

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Overview

Provides funding for early childhood community hub planning and implementation grants and prekindergarten through grade 3 program grants and expands MDE's voluntary developmental assessment administered to entering kindergartners.

Section

1 Early childhood community hub planning and implementation grants.

Subd. 1. Establishment. (a) Establishes a three-year grant program for school districts and tribal schools to increase children's school readiness through: collaboration between service providers and schools; information and education for young parents; kindergarten transition services; and comprehensive care and education programs for disadvantaged children and their families.

(b) Requires recipients to use grants to plan and implement a locally-based early childhood community hub that promotes children's school readiness from 0 to K by providing access to early care and education support services. Requires a school administrator to direct the community collaboration.

Subd. 2. Eligibility. (a) Requires applicants to develop a collaboration plan among early childhood providers and to pursue opportunities to work with neighboring charter schools. Makes 70 percent of grant funds available to applicants where 50

percent or more of enrolled children are eligible for a free or reduced price lunch.

(b) Directs the education commissioner to determine whether an applicant's student population is sufficiently large to serve as a hub.

Subd. 3. Program components. Requires grant recipients to: administer a developmental assessment; involve the community in developing a plan to improve children's school readiness; provide parents and providers with activities that promote children's health; provide transition activities; help parents obtain culturally appropriate information and parenting skills and link families to early childhood and family education programs; link families with the child care resource and referral system; provide professional development activities to education and child care providers; help develop accurate counts of resident children; develop and implement an evaluation plan; assign children an unduplicated MARRS number; and develop partnerships and collaboration among school districts' programs.

Subd. 4. Grant application process. Requires interested school districts and tribal schools to apply to the education commissioner and to: describe the applicant's characteristics and community needs and children and families' school readiness status; include a letter of intent indicating the ability agencies and organizations to collaborate on school readiness services; describe how the applicant will use local resources to coordinate the early childhood community hub; describe how the applicant will implement program components and ensure that children and families receive needed services; describe the community services the applicant will provide; indicate available matching funds; and provide other information.

Subd. 5. Staff qualifications. Requires a qualified person to coordinate the hub program.

Subd. 6. Match. Requires a grant recipient to provide a 15 percent local match.

Subd. 7. Advisory committee. Requires an early childhood community hub to have an advisory committee.

Subd. 8. Reviewing applications; awarding grants. Allows the education commissioner to award up to 20 grants. Requires grant recipients to use the grant money to implement this program.

Makes this section effective July 1, 2007.

2 **Prekindergarten through grade 3 program grants.**

Subd. 1. Establishment. Establishes a multi-year competitive grant program to develop community-based prekindergarten through grade 3 programs in public school collaborative settings that promote children's school readiness and future school success. Makes 70 percent of grant funds available to applicants where 50 percent or more of enrolled children are eligible for a free or reduced price lunch.

Subd. 2. Program components. Requires grant recipients to: provide high quality prekindergarten programming; provide all-day kindergarten; align kindergarten through grade 3 standards, curriculum and assessments; provide ongoing professional development and sufficient planning time; require a qualified supervisor for early childhood classrooms, obtain training for providers, and require family child care providers to obtain an associate's degree; coordinate prekindergarten through grade 3 programs; implement small class sizes; provide meaningful transition activities; promote parent involvement; provide accountability; and provide or make referrals to social service providers.

Subd. 3. Eligibility. Allows school districts, tribal schools and charter schools to apply for a grant. Makes 70 percent of grant funds available to applicants where 50 percent or more of enrolled children are eligible for a free or reduced price lunch.

Subd. 4. Grant application process. Requires applicants to apply to the education commissioner and to: describe the applicant's characteristics; propose a work plan; indicate available matching funds; and describe the applicant's efforts to collaborate.

Subd. 5. Match. Requires recipients to provide a 15 percent local match.

Subd. 6. Reviewing applications; awarding grants. Allows the education commissioner to award up to 20 grants. Requires grant recipients to use the grant money to implement this program.

Makes this section effective July 1, 2007.

3 Expanding MDE developmental assessment administered to entering kindergartners.

Subd. 1. Establishment. Directs the education commissioner to expand the developmental assessment that school districts voluntarily administer to entering kindergartners and to set biennial milestones for measuring children's progress.

Subd. 2. Description. Encourages school districts to implement the voluntary school readiness kindergarten assessment according to a specified timeline.

Makes this section effective July 1, 2007.

4 Appropriation.

Subd. 1. Department of education. Appropriates money from the general fund to the education department in the fiscal years designated.

Subd. 2. Early childhood community hub grants. Appropriates \$5,000,000 in fiscal year 2008 and \$5,000,000 in fiscal year 2009 for the early childhood community hub grants.

Subd. 3. Prekindergarten through grade 3 program grants. Appropriates \$5,000,000 in fiscal year 2008 and \$5,000,000 in fiscal year 2009 for the prekindergarten through grade 3 program grants.

Makes this section effective July 1, 2007.