Attachment A: Early Childhood Education Grants Program Requirements

**Fiscal Year 2018 (July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018)
Office of Early Learning and School Readiness**

PURPOSE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

The Early Childhood Education grants provide funding for high-quality early learning services to eligible children. Grantees 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 are utilized and monitored through Step Up To Quality, Ohio's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. Information regarding these program standards and information on Step Up To Quality is available at earlychildhoodohio.org.

SOURCE OF FUNDS

Funding for the Early Childhood Education grant is state general revenue funds (GRF) and casino settlement funds (CSF). Funding for the Early Childhood Education grant program will provide programming for up to 17,913 children in State Fiscal Year 2018 at $4,000 per child/slot. Please note that during this application period there are a total of 1,200 slots currently available statewide for allocation in 2017-2018.

PROVIDER ELIGIBILITY

Eligible providers must be located within the boundary of a targeted school district and be one of the following:
- Ohio Department of Job and Family Services licensed programs that are highly rated or recommended for rating at the three star level or above on or before June 30, 2017;
- ODE licensed programs that are highly rated in SUTQ (3, 4, 5 stars)
- Ohio Department of Education-licensed preschools that are not yet rated in SUTQ must meet the original early childhood education requirements as outlined in House Bill 49, Section 265.10:
    - Meet teacher qualification requirements prescribed by section 3301.311 of the Revised Code which is 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 degree 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;
    - Complete Ohio's Early Learning Assessment 10 required Learning Progressions on all Early Childhood Education funded children;
    - Require teachers, except teachers enrolled and working to obtain a degree pursuant to section 3301.311 of the Revised Code, to attend a minimum of twenty 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's early learning program standards as prescribed by the Department; and
    - Participate in the Step Up To Quality program established pursuant to section 5104.29 of the Revised Code

- Community schools eligible to become licensed as outlined and set forth in House Bill 49, Section 265.10. Community schools eligibility criteria can be found here.

  Note: All Department of Education-licensed programs not yet rated at a three-star level or above must submit an application to be highly-rated (three-, four-, or five-star rated) within 30 days of grant award, and must be recommended to be highly-rated). Programs that do not meet this timeline, or those that are unable to become highly-rated, are subject to reduction or reallocation of their funds to another eligible program.

ELIGIBLE CHILDREN

These funds will be used to provide preschool to economically disadvantaged children. These requirements apply to currently funded grantees, as well as those applying for new or additional slots.

Child eligibility criteria for FY18 include the following:
- Children are eligible for this program if they are at least four years of age;
- Family income falls at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level;
- Children with an Individualized Education Program and where the Early Childhood Education program is the least restrictive environment may be enrolled on their fourth birthday;
- Eligible children may receive other funding sources, including publicly funded child care, to extend the day beyond the required 12.5 hours per week;
- Eligibility will be determined by the provider.

PROVIDER REQUIREMENTS FOR PROGRAM

The following are program requirements:
- Provide a 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. Programs must reapply for this waiver annually. A copy of the waiver can be found here.
  - Note that 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;
- Note that 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 unless the program is a community school that only became eligible for licensure in 2016. Children must be served in an already existing and licensed site that is highly rated (three-, four-, or five-star) in Step Up To Quality; or an Ohio Department of Education-licensed preschool that meets the original requirements as outlined in House Bill 49, Section 265.10 (see Provider Eligibility above);
- If the program is highly rated in Step Up To Quality, the program shall comply with the requirements of that system and maintain a three-, four- or five-star star rating for the entire grant award period.

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

- Program maintains fiscal control and accounting procedures to ensure the accurate accounting for and proper disbursement of funds. Funds are based on a per child allocation of $4,000 and must be drawn down based on the number of children enrolled in the program. Funds will only be used for allowable expenses covered under the grant. Expenses will be charged to the grant based on the number of Early Childhood Education funded children who benefit from the expense versus the total number of children who benefit from the expense. This is necessary to ensure that the Early Childhood Education grant is only charged its share of expenditures in programs with multiple funding streams.
- Children from families whose income is at or below 100 percent of the federal poverty level attend tuition-free. Children from families whose income is between 101 percent and 200 percent of the federal poverty level may attend on a prorated tuition basis. Please 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 are monitored by the department. Programs must comply with all monitoring procedures as outlined by the department; and
- Programs must use the common application developed by the Ohio Department of Education and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services when determining child eligibility. All applications must be maintained by the program and available upon request by the department.