

## Attachment A

### Early Childhood Education Expansion Program Requirements State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2015 Office of Early Learning and School Readiness Ohio Department of Education

#### PURPOSE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

The early childhood education program will provide funding for high-quality early learning services to eligible preschool-aged children through full and part day center-based programs. Selected applicants will provide early education, parent support and linkages to health, social and nutrition services as required by Ohio's Early Learning Program Standards. These program standards will be utilized and monitored through Step Up To Quality, Ohio's tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. Information regarding these program standards and information on SUTQ can be found at [www.earlychildhoodohio.org](http://www.earlychildhoodohio.org)

#### SOURCE OF FUNDS

Funding for the early childhood education program is state general revenue funds (GRF). Funding for the early childhood education expansion program will provide programming for up to 2,940 additional children in Fiscal Year 2015 at \$4,000 per child/slot. Currently there are already 8,150 children funded statewide. With the additional funds, a total of 11,090 children will be funded through this program in Fiscal Year 2015.

#### PROVIDER ELIGIBILITY

Eligible providers must be located within the boundary of a targeted school district and be one of the following as of February 1, 2014:

- a) An existing early childhood education entitlement grantee licensed by the Ohio Department of Education in accordance with Chapter 3301 of the Ohio Revised Code.
- b) An entity operating a child care program licensed by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services that has at least a 3-, 4- or 5-star rating through Step Up To Quality, Ohio's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.
- c) An Ohio Department of Education licensed preschool or chartered nonpublic school, in accordance with Chapter 3301 of the Ohio Revised Code that meets the original requirements of the early childhood education program by July 1, 2014.

#### ELIGIBLE CHILDREN

##### Child Eligibility - Priority Placed on Serving New Children

These funds must be used to provide preschool to economically disadvantaged children who are not currently receiving, or are not eligible to receive, preschool services from other local, state or federally funded preschool programs. Eligibility criteria includes the following:

- Children who are at least three years of age as of the district entry date for kindergarten, are not of the age to be eligible for kindergarten as defined in Ohio Revised Code 3321.01.
- Family income falls below 200 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL).
- Children who are not receiving publicly funded preschool services, whether from Head Start, ODJFS, preschool special education, or local funds.
- Eligibility will be determined by providers.

## PROVIDER REQUIREMENTS FOR PROGRAM

### The following are program requirements:

- Provide minimum of 12.5 hours of service per week or has a department-approved waiver for an alternative schedule.
  - For any provider for which the 12.5 hours per week schedule creates a hardship or for which the provider shows evidence that the provider is working in collaboration with a preschool special education program, the provider may submit a waiver to the department requesting an alternate schedule. If the department approves a waiver for an alternate schedule that provides services for less time than the standard early childhood education schedule, the department may reduce the provider's annual allocation proportionately. Under no circumstances shall an annual allocation be increased because of the approval of an alternate schedule.
  - A program may arrange to serve children through a.m./p.m. or full-day/part-day options as long as each child receives 12.5 hours of instruction per week.
- Provide services for the minimum school year as defined in Ohio Revised Code 3313.48, which is 455 hours.
- Programs may not add a new site that would require a new license by the Ohio Department of Education or Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. Children must be served in an already existing and licensed site that is highly rated in Step Up To Quality, an existing early childhood education grantee site, or an ODE licensed preschool or chartered non-public school.
- Programs may partner and subcontract with entities to provide services as long as subcontractors meet all requirements outlined within this document including: licensure by the Ohio Department of Education or Ohio Department of Job and Family Services; meeting requirements specific to the license type for quality (see within this document); and considered an eligible provider within the school district boundary (as defined in Attachment C Early Childhood Education Expansion Funding Distribution FY2015).
- ODJFS licensed early learning and development programs that submitted a Step Up To Quality registration, to be initially rated a 3, 4 or 5 star or to increase a current rating to 3, 4 or 5 stars, and all required documentation by February 15, 2014, will be notified as eligible providers for this program. However, they will be held in a pending ECE expansion grant award status until the conclusion of the on-site verification visit. All inspections will be completed by ODJFS prior to ODE making final decisions on the ECE expansion for the 14-15 school year. All pending eligible providers should complete the application fully, under the assumption that a star-rating of a 3, 4 or 5 may be achieved. If a program does not achieve a 3, 4 or 5 star rating, they will no longer be considered eligible for the ECE expansion slots.
- Requirements specific to license type:
  - **Ohio Department of Education licensed programs:** If the early childhood education program is licensed by the department and is not yet highly rated in Step Up To Quality, the program shall do all of the following:
    - Meet teacher qualifications prescribed by section 3301.311 of the Ohio Revised Code which requires that 50 percent of teachers must have an associate's degree in early childhood education or approved related field, and 50 percent of teachers must have a bachelor's degrees in early childhood education or approved related field.
    - Align curriculum to Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards (birth to kindergarten entry) in all domains of school readiness.
    - Meet any child or program assessment requirements prescribed by the department.
      - Program will be required to assess participating children using Ohio's new child assessment system which will be available beginning in 2014-15 school year. Program will be required to report program, teacher and budget information using a designated ODE data system.

- Require teachers and assistant teachers, except teachers enrolled and working to obtain a degree pursuant to section 3301.311 of the Revised Code, to attend a minimum of 20 hours every two years of professional development as prescribed by the department.
- Document and report child progress as prescribed by the department.
- Meet and report compliance with Ohio Early Learning Program Standards as prescribed by the Department. Note that Ohio Early Learning Program Standards are measured using Step Up To Quality. The Standards can be found at the [www.earlychildhoodohio.org](http://www.earlychildhoodohio.org) website.
  - All early childhood education programs will be phased in Step Up To Quality to determine compliance with these Standards. If programs have not yet been phased in to receive a rating, programs will be asked to complete documentation to determine compliance.
- Participate in Step Up To Quality.
- **Ohio Department of Job and Family Services licensed programs:** If the program is highly rated in Step Up To Quality, the program shall comply with the requirements of that system, and maintain a 3-, 4-, or 5-star rating for the entire grant award period.
  - Programs maintain fiscal control and accounting procedures to ensure the disbursement of and accounting for these funds.
  - Programs must develop a process to verify eligibility for the program. All applications must be maintained by the program and available for monitoring by the department.
  - Children from families whose income is at 100 percent of the federal poverty level or below attend tuition-free. Children from families whose income is between 101 percent and 200 percent of the federal poverty level attend on a prorated tuition basis. Once a program has enrolled the number of children for which the grant was funded (funded number), children from families whose income is above 200 percent of the federal poverty level may be enrolled on a tuition basis. Note: All children included in the “funded number” must be from families who earn no more than 200 percent of the federal poverty level with the exception of children with disabilities.
  - Programs must report student, teacher and program information as required by the Ohio Department of Education using the data systems established by the Department. Programs must ensure all appropriate staff members register for and gain access to information systems as required by the Department.
  - All program requirements may be monitored at any time by the Department. Programs must comply with all monitoring procedures as outlined by the Department.