

Promoting Early Learning for Success in School and in Life

President Obama is committed to creating a 21st century workforce, and the Budget includes a robust education reform agenda to achieve this goal. High-quality early learning programs for young children from birth through third grade are a key component of this broader agenda because research tells us that what happens in the early years can mean the difference between a child who is successful in elementary school, and one who struggles. High-quality early learning programs are an integral component to creating an educational system that is internationally competitive, spurs innovation, and ensures every child reaches his or her full potential.

Early childhood education fosters cognitive skills along with attentiveness, motivation, self-control and sociability – the character skills that turn knowledge into know-how and people into productive citizens.

Dr. James Heckman
-- Nobel Laureate in Economics

The President's request reflects this national imperative by raising the bar on quality and making significant investments in early learning to help all children succeed, especially children with high-needs. The Budget will improve quality across all publicly-funded early learning and development programs by funding a new Early Learning Challenge Fund program that will challenge States to establish model systems of early learning. The historic expansion of Head Start and Early Head Start will be maintained, while supporting quality initiatives already underway. Child Care will receive a significant increase in funding, supporting critical reforms that improve quality. The Budget also supports an increase in funding for early intervention services for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families, and encourages States to extend early intervention services to children through age 5. These investments will help to make sure America wins the future.

To support the President's goal of providing the strong foundation our youngest children need for lifelong learning and success, the Budget will:

Establish a New Early Learning Challenge Fund

- Provides an initial investment of \$350 million for the creation of the Early Learning Challenge Fund. The Fund would spur states to take dramatic steps to improve the quality of early learning programs. It would drive innovation by promoting high standards of quality and focus on improving outcomes for young children across all settings to ensure that more children enter school ready to succeed. Jointly administered by the Departments of Education and Health and Human Services, this competitive grant program would challenge States to establish model systems of early learning and development for children from birth to kindergarten entry, including children with disabilities and English learners.

Strengthen Head Start

- Increases funding for *Head Start and Early Head Start* by \$866 million from the FY 2010 enacted level for a total of \$8.1 billion. The Head Start and Early Head Start programs promote school readiness by enhancing the cognitive and social development of children through the provision of educational, health, nutritional, social, and other services to enrolled children and families. At the requested funding level, more than 968,000 children can participate in the program -- more than 854,000 in Head Start and 114,000 in Early Head Start. The budget request maintains historic investments made in these programs and supports the critical reforms underway to raise the bar on quality in Head Start, including requiring low performing programs to compete for funding to ensure that children and families are served by the most capable providers. The budget request also supports the redesigned training and technical assistance system which would bring current research and the best evidence-informed practice into Head Start classrooms, including best practices for local programs to work with their local school systems to ensure that children start school with the skills they need and that the gains children achieve in Head Start are sustained as the children leave Head Start and move on to public schools.

Increase the Quality and Availability of Child Care

- Invests an additional \$1.3 billion for the *Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF)* for a total of \$6.3 billion and supports a reform agenda focused on health and safety and quality. The Child Care and Development Fund helps finance child care assistance programs in states and quality improvements across child care settings. The funding request would serve an estimated 1.7 million children, approximately 220,000 more than could be served without these additional funds. The President's budget supports important reforms of the CCDF program with the goal of helping more low-income children access high-quality child care, through improving quality, protecting health and safety, and strengthening early learning. The budget also supports improvements to program integrity initiatives. Taken together, these investments and reforms would help transform the Nation's child care system into one that provides safe, nurturing care that fosters healthy child development, promotes future academic success, is focused on quality improvement, and supports parental employment.

Invest in Evidence-Based Home Visiting Initiatives

- Includes \$350 million in mandatory funding for the recently enacted Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program. These funds will go to states, territories, and Tribes for evidence-based home visiting programs for low-income families in at-risk communities. Effective home visiting programs provide crucial supports to new and expectant families and can have powerful and positive impacts on both children and families. Home visitors work one-on-one with families to improve maternal and child health; prevent child maltreatment; improve parenting skills; promote children's cognitive, language, and social-emotional development; and assure

school readiness. Under the MIECHV program, at least 75 percent of the funding must be used to support home visiting models that have been rigorously evaluated and shown to be effective. Up to one-quarter of the funds can be used to support promising approaches that will be rigorously evaluated to assess their impact.

Increase the Support to Infants, Toddlers and Children with Disabilities under IDEA

- Provides \$50 million more than the FY 2010 enacted level for a total of \$489 million in formula grants for *Early Intervention Programs for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities (IDEA Part C)*, to help States implement statewide systems of early intervention services for all eligible infants and toddlers with disabilities from birth through age 2 and their families. This request would increase the average State allocation by almost \$1 million, help States serve an estimated 360,000 infants and toddlers, and encourage States to extend early intervention services to children through age 5. Additionally, this request would permit the Department of Education to award up to \$4 million for *State Incentive Grants* (since the request is above \$460 million) to facilitate a seamless system of services for children with disabilities from birth until kindergarten.
- Maintains \$374 million in formula grants for *Preschool Grants for Children with Disabilities (IDEA, Part B, Sec. 619)* to help States make a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment available to all children with disabilities ages 3 through 5. This program provides over 730,000 young children with disabilities additional supports to help ensure that they succeed in school.
- Provides an additional \$200 million in formula grants for *Grants to States for Education of Children With Disabilities (IDEA Part B, Sec. 611)* to states for a total of \$11.7 billion to support States and districts in providing special education and related services to an estimated 6.6 million children with disabilities aged 3 through 21 years.

Enhance Learning from Birth through 3rd Grade

- Provides \$14.8 billion in formula grants for *College- and Career-Ready Students* (formerly *Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies*). The Administration encourages districts and schools to use existing flexibility to invest these funds in high-quality preschool programs for eligible children, joint professional development for school staff and other early learning educators, and coordination of early learning programs in schools and community-based organizations.
- Designates \$900 million for *Race to the Top*, which would create and drive system-wide educational reform and innovation in States and districts. One priority that will be considered for this program will be for projects that are designed to improve early learning outcomes.
- Invests \$300 million for *Investing in Innovation*, which provides competitive grants for innovative and evidence-based practices, programs and strategies that significantly

improve student achievement and close achievement gaps. Improving early learning outcomes is one of several priorities under consideration for the 2012 grant competition.

- Funds *Promise Neighborhoods* at \$150 million to support projects that provide a cradle-to-career continuum of comprehensive education reforms, effective community services, and strong systems of family and community support – with high quality schools at the center. The Secretary of Education may give priority to applicants that propose to implement a comprehensive local early learning system.
- Supports State and local efforts to develop and expand innovative practices to improve teaching and learning, including implementing and supporting comprehensive literacy or STEM strategies that provide high-quality instruction and support for students from preschool through grade 12, by providing \$835 million for the *Effective Teaching and Learning for a Complete Education* programs.

Increase the Number of Effective Teachers and Principals

- Supports bold approaches to recruiting, developing, retaining, and rewarding effective educators - including educators of young children – as well as encouraging successful and innovative pathways into teaching and school leadership by providing \$3.25 billion in funds for states and districts for the new *Excellent Instructional Teams* programs.

Promote School Reform

- Provides \$600 million for *School Turnaround Grants*, which would make available formula grants to support States and districts as they implement rigorous interventions in their persistently lowest-performing schools. The Administration believes that high-quality early learning programs can be an important element of school reform. School interventions may include locally designed plans that recognize and meet a broad range of student needs from preschool through grade 12, including improving the school readiness of young children.



For more information, go to <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/Overview/>
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