



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING



MICHAEL P. FLANAGAN
SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

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GOVERNOR

August 28, 2006

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Michael P. Flanagan, Chairman 

SUBJECT: Approval of Criteria for the Birth to Five Beginnings Library Program Grants

The Birth to Five Beginnings Library Program is a state-funded book program for children birth to five years of age authorized through Section 32m of the State School Aid Act, Public Act 342 of 2006.

Research has shown that access to books at home and school is strongly related to children's cognitive development including literacy, language and math achievement. Children who have early experiences with print tend to read earlier and enjoy reading. Reading books to young preschoolers is known to have a positive effect on their oral language development. It is through books that children are exposed to new words and complex structures that are not normally contained in daily oral language but are needed for later reading proficiency.

Parental involvement in their children's education is another important predictor of children's success in school. Further research has also shown that secure attachment between the parent and the child predicts greater cognitive development, related to language development, emergent literacy and reading. When parents and children engage in shared book reading, opportunities are provided for parents to be involved in their child's education and for the parent/child attachment to be strengthened.

The State Board of Education priorities of early childhood literacy and integrating communities and schools are embedded in this State School Aid grant program. In line with these priorities, Section 32m of the 2006-2007 State School Aid Act establishes this new initiative for children birth to five. The 2006-2007 State School Aid legislation designates \$500,000 to be awarded through a competitive process to intermediate school districts, local education agencies and public school academies.

The purpose of this grant program is to increase early literacy and language skills for children, birth to five years of age, through access over time in their homes to high quality, age appropriate books.

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Grantees will achieve this purpose by providing high-quality books to children throughout the community on a monthly basis from the birth of a child to age five. This will allow a child by the age of five to have had access to his/her own library of 60 high-quality, age appropriate books.

Criteria for the Birth to Five Beginnings Library Grants are provided in Attachment A.

It is recommended that the State Board of Education approve the criteria for the Birth to Five Beginnings Library Program Grants as described in the Superintendent's memorandum dated August 28, 2006.

**MICHIGAN
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Criteria for Birth to Five Beginnings Library

The State Board of Education has adopted as its Strategic Goal "Attain substantial and meaningful improvement in academic achievement for all students/children with primary emphasis on high priority schools and students." In addition, the State Board has adopted the following five Strategic Initiatives to implement the goal:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring Excellent Educators Elevating Educational Leadership Embracing the Information Age | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring Early Childhood Literacy • Integrating Communities and Schools |
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To the extent possible, all grant criteria and grant awards will include priority consideration of the Strategic Goal and the Strategic Initiatives.

BACKGROUND/PURPOSE OF GRANT

Competitive Formula New Continuation

The Michigan legislature has directed \$500,000 be made available to assist in the funding of programs to provide children with a book each month from birth to five years of age. Grants of up to a maximum of \$25,000 will be made available to Intermediate School Districts (ISDs), Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and Public School Academies. If all applicants requested \$25,000, the appropriation would allow for 20 grants to be awarded.

The primary goal of the grant is to increase young children's early literacy skills through ongoing access to quality age appropriate books from birth to kindergarten entry. The availability of quality books in the home allows parents to partner with the schools in developing young children's school readiness skills.

LEGISLATION

Public Act 342 of 2006, the 2007 State School Aid Act, Section 32m appropriates \$500,000 to be awarded through a competitive process for 2006-2007. The selection of grant recipients shall be based on the ability to serve children and the need for the program in the area to be served by the grantee.

RATIONALE FOR CRITERIA

The Birth to Five Beginnings Library (B5BL) program further assists the State Board of Education with the goals of ensuring early childhood literacy and integrating communities and schools. Schools will partner with local communities in the design and implementation of their grant. The program will also work to further solidify the relationship between and among the State Board of Education, the Michigan Department of Education and Intermediate School Districts.

CRITERIA

Defined in Legislation Defined in Department's Grant Proposed by Staff
 Section 32m of the State School Aid Act provides a beginning framework upon which criteria have been developed for a competitive process. It further gives the Department the authority to prescribe the form and manner of application. Criteria are necessary to differentiate between proposals and to assure that grantees meet the intent of the legislation. Each grantee funded by Birth to Five Beginnings Library Grants:

- must demonstrate the need for the program based upon identified community risk factors, available resources and the number of children birth to five in the community;
 must demonstrate the ability to obtain and distribute high-quality children's books on a monthly basis to children birth to age five who reside in the identified service area;
- must operate the program itself or within a contracted or cooperative arrangement with another local unit of government, a foundation, or another nonprofit entity;
 shall include match from locally raised funds at least equal to the amount of the requested Section 32m funds;
 must demonstrate how the project collaborates and works in conjunction with other community-based literacy, parenting education and early childhood programs, as well as existing local book distribution efforts targeted to this age group;
 shall only use funds to cover the cost of providing monthly high quality, age appropriate books to children, birth to age five;
 shall demonstrate how it will serve, within the first year of the grant, at least 20 percent or 700 of the age-eligible children in the identified service area;
 shall have operational costs not to exceed an annual cost of \$35 per enrolled child;
 shall assure that all administrative costs will not exceed 8 percent of the total grant funds (MDE and local match) and will be paid for from match funds;
 shall provide a plan of outreach and enrollment to all children in the service area with special attention given to enrolling children of harder to engage families; and
 shall establish measurable program and child goals and outcomes for the grant.

Awarding of grants will be limited to no more than four grantees within any one Michigan Association of School Administrators' governance region. An effort will be made to award grants geographically across the state.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS/TARGET POPULATION TO BE SERVED BY GRANT

Eligible applicants are intermediate school districts, local education agencies and public school academies that propose to serve the grant's target population. The target population is all children age four or younger who reside within the intermediate school district, local education district or other specified geographic area (such as children within a grouping of elementary school attendance areas, one specific county area, etc.).

TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE

A total of \$500,000 will be available for grants up to a maximum of \$25,000 each to assist programs in providing preschool children with a book each month from birth to age five.

OFFICE ADMINISTERING GRANT/PROGRAM CONTACT

Office of Early Childhood Education and Family Services:

Director:	Lindy Buch	1-3592
Program Contact:	Jacqueline Wood	1-4741