

## **Early Reading First** **Effective, Research-based Instruction for Pre-School Children<sup>12</sup>**

### **Purpose of the Program**

Early Reading First is designed to prepare young children to enter kindergarten with the necessary language, cognitive, and early reading skills for reading success when they enter school. Early Reading First will transform early childhood education programs into centers of excellence for young children, especially those from low-income families. Early Reading First will not only provide resources and training to pre-school teachers, but will also benefit teachers in all grades by helping to increase the number of children who enter school ready to learn to read.

### **New Program Improvements and Resources**

The *No Child Left Behind Act* establishes this program and will help to improve children's education by providing young children, particularly children from low-income families, with pre-reading skills.

Last year, President Bush signed legislation that provided \$75 million for this program in 2002. President Bush has proposed to continue this commitment to Early Reading First in his FY-03 budget.

### **Highlights for Individuals**

- Teachers will participate in intensive high-quality, professional development.
- Early Reading First Programs are encouraged to provide incentives or stipends to teachers who participate in professional development.

### **Highlights for partnerships:**

- Early Reading First programs will:
  - Lay the groundwork for student reading success in the elementary grades by providing young children, particularly children from low-income families, with high-quality instruction in language, cognitive skills, and early reading.
  - Help align the curriculum and instruction in participating preschool programs with State content and performance standards.
  - Use screening assessments to identify young children who may be at risk for reading failure to ensure they are on the road to reading proficiently by the time they begin school. These screening assessments will help guide teachers in what approaches to take toward their preschool students.

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<sup>12</sup> *Elementary and Secondary Education Act as amended by No Child Left Behind: Title I, Part B, Subpart I*

## **Reading First Effective, Research-based Instruction in K-3 Classrooms<sup>13</sup>**

### **Purpose of the Program**

Reading First is a bold, new national initiative aimed at helping every student in every State become a successful, fluent reader by the end of third grade. Through the application of rigorous, scientifically based research, Reading First will help States and localities implement effective practices for classroom reading instruction and improve student achievement. Reading First grants will support programs and strategies that are based upon the evidence on how children learn to read. Since no child will become an effective reader without an effective teacher, Reading First funds places a heavy emphasis on professional development and instruction for teachers.

### **New Program Improvements and Resources**

The *No Child Left Behind Act* establishes this program and will help to improve children's education by providing the tools needed for all students to be reading by the end of third grade.

Last year, President Bush signed legislation that provided \$900 million for this program in 2002. President Bush has proposed further increasing the program to \$1 billion in his FY-03 budget.

### **Highlights:**

- Reading First classroom reading instruction will use only research-based programs, practices, and assessments.
- Reading First programs will use classroom-based student assessments to inform instructional decisions and evaluate programs for effectiveness.
- All States will be eligible to receive funding upon review. States would then conduct their own sub-grant competitions, primarily targeting their neediest and most under-performing districts and schools in accordance with legislative guidelines.
- States may retain up to 20 percent of their total awards to support Statewide professional development, technical assistance, and other program administration activities. States would be required to spend at least 60 percent of these funds on professional development for teachers in research-based methods of reading instruction.
- Reading First professional development and technical assistance activities can be offered to all K-3 reading teachers, not just those in schools receiving Reading First sub-grants.

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<sup>13</sup> *Elementary and Secondary Education Act as amended by No Child Left Behind: Title I, Part B, Subpart I*