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WELCOME BACK!

Dear Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG) Grantees,

Welcome to the start of another school year. The new fiscal year marks the beginning of a five year ECBG grant cycle. So much has happened in order to bring us to what feels like a fresh start for the ECBG, and Early Childhood Division staff are ready to get started!

We released three Early Childhood Requests for Proposals, received a timely state budget, released tentative ECBG funding award notifications, weathered the new Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) merit-based review process and appeals, and worked cooperatively with the Illinois Department of Human Services to fund even more programs during the last fiscal year. Finally, fiscal year 2019 is upon us. IWAS eGrants have been loaded with allocations, and we are ready for programs to complete applications and submit them for approval.

It is the intent of the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and the Early Childhood Division to provide you with tools, resources, and guidance to help you be successful with providing high-quality early childhood services to children. Please feel free to reach out to your assigned Early Childhood Division consultant with any questions, comments, and/or concerns. We are ready to assist you.

You may also contact the Early Childhood Division via email at earlychi@isbe.net or by phone at 217/524-4835. Thank you for all you do for Illinois' youngest learners and their families. Best wishes for a great year!

Sylvia Burgett

We welcome Carisa Hurley as the director of Early Childhood at ISBE! Carisa began on September 4, 2018, and comes to us with experience as a program director at One Hope United as well as previous work at CEDA of Cook County and Children's Home and Aid. She has also led early childhood education programs in the Harvey School District and at The Children's House. Look for more information from Carisa in next quarter's newsletter!

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ECBG APPLICATIONS

All electronic grant applications have now been released. Programs have until September 30, 2018, to submit a grant application to enact a July 1, 2018, start date. When completing budgets, remember that funding was based on the number of students to be served; therefore, programs must serve the number of students cited in the award. The top priority should be to include requirements of the grant (i.e., items on the compliance checklists) should the budget not allow for all of the planned services to be provided. Please talk to your consultant if you need assistance in determining priorities for funding.

Programs, including Prevention Initiative (PI), Preschool for All (PFA), and Preschool for All Expansion (PFAE), should be operational as soon as possible. Full enrollment is expected by November 15, 2018, with all students entered in to Student Information System (SIS). Valid justification must be provided in first quarter GATA reports as to why a program could not begin and/or does not have full enrollment.

Consultant Corner

CONTACT US

The start of a new grant cycle means programs will be assigned to a principal consultant. This person will be reviewing your grant, Continuous Quality Improvement Plan, and GATA reports, and also be your go-to person for any questions you may have. Your consultant will contact you through the grant feedback process and/or via email. Please do not hesitate to reach out. We are here to help!

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PFA AND PFAE ADMINISTRATOR FORUM

ISBE is hosting a Preschool for All and Preschool for ALL Expansion Administrator Forum at the I-Hotel in Champaign on September 25 and 26, 2018. ISBE strongly encourages all PFA and PFAE administrators to attend. The forum will have something for you whether you're new to administering these grants or want to expand your skills. There will be seminars on implementing your grant, informative sessions on best practices and innovative strategies, roundtables on hot topics, networking opportunities, resources to support you in your work, and a tour of a GOLD-rated early childhood center.

Registration information and forum details can be found on the [Early Childhood Professional Learning](#) website.

EXCELERATE RATINGS AND MONITORING

ExceleRate ratings for FY 2018 have been sent to each program's authorized official and program contact. Certificates will be mailed at a later date. Authorized officials and program contacts have also been notified of program monitoring visit windows for the 2018-19 school year. Please contact the Early Childhood Division if there has been a change of staff in these positions to confirm the program's monitoring status. Also, contact the division if the ExceleRate rating has not been received.



INCOME VERIFICATION

Programs are now required to collect and review proof of family income to determine eligibility and priority points for every student as a part of the screening process for eligibility into ECBG programs. Proof of family income must be placed in each child's file. Monitors will examine this documentation during compliance monitoring visits. An FAQ on income verification was just posted on the [Early Childhood website](#).

SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

In 2017, Illinois passed Public Act 100-105, which prevents licensed child care centers, homes, and group homes, and programs receiving ECBG funds from expelling children 0-5 due to child behavior. Specific requirements and details on enforcement of this policy will be outlined in administrative rule.

ISBE has been working toward rulemaking and policy development regarding this public act and expects to publish the proposed rules in the near future. There will be a public comment period after the proposed rules have been posted so stakeholders can weigh in with their opinions. ISBE may make changes before adopting the final rules. Stay tuned for updates on when the proposed rules will be posted and how to submit public comments.

Current requirements for ECBG programs regarding this legislation per the compliance checklist is to have a written policy prohibiting suspension and expulsion.

