

## Even Start Clarification regarding dissolution

General understanding related to the process:

- MDE will gather unspent grant monies from the ten programs at the end of the fiscal year to be used for further allocations per local program plans. This remains the same as in years past since there is no provision for carryover in the Even Start statute.
- MDE expects to receive additional federal Even Start funds to support local programs though the amount and details are not known at this time. There may be forthcoming clarification when Renee returns from the State Coordinators' meeting in Louisville next week.
- MDE will have conversations with local programs to assess whether any of the programs are interested in an additional allocation amount to extend the period of obligation of Even Start funding for programming (see options 2 or 3 below).

Option 1: local program is closing and may do one of the following:

- Discontinue all Even Start programming/staffing by 6/30/2011
- Discontinue all Even Start programming by 6/30/2011  
Staffing of one or two key personnel would be continued through July utilizing funding from the current grant funds (as negotiated with MDE).

Option 2: local program plans to continue Even Start programming in some capacity and may do one of the following (understanding that if grant funds from federal Even Start are used, all four components must be included to reflect Even Start Family Literacy programming):

1. Even Start programming continued (potential to negotiate reducing the number of targeted families and, consequently, number of staff) through 8/31/2012

- Building on existing and new collaboration with community partners to maintain family literacy components even if the program is no longer called Even Start (though still using ES grant funds)
  - Assisting families to access alternative components or other family literacy programs in the community
  - Utilizing Even Start grant funds (current or increased funding) which may change the target enrollment – as negotiated with MDE
2. Operate the current full Even Start program (with potential reduction in number of targeted families) for an additional semester past 6/30/2011 or other date negotiated with MDE
- Current or fewer staff
  - Building on existing and new collaboration with community partners to maintain family literacy components even if the program is no longer called Even Start (though still using ES grant funds)
  - Assisting families to access alternative components or other family literacy programs in the community
  - Utilizing Even Start grant funds (current or increased funding) which may change the target enrollment – as negotiated with MDE
3. Operate a modified Even Start program (focused on transitioning with fewer number of enrolled families) through 8/31/2011 or another date negotiated with MDE
- Current or fewer staff
  - Building on existing and new collaboration with community partners to maintain family literacy components even if the program is no longer called Even Start (though still using ES grant funds)
  - Assisting families to access alternative components or other family literacy programs in the community

- Utilizing Even Start grant funds (current or increased funding) which may change the target enrollment – as negotiated with MDE.

***MDE supports any of the above options.***

All necessary reports need to be submitted by ending date. Because “all reports” would include the final data report and local evaluation for the 2010-2011 year (which was budgeted and expected to be paid during the budget year (7/1/10 – 6/30/11), this may be a difficult option especially regarding the local evaluation.

The local evaluation must be submitted. The original deadline/timeline is November 1, 2011. It is expected that current local grant funds should be designated for this purpose. Clarification is being sought by MDE from USED.

### **Additional Clarification regarding Local Evaluation**

If the local program is closing in June 2011, how should “future recommendations” be incorporated into the 2010-2011 local evaluation report?

- “Lessons learned” over full years and/or current year of local project funding OR would evaluator “act as if” the program were going to continue even though they are not?
- **NEITHER** – the evaluator’s design should have included a focused inquiry that was created to lead toward continuous improvement. The evaluation report should present the data that were collected and analyzed during the year to respond to the inquiry. From the results, the evaluator draws conclusions and those conclusions would typically lead to recommendations regarding the practices that were implemented and their effectiveness in strengthening the

program. If the data show that the practices did not impact the initial problem being addressed, the recommendation may point to other activities that may be more beneficial. For the 2010-2011 program year, this approach to recommendations would still be viable, whether or not the local program plans to continue comprehensive Even Start service, as the recommendation(s) would be those that benefit the field of early learning and family literacy/support programs. Note: reference the Guide to Local Evaluation, pages 18 & 19 and chapter 10.

The previous comment would also address the final question: "If the local program plans to continue Even Start programming/staffing in some capacity, what is the expectation for local evaluation for the extended period of operation?" This is a perfect opportunity to clarify, with the local evaluator, what the focused inquiry would be under these unusual circumstances. It may be that the focused inquiry for this year(s) is an outgrowth of the process of decision making which has evolved including, but not limited to, whether or not to continue Even Start, its value for the enrolled families, options for those families, etc.