



from the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee
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Grants available to SC school districts focused on four-year old kindergarten quality

Editor's Note: The grant application is located online at <http://tinyurl.com/p4m35yd>. Districts intending to apply should contact Bunnie Ward, bward@eoc.sc.gov, by October 2. There will be an informational conference call on October 5, 2015.

Columbia – Today, school districts received an invitation to apply for the South Carolina Community Block Grant for Education Pilot Program, a matching grants program designed to encourage sustainable partnerships among South Carolina school districts and community groups. Proviso 1.78 of the 2015-16 General Appropriations Act created the program, which is focused on “improving children’s readiness for kindergarten by enhancing the quality of state-funded full day 4K programs and instruction.”

“The Education Block Grant program is an innovative approach to incentivize and implement early childhood strategies that can enhance the quality of 4K programs and instruction,” said Hayes Mizell, chair of the grants committee that will review submitted applications. “Ultimately, we hope to pilot ideas that can improve school readiness outcomes for our young children who can benefit the most from a high-quality 4K education.”

Mizell stated that the deadline for applications will be noon on December 7. Grant applications, which must include at least ten percent of matching financial support, cannot exceed \$250,000 unless the grants committee finds that exceptional circumstances warrant exceeding that amount. However, the budget proviso allocated \$2 million for the program, allows the grants committee to award multiple grants if they choose to do so. It is expected that funded grants will be announced in mid-February.

Per Proviso 1.78, the Executive Director of the Education Oversight Committee is charged with appointing the grants review committee as well as reviewing and reporting on the results of the funded programs. The grants review committee, which is an independent group of representatives from the business and education committee, makes the final decision on grant recipients.

The SC Education Oversight Committee is an independent, non-partisan group made up of 18 educators, business persons, and elected leaders. Created in 1998, the committee is dedicated to reporting facts, measuring change, and promoting progress within South Carolina’s education system.

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