

SUMMARY of the PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT GRANTS PROGRAM

On May 5th, the US Departments of Education and Health and Human Services released a Request for Public Comment on the Preschool Development Grant Program.

Program Description

The Preschool Development Grants competition supports States to (1) build or enhance a preschool program infrastructure that would enable the delivery of high-quality preschool services to children, and (2) expand high-quality preschool programs in targeted communities that would serve as models for expanding preschool to all 4-year-olds from low- and moderate-income families. These grants would lay the groundwork to ensure that more states are ready to participate in the Preschool for All formula grant initiative proposed by the Obama Administration.

Two types of grants are available: 1) Development Grants (\$90m) for states with small or no existing state run prekindergarten program and 2) Expansion Grants (\$160m) for states that have won an Early Learning Challenge Grant or who have large prekindergarten programs. New York State is eligible for a \$25 million grant under the Expansion Grant portion of this program. Funding is for one year, but the intent is that funding would be allocated for an additional three years resulting in \$100 million over the four-year period.

The majority of grant funds (90%) must be used to implement high-quality preschool programs for 4-year old children. The remaining 10 percent can be used to enhance the State-Funded Preschool Program, including but not limited to monitoring and evaluation and other quality enhancing activities.

States will need to meet several requirements including demonstrating “Commitment to State-Funded Preschool Programs,” which is describes as “The extent to which the State has demonstrated commitment to and investment in State-Funded Preschool Programs for Eligible Children, as evidenced by—

- (1) State Early Learning and Development Standards;
- (2) The State’s financial investment and number of children, including Eligible Children, served in State-Funded Preschool Programs over the last four years, including the amount of these investments in relation to the size of the State’s population of Eligible Children during this time period;
- (3) Pending and enacted legislation, policies, and/or practices, which demonstrate the State’s current and future commitment to increasing access to High-Quality Preschool Programs for Eligible Children;
- (4) The quality of existing State-Funded Preschool Programs, as evidenced by policies and program data that demonstrate the State’s commitment to the components of a High-Quality Preschool Program, complying with Program Standards, and providing support for program monitoring

and improvement, which may be accomplished through the use of a Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (TQRIS); and

- (5) The State's coordination of preschool programs and services, in partnership with its Early Learning Advisory Council, with other State and Federal resources that may be used to serve preschool-aged children, including, if applicable, programs and services supported by Title I of the ESEA, Part C and Part B, Section 619 of IDEA, the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.), and the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.)."

Timeline

The RFP is expected to be released sometime during the summer 2014 with applications due in the fall 2014. Awards are expected in December 2014.