Ohio | Department of Education

William F. Goodling Even Start Family Literacy Program
Title I, Part B, Subpart 3 of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001

Even Start General Information

A. Introduction and Overview of Federal Program Requirements

The Even Start Family Literacy Program, Part B of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 was first authorized in 1988. Since that time, the program has been amended and re-authorized several times. The most recent amendments occurred under the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (*Public Law 107-110) placing Even Start under Title I, Part B, Subpart 3.

Even Start Family Literacy Programs provide ***intensive family literacy services*** that involve parents and children, in an effort to help parents become full partners in the education of their children and to assist children in reaching their full potential as learners. The purpose of the Even Start program is to help break the cycle of poverty and low literacy by improving the educational opportunities of low-income families through a cooperative learning effort.

Even Start is intended to serve the State's most disadvantaged families. Even Start applications must build on existing community resources of high quality to create intensive family literacy services. The term "family literacy services" means services provided to participants on a voluntary basis that are of **sufficient intensity** in terms of hours, and of **sufficient duration** to make sustainable changes in a family, and that **integrate all of the following activities**:

- interactive literacy activities between parents and their children (also known as PACT)
- training for parents regarding how to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children (Parenting Education)
- parent literacy preparation that leads to economic self-sufficiency (Adult Education)
- an age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences (Early Childhood Education).

Even Start Family Literacy projects must demonstrate that their programs and services are of high quality and that resources are used efficiently and effectively. Applications must address all of the required 15 Program Elements found in Section 1235 of the Even Start Law along with the Ohio Even Start Performance Indicators as outlined in part E below.

B. Eligibility

Even Start legislation states that eligible **applicants** for awards are partnerships composed of

1) a local educational agency (LEA), **and**
2) a nonprofit community-based organization, a public agency other than a local educational agency, an institution of higher education, or a public or private nonprofit organization other than a local educational agency, of demonstrated quality.

Under the Education Department General Administrative Rules (EDGAR), the definition of a local educational agency would include, but is not limited to, a local school district, an

educational service center, or a vocational education program.
For further information, see EDGAR 34 CFR part 77.1; website address is:
www.ed.gov/policy/fund/reg/edgarReg/edgar.html

The partnership may include more than the minimum of two co-applicants. Throughout the life of the project, the concept of partnership is to be demonstrated through joint management and decision-making. While fiscal responsibility will rest with a single entity (whose IRN is used for the application process), all aspects of the project are considered the responsibility of all co-applicants.

Participants in an Even Start program are eligible parents and their children, ages birth through age seven. New legislation allows services to children age eight and older if the local project collaborates with a program under Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and the Title I Part A funds contribute to the cost of providing Even Start services to those children.

Parents must be eligible for participation in the federal and state funded adult basic education program or be within the state's compulsory school attendance age range, so long as a local educational agency provides (or ensures the availability of) the basic education component, or be attending secondary school. The program must be designed so that children are eligible to participate for at least three years.

C. Available Funding/Matching Requirements

The amount of funding in any grant period is based on the availability of federal funds designated for this program. The minimum amount of an Even Start grant is $75,000, except for grantees in their ninth or subsequent years where the minimum is set at $52,000. An Even Start program's total funding is comprised of a portion of federal funds (Federal Share) and a portion contributed by the project (Local Share). The ratio of federal to local share changes as follows:

1st year	90%	10%
2nd year	80%	20%
3rd year	70%	30%
4th year	60%	40%
5th, 6th, 7th, 8th years	50%	50%
9th and any subsequent year	35%	65%

The source of the local share may be provided as cash or in-kind that is fairly evaluated and may be obtained from any source including other federal funds under ESEA. Documentation must be kept on file locally verifying that the amounts from the identified sources were dedicated to Even Start.

Funding requested in this continuation application should concentrate on a twelve month program year (FY2011: July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011). All activities should be planned with the intent to provide services and expend the award during the twelve months period. For FY2010, Final Expenditure Reports (FER) will be due no later than September 30, 2011. Carryover is allowed only after the FER is filed with the ODE Office of Grants Management. Use of carryover will be allowed after a budget revision is completed.

Grant proposals are submitted annually for continuation funding within a four-year grant cycle. After successfully completing the first four-year cycle, an eligible partnership may **re-compete** in the open pool for an additional four-year cycle of funding. Beyond year eight, programs may continue to re-compete on a four-year cycle for a 35% level unless advised otherwise by the Department.

Funds may not be used for indirect costs.

All fiscal records should be kept for a period of five (5) years.

D. Evaluation/Accountability

The mission of the Office of Early Learning and School Readiness (ELSR) is to ensure that all families and children enrolled in programs be provided a quality, comprehensive program in a safe environment. The Office's leadership role is twofold. First, ELSR must set standards for monitoring programs as required by legislation. Second, but by no means of lesser importance, is the charge to set standards for programs' continuous improvement. Therefore, each Even Start program is required to participate in state monitoring and evaluation processes and must conduct an independent local evaluation.

