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

Guidance for New Applicants: FY2010 Competitive Grant Application

Format Information

There are two interconnecting parts to the Even Start Competitive Grant Application for FY2010:

- the **Planning Tool (PT) of the Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Planning document (CCIP)**
- the **Even Start Funding Application (FA)**

Applicants should pay attention to the locations for particular information as described under each subtopic below. Be particularly aware that (1) the term Needs Assessment is used in a slightly different context in each part of the application (PT and FA) as described below and (2) at times while writing in the Planning Tool side of the application, the applicant must designate to which competitive grant program the information links (i.e., Program Relationship).

FUNDING APPLICATION

Guidance for Needs Assessment (different format than Needs Assessment in Planning Tool)

Areas to be served by an Even Start family literacy program must have a high percentage or a large number of children and families who are in need of such services as indicated by high levels of poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, limited English proficiency, or other need-related indicators, including a high percentage of children to be served by the program who reside in a school attendance area eligible for participation in programs under Title I. Please provide the requested data for the area to be served in order to show your community's need for Even Start funding. Not all "boxes" need to be filled for the need factors, but the more thorough the information provided, the better the picture of the area's need.

The requested numbers of projected participants (adults and children) are not optional and must be filled in even if the number is zero. Note that the program has four core components that all participants must attend, so the projections of numbers to be served should be based on reasonable expectations. Serving hundreds of families in all four components the early years of programming is not a reasonable expectation.

Guidance for Even Start's Integration into the Continuous Improvement Plan
Even Start programs are built on community partnerships that must by law include at least one Local Educational Agency (LEA) and at least one non-LEA partner (see ***Even Start General Information*** in the Documents Library).

LEAs include such entities as school districts; Educational Service Centers (ESC), Joint Vocational Schools (JVS), MRDD agencies, etc. (see ***Even Start Definitions and Terms*** in the Documents Library). The LEA that partners to develop and implement the proposed Even Start program should have an electronic document called Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Planning or **CCIP**. A strategic plan is written by using the Planning Tool (PT) within the CCIP electronic system. The plan describes the entity's mission, needs assessment (in a different format from the Funding Application), goals, strategies, and action steps to impact student performance outcomes.

In this section called "Integration into Continuous Improvement Plan" (in Funding Application), briefly describe the joint planning conducted by or with the LEA to develop the Even Start program **design and goals**. Include a description of how the proposed Even Start program will be supported by the LEA and how the proposed Even Start program aligns with the CCIP of the partnering LEA.

[**Note**: Appropriate supporting documents (meeting minutes, sign-in sheets, telephone logs, etc.) that provide evidence of joint planning and support among stakeholders for this proposed Even Start project should be available for review by state staff at any time during the program year.]

Guidance for Capacity to Implement
Applications will be approved based on several criteria (Section 1238 of Even Start law) including "…most likely to be successful in -- (i) meeting the purpose of this subpart; and (ii) effectively implementing the program elements required under section 1235…."

In this section of the Funding Application, give evidence that the partnering entities have the capacity to:
1) fulfill the purpose of this program (Section 1231 of Even Start law)
2) implement all 15 program elements required by Even Start law (Section 1235)
3) administer and implement the proposed program design, and
4) provide access to special training necessary to prepare staff for operation of a high quality
program.

Guidance for <u>Partnership Commitment: Stakeholder Involvement/Collaboration</u>
Program collaboration and coordination are critical elements when creating and implementing
an Even Start family literacy project. As noted in Even Start law, the Even Start program "shall be implemented through cooperative projects that build on high-quality existing community resources to create a new range of services" [Sec. 1231(2)(A)]. In this section of the Funding Application, list the major partners who will provide academic and support services for the FY2009 program year. Briefly describe each partner's role and level of commitment in the provision of comprehensive family literacy services to families most in need. Indicate what firm agreements have been secured from specific partners. [**Note**: These documents should be available during any on-site visits made by state staff during the program year.]

Guidance for <u>Goals and Strategies</u> (This section will also include Action Steps)
<u>IMPORTANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION</u>: Districts/agencies who receive funding from ODE should have goals, strategies, and action steps recorded in the Planning Tool portion of the Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan (CCIP) electronic system. Each goal in the CCIP is connected to a fiscal resource(s) to support the achievement of academic success of children served by the district/agency. Even Start grant funds serve as a fiscal resource to support children at risk due to their family's high level of poverty and low level of literacy skills.
The <u>fiscal agent in the partnership that plans to apply for Even Start funds must have a CCIP document in the ODE system</u>

To complete the Funding Application's "Goals and Strategies" section for Even Start, the applicant <u>must use the Planning Tool of the CCIP</u>. **Follow the steps below to <u>access the Planning Tool (PT)</u> and to enter required goals, strategies, and action steps <u>that will link to the Even Start Funding Application (FA)</u>.**

(NOTE: A User ID <u>and</u> password are required to follow the steps given below).

