

## ABSTRACT

With Missouri's strong history and foundation for quality early learning supported by a broad coalition of partners, Missouri is well-positioned to make significant advances in early childhood education.

### **Absolute Priority**

While there are families with high-need in every community, for the Preschool Development Grant, we have identified those areas of Missouri with the most concentrated need. Through our identification process and estimate of needs, nearly 2,000 additional children located throughout Missouri in both rural and urban settings could be served in high-quality preschool.

### **Competitive Priorities**

- 1) *Matching Funds*. We will use the \$12,315,317 appropriated for the Missouri Preschool Program (MPP) in FY2015 as the state match for the Preschool Development Grant.
- 2) *Birth through Third Grade Continuum*. Missouri has recently revised early learning standards, known as the Missouri Early Learning Goals, that are aligned with the State's K-12 standards and endorsed by the State Board of Education.
- 3) *Expansion of the State Preschool Program*. We anticipate serving an additional 1,976 four-year-olds per year in high-quality preschool programs through the MPP program structure which has a monitoring and evaluation protocol designed to ensure high-quality. Building upon the foundation of MPP, we can incorporate additional program enhancements, partnerships, and quality assurances to extend the opportunity for high-quality preschool to our high-need communities.

In addition, to improve the State preschool program infrastructure, we have identified five projects that will provide direct support to teachers and children, increase the breadth and quality of early learning data in Missouri's longitudinal data system, and inform program decisions as well as future research and policy decisions. Missouri has set ambitious goals for increasing access to high-quality preschool and strengthening the State preschool program infrastructure that we are confident we can achieve.