Resources pertaining to Illinois Early childhood expulsion legislation will be posted soon on the [Early Childhood website](#).

DATES TO REMEMBER

September 25-26, 2018

PFA/PFAE Administrator Forum

September 30, 2018

Grant due date for July 1 start date

October 20, 2018

1st Quarter GATA and Expenditure Reports due

November 15, 2018

Full enrollment entered in SIS

January 20, 2019

2nd Quarter GATA and Expenditure Reports due

April 20, 2019

3rd Quarter GATA and Expenditure Reports due

May 31, 2019

Amendment due date for June 30 project end date

July 20, 2019

4th Quarter GATA and Expenditure Reports due

August 1, 2019

Amendment due date for August 31, end date

KIDS DATA RELEASE

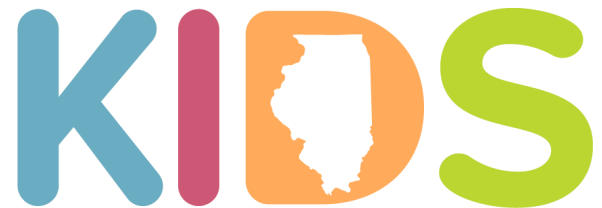
ISBE shared 2017 Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS) district-level data with school superintendents and principals through Ed360 and SIS on August 6. (Districts can choose to opt into Ed360 at isbe.net/ed360.) The data was subsequently under embargo until August 13, when ISBE issued a press release and posted state- and district-level data on the [KIDS website](#). Teachers continue to have access to classroom and student-level data in KIDStech.

Also included in the district-level release were resources, including guidance for understanding and using KIDS data, an editable infographic to support districts in releasing data locally, and a list of free professional learning opportunities with KIDS coach-

es. These resources were also added to the Administrators & Teachers Toolkit on the [KIDS webpage](#) on August 13.

Families can visit isbe.net/Pages/KIDS_Parents_Families.aspx to see activities to support their children's early development.

Reach out to the ISBE Early Childhood Division at (217) 524-4835 or email KIDS@isbe.net with any questions.



Kindergarten Individual Development Survey
Every Illinois Child Ready for Kindergarten

CAR SEAT REGULATIONS

There is a new Illinois law regarding car seat regulations in an effort to better protect young children in the event of a collision. Public Act 100-672 amends the 1983 Child Passenger Protection Act to require children 2 and younger to sit in rear-facing car seat. Children may be exempt from the age limit if they weigh 40 pounds or more or if they are 40 inches or taller. Rear-facing car seats are designed to absorb and distribute the force of a collision across the entire body, better protecting a child's head, neck, and spine.

REQUIREMENTS FOR PRE-K MEALS AND INFANTS IN THE NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM AND SCHOOL BREAKFAST PROGRAM

All schools serving preschool students in the [National School Lunch Program](#) (NSLP) and [School Breakfast Program](#) (SBP) must comply with preschool meal pattern requirements, which are the same as the [Child and Adult Food Care Program](#) (CACFP) preschool requirements.

Schools do not have to apply to become CACFP sponsors, as they can do reimbursement/claims through the NSLP and SBP. Meal pattern requirements and nutrition information, including the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child Meal Pattern, tip sheets, and more can be found on the [Illinois State Board of Education website](#) [USDA Child Meal Pattern](#), tip sheets, and more.

There is meal pattern flexibility when pre-K students are co-mingled with students in grades K-5. The USDA released [guidance on the Flexibility for Co-Mingled Preschool Meals](#). Schools that serve meals to preschoolers and K-5 students in the same area at the same time may choose to serve a K-5 meal pattern for lunch and/or breakfast.

Please note that the [After-School Care Program](#) under School Nutrition Programs that serves reimbursable snacks to children does not align with CACFP requirements for preschoolers. Snacks served during school hours to preschool children must align with the CACFP program and meal pattern requirements. A school will have to apply to become a CACFP sponsor in order to receive reimbursement/ claims for snacks served to preschoolers.

For more information or questions, please contact ISBE's Nutrition Division at cnp@isbe.net or (800) 545-7892.

ENCOURAGING CHILD TO CHILD INTERACTIONS

Most preschool and kindergarten classes include regular whole group meetings. Often called circle or group time, these meetings may include listening to stories, singing, finger plays, and other teacher-led activities. Group meetings are also good times to encourage children to talk directly to each other about what matters to them. Child-to-child conversations during group meetings can help meet several Illinois Early Learning and Development Benchmarks (1.A.ECc, 1.B.ECb, 1.B.ECd, 31.A.ECb).