Writing Goals, Strategies, and Action Steps
STEP 1: After logging into the CCIP system, the applicant is taken to the district/agency's own home page. To view the district/agency plan, the applicant should click on the link named <u>Planning Tool</u> in either the text of the page or in the left margin. Now the applicant should be on a page called **Planning Tool Overview** and can begin to review and/or enter information related to goals, strategies and action steps. **Do not erase or change other programs' work within the Planning Tool. Work only with Even Start-specific items.**

To review the mission statement, needs assessment, goals, and strategies already in the plan, click on the box labeled District/Agency Plan and then click on each underlined phrase located under "Requirements." **If no Improvement Plan exists** for the applicant, the word "Incomplete" will appear next to each of the phrases. In this case, a plan will need to be created (see Step 2b below). **If the improvement plan is missing information** like the mission statement, needs assessment, goals, and strategies, the applicant should provide the missing information.

STEP 2a: Applicants who have an existing Improvement Plan in this electronic system should look in the Planning Tool for one or more strategies related to family literacy under the title Reading/Language Arts Goal because Even Start is a program to improve literacy skills in families so children can achieve academic success. **If no strategy related to comprehensive family literacy is in the plan**, **then use the suggested strategy found under View Recommended Strategy:**

> The strategy to use is titled:
> **Comprehensive family literacy services**
>
> The description for this strategy is:
> **Provide the four components of adult education, early childhood education, parenting education, and parent/child time together in an intense, holistic program for families living in poverty with adults who need literacy skill enhancement and have children ages birth to eight.**

STEP 2b: If the applicant does not have an Improvement Plan in the system, this plan can be created by clicking on Create a Goal and following the electronic links to complete a plan that includes a Reading/Language Arts Goal and the recommended Comprehensive Family Literacy Strategy described above in Step 2a.

STEP 3: Once the appropriate goals and strategies are in place in the district/agency plan, Even Start applicants must write **clear and specific action steps** that show what the Even Start program will do to contribute to the achievement of the family literacy goal(s) and strategies. **The action steps must reflect:**

- **each of the Ohio Even Start Performance Indicators which relate to the four core components of comprehensive family literacy and summer program intensity (see *Even Start Performance Indicator Guide FY10* in the Documents Library)**
- **all 15 Required Program Elements (Sec. 1235 of *Even Start Legislation* in the Documents Library), and**
- **other program considerations related to such issues as intensity, duration, etc.**

The action steps in the application show the program's entire design.

Suggested action step titles are:

Achieve Even Start Performance Indicator 1a: progress for ages 0 to 3
Achieve Even Start Performance Indicator 1b: progress for ages 3 to 5
Achieve Even Start Performance Indicator 2: K transition plans
Achieve Even Start Performance Indicator 3: promotion grades 1 through 3
Achieve Even Start Performance Indicator 4: attendance rate grades K through 3
Achieve Even Start Performance Indicator 5: progress in adult basic skills
Achieve Even Start Performance Indicator 6: achieve goal of post-secondary education or training
Achieve Even Start Performance Indicator 7: achieve goal of employment
Achieve Even Start Performance Indicator 8: achieve goal of diploma/GED
Achieve Even Start Performance Indicator 9: progress in parents' support of interactive literacy activities
Achieve Even Start Performance Indicator 10: progress in parents' support of children's learning in formal school environments
Achieve Even Start Performance Indicator 11: programs will conduct summer instructional and enrichment activities in all four components
Achieve Program Element 1
Achieve program Element 2…, etc.
Achieve recruitment goal of….
Achieve retention rate of…..
Achieve intensity of services rates of…, etc.

