

TO: Preschool Expansion Subgrantees
FROM: Bryan Stokes II, Preschool Expansion Policy Director
SUBJECT: Fees to Parents in Preschool Expansion Programs
DATE: May 5, 2015
CC: Theresa Hawley, Cindy Zumwalt

Notice Regarding Fees in Preschool Expansion Programs

Dear Preschool Expansion Program Administrators,

There have been some questions about the possibility of charging fees to parents participating in the new Preschool Expansion Program. As we prepare for full implementation of this project in the fall, I am writing to provide guidance on this issue.

Your organizations have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the State of Illinois which requires, in addition to other conditions, that you adhere to the Early Childhood Block Grant Preschool for All rules. These rules include a responsibility to “ensure that no fees will be charged of parents or guardians and their children who are enrolled and participate in Early Childhood Block Grant programs.”

If your program has been funded as a collaboration program with existing Child Care Assistance Program funding, you are expected to collect the co-payment determined by the Illinois Department of Human Services based on the family’s income and size. You may not, however, charge any additional fees to parents beyond this co-payment. This includes registration fees, activity fees, field trip fees or any other fee required for full participation in all aspects of your program.

If your organization has subcontracted your Preschool Expansion Program funds to community-based organizations, school districts or privately-owned early education centers, please remember that it is your responsibility to ensure that those programs are in full compliance with all terms of your contract, including the requirements regarding fees.

The Preschool Expansion Program is designed to serve the most at-risk children in our state, all of whom are living in families with incomes below 200% of the federal poverty limits. Any additional fees will pose an unacceptable hardship to our families.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at bryan.stokes@illinois.gov or by phone at 312-814-6379. Thank you for your continuing commitment to children and families.