

**AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT (ARRA) HEAD START FUNDS
FOR STATE ADVISORY COUNCILS ON EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND
CARE**

Section 642 B(b)(1)(A)(i) of the Head Start Act, 42 USC 9837B(B)(1)(A)(i), which was added by The Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007, requires the Governor of each "State" as defined in Section 637.25 to designate or establish a council to serve as the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care for children from birth to school entry (referred to as State Advisory Councils). The overall responsibility of the State Advisory Council will be to lead the development or enhancement of a high-quality, comprehensive system of early childhood development and care that ensures statewide coordination and collaboration among the wide range of early childhood programs and services in the State, including child care, Head Start, IDEA preschool and infants and families programs, and pre-kindergarten programs and services. The full text of the Act is available on the Office of Head Start's web site at www.eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov.

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) is soliciting applications from eligible States for grants to carry out the activities of the State Advisory Council. ACF is working in consultation with the U.S. Department of Education in the development of the State Advisory Council program. To be eligible to receive a grant, a State must prepare and submit an application for a three-year period that meets the requirements specified in the Act and includes the following with the application:

- A statewide strategic report addressing the activities of the Advisory Council.
- A description, for each fiscal year, of how the State will make effective use of funds available to facilitate the development or enhancement of high-quality systems of early childhood education and care designed to improve school preparedness by developing or enhancing programs and activities consistent with the statewide strategic plan.
- A description of the State early learning standards and the State's goals for increasing the number of children entering kindergarten ready to learn.
- Information identifying the agency or joint interagency office, and the individual designated by the Governor to coordinate the activities of the State Advisory Council.
- A description of how the State plans to sustain activities under paragraph (b) of Section 642B beyond the grant period.

The one-time, startup allocation available for Alabama for the three-year grant period is \$1,797,985. A grant will be awarded based on the following criteria:

- The Governor shall designate or establish a council to serve as the State Advisory Council for children from birth to school entry.

- The Governor may designate an existing entity in the State to serve as the State Advisory Council.
- The Governor shall designate an individual to coordinate the activities of the State Advisory Council.
- The Governor shall ensure, to the extent possible, that the membership of the State Advisory Council includes the representatives specified in Section 642B(b)(1)(C) of the Act.

Members of the Council shall include:

- A representative of the State agency responsible for child care;
- A representative of the State educational agency;
- A representative of local educational agencies;
- A representative of institutions of higher education in the State;
- A representative of local providers of early childhood education and development services;
- A representative from Head Start agencies located in the State, including migrant and seasonal Head Start programs and Indian Head Start programs;
- The State Director of Head Start Collaboration;
- A representative of the State agency responsible for programs under section 619 or part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Act;
- A representative of the State agency responsible for health or mental health care; and
- Representatives of other entities determined relevant by the Governor.

States are required to meet a non-Federal share of 70 percent of the total approved cost of the project. The non-Federal share may be met by cash or in-kind contributions. There is no waiver authority of this requirement for these grants. HHS appreciates that for some states this may be a significant obstacle and encourages states to look for appropriate sources of this non-federal share, including but not limited to investments in early childhood education and development programs, professional development of the early childhood workforce, 'in-kind' contributions of real property, equipment and supplies as well as services, fairly valued, provided by State employees, consultants and Advisory Committee members with direct and tangible benefits for the State Advisory Council program.

More information on what will need to be included in this funding application and the standard forms may be found at <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc>. Applications must be received no later than August 1, 2010.

This grant opportunity is being made available under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) (P.L. 111-5). States will be subject to reporting requirements consistent with the ARRA and with current administrative requirements for grants to States and other applicable requirements. More information on these requirements will be forthcoming. More information on ARRA can be found at <http://www.hhs.gov/recovery>.

The ARRA included a significant expansion of federal programs supporting the early learning and development of children, including additional resources for Head Start, Early Head Start, the Child Care Development Fund, Title I education for the disadvantaged, and the IDEA preschool and infants and families program. President Obama's FY 2010 budget also includes plans for a new Early Learning Challenge Grant program to help states develop and implement statewide systems of integrated, high-quality early learning supports and services for children, and reward states that promote a high standard of quality across all publicly funded early learning programs, from birth through age 5. The Administration's proposal builds upon the work initiated by the State Advisory Councils, and encourages states to raise the bar on the quality of early education and drive improvements across multiple federal, state, and local funding streams.

If you have questions regarding the State Advisory Council or the requirements for preparing and submitting the application, please call Pat Brown, Acting Director of the Office of Head Start at (202) 205-8573.