

INVESTING IN EARLY LEARNING

President Obama is committed to an early learning agenda that will ensure that all children enter kindergarten ready to succeed in school and in life. A robust body of research demonstrates that high-quality early learning programs and services can improve young children's health, social-emotional, and cognitive outcomes; enhance school readiness; and help close the school readiness gaps that exist between children with high needs and their peers.

To help all children begin school on a level playing field, the Administration is continuing to work to expand access to high-quality early learning programs. The President's 2014 budget request includes a historic new investment in preschool education that supports universal access for all four-year olds from low-income and moderate-income families through a partnership with the States. The Administration will continue to administer the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge program and will work to disseminate the lessons learned by grantee States to support the implementation of early learning reform across the Nation. The Administration also requests funding to increase or maintain key investments in a number of programs that seek to improve outcomes for young children, especially for those with high needs:

- **Preschool for All (\$75 billion over 10 years).** This investment would support grants to States for the implementation of high-quality preschool programs. The Department would share costs with States to provide universal access to high-quality preschool for children from low- and moderate-income families and provide incentives for States to serve additional middle-class families.
- **Preschool Development Grants (\$750 million).** This program would provide grants to States to carry out activities that would build state capacity for implementing high-quality preschool programs, and expand model programs at the local level. The Department would provide competitive grants to States with preschool systems at various stages of development that are planning to provide universal access to high-quality preschool for four-year-old children from low- and moderate-income families to carry out the activities needed to successfully implement the Preschool for All program.
- **Early Intervention Programs for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities (\$463 million).** These formula grants help States implement statewide systems of early intervention services for all eligible children with disabilities and developmental delays from birth through age two and their families.
- **Preschool Grants for Children with Disabilities (\$373 million).** These formula grants help States make a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment available to all children with disabilities ages three through five to help ensure that young children with disabilities succeed in school.

- **Promise Neighborhoods (\$300 million).** This program supports projects that significantly improve the educational and developmental outcomes of children by providing a birth-to-career continuum of rigorous and comprehensive education reforms, effective community services, and strong systems of family and community support – with high quality schools at the center. The Secretary may give priority to applicants that propose to expand, enhance, or modify an existing network of early learning programs and services to ensure that they are high-quality and comprehensive for children from birth through the third grade.
- **Effective Teaching and Learning for Literacy (\$187 million).** This program would provide competitive grants to State education agencies, alone or in partnership with other entities, in order to improve comprehensive State and local efforts aimed at improving literacy instruction, especially in high-need schools for children and youth from preschool through grade 12.

In addition, the Department is proposing investments in programs that can be used to improve the outcomes for young children and lay the foundation for school success. Funds from the following programs may be spent on children from birth through third grade:

- **College- and Career-Ready Students (\$14.5 billion)** (formerly Title I Grants to local education agencies). Since the enactment of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in 1965, Title I funds have been available to provide services to eligible children birth to school entry. The Administration encourages districts and schools to use existing flexibility to invest Title I funds in high-quality preschool programs for eligible children, joint professional development for school staff and the early learning workforce, and coordination with early learning programs and services. In October 2012, the Department published non-regulatory guidance to assist states and local school districts in using Title I, Part A funds to implement high-quality preschool programs.
- **School Turnaround Grants (\$659 million).** This program provides support to States and districts as they implement rigorous interventions in their persistently lowest-performing schools. The Administration believes that implementing a high-quality preschool program that is designed to improve the cognitive, health, and social-emotional outcomes for children with high needs can be an important element of school reform.

Additional investments for young children include:

- 21st Century Community Learning Centers (\$1.25 billion)
- Assessing Achievement (\$389 million)
- Effective Teaching and Learning for a Complete Education (\$75 million)
- English Learner Education (\$732 million)

- Excellent Instructional Teams programs (\$2.5 billion)
- IDEA Grants to States (\$11.6 billion)
- Indian Education - Demonstration Grants for Indian Children (\$10.7 million)
- Indian Education - Professional Development Grants (\$8.1 million)
- Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems Grant program (\$85 million)
- Successful, Safe, and Healthy Students (\$280 million)

The Department of Health and Human Services is also investing in young children by requesting significant increases in funding for the following programs:

- **Head Start (\$9.6 billion).** The program would continue to provide grants to local public and private non-profit and for-profit agencies to promote school readiness by enhancing the social and cognitive development of children through the provision of educational, health, nutritional, social and other services to disadvantaged children and families. This request allows the program to continue serving approximately 962,000 of our nation's most vulnerable children and families and minimizes the potential for service disruptions in the transition from incumbent grantees to new grantees under the Designation Renewal System. This level includes \$1.4 billion for Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships and \$200 million for a COLA increase and transition grants to implement recompetition.
- **Early Head Start – Child Care Partnerships (\$1.4 billion).** Competitive grants would be provided to States, local governments, public and private non-profits, and for-profit agencies to partner with child care providers to provide high-quality early childhood development services that is full-day and full-year to meet the needs of working families. Applicants would be evaluated based on the extent to which they partner with child care providers in their communities, especially those caring for Early Head Start eligible children receiving a subsidy through the Child Care and Development Fund.
- **Child Care and Development Fund (\$5.8 billion).** These funds support formula grants to States for child care subsidies for low-income families who are working. This request would allow the Administration to continue to maintain child care for 1.4 million children, improve the quality of care, and support state systems that empower parents to select high-quality care.
- **Voluntary home visiting services (\$15 billion over 10 years).** Home visiting programs have been shown to improve maternal and child health outcomes in the early years; leave long-lasting, positive impacts on parental skills; and enhance children's cognitive, language, and social-emotional development and school readiness. The President proposes a long-term \$15 billion investment in home visiting services beginning in FY 2015.
- **A new Child Care Quality Initiative (\$200 million).** This program would provide competitive grants to states to raise the bar on child care quality through improved

standards, monitoring, and transparency. Funds would be available to states with the most effective applications in key areas like implementing Quality Rating Improvement Systems and other systems of quality indicators to provide all parents with better and more transparent information about the quality of child care in their communities; raising standards to improve monitoring and oversight of child care providers; and implementing more evidence-based professional development systems focused on improved classroom practice, teacher-child interaction, and better implementation of curricula.