



THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20201

MAY 11 2009

The Honorable Bob Riley
Governor of Alabama
Montgomery, AL 36130-2751

Dear Governor Riley:

As you know, multiple funding streams for early childhood education and care present both genuine challenges and great opportunities for serving our young children and their families. The Administration is deeply committed to working with you to create a framework for effective collaboration at the Federal, State, and local levels to enable key partners to create a cohesive system to meet the needs of our young children and families.

Consequently, I am writing today with more information on the funding available under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) to help strengthen statewide coordination and collaboration among the wide range of early childhood programs and services in the State, including child care, Head Start, Early Head Start, IDEA preschool and infants and families programs, pre-kindergarten, and other early childhood care and education programs. As our Department announced on April 2, 2009, we are providing \$100 million in Head Start ARRA funds to states to establish advisory councils on early childhood education and care. The one-time startup allocation available for your State for the three-year grant period is \$1,797,985.

At the Federal level, the White House, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and the U.S. Department of Education are collaborating on early education and care programs overseen by different federal agencies and offices, including the new activities authorized under ARRA. The Administration is committed to fostering interagency efforts to improve the coordination, planning, and implementation of federal programs relating to early learning and child development.

At the State level, the State Advisory Councils on Early Childhood Education and Care will play a key role in planning better coordinated systems, facilitating working relationships among essential partners, and moving towards integrated delivery of services to young children and families. Under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, funds are for the first time available to Governors to carry out activities of the councils. States, if they have not already done so, have an exceptional opportunity to begin developing plans for better coordinated systems of early childhood education and care.

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The enclosed document provides more information on how your state may take advantage of this funding. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Paul Dioguardi, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, at paul.dioguardi@hhs.gov or (202) 690-6060. For any questions regarding the State Advisory Council or the requirements for preparing and submitting the application, please have your staff contact Patricia Brown, Acting Director of the Office of Head Start at (202) 205-8573.

We look forward to a continuing partnership with you on behalf of the children and families of your State.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kathleen Sebelius', with a horizontal line drawn across the middle of the signature.

Kathleen Sebelius

Enclosure