FSSA Now Accepting Applications for Early Childhood Education Matching Grant

Indianapolis (January 15, 2014) – The Indiana Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) is now accepting applications for the Early Childhood Education Matching Grant, which will help provide quality early education for low-income, prekindergarten children in Indiana.

The matching grant program, established by the Indiana General Assembly in 2013, allows high-quality, early care and education programs to apply for matching funds to serve 4-year-old children from families whose incomes are below federal poverty guidelines. Applicants must have already achieved Level Three or Level Four in Paths to Quality ^{TM}, Indiana's voluntary child care quality rating and improvement system and they must secure a cash match from a community organization or other funding source.

Governor Mike Pence, in outlining his legislative agenda in December 2013, listed early childhood education as a priority.

"While I am proud of the fact that Indiana is only one of a handful of states that funds all-day kindergarten, this matching grant program will be the first time that our state has used state funds to provide education to students before kindergarten. I hope this is a significant first step in helping to prepare low-income Hoosier children to enter kindergarten and to succeed throughout their school years," Governor Pence said.

The legislation establishes that $2 million will be available for two years, beginning in 2014. Grants will be awarded effective July 1, 2014. The existing grant program is distinct from additional pre-K legislation currently under consideration by the 2014 General Assembly.

The application for the Early Childhood Matching Grant is now available on FSSA's Carefinder website. FSSA will also hold webinars and other informational sessions to help inform potential applicants and educators about the grant process.

More information about the Paths to Quality ^{TM} program is available here

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