

§6603-A. Early childhood nutrition grant program

The department shall create and administer, in consultation with the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Child and Family Services, a grant program to provide grants to school administrative units to enter into agreements with providers of off-site public preschool programs to provide students in those programs with breakfast, lunch and a snack in accordance with this section. [PL 2025, c. 650, Pt. BB, §2 (NEW).]

1. Definition. For the purposes of this section, "off-site public preschool program" means a public preschool program offered by a public school in the State in partnership with a community provider that is not located on the site of a public school and includes, but is not limited to, a public preschool program offered at a private child care facility. [PL 2025, c. 650, Pt. BB, §2 (NEW).]

2. Eligibility. After consulting with the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Child and Family Services, the department shall adopt rules to establish eligibility standards and requirements for participation in the grant program. Eligibility standards and requirements must align with rules adopted by the Department of Health and Human Services for the licensing of child care facilities, including, but not limited to, child care centers, nursery schools and small child care facilities. Eligibility standards and requirements must include, but are not limited to:

A. A requirement that the off-site public preschool program meet the basic approval standards for public preschools adopted by the department; [PL 2025, c. 650, Pt. BB, §2 (NEW).]

B. A requirement that the off-site public preschool program provide food that meets the nutritional standards developed for child care centers as provided in section 6602 and pursuant to 42 United States Code, Section 1766 and administered by the United States Department of Agriculture, child and adult food care program; [PL 2025, c. 650, Pt. BB, §2 (NEW).]

C. Requirements for the eligibility of school administrative units partnering with licensed child care programs for the delivery of special education services for children eligible under Part B, Section 619 as defined in section 7001, subsection 1-D; and [PL 2025, c. 650, Pt. BB, §2 (NEW).]

D. A requirement that a memorandum of understanding between the school administrative unit and the off-site public preschool program provider describe the process by which meals will be delivered and reimbursed. [PL 2025, c. 650, Pt. BB, §2 (NEW).]

Rules adopted pursuant to this subsection are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

[PL 2025, c. 650, Pt. BB, §2 (NEW).]

3. Awards. Grants awarded by the department pursuant to this section are governed as follows.

A. The amount of a grant is limited to the total annual per-student reimbursement rate for the National School Lunch Program established in 7 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 210. [PL 2025, c. 650, Pt. BB, §2 (NEW).]

B. The department may not distribute grant funds prior to the 2027-2028 school year. [PL 2025, c. 650, Pt. BB, §2 (NEW).]

[PL 2025, c. 650, Pt. BB, §2 (NEW).]

4. Fund established. The Early Childhood Nutrition Grant Program Fund, referred to in this subsection as "the fund," is established within the department to be used for the grant program in accordance with this section. The fund consists of any funds appropriated or allocated for inclusion in the fund by the State. The fund is nonlapsing and any balance remaining in the fund at the end of any fiscal year must be carried forward to the next fiscal year.

[PL 2025, c. 650, Pt. BB, §2 (NEW).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 2025, c. 650, Pt. BB, §2 (NEW).

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