

## Article - Education

[Previous][Next]

§5–217.

- (a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.
- (2) “Accreditation” means the determination that a program meets quality standards defined by the accrediting agency beyond State child care regulations.
- (3) “Accrediting agency” means a State agency or national organization that has developed a recognized accrediting process.
- (4) “Credentialing” means the process through which an individual is awarded a professional certificate based on education and experience.
- (5) “Early Childhood Education Enhancement Grant” means a grant that is distributed under subsection (e–1) of this section.
- (6) “Full day” means a period of time during the day that:
- (i) Meets the needs of families; and
  - (ii) Is not less than 7 hours or more than 12 hours per day.
- (7) “Judy Center” means a site where comprehensive early childhood education services are provided to young children and their families for the purpose of promoting school readiness through collaboration with participating agencies and programs.
- (8) “Judy Center Grant” means a grant that is distributed under subsection (d) of this section.
- (9) “Local management board” means a local management board as defined under § 8–101(l) of the Human Services Article.
- (10) “Participating agencies and programs” includes:
- (i) Public prekindergarten and kindergarten programs;
  - (ii) Head Start programs;
  - (iii) Family literacy programs and services;
  - (iv) Local infants and toddlers programs;
  - (v) Child care centers and family child care homes;
  - (vi) Family support centers;

- (vii) Healthy family sites;
- (viii) Parent involvement programs;
- (ix) Early childhood programs affiliated with institutions of higher education; and
- (x) Other home visiting, community health, family support services, and child care resource and referral agencies.

(11) “Preschool Services Grant” means a grant that is distributed under subsection (e) of this section.

(12) “Program” means the Judith P. Hoyer Early Childhood Education Enhancement Program established under this section.

(b) (1) There is a Judith P. Hoyer Early Childhood Education Enhancement Program in the Department.

(2) The purpose of the Program is to promote school readiness through the development and expansion of collaborative approaches to the delivery of high quality, comprehensive, full-day early childhood education programs and family support services.

(c) (1) The Program shall be funded as provided in the State budget.

(2) Funds that are allocated to the Program in the State budget may be used:

(i) To cover the costs incurred by the Department in implementing and administering the Program;

(ii) For Judy Center Grants, as provided under subsection (d) of this section;

(iii) For Preschool Services Grants, as provided under subsection (e) of this section;

(iv) For Early Childhood Education Enhancement Grants, as provided under subsection (e-1) of this section; and

(v) To fund the statewide implementation of the Department’s Early Childhood Assessment System, as provided under subsection (f) of this section.

(d) The Department may distribute a Judy Center Grant to a county board if the county board submits an application to the Department that includes:

(1) A memorandum of understanding between the county board, the participating agencies and programs, and, in the discretion of the county board, the

local management board that includes:

(i) The terms of the collaboration to be undertaken by the county board, the participating agencies and programs, and, if applicable, the local management board, including the roles and responsibilities of each of these entities; and

(ii) A plan for establishing ongoing communication between private service providers and public school early education programs; and

(2) Documentation that shows that:

(i) The Department's Early Childhood Assessment System will be implemented at the Center;

(ii) All participating agencies and programs that provide early childhood education services through the Center have voluntarily obtained accreditation or, by the date of the Grant application, have voluntarily initiated and are actively pursuing the process of obtaining accreditation; and

(iii) The Center will provide comprehensive, full-day early childhood education services and family support services.

(e) (1) The Department may distribute a Preschool Services Grant to be used to provide prekindergarten services for 4-year-old children whose birthdays fall on or before September 1 of the school year during which services will be provided and whose family income is below a level set by the Department.

(2) Private providers that have voluntarily obtained accreditation or have voluntarily initiated and are actively pursuing accreditation by the date of the grant application must obtain accreditation before receiving a grant award.

(e-1) The Department may distribute an Early Childhood Education Enhancement Grant to a private provider of early childhood education services to be used:

(1) To assist the provider in voluntarily obtaining accreditation; or

(2) For professional development activities leading to increased competency and appropriate credentialing that is related to early childhood education services.

(f) The Department may distribute funds to a county board for the purpose of implementing the Department's Early Childhood Assessment System in the county's public schools.

(g) (1) The Department shall:

(i) Establish application procedures for obtaining Judy Center Grants, Preschool Services Grants, and Early Childhood Education Enhancement Grants as provided under this section;

(ii) Supervise and monitor the use of Grant funds distributed under this section; and

(iii) Evaluate whether Grant recipients are meeting annual benchmarks established by the Department.

(2) For Judy Center Grants, the Department may award multiyear funding.

(h) A county board that is selected to receive a Judy Center Grant or a private provider that has been selected for a Preschool Services Grant or an Early Childhood Education Enhancement Grant shall:

(1) Administer the Grant award;

(2) Submit fiscal and program reports as required by the Department; and

(3) Coordinate the involvement of participating agencies and programs in any evaluation process conducted by the Department.

(i) Grants awarded under this section may not be used:

(1) To supplant existing funding for any services provided by participating agencies and programs; or

(2) For capital improvements.

(j) The Department shall conduct an evaluation process to measure the effectiveness of:

(1) The Judy Centers; and

(2) Early childhood education services and family support services that are purchased with funds from Preschool Services Grants and Early Childhood Education Enhancement Grants.

(k) The Department shall submit to the Governor and, subject to § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly:

(1) On or before November 1 of each year, a report on the implementation of the Program and the participating agencies and programs, including a description of the Program's and the participating agencies' and programs' expenditures, enrollment, and statewide performance data, including school readiness data disaggregated by program and by jurisdiction; and

(2) On or before January 1, 2016, a separate report that includes an evaluation, based on objective performance criteria established by the Department, of the effectiveness of:

(i) The Judy Centers; and

(ii) Early childhood education services and family support services that are purchased with funds from Preschool Services Grants and Early Childhood Education Enhancement Grants.

(l) The Department may adopt regulations as necessary to implement the Program.

[Previous][Next]