Description of action steps under the action step title, ***Achieve Even Start Performance Indicator 1b: progress for ages 3 to 5,*** could be, for example:

- Using Individual Growth and Development Indicators (IGDI) and other instruments, assess children ages three to five within 30 days of enrollment in the Even Start program and build an on-going developmental profile for each child;
- Provide an age-appropriate education to all children enrolled in the Even Start program, including: 1) scientifically-based researched curriculum based on ODE's *Connections Framework;* 2) print-rich classroom environments; and 3) emphasis on language and reading-readiness skill development in all environments; 4) curriculum that reflects the Ohio Department of Education Early Learning Content Standards.
- Individualize lesson plans for all children ages three to five enrolled in the Even Start program;
- Provide intense, ongoing professional development for all early childhood education staff that enhances, at least: 1) observational and listening skills; 2) use of materials that provide parents with resources and modeling for language and literacy activities in the home; 3) best practices for classroom instruction.

Note that this list of action steps is only a sampling of the actions that can be developed for the particular indicator. Action steps related to each of the Ohio Even Start Performance Indicators must include, at least, information about:

- assessment
- curriculum
- parent's role and/or instruction
- professional development that complies with No Child Left Behind definition of professional development (see NCLB: Professional Development in the Documents Library under ***Even Start Definitions and Terms***)

Action Steps related to the Required Program Elements and other program issues will not necessarily include all of the above information.

So, appropriate action steps should be listed to show how the program is going to achieve intense, high quality services in the four core components and align to the Performance Indicators and district/agency goals. When entering information for an Action Step on the "Insert Action Step" page, the user will see a box labeled "Benchmark Indicator (Optional)." Entry of any **benchmark information is optional for Even Start applicants**. Programs should develop benchmarks for all strategies and actions, but these do not have to be entered in the competitive grant application.

STEP 4: IMPORTANT--WHEN AN ACTION STEP IS ADDED TO THE PLANNING TOOL SIDE OF THE APPLICATION, A "**PROGRAM RELATIONSHIP"** MUST BE DESIGNATED SO THE INFORMATION WILL BE INCLUDED IN THE APPROPRIATE FUNDING APPLICATION. Even Start Applicants will choose Even Start from the program list that is provided while writing Even Start Action Steps. Therefore, each and every Action Step related to Even Start will have to be designated as an Even Start Action Step through use of the program list. Failure to do this will result in the loss of information to the Funding Application.

Remember, there are two interconnecting parts to the Competitive Grant Application for FY2010:

- the **Planning Tool (PT) of the CCIP**
- the **Even Start Funding Application (FA)**

The goal/strategy/action step information is written in the Planning Tool side of the application but will be used to evaluate the program-specific Funding Application. So, the applicant must designate to which competitive grant program the information belongs (i.e., Program Relationship); if this is done correctly, all Even Start Action Steps will appear in the Funding Application and will be seen when the Funding Application is printed.

Guidance for Scientifically Based Research

Even Start instructional programs must be based on scientifically based reading research (SBRR) for children and adults, to the extent that research is available. Please refer to ***Even Start Definitions and Terms*** and to ***Even Start Recommended Reading List*** in the Documents Library for the definition of SBRR. The most current information about SBRR is available from the National Reading Panel and the National Institute for Literacy (NIFL) at www.nifl.gov (Partnerships for Reading icon) and at www.nationalreadingpanel.org

In this section of the Funding Application, list curricula to be used in each of the core components and cite criteria by which each curriculum fulfills the SBRR requirement (see ***Even Start Definitions and Terms*** in the Documents Library). Note that vendors' evaluations of their own materials/program do not meet the Federal criteria for SBRR.

Guidance for Professional Development

Refer to ***Even Start Definitions and Terms*** in the Documents Library for the full definition of the term "professional development" as presented in No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

Staff development must be systematic and ongoing. In this section of the Funding Application, describe the Even Start program's professional development plan that includes at least program goals, budget evidence, and requirements for staff participation (for example, minimum number of hours of continuing education required, acquisition of specific certifications, attendance requirements, etc.).

In the document *Guide to Quality: Even Start Family Literacy Program Implementation and Continuous Improvement* (June 2001), RMC Research Corporation makes the following recommendations for areas of professional development for family literacy staff:

- Early childhood instructors should have intense professional development in at least the following areas: the Even Start family literacy model and family literacy philosophies; child observation and assessment; early literacy and language acquisition (including second language acquisition); curricula, environments and materials for young children; parent involvement; cultural diversity and special needs; and working with other staff."

- Adult educators should have intense professional development in at least the following areas: the Even Start family literacy model and family literacy philosophies; characteristics of adult learners; instructional practices that link adults' individual goals to the academic content of the program; use of teaching materials that have a functional context appropriate to the lives of adult learners; use of strategies that build instruction and learning activities upon learners' prior knowledge and individual skill levels; and, use of required assessment tools. RMC notes that adult education staff should also be knowledgeable about a range

of options for participants to continue their learning and/or obtain employment; educational uses and benefits of technology; and, adults' learning disabilities.

