



Florida's Office of Early Learning

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Florida to Submit Application for Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant

Tallahassee, Fla. – Today, the State of Florida will submit its application for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grant and is one of four states eligible for the highest award amount totaling \$100 million. This grant is reflective of Florida's vision in developing a world class education system and will help provide Florida's children with a foundation to achieve valuable jobs in the global marketplace.

The Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge aligns with the commitment Governor Scott has made to education. It is a plan that infuses resources into Florida's early learning system, makes a positive investment in Florida business and prepares Florida's children for school and life success.

How the Challenge Grant Works:

- **Serving High Risk Children**
The Challenge Grant partners with private businesses to meet the needs of high risk children. Utilizing demographic data, areas of historically high risk will be targeted. Childcare providers serving high risk children will have the option of participating in the process. Childcare providers will also have access to mini-grants to build capacity for delivering services to high risk children.
- **Administration**
Early Learning Coalitions will administer the process in local areas and will be held accountable for how funds are allocated and utilized. Childcare providers will receive funding through mini-block grants.
- **Measurable Results**
The Office of Early Learning will monitor progress towards desired outcomes and spending to ensure positive results for children and support to small businesses.

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The Challenge grant is in line with Governor Scott's Commitment:

- **Participation is optional**
No childcare business in the State of Florida will be forced to participate in this process. It's an optional benefit to strengthen the valuation of businesses.
- **Conservative Principles at Work**
Smaller government and localized solutions are the backbone of this approach. This leverages the strength of the private sector to provide localized solutions to serve at risk children.
- **No strings attached**
If the grant package comes back from the federal government with new required regulation or constraints with how Florida spends the money, we will not accept it.
- **No new business regulations**
The grant application does not impose additional regulations on businesses, but will hold providers and Early Learning Coalitions accountable for spending grant dollars wisely.
- **Streamlining of existing regulations**
The Office of Early Learning, Department of Education, Department of Children and Families, and Department of Health working collaboratively to eliminate duplicative, cumbersome approaches.
- **No legacy spending**
There will be no commitment to additional state resources currently or in the future.
- **Smaller government and localized solutions**
The grant will be implemented in local communities across the State of Florida, utilizing our existing framework. State government will not grow.

The Office of Early Learning has garnered wide ranging support for this proposal. Business leaders including Publix, Walt Disney World, Fifth Third Bank, Northern Trust, Royal Caribbean Cruises, Baptist Health, Bank of America, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida, as well as Florida's Association for the Education of Young Children, Florida Family Child Care Home Association and the Redlands Christian Migrant Association realize a strong and vibrant early learning system serves as the foundation of our education system.

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