

Great Parents, Great Start Grant Program Criteria

Allocations for the Great Parents, Great Start Program Grants will enable eligible districts to expand parenting education and involvement programs designed to improve school readiness, encourage early mathematics and reading, as well as impact the maintenance of stable families through fostering positive parenting skills. Projects funded by the Great Parents, Great Start Program Grants must:

- demonstrate adequate collaboration with local entities involved in providing programs and services to children, birth to five years of age, and their parents;
- develop Great Parents, Great Start services so they align with, and are part of the broader local early childhood community collaborative plan;
- provide services to all parents with children age five or younger residing in the intermediate school district who choose to participate;
- provide a program that includes at least all of the following service components for parents:
 - information on the development of children from birth to age five.
 - methods to enhance parent-child interaction to promote social and emotional development of infants and toddlers and age-appropriate language, mathematics, and early reading skills.
 - examples of learning opportunities to promote intellectual, physical, and social growth of children birth to five years of age.
 - promotion of access to needed community services through a community-school-home partnership.
 - promotion of marriage.
- scale parent services and intervention efforts to reflect the level of family risk by providing:
 - low intensity, universally available services to any interested family with children birth to five years of age, such as newsletters, book distributions, web-based resources, etc.
 - higher, more intensive face-to-face services, such as home visiting, play groups, etc., to families of higher risk.
- focus the majority of parent education and involvement services directed to families with children younger than four years of age;
- provide connections to quality preschool programs for families who have children three and four years of age;
- utilize current validated research-based methods and curriculum that match the populations with whom the district will be providing program components;
- provide higher risk families with referrals to community agencies to meet other needs, beyond parenting services;
- assure that staff providing parenting services possess proper early childhood training, including but not limited to academic credit in child development, early childhood education or equivalent or certification as a parent educator/home visitor focusing on parents of children birth to five years of age;
- provide balanced funding directed towards both universal and intensive services so that universal services do not deplete the majority of grant dollars;

- provide a cost-effective budget with no more than 10 percent administrative cost;
- include at least a 20 percent match from local public or private resources of which no more than one-half of the matching requirement is satisfied through in-kind services;
- establish measurable program goals and outcomes for the universal service component;
- establish measurable child and family outcomes related to overall school readiness and family stability for families receiving more intensive services;
- participate in a department-approved data collection and evaluation system, including use of selected data collection instruments;
- budget one half of one percent of the district's Great Parents, Great Start state funding towards a state evaluation to assess the effectiveness of GP,GS services; and
- spend out all previous years' Great Parents, Great Start funds prior to accessing the current year's grant funds for program service delivery.