



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

May 30, 2006

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Michael P. Flanagan, Chairman 

SUBJECT: Approval of Criteria for Training and Technical Assistance for William F. Goodling Even Start Literacy Programs

William F. Goodling Even Start Family Literacy Programs (Even Start), authorized through Title I, Part B, Subpart 3 of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, is designed to improve the educational opportunities of low-income families by integrating early childhood education, adult literacy or adult basic education, parenting education and parent/child interaction into a unified family literacy program.

Federal statute requires that State Education Agencies which receive Even Start funds provide "through one or more subgrants or contracts, technical assistance for program improvement and replication" to local projects. The purpose of this grant is to create a comprehensive, integrated, responsive system of technical support for Michigan Even Start Family Literacy projects. This coordinated system will: provide Even Start projects with accurate and timely information, resources and support services focused on improving the quality of family literacy services provided by a local project; support individual projects in addressing their goals for continuous program improvement through attendance at state and national conferences; and deliver systematic training based upon the program elements specified in federal statute.

It is recommended that the State Board of Education approve the criteria for Training and Technical Assistance for William F. Goodling Even Start Family Literacy Programs as described in the Superintendent's memorandum dated May 30, 2006.

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MICHIGAN
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Criteria for Training and Technical Assistance for William F. Goodling Even Start
Family Literacy Programs

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 | • Ensuring Early Childhood Literacy |
| Elevating Educational Leadership | • Integrating Communities and Schools |
| Embracing the Information Age | |

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

X Competitive Formula **X** New Continuation (*check all that apply*)

The purpose of Even Start is to improve the educational opportunities of low-income families by integrating early childhood education, adult literacy or adult basic education, parenting education and parent/child interaction into a unified family literacy program. Additionally, the expectation is that the program "promote the academic achievement of children and adults" and "assist children and adults from low-income families to achieve to challenging State content standards and challenging State student achievement standards." The ultimate anticipated outcome is that the children whose families have been enrolled in Even Start will have at least an even start in their school careers, with the hope that they might experience substantial school success. Federal statute requires that State Education Agencies which receive Even Start funds provide "through one or more subgrants or contracts, technical assistance for program improvement and replication" to local projects. The purpose of this grant is to create a comprehensive, integrated, responsive system of technical support for Michigan Even Start Family Literacy projects. This coordinated system will: provide Even Start projects with accurate and timely information, resources and support services focused on improving the quality of family literacy services provided by a local project; support individual projects in addressing their goals for continuous program improvement through attendance at state and national conferences; and deliver systematic training based upon the program elements specified in federal statute.

LEGISLATION

Even Start is authorized by Title I, part B, subpart 3 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, reauthorized under the *No Child Left Behind Act*

of 2001, P.L.107-110. Specific criteria related to the provision of training and technical assistance are referenced in sections 1233(a)(2) and 1234 (c)(4).

RATIONALE FOR CRITERIA

The State Board of Education has embraced five core strategies to ensure **substantial and meaningful improvement in academic achievement in chronically underperforming schools**. Even Start has a primary focus and intentional outcome of **ensuring early childhood literacy**. Comprehensive family literacy programs have been found to be an effective strategy to improve student performance. A synthesis of local evaluations of Even Start projects has found a consistent pattern of positive gains on children's preschool development (St. Pierre et al., 2000). Family literacy programs provide a setting (both in center-based and home-based models) in which parents can be supported in learning the components that lead to positive literacy development of their children. In addition, the legislation requires Even Start projects to provide high-quality, intensive instructional programs, to comply with staff qualification requirements and use the most highly qualified staff available. Each Even Start project is based upon a partnership between a local education agency and a community-based nonprofit entity. Thus, this grant also supports the State Board strategies of **ensuring excellent educators** and **integrating communities and schools**.

CRITERIA

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

Legislation requires that State Education Agencies which receive Even Start funds provide technical assistance and training through one or more subgrants, contracts, or cooperative agreements with an entity that has experience in offering high-quality training and technical assistance to family literacy providers. Technical assistance should be designed to:

- improve the quality of Even Start family literacy services;
- support the continuous improvement of local programs;
- support the replication of successful programs;
- assist local programs in leveraging additional local funds to expand family literacy services to families;
- develop, implement, and use the State's indicators of program quality;
- provide training in using data to improve participant achievement results; and
- assist programs in implementing high-quality, research-based instructional practices.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS/TARGET POPULATION TO BE SERVED BY GRANT

Intermediate school districts, local education agencies including public school academies, institutions of higher education, professional organizations, non-profit organizations, and others of demonstrated experience in providing high-quality training and technical assistance specific to Even Start family literacy programs will be eligible to apply for the grant.

Training activities and technical assistance are targeted to the Michigan Even Start programs and their collaborators.

TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE

The total amount available ranges from \$289,000-\$376,000 over three years, pending federal appropriation. The first year award would equal \$200,000, while subsequent years would diminish to approximately \$87,500.

OFFICE ADMINISTERING GRANT/PROGRAM CONTACT

Reneé DeMars-Johnson, Supervisor
Infant/Toddler and Family Services
Office of Early Childhood Education and Family Services