- Parenting/PACT educators should have intense professional development in at least the following areas: the Even Start family literacy model and family literacy philosophies; principles of child development; interactive literacy development; cultural diversity; working with schools and community resources; use of required assessment tools.

Guidance for Local Program Evaluation

Even Start programs are required by law to conduct an independent local evaluation. The evaluation of the program must measure, report, and analyze program results in order to demonstrate the successes of the project and identify areas for continuous improvement. Results obtained from the local evaluation should inform the program's plan of operation for the next program year. Describe the proposed local evaluation process (who, what, where, when, how).

Guidance for Budget/Allocation of Resources/Costs/Budget Integration

The program costs reflected in the Funding Application budget grid must be reasonable in relationship to the number of families served and the expected outcomes. The budget narrative (this section) must provide sufficient information to support the requested amount of funds. Narrative information must be included for both federal and local shares. For more detailed guidance for this section of the Funding Application, see ***Even Start-Fiscal Information*** in the Documents Library.

Guidance for Timeline

In this section of the Funding Application, describe the proposed program's plan for full implementation within six months of the award.

Guidance for the Continuation Plan

Describe the proposed program's plan to obtain matching funds and/or in-kind services as the federal share decreases over the four years of the project (see Section 1234 of the Even Start legislation). Also, include a plan for funding the program when federal assistance is no longer available.

Guidance for Questions Unique to Even Start for New Applicants

Guidance for <u>Specific Target Population</u> [bold type added]
Even Start programs must serve, by law, those "eligible" families who are "most in need" of Even Start services, as indicated by a low level of income, a low level of adult literacy or English language proficiency of the eligible parent or parents, and other need-related indicators. See ***Even Start Definitions and Terms*** in the Documents Library for more information about the terms "eligibility" and "most in need."

Federal guidelines state that "it is important to note a distinction between families that are considered 'eligible' for Even Start services and those actually served by a project. **Even Start projects serve a small subset of the 'eligible' population** and must target families who are most in need of services" in that community.

Applicants must conduct a needs survey to determine the population most in need of Even Start services in the area to be served (the subset of all who are eligible). This section of the Even Start Funding Application must describe and justify the specific subset to be served. A general response, such as "*All families whose adults meet the ABLE criteria and who have children between the ages of birth and age eight*," would not be an acceptable description of the <u>specific</u> target population because it is too broad a description.

[**Note**: The survey documents should be available during any on-site visits made by state staff during the program year.]

Guidance for <u>Alignment</u> between Even Start Action Steps and LEA Goals and Strategies
The Even Start program's action steps and outcomes must relate to 1) the CCIP Planning Tool's goals and strategies for students' long-term achievement, 2) the Ohio Even Start Performance Indicators, and 3) other program considerations for the operation of a high-quality, intense comprehensive family literacy program.

In this section of the Even Start Funding Application:

1) Describe the process that will be in place for ongoing tracking of progress toward achievement of program outcomes that are critical for the success of a program and its participants. That is, what system will be in place to track eligibility, hours of attendance, retention, participant outcomes, professional development requirements, etc., through the program year?
2) Outline steps that will be put into place to track Even Start outcomes (short and long term) related to the CCIP Planning Tool's goals and strategies.
3) Describe the program's management plan and relate this plan to two tracking processes described above.

Guidance for Describing <u>Proposed Site Locations, Services Offered at Each Site, Hours of Service at Each Site, and Provider of Each Service</u>

Because each Even Start program builds on its community's resources and serves a target population that is identified as "most in need" in the community, no two Even Start programs have the same program designs. In this section of the Even Start Funding Application, create a picture of the physical design of the program by describing the what/where/how/who related to the core services of the proposed comprehensive family literacy program. (Refer to ***Even Start- General Information*** in the Documents Library for information about the USDOE recommended hours of service (intensity) for each core component.) Include information about formal and/or informal agreements already obtained with partners for the provision of services.

Guidance for <u>Integration of Even Start with Other Programs</u>

The law requires that Even Start programs coordinate services to make efficient use of community resources and to create a whole that is greater than its individual parts (a new range of services for an underserved target population).

Briefly describe how the proposed program builds on the existing services in the community to develop this <u>new range of services</u>. Include information about coordination with programs named in Section 1235(9) of the Even Start law (see Documents Library).

Also, describe how multiple partners' services will be integrated throughout the operation of the four core components.