



GARRETT COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION COMMITTEE, INC.
104 EAST CENTER STREET
OAKLAND, MD. 21550

Federal Cuts Shrink Community Action Services

*Federal budget action to shorten Head Start and reduce services of
Community Action*

For Immediate Release

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Oakland - Garrett County Head Start and Early Head Start operations will close for one month in 2013 as the result of the federal government's budget sequestration. The closing of the nine month Head Start program on April 12 and the twelve month Head Start option on July 12 were among a number of service and employee reductions announced by the Garrett County Community Action Committee to accommodate the federal government's mid-year impoundment of fiscal year 2013 funds.

300 children and their families and 57 Community Action employees will be impacted by the Head Start action alone, Duane Yoder, President of Garrett County Community Action, said. Other cutbacks will effect Community Action's Weatherization, Senior Citizen, housing and core organization activities Yoder stated. The federal reductions

occurred in the middle of the federal budget year so we have to absorb these reductions in a very compressed time frame Yoder explained. We have already reduced the days of operations for facilities such as the Flowery Vale Senior Wellness Center, eliminated most of our federally assisted energy conservation services and starting in the fall will need to reduce our emergency housing assistance to prevent homelessness Yoder stated. Over 70 employees will experience layoffs or furloughs and \$300,000 eliminated.

Patty Gallagher, Chairperson of the GCCAC Head Start Parent Policy Council said that parents are scrambling to find quality child care they can afford as a result of this unexpected news and the Parent Policy Council is working with parents to make the transition to the summer break as easy for everyone as possible. Lowell Bender who chairs the Community Action Board of Directors expressed concern that the closings will seriously impact on the school readiness of Head Start children entering kindergarten. We have invested energy and money in trying to make sure that every child is fully ready and the Garrett County scores are among the highest in the State he noted.

According to Mark Colaw who directs Community Action's Early Child Education Department the nine month Head Start operations will cease on April 12, 2013 and the twelve month on July 12. He said both will open at the regular scheduled opening in September. Gallagher noted that the Wrap Around Child Care Center in Oakland will operate in the summer and that parents are being assisted in obtaining child care purchase of care vouchers to help employed parents as well as those attending college.