

## **Chief Executive Officer's Report**

**October 14, 2021**

### **Covid 19 Vaccinations, Testing and Related Resignations**

WCCA started mandatory testing for all employees that had not been vaccinated for Covid 19 on September 30<sup>th</sup>. WCCA's Human Resources Department (HR) has been tracking the number of vaccinated versus unvaccinated employees. The attached chart shows the trends for the last month. Twenty-six more employees were vaccinated by the end of September compared to the end of August. The number of unvaccinated employees dropped by almost fifty percent. Most of this decrease was because more employees got vaccinated, but part of the reduction was due to employees resigning. Most of those who resigned were part time and intermittent employees. During the first two days of testing four employees did not show for their test. These employees cannot return to work until they have been tested. Any employee that misses three testing appointments will be terminated from WCCA.

The policy is having its intended effect of increasing the number of vaccinated employees. This makes WCCA safer for our clients and our employees. I appreciate the support the Board has given WCCA management in implementing our response to Covid 19.

### **What I Learned from NHSA's Fall Leadership Conference and Serving on Their Board**

Attached is a chart showing in very broad terms what is in the \$3.5 trillion dollar Build Back Better bill. This bill is still being ironed out in congress. If it does become law, it could be much smaller. The National Head Start Association (NHSA) does expect it to become law. It also expects the \$450 Billion investment in early childhood education to survive. NHSA is working hard to insure that Head Start plays a starring role in this transformation.

In the short run the NHSA Board, that includes representatives from many of the best Head Start grantees in the nation, are all worried about the same things. Those worries include:

- Under enrollment due to Covid and strict income eligibility requirements
- Being able to pay enough to hire and retain staff
- Staff burnout due to Covid
- How many staff members will chose to leave over the vaccine mandate

The Office of Head Start (OHS) says it expects programs to be back to full enrollment by April of 2022. NHSA does not think this is realistic and will communicate this to OHS. There is money coming to help with salaries in the next federal budget, and even more if Build Back Better becomes law. WCCA is not alone in offering wellness programs and having a generous mental health insurance benefit. My main point is that there is a lot happening, and WCCA is not alone in dealing with a difficult and uncertain landscape.