

Missouri Coordinating Board for Early Childhood

Pre-K Recommendations Approved at 12/08/09 CBEC Meeting

The following recommendations were discussed and revised at the November 10, 2009 CBEC meeting. They will be brought to the December, 2009 meeting for approval.

***Recommendation.* By the end of the 2011 Missouri legislative session, statutory authority should be established for a publicly funded pre-kindergarten in Missouri, subject to the availability of funds.**

This publicly funded, voluntary PreK should include the following conditions in the statute:

- Enrollment in this publicly funded PreK should be voluntary for Missouri families.
- Enrollment in this PreK should be available to Missouri's children for two years prior to their entry into kindergarten.
- A sliding fee scale or other financial structure will be established that program enrollment is accessible and affordable to all age-eligible children, and that state funds are used to support those in greatest financial need.
- This pre-kindergarten program should be held accountable for meeting identified research-based program standards that will be established by the State and required of programs at the time of the pre-kindergarten program's initiation. These program standards should address, at a minimum:
 - *Child health and social-emotional development*
 - *Class size and teacher: student ratio*
 - *Community involvement and collaborative partnerships*
 - *Developmentally-appropriate curriculum*
 - *Developmentally-appropriate learning goals*
 - *Family engagement*
 - *Length of the pre-kindergarten day and duration of the year*
 - *Responsive interactions*
 - *Safe and healthy environments*
 - *Staff qualifications*

The Missouri Coordinating Board for Early Childhood will be responsible for recommending, monitoring, and advising the process for establishing these standards and guidelines, and for establishing initial variances and timelines for rectifying them.

- Any center- or family-based program (e.g., private, for-profit, non-profit, faith-based) that meets the standards established for this pre-kindergarten program in Missouri are eligible to participate and receive public funds.

- This pre-kindergarten program should be required, at the time of the pre-kindergarten program's initiation, to use a uniform, standardized child assessment process for tracking and monitoring children's progress and informing the instructional process.
- The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's data tracking system (MOSIS) should be used to establish a uniform, child-specific (aggregate level) longitudinal measure of outcomes for children participating in the State's pre-kindergarten program.
- A state level system of oversight for this pre-kindergarten should be established. The system's functions should include:
 - *Maximization of fiscal resources,*
 - *Coordination and collaboration,*
 - *Standards alignment,*
 - *Enforcement of program standards, and*
 - *Data collection and analysis.*
- The state system of oversight should identify local or regional entities to facilitate design of mixed delivery systems that are responsive to community needs and resources.

Recommendation: By November, 2010, the CBEC will recommend to the Governor and State departments represented on the Coordinating Board, a financing plan for this Pre-K program. The CBEC will work in collaboration with the Coalition for School Readiness to develop this plan.