

From: Webster, Melinda
Sent time: Friday, December 16, 2011 1:10:23 PM
To: Cari Miller (Cari@excelined.org) <Cari@excelined.org>
Subject: RE: Associated Press: 9 states to win early learning grant

I know...rats for Florida and NM!

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From: Cari Miller (Cari@excelined.org) [mailto:Cari@excelined.org]
Sent: Friday, December 16, 2011 10:44 AM
To: Webster, Melinda
Subject: FW: Associated Press: 9 states to win early learning grant

☺ So sorry Melinda!

From: Nadia Hagberg (Nadia@excelined.org)
Sent: Friday, December 16, 2011 8:50 AM
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Subject: Associated Press: 9 states to win early learning grant

**According to this article – FL will not be one of the grant recipients*

AP Newsbreak: 9 states to win early learning grant

KIMBERLY HEFLING - AP Education Writer (AP)

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<http://www.knoxnews.com/news/2011/dec/16/ap-newsbreak-official-9-states-win-grants/>

WASHINGTON (AP) — Nine states will share \$500 million in grant money won in a high-profile competition intended to jump-start improvements in often-overlooked early childhood programs, The Associated Press has learned.

The winners to be announced Friday at the White House are California, Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, North Carolina, Ohio, Rhode Island and Washington, according to an administration official who spoke on condition of anonymity because the winners had not been officially announced.

The money to aid the nation's youngest learners is part of the Obama administration's cornerstone education initiative — the "Race to the Top" grant competition — which has states competing for federal dollars to create programs that make schools more effective. Last year, it handed out \$4 billion in similar grants focused on K-12 education.

The goal of this competition is to get more children from birth to age 5 ready for kindergarten. Thirty-five states along with the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico applied for the chance to win between about \$50 million to \$100 million apiece in prize money. The winnings are to help build statewide systems that affect all early learning programs, including child care, Head Start centers and public or private preschools.

Billions are spent annually in America on early education programs, but the quality and availability of those programs varies greatly. Roughly half of all 3-year-olds and about a quarter of 4-year-olds do not attend preschool, said Steve Barnett, director of the National Institute for Early Education Research at Rutgers University.

Kids who attend quality early education programs have been shown to do better in school, be less likely to spend time in prison later and to make more money as adults. But children from low-income families who start kindergarten without any schooling are estimated to start school 18 months behind their peers, a gap that is extremely difficult to overcome.

To win, states were asked to demonstrate a commitment to making such programs more accessible, coordinated and more effective. Providing professional development for teachers and creating ways to assess the education level of kids entering kindergarten were among the areas states were asked to focus on in their application.

Education Secretary Arne Duncan and Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius were to announce the winners at the White House. The two agencies jointly administered the competition. HHS oversees the federal Head Start program, which provides early education to nearly 1 million low-income children.

Last month, Obama announced new rules that require lower-performing Head Start programs to compete for funding. The Education Department also has proposed creating a new office to oversee the grants and better coordinate early learning programs.
