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Increasing Access to High-Quality Early Childhood Education in Connecticut

The President believes we need to equip every child with the skills and education they need to be on a clear path to a good job and the middle class. That education has to start in the earliest possible years to prepare our children for later success in school and in life. To ensure these opportunities are available to all, President Obama has put forward a comprehensive early learning proposal to build a strong foundation for success in the first five years of life. These investments – made in partnership with States and fully paid for in the President’s budget – will help close America’s school readiness gap and ensure that America’s children enter kindergarten ready to succeed:

- ***Providing High-Quality Preschool for All.*** In partnership with the States, President Obama’s Preschool for All proposal would provide every four-year-old child with access to high-quality preschool, while also incentivizing States to adopt full-day kindergarten policies. Providing a year of free, public preschool for every child is an important investment in our nation’s future, providing our children the best start in life while helping hard-working families save thousands each year in costs associated with early care and education. This proposal would invest \$75 billion over 10 years without adding a dime to the deficit.

Under the President’s proposal, Connecticut is estimated to receive \$21,900,000 in the first year it participates in the Preschool for All program. This funding, combined with an initial estimated state match of \$2,200,000, would serve about 2,675 children from low- and moderate-income families in the first year of the program alone.*

- ***Investing in High-Quality Infant and Toddler Care.*** In order to increase high-quality early learning opportunities in the years before preschool, a new \$1.4 billion competitive Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership grant program would support communities that expand the availability of early learning opportunities with child care providers that meet high Early Head Start quality standards, growing the supply of high-quality child care for children from birth through age 3.

About 4,466 children in Connecticut from birth to age three are currently served by the Child Care and Development Block Grant. Through Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships, more of these children will have access to high quality early care and education.

- ***Expanding Effective Parent and Family Support.*** Quality education begins at home as parents support their child’s learning and development. As part of a comprehensive early learning agenda, the President proposes \$15 billion over 10 years to extend and expand voluntary home visiting programs. These programs allow nurses, social workers, parent educators, and other professionals to connect families to services, supports, and tools that positively impact the health, development, and education of their children.

Under the President’s proposal, Connecticut is estimated to receive \$6,900,000 in the first year it participates in the expanded Home Visiting program. Each year, 8,286 low-income mothers in Connecticut give birth to a new baby and may benefit from these voluntary services.**

* These figures estimate the funds a State could receive in the first year if it chooses to participate in the Preschool for All program. The estimate is based on the State’s current population of four-year-olds in families at or below the 200 percent federal poverty level. Estimates will vary based on the scope of the State’s preschool expansion and the cost of providing high-quality preschool services.

This estimate assumes that States will expand to 20 percent of their eligible four-year-olds in the first year at a per child cost of \$9,000 a year. The federal share of the total cost is calculated at 90 percent, which is the regular match rate the State would receive in the first year. Please note that this estimate is designed to be illustrative only and does not attempt to represent how the Department of Education would determine actual first year awards.

** This figure estimates the funds a State could receive in the first year of an expanded Home Visiting program. The estimate assumes \$15 billion of total funding over 10 years and assumes the same proportion of total funding is allocated for statutory set-asides, formula and competitive grants as in FY 2012 and States received an equal amount of competitive funding. Please note that this estimate is designed to be illustrative only and does not attempt to represent actual first year awards. The methodology and criteria for funding allocations beyond FY 2014 has not yet been determined.