



Department
of Education

John R. Kasich, Governor
Michael L. Sawyers, Acting Superintendent of Public Instruction

October 9, 2012

Jacqueline Jones, Ph.D
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy and Early Learning
US Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Dr. Jones:

The Ohio Department of Education's (ODE) Office of Early Learning & School Readiness (OELSR) is requesting a Tydings Waiver to expend remaining Even Start funds available in our state.

Due to the Even Start program coming to an end at the federal level, ODE began closing the Even Start program in Ohio over one year ago. Where we funded seven local grants in the past year, ODE's intention was to close the grant programs at these local sites as well. Over the life of the Even Start grant, ODE has not lapsed grant funds, but has worked diligently to ensure all of the oldest funds were expended before newer grant funds were expended each year. The funds that now remain at ODE for Even Start are the result of an accumulation of unspent funds over the life of the grant that were identified just prior to the last year of the grant.

After discussions with US Department of Education and other officials at ODE, it has been determined that it would benefit local programs if we can extend the grant to local programs through September 2013. Therefore ODE is seeking a Tydings Waiver to extend the programs that are able to continue the full program at the local level.

In Ohio we have most recently funded Even Start programs that are still operating with reduced services due to the reduction of the funds at the federal level. These programs are the programs that still have the space, staffing, and capacity to implement the program. These programs are the targeted grantees for the additional waiver year of services in Ohio. With the additional funding, the programs will be able to operate a full Even Start program including interactive literacy activities between parents and their children, parent literacy participation that leads to economic self-sufficiency, an age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences and training for parents regarding how to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in their child's education.

We have contacted local programs that are still operating their program and out of the five programs still operating out of the seven funded last year, three have indicated they would be able to continue the full program at the local level. The following three potential programs expect to expend the following amounts through September 30, 2013 if this waiver is approved. In addition, a budget for professional development has been added and the total budget request below.

Total Budget:

Kettering City Schools: \$352,000
Springfield City Schools: \$83,000
South Central Ohio Educational Service Center: \$480,000
Professional Development: \$20,000
Total Request: \$935,000

ODE will administer and provide technical assistance for the grant through the assigned Even Start state coordinator who will be assigned and funded 30 percent of a full-time equivalent position. ODE will cover this amount.

In order to ensure the programs effectively implement the program and expend the allocated funds if the waiver is approved, ODE's assigned Even Start state coordinator will require the local programs to submit a budget and claim their funds on a monthly basis over the course of the year. In addition, the Even Start state coordinator will monitor the fiscal expenditures in conjunction with the fiscal office to ensure we are monitoring expenditures and remaining funds. Finally, the Even Start state coordinator will have monthly phone meetings with local programs to monitor the local program expenditures and program activity.

Ohio is requesting a waiver for programs to begin in Fall of 2012 and continue until September 30, 2013. This would give almost a full program year for the parents and children of the Even Start communities to reap the benefits of this comprehensive quality program.

Thank you for your consideration of this waiver. I look forward to the possibility of using the designated Ohio Even Start funds to full potential. Please feel free to contact me by phone (614-995-3449) or by email (stephanie.siddens@education.ohio.gov).

Sincerely,



Stephanie Siddens, PhD., Director
Office of Early Learning and School Readiness