Check out this [Illinois Early Learning Project Tip Sheet](#) for application strategies.



For the Classroom

SUPPORTING CHILDREN WHO ARE DUAL LANGUAGE LEARNERS WITH DISABILITIES OR SUSPECTED DELAYS

One of the biggest conundrums educators face is how to screen and provide services to our English Learners who may have developmental delays. One of the unfortunate things heard from colleagues in our field is that English Learners who are screened and determined to need Individualized Education Programs are not provided these services, or their families are asked to choose either English Learner services or special education services — but not both — as required by federal and state law.

The National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning publishes Head Start's monthly Disabilities Services Newsletter. The newsletter's June edition has an article titled [Supporting Children Who Are Dual Language Learners \(DLLs\) with Disabilities or Suspected Delays](#) that provides a case scenario as well as best practices for early childhood educators and families that are informed by cultural and linguistic responsiveness.

Some of the key takeaways from this resource are the following:

- Ensure that screenings are conducted by staff or alongside specialists with an understanding of the child's cultural and linguistic background
- Utilize screeners and assessments that reflect children's cultural and linguistic background whenever possible
- Partner with parents and local agencies (such as immigrant/refugee service organizations) to support your program and families through the formal evaluation process and design of services and supports in your program and at home

This resource is perfect for educators in early childhood special education/inclusion classrooms that serve our increasingly culturally and linguistically diverse preschool student population and their families.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Early CHOICES

www.eclre.org

Early Childhood Professional Learning (ECPL)

www.eclearningil.org/

Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map (IECAM)

<https://iecam.illinois.edu>

Illinois Early Learning Project <https://illinoisearlylearning.org/>

Illinois STAR NET

www.starnet.org

KIDS <https://www.isbe.net/kids>

Partner Plan Act <http://partnerplanact.org/>

The Child Find Project of Illinois <http://www.childfind-idea-il.us/>

The Ounce of Prevention <https://www.theounce.org/what-we-do/professional-development/>

UPCOMING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Check out the [statewide professional development calendar](#).

This reflects professional development opportunities from each of the six STAR NET regions as well as the Early Childhood Professional Learning Center from now through December, 2018.

A few opportunities to highlight:

[Outstanding Practices in Inclusion \(OPI\) recognition informational webinar](#)

10/3/18 9-10 a.m. Webinar

[Developing and Sustaining Community Partners](#)

10/10/18 9 a.m.- 3 p.m. at The Center in Arlington Heights

[Integrating Speech and Language Therapy into Early Childhood Classrooms: Strategies for Successful Implementation](#)

10/17/19 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at The Center in Arlington Heights

[Beyond MOUs: Let's Find and Enroll Children with High Needs Together](#)

10/18/18 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. at The Center in Arlington Heights

[Introduction to the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale - 3rd Edition \(ECERS-3\)](#)

11/2/18 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. at The Center in Arlington Heights

[Building a Culture of Inclusion Community of Practice](#)

First of ongoing dates November 28, 2018, in-person and webinar sessions

[Administrator Community of Practice](#)

1st of 4 parts November 28, 2018, 9 a.m. -10 a.m., webinar

Administrator Academies

[Early Childhood Inclusion: Supporting Children's Special Needs in High Quality Early Learning Environments](#)

Date: 9/21/2018 9 a.m. - Noon

[Essential Leadership Strategies for Adopting the Pyramid Model with Fidelity](#)

10/10/2018 9 a.m. - Noon

[Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale \(ECERS-3\)](#)

11/08/2018 9 a.m. - Noon

ILLINOIS EARLY LEARNING PROJECT (IELP)

The Illinois Early Learning Project website is a source of evidence-based, reliable information on early care and education for families, caregivers, and teachers of young children in Illinois. It offers graphic tip sheets, infant/toddler tip sheets, and tip sheets that are aligned to the Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards.

<https://illinoisearlylearning.org/>



Project Spotlight

THE CHILD FIND PROJECT OF ILLINOIS

The Child Find Project provides free public awareness services as part of the comprehensive Child Find system. The goal of the Child Find Project is to educate the public about the importance of early intervention and early childhood special education services for eligible children as early as possible in their development. The Child Find Project develops and disseminates informational education materials, and resource and service information to Illinois school districts, early intervention providers, health care providers, families, child care providers, educators, and the general public. The distribution of this educational material helps the Child Find Project assist professionals with meeting Child Find mandates as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.



Look What I Can Do

Early Intervention For Young Children With Developmental Delays

Does your ECBG program do something innovative you would like to share with the state? Send us information and pictures and you may be included in the next newsletter! Send information to earlychi@isbe.net