



Bill Purcell, Mayor

News Release

Metropolitan Action Commission

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Metro Action Reveals Plans for \$4 million Head Start Center South Nashville Site Open by Fall 2006 School Year

Nashville—Today Nashville Mayor Bill Purcell joins Cynthia Croom, Executive Director of the Metropolitan Action Commission to unveil the plans for Nashville's first newly constructed Head Start Center.

“This is a historic day for the city of Nashville and an outstanding acknowledgement of the substantial impact that the Head Start program has on Early Childhood Education,” said Croom.

The 21,480 square foot center will enroll 220 children ages 3-4 years old from low-income families in the Southeast quadrant of Davidson County. The center is estimated to cost \$4 million.

Prior to this project, all Head Start centers were housed in vacated schools and community centers and had to be retrofitted with equipment to accommodate the needs of young children. The Antioch site is designed specifically for pre-school children. Its design includes key elements such as child size amenities and more open space to enhance the learning environment.

“Most of our centers have playgrounds with rubberized surfaces to decrease the chances of injury. The Antioch center will also include the rubberized surface on the playground as well as under the covered outdoor play area. The covered outdoor play area will allow children to play outside on rainy days which would normally limit their play to indoor activities,” said Croom.

Head Start incorporates parent involvement as a component of the educational partnership between the program and the families. A multipurpose room for parent meetings, home ownership classes and other services for families were included to accommodate the increased need for outreach programs.

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The Antioch site was recommended by an independent facilities study requested by Metro Government in 2000. In addition to the identified need for a new Head Start building in Antioch, the plan also identified facility renovations, improvements and upgrades to the other Head Start Centers. The study also recommendation relocation of children currently served in the East and Reservoir Head Start Centers due to the age and location of its buildings.

Since 2000, \$5.4 million has been spent in capital improvements to Metro Action Head Start buildings. Currently 1,485 children are enrolled in 8 Head Start Centers and 5 partner sites throughout Nashville, making the program the largest single provider of early childhood education in Davidson County.

Editor's Note: Construction Renderings of the new site are available on the Metro Action Website (www.nashville.gov/mac).

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