



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING



MICHAEL P. FLANAGAN
SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

August 28, 2006

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Michael P. Flanagan, Chairman 

SUBJECT: Approval of Criteria for the 2006-2007 Michigan School Readiness Program Grants for Four-Year-Old Children At Risk of School Failure

The Michigan School Readiness Program is a state-funded preschool program for four-year-old children at risk of school failure.

Public Act 342 of 2006, the State School Aid Act, Sections 32d, 32l and 37-40, outlines the Michigan School Readiness Program. Section 32d has set aside \$78,600,000 for 2006-2007 to be allocated to eligible school districts and public school academies by a **formula** defined in Section 38. Section 32l provides an additional \$12,250,000 for Michigan School Readiness Program grants in 2006-2007 to be awarded to public and private, nonprofit and other community agencies through a **competitive** grant award process. It is expected that the State School Aid Act introduced for 2007-2008 will maintain or increase funding.

Applicants for State School Aid grants are local school districts or public school academies that have completed the Comprehensive Community Needs and Resources Assessment (CNRA), the pre-application designed to assist in estimating a district's/public school academy's eligible population. Eligible grant applicants for the competitive funds are early childhood programs operated by any public or private non-profit legal entity or agency other than a local or intermediate school district. A local or intermediate school district acting as fiscal agent for a Head Start grantee program is eligible to apply for funds.

Criteria for both the competitive programs and those programs being operated by school districts/public school academies receiving state aid funds are provided in Attachment A. The criteria included reflect current legislative provisions so that the allocation processes can begin in the required time frame. Legislative changes to the program have resulted in changes to the criteria.

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It is recommended that the State Board of Education approve the criteria for the 2006-2007 Michigan School Readiness Program Grants for Four-Year-Old Children At Risk of School Failure as described in the Superintendent's memorandum dated August 28, 2006.

MICHIGAN
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Criteria for Michigan School Readiness Program Grants
for Four-Year-Old Children At Risk of School Failure

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:

- Ensuring Excellent Educators
- Elevating Educational Leadership
- Embracing the Information Age
- Ensuring Early Childhood Literacy
- Integrating Communities and Schools

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 School Readiness Program (MSRP) is a state-funded preschool program for four-year-old children at risk of school failure. This state-funded preschool program has been in existence since 1985. Preschool programs funded through this state grant program must be designed to meet the comprehensive needs of four-year-old children and must provide opportunities for the active involvement of parents in program planning and implementation. School districts and agencies may operate classroom-based or home-based programs for four year-old children. Beginning in FY2004, new language was included in Section 32d of the State School Aid legislation, allowing MSRP funds to be diverted to provide preschool and parenting education programs as were formerly authorized under Section 32b of the State School Aid Act during 2001-2002.

LEGISLATION

School District/Public School Academy: Section 32d, P.A. 342 of 2006, sets aside \$78,600,000 for 2006-2007 to be allocated to eligible school districts and public school academies by a formula defined in Section 38.

- *Competitive Grant Program:* Section 32l provides \$12,250,000 in 2006-2007 for Michigan School Readiness Program grants to be awarded to private and public, nonprofit and other community agencies through a competitive grant award process.

RATIONALE FOR CRITERIA

The funds granted to operate the Michigan School Readiness Program (MSRP) enable eligible recipients to establish or expand high-quality preschool programs designed to improve the readiness and subsequent achievement of children at risk of school failure. High-quality preschool programs address the Board's strategic initiatives of Ensuring Early Childhood Literacy and Integrating Communities and Schools.

CRITERIA

Defined in Legislation Defined in Department's Grant Proposed by Staff

Classroom- and Home-based projects funded by the 2006-2007 Michigan School Readiness Program State Aid and Competitive Grants must:

- comply with all state and local licensing laws governing day care services for children (Public Act 116 of the Public Acts of 1973, as amended); and
- comply with the Michigan State Board of Education *Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Prekindergarten*, the *Michigan School Readiness Program Implementation Manual*, PA 342 of 2006 and any elements of authorizing legislation.

Preschool and parenting education programs funded by the 2006-2007 Michigan School Readiness Program State Aid Grants must:

- provide services to all families with children age five or younger residing within the district who choose to participate, as described in former section 32b as in effect for 2001-2002; and
- comply with the Michigan State Board of Education *Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Prekindergarten*, the *Michigan School Readiness Program Implementation Manual*, PA 342 of 2006 and any elements of authorizing legislation.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS/TARGET POPULATION TO BE SERVED BY GRANT

School District/Public School Academy: Eligible applicants are local school districts and public school academies. Two or more district/public school academies may join to form a consortium by designating a single fiscal agent.

Competitive Grant Program: An eligible applicant is an early childhood program operated by any public or private non-profit legal entity or agency other than a local or intermediate school district. A local or intermediate school district acting as fiscal agent for a Head Start program is eligible to apply for funds.

TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE

The following amounts are available to fund programs:

- *School District/Public School Academy:* \$78,600,000 has been approved for programs to operate in the 2006-2007 school year.

Competitive Grant Program: Of the appropriation of \$12,250,000, \$3,577,200 will be used to fund eligible continuation grants that began operation during 2004-2005 and 2005-2006. The remaining \$8,672,800 of the allocation will be used to fund applications for (new) initial and expansion grants.

OFFICE ADMINISTERING GRANT/PROGRAM CONTACT

Office of Early Childhood Education and Family Services

Director:	Dr. Lindy Buch	1-3592
Supervisor:	Bill Witt	3-8512
Program Contacts:	Connie Robinson, Judy Levine, Blanche Deren	3-8483