

SAMPLE

Professional Development for Prekindergarten Teachers

Program Description

This is a competitive fiscal year 2014 discretionary grant program funded by the United States Department of Education. The program provides resources in support of a broad range of professional development activities and strategies for the early childhood workforce. The program will support outreach, technical assistance, and training.

Eligibility and Projected Funding

The program will fund eligible entities (i.e., grantees) to conduct specific activities (see program purpose, below). Eligible entities include (1) Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs), (2) for-profit institutions, (3) non-profit institutions, (4) state education agencies (SEAs), and (5) consortia of the above entities. A total of \$150 million dollars is projected for the five-year grant cycle; the Department anticipates making 25 awards.

Purpose

Recent studies (summarized in Early et al., 2007¹) document the importance of well-rounded professional development for the early childhood workforce. More specifically, research suggests that requiring education (e.g., a two-year or higher degree in Early Childhood Education) is not sufficient to ensure the workforce consistently provides high quality early learning environments; additional and ongoing professional development, training, and technical assistance with the early childhood workforce are necessary. This program was created to promote and support comprehensive professional development for a high quality prekindergarten workforce that works to optimize child development in anticipation of kindergarten entry (i.e., school readiness). Each applicant should establish a plan for accomplishing the following objectives:

- (1) Provide technical assistance to local education agencies (LEAs), and equivalents, that builds the capacity of these entities to develop, implement, and evaluate evidence-based professional development activities for their prekindergarten workforce.
- (2) Create and validate a toolkit for LEA use that contains (at a minimum) research-based curricula, sample training modules, guiding literature, and materials and resources for public distribution, with a focus on child literacy and socio-emotional development and teacher-child interactions.
- (3) Create and implement outreach and engagement plans to guide engagement with LEAs and equivalents.
- (4) Provide LEAs and equivalents technical assistance on creating outreach and engagement plans to the local prekindergarten workforce, with a focus on improving the number and

¹ Early, D.M., Maxwell, K.L., Burchinal, M., Alva, S., Bender, R.H., Bryant, D., Cai, K., Clifford, R.M., Ebanks, C., Griffin, J.A., Henry, G.T., Howes, C., Iriondo-Perez, J., Jeon, H., Mashburn, A.J., Peisner-Feinberg, E., Pianta, R.C., Vandergrift, N. and Zill, N. (2007). Teachers' education, classroom quality, and young children's academic skills: Results from seven studies of preschool programs. *Child Development* 78 (2) 558-80.

percentage of the workforce with a two-year or higher degree in Early Childhood Education (ECE) or a related field.

- (5) Develop and implement a comprehensive formative and summative evaluation of project activities.

Further, applicants are encouraged to collaborate with existing state and local initiatives, whenever applicable and possible, and to be inclusive of professional development for a wide range of child needs, including special developmental or educational needs.

Accountability

Grantees will submit annual reports. At a minimum, grantees will report on:

- Number and type of technical assistance services provided
- Number and type of toolkit materials created
- Number of LEAs or equivalents receiving technical assistance
- Number of prekindergarten teachers impacted
- Change in prekindergarten teacher knowledge and capacity as a result of technical assistance and services
- Change in quality of early education classrooms
- Percent enrollment of prekindergarten teachers in coursework leading to a two-year or higher degree in ECE, or a related field

The Department requires all grantees to annually report on applicable **Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA)** measures. The relevant measures for the Professional Development for Prekindergarten Teachers program include:

- (1) Percentage of early education workforce with two-year or higher degree in ECE or a related field providing high quality instruction.
- (2) Percentage of prekindergarten children enrolled in high quality classrooms.