



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL P. FLANAGAN
SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

July 26, 2010

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Michael P. Flanagan, Chairman 

SUBJECT: Approval of Criteria for the FY 2010-2011 Great Start Readiness Program Grants for Four-Year-Old Children At Risk of School Failure

The Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) is a state-funded preschool program for four-year-old children at risk of school failure.

Public Act 110 of 2010, the State School Aid Act, Sections 32d, 32l, and 37-40, outlines the GSRP. Section 32d has set aside \$89.4M for FY 2010-2011 to be allocated to eligible school districts/public school academies (PSAs) by the formula defined in Section 38 and provides an additional \$8.875M for GSRP grants in FY 2010-2011 to be awarded to public and private, for-profit and non-profit, and other community agencies through a competitive grant award process.

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

The criteria included reflect current legislative provisions so the allocation process can begin within the required timeframe.

It is recommended that the State Board of Education approve the criteria for the 2010-2011 Great Start Readiness Program Grants for four-year-old children at risk of school failure, as described in the Superintendent's memorandum dated July 26, 2010.

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

The Michigan 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."

To the extent possible, all grant criteria and grant awards will serve to further attain the above goal, and the Board's Vision and Principles of Universal Education.

PRIORITIES, POLICIES, AND PROGRAMS THAT THESE CRITERIA SUPPORT

The Michigan State Board of Education has embraced five core strategies to ensure substantial and meaningful improvement in academic achievement in chronically underperforming schools. The Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) grants 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. The programming provided through the GSRP grants has a considerable impact on future performance and success of the children who are served; in particular, ensuring early childhood literacy and integrating communities and schools.

BACKGROUND/PURPOSE OF GRANT

Competitive Formula New Continuation

P.A. 110 of 2010, the State School Aid Act, continued funding for GSRP for the 26th year; the first two years were pilots with funding at \$1,000,000 per year. The legislative option to use some or all of the funding to provide Parent Involvement and Education (PIE) programs was instituted in 2003-2004. The legislative option to use some or all of the funding to provide full-day services with each child utilizing two half-day slots, was instituted in 2005-2006. In 2008-2009 legislation altered the name from the Michigan School Readiness Program to GSRP. The 2008-2009 legislation provided for blended funding sharing a part-day GSRP slot and a part-day Head Start slot to provide a full-day preschool program for Head Start eligible four-year-old children. The 2008-2009 legislation also allowed for consortiums to serve children based on the allocation to the entire consortium, relaxing GSRP enrollment restrictions and encouraging regional program quality supports. The 2009-2010 legislation provided the option for grantees to choose to apply a foundation allowance reduction to GSRP funding, but this option is reversed in P.A. 110 of 2010. Risk factors for eligibility were also revised beginning in 2009-2010 as approved by the Michigan State Board of Education on May 12, 2009.

CRITERIA

Date criteria were last approved: September 12, 2006

- Defined in Legislation
- Defined in Department’s Grant Application to the Funder
- Proposed by Staff

Classroom- and Home-Based programs funded by the FY 2010-2011 GSRP State Aid Act grants must:

- comply with all state and local licensing laws governing child 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 *Great Start Readiness Program Implementation Manual*, P.A. 110 of 2010, and any elements of authorizing legislation.

Preschool and parenting education programs funded by the FY 2010-2011 GSRP State Aid Act grants must:

- provide services to all families with children age five or younger residing within the school district who chose to participate, as described in former section 32b, as in effect for FY 2001-2002; and
- comply with the Michigan State Board of Education *Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Prekindergarten*, the *Great Start Readiness Program Implementation Manual*, P.A. 110 of 2010, and any elements of authorizing legislation.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS/TARGET POPULATION TO BE SERVED BY GRANT

School District/PSA Programs: Eligible applicants are school districts/PSAs. Two or more school districts/PSAs may join to form a consortium by designating a single fiscal agent. The “schools-of-choice” restriction is waived for consortiums when each consortium member agrees to serve children based on the allocation to the entire consortium.

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

TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE

School district/PSA Programs: \$89.4M has been approved for programs to operate in the 2010-2011 school year.

Competitive Programs: Of the appropriation of \$8.875M, \$5.804M will be used to fund eligible continuation grants that began operating in FY 2009-2010. The remaining \$3.071M will be used to fund initial (new) grants, expansion grants, and blended part-day slots with Head Start.

LEGISLATION

- **School district/PSA Programs:** Section 32d, P.A. 110 of 2010 sets aside \$89.4M for FY 2010-2011 to be allocated to eligible school districts/PSAs by the formula defined in Section 38. Second-round funding is altered to reflect “hold harmless” language, ensuring that if funds are available after the initial allocation, a grantee will receive the requested number of slots or an allocation based on the number of children served the prior year, whichever is less. The per-slot allocation remains constant at \$3,400. The number of children that can be served part-day is 26,294.
- **Competitive Programs:** Section 32d, P.A. 110 of 2010 also provides \$8.875M in FY 2010-2011 for the GSRP grant to be awarded to private and public, for-profit or non-profit, and other community agencies through a competitive grant award process. The per-slot allocation remains constant at \$3,400. The number of children that could be served part-day is 2,610.

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