

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Flowers Early Learning CEO Chanda Hillman Named Executive Director of the Michigan Head Start Association

Paw Paw, MI — March 16, 2026 — Flowers Early Learning announced today that Chief Executive Officer **Chanda Hillman** has been named the next Executive Director of the **Michigan Head Start Association (MHSA)**, where she will lead statewide efforts to support and advocate for Head Start and Early Head Start programs serving children and families across Michigan.

Hillman currently serves as CEO of Flowers Early Learning, a nonprofit organization providing Head Start and Early Head Start services to children and families across Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren counties. Hillman's journey with the organization began as a parent in the program in 2014. Inspired by the impact Head Start had on her family, she joined Flowers Early Learning in 2016 as a part-time recruiter. In 2018, Hillman was selected to become only the third CEO in the organization's more than 50-year history.

During her tenure, Hillman worked alongside the organization's board of directors, staff, families, and community partners to strengthen services for children and families and expand community awareness of the critical role high-quality early childhood education plays in supporting families and strengthening local communities.

"Head Start has always been deeply personal to me," said Hillman. "I first experienced the program as a parent, and I have had the incredible privilege of serving alongside the dedicated staff, families, and community partners who make this work possible every day. Flowers Early Learning will always hold a very special place in my heart."

Under Hillman's leadership, Flowers Early Learning continued building on its long-standing legacy of serving children and families across Southwest Michigan through comprehensive early childhood education, health, and family support services.

"Chanda's journey reflects the very heart of Head Start," said Brian Saxton, Chair of the Flowers Early Learning Board of Directors. "She experienced the program as a parent, dedicated her career to supporting families, and became a leader who strengthened this organization and our community. While we will certainly miss her leadership, we are incredibly proud to see her take this next step as she advocates for children and families across Michigan. The strong foundation and bold vision she helped create will continue to move forward, ensuring Flowers Early Learning remains a leader for children and families in Southwest Michigan. The Board remains deeply committed to that vision and confident the organization will continue advancing this important work for the children, families, and communities we serve."

Hillman will continue serving as CEO of Flowers Early Learning through April while working closely with the Board of Directors to ensure a thoughtful transition and to begin the search for the organization's fourth CEO.

Flowers Early Learning remains committed to its mission of supporting children and families and will continue its work providing high-quality early childhood education and comprehensive family services across the region.

About Flowers Early Learning

Flowers Early Learning is a nonprofit organization that provides Head Start and Early Head Start services to children and families across Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren counties in Southwest Michigan. For more than 50 years, the organization has supported young children and their families through high-quality early childhood education, health services, and family support programs designed to help children thrive.

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