Request for Proposals

Recruiting Fourth Cohort for NASBE Early Childhood Education (ECE) State Network

The National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) seeks applicants to join the NASBE Early Childhood Education (ECE) State Network as part of its efforts to support a well-qualified, equitable, well-compensated ECE workforce through effective state policies. NASBE welcomes state proposals that seek to develop or build on existing innovative strategies to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on children from birth to third grade and on the ECE workforce.

NASBE established the ECE State Network in 2017. State boards of education from New York, Iowa, Nebraska, Michigan, Mississippi, Washington, Delaware, Illinois, and Guam were tasked with developing, revising, and adopting policies to support the ECE system and its workforce. They made tremendous progress and showcased state boards’ key role in leading initiatives to advance ECE.

To further build the capacity of state boards to support the ECE system and the workforce, NASBE seeks to recruit two additional state boards to develop, revise, or adopt policies and share practices with other states. The network has these aims:

1. a well-qualified, equitable, well-compensated workforce for children from birth to age 8;
2. an improved, better aligned system to support education from birth to age 8;
3. collaborative stakeholder engagement across agencies; and
4. supportive state policy and leadership.

Upon approval of their applications to join the network, the two selected states will each receive a stipend of $5,000 each year for two years (2022 and 2023).

Past Successes

1) The Illinois State Board of Education commissioned a research project on ECE licensure and teacher shortage issues after joining NASBE’s ECE network. The project laid the groundwork for solving a teacher shortage problem that preexisted COVID-19. Findings were presented to the state board, and the board is reexamining its licensure types to determine whether it might create a permanent alternative pathway for ECE teachers to become state certified. The project supported the convening of representatives from across Illinois government, including the state board, the Illinois Department of Human Services, the Governor’s Office of Early Childhood Development, Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Illinois Board of Higher Education, and Illinois Community College Board.

2) Michigan’s state board approved a birth-kindergarten teacher license. Over its four years of working with NASBE, Michigan changed its ECE teacher licensure structure, replacing its K-6 license with two narrow-band licenses that specify the knowledge and skills the workforce needs for early childhood and elementary teaching. The Michigan state board, working closely with the Michigan Department of Education, led the work. NASBE published
a *State Innovation* report about their initiative: "[Michigan Adds Certificate for Birth to Kindergarten Teachers.](#)"

3) **New York** developed "[Resource Guides for School Success in Early Learning: The Third Grade Early Learning Standards.](#)" This document was reviewed and approved by the Board of Regents. The guides provide reference tool by teachers, specialists, and administrators responsible for designing programs for third-grade students, and strengthen PreK-3rd grade alignment. New York also provided professional learning events to support teachers’ career development, the learning sessions are posted on the New York State Education Department’s Office of Early Learning’s [website](#).

4) The **Guam Board of Education** developed guidance for early childhood educators on social and emotional learning (SEL) and supportive policy to help young children and their families adjust to online, hard-copy curriculum and face-to-face models of instruction during the pandemic. The project included training of Guam board members and the island’s Early Childhood Education Planning Committee to deepen their understanding of SEL and to craft policy to address the needs of young children. The board worked with the superintendent of education and appointed an ECE task force to draft an SEL policy, which was approved by the board in 2020.

**Selection Criteria**

**Focus Areas.** Applicant state boards must have a strong interest in work on ECE workforce issues to support educators and leaders serving children birth through age 8, focusing on at least two of the areas identified in the 2015 report issued by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine entitled *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation*. These areas are:

1. educator competencies and certification
2. educator preparation programs
3. educator professional development
4. compensation

Proposed areas for policy work could address, for example, the health and safety of young children and teachers, early literacy, professional development for teachers or leaders about trauma-informed or culturally responsive instruction, birth to 3rd grade system alignment, a policy audit, or teacher recruitment and retention. Proposed initiatives should have at least one policy component to support ECE educators.

**Stakeholders.** State boards should include state and local stakeholders as team members or partners in their applications. State boards may consider participants from other state entities including departments of education, health, and family and child care; Head Start; ECE advisory councils; state educator leadership, licensure, and accreditation agencies; leaders and faculty from higher education; and other early care and education stakeholders.

**Proposals are due to NASBE no later than close of business on Friday, May 20, 2022.** Please fill out the stipend application below and email to Winona Hao, director of early learning, at [winona.hao@nasbe.org](mailto:winona.hao@nasbe.org).
STATE STIPEND APPLICATION

GENERAL INFORMATION

State

Signature of board chair or vice chair

Name, title, phone, and email of state liaison

Name, phone, and email of the lead State Board of Education member (if different from above)

Is your state board a member of NASBE?

☐ Yes  ☐ No

Has your state board agreed to join the Network and accept the stipend?

☐ Yes  ☐ No

Areas of Focus. States must tackle at least two of the following areas identified in the National Academies’ report *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation* through this stipend. Which areas are your state planning to tackle? States should consider both teachers and leaders in the following categories.

☐ Educator competencies and certification
☐ Educator preparation programs
☐ Educator career pathways and professional development
☐ Compensation Issue

Application Narrative (please extend the space as needed to describe your project)
1. **Statement of Interest and Commitment.** Describe your state board’s interest in this project and its commitment to ECE. What do you hope to achieve by joining the Network?

2. **Capacity and State Landscape.** Describe the state board’s capacity to accomplish the activities in this proposal. What is the current landscape of ECE in your state in terms of readiness for policy change?

3. **Strategic Partnerships.** Describe current and potential state board relationships with key stakeholders related to this initiative. What critical partnerships will assist with this work? What entities will you include in the planning and execution of the work plan? What relationships exist with other public entities impacted by this work (legislature, governor’s office, local districts, etc.)? How will you communicate regularly with stakeholders throughout the project?

4. **Goals and Objectives.** Please share the general goals you wish to accomplish by joining the Network and list specific objectives that you will include in your work plan.

5. **Please List Your Project Deliverables** (you will need to submit a more detailed work plan once NASBE approves your application; NASBE will provide the work plan template):

6. **Budget Narrative.** Please share your general proposal for how the stipend funds will be spent.
Proposed budget based upon a $5,000 stipend award each year for two years (as outlined in the budget narrative)

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