The state's evaluation process is data-driven based upon information collected through grant proposals, quarterly reports, monitoring reports, site visits, and the independent local evaluation. The local project evaluation should measure the effectiveness of all program components including success in attaining program objectives and the Ohio's Even Start Performance Indicators.

E. Ohio Even Start Performance Indicators for FY2011

State developed indicators are required by law to be used, along with independent local evaluations, to monitor, evaluate, and improve the quality of local Even Start programs.

Performance Indicator 1.a. 100% of children, ages 0-3, whose families have participated in Even Start for at least four months will demonstrate progress in reading readiness as measured by the set of child observation scales called the Measurement and Planning System (MAPS) found in the Galileo software package.

1.b. 100% of children, ages 3-5 (and not in kindergarten), whose families have participated In Even Start for at least four months will demonstrate progress in reading and reading strategies as measured by the Individual Growth and Development indicators (IGDI) child assessment tool.

Performance Indicator 2. 100% of children who are age eligible for admittance to kindergarten by Ohio law and whose families have participated in Even Start for at least four months will have written transition plans to maintain educational continuity.

Performance Indicator 3 90% of children, grades 1 through 3, whose families are enrolled in Even Start from at least November 1 to June 1 of the program year are promoted as determined by school district policy.

Performance Indicator 4 80% of children attending school grades K-3 whose families have participated in Even Start for at least four months will have a school attendance rate of 90% or better.

Performance Indicator 5 75% of adult Even Start participants who have identified achievement in basic skills (i.e., reading, writing, English language acquisition, problem solving, and numeracy) as a primary or secondary goal will complete or progress toward this goal during the program year.

Performance Indicator 6 20% of adult Even Start participants who have identified enrollment in post-secondary education or training, including adult career-technical education, as a primary or secondary goal will enroll in such an educational training program during the program year..

Performance Indicator 7 25% of adult Even Start participants who have identified placement in unsubsidized employment as a primary or secondary goal will become employed during the program year.

Performance Indicator 8 40% of adult Even Start participants who have identified receipt of a secondary school diploma or Ohio High School Equivalence Diploma/GED as a primary or secondary goal will earn a secondary school diploma or Ohio High School Equivalence Diploma/GED during the program year.

Performance Indicator 9 75% of the parents who have participated in Even Start for at least four months within the reporting year will demonstrate at least 0.3 gain in supporting interactive literacy activities as indicated on the Parenting Education Profile.

Performance Indicator 10 50% of the parents who have participated in Even Start for at least four months within the reporting year will demonstrate at least 0.3 gain in supporting children's learning in formal education settings as indicated on the Parenting Education Profile.

Performance Indicator 11 100% of Ohio Even Start programs will conduct summer instructional and enrichment activities in all four components for at least seven weeks within the months of June, July, and August. The hours of service offered will be at minimum: at

least 6 hours adult education per week, at least 8 hours early childhood education per week, at least 2 hours PACT per week (with instructor), and at least one home visit per month.

F. Critical Program Issues

Family literacy programs are complex to implement because they rely on cooperation between educational and other community service providers and require knowledge of best practices in a number of fields. The following areas of programming require particular attention.

Instructional Focus-must be on literacy and cognitive development.

Full Participation-Even Start relies on the dynamic interaction (integration) among the four core components. Without a family's full participation in each part of the whole, this program becomes just another isolated, fragmented program.

Intensity-In Adult Education, Parenting Education, and Early Childhood Education, greater hours of services offered correlate with greater hours of participation and, therefore, with participant achievement. The following are USDOE recommendations for the number of hours to be offered at minimum:

- Adult Education - offer at least 60 hours per month
- Early Childhood Education (0-3) - offer at least 60 hours per month
- Early Childhood Education (3-5) - offer at least 65 hours per month
- School-age children - offer educational services beyond the regular school day for those children in need of skill enhancement
- Parenting Education - offer at least 20 hours per month
- Home-Based Instruction (aka Home Visits) - at least one home visit per family per month
- Parent/Child Time Together (PACT) - Currently, the USDOE has not made a recommendation for minimum hours related to this component, but ideally parents and children should have daily interaction related to literacy experiences. The State recommends that a program schedule PACT activities that begin in the classroom and continue in the home at least three times per week.

Duration-Families that participate in Even Start for 12 months or more experience greater success in achieving their goals. Research shows that the greatest gains were made by those families who participated in the program for a minimum of 12-18 months.

Support Services-When comparing the average number of support services families received to their hours of participation in the instructional services, researchers found a greater number of support services correlates with greater hours of participation.

Program Improvement-Even Start Law requires that program improvement must be data-driven (related to the local independent evaluation and the State's Performance Indicators), and "sufficient progress" for programs must serve as the basis for continuation funding.