

Full Application Toolkit
Early Reading First
Featuring *Scholastic Early Childhood Program*™

Scholastic Inc. has prepared this Grant Assistance Toolkit to assist Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and/or public or private organizations or agencies in the development of an *Early Reading First (ERF)* grant program. The Toolkit provides key information in these areas:

- ◆ Funding program information
- ◆ Alignment of the **Scholastic Early Childhood Program** to *ERF* grant requirements
- ◆ Grant writing support

Scholastic Early Childhood Program is the research-based reading program featured in this Toolkit.

The **Scholastic Early Childhood Program (SECP)** is a comprehensive Pre-Kindergarten program that is structured around the following pedagogy: curriculum, methodology, and cognitive socialization. The program is based upon the critical principles of best practices in Early Childhood Education, as well as key research findings about the relationship between what is determined by genetic factors and what is shaped by a child's environment and interactions. This research-based foundation addresses the critical areas for a successful high-quality curriculum and environment for young learners. These areas include:

- ◆ Effective curriculum, assessments, and evaluations
- ◆ Relevant professional development
- ◆ Strong school/home connections and family support

Using the Toolkit

This Toolkit is designed as a resource to provide information that can be used when completing the full application for *ERF* grant funds. It only addresses application requirements that are pertinent to Scholastic products and services and does not cover all *ERF* expectations.

The Toolkit also includes grant writing tips and examples of the types of information needed when applying for a grant. Contact the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) for the official application that has all the requirements and guidelines.

Please note these symbols throughout the Toolkit to help you write your application:

 **Highlights additional support and suggestions for writing your application.**

 **Refers to Scholastic Early Childhood Program features.**

Scholastic's Commitment

Scholastic is committed to the sustainability of quality programs in order to improve teaching and learning. For more information about the products included in this Toolkit, please contact your Scholastic Regional Office.

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800-342-5331

Northeast
800-878-8398

Southeast
800-348-3750


Southwest
800-221-5312

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 *Because every grant program is unique, it is important to adapt the language provided in this Toolkit rather than copy it. Your proposal is more likely to be successful if you **customize** your application. Be sure to incorporate specific information about your program's needs, vision, programs, and design when you write your *Early Reading First* application.*

Funding Program Overview: *Early Reading First*

The information in this section of the Toolkit is based on the federal *Guidance for the ERF Program* (March 2003) and the *Fiscal Year 2005 Application for New Grants for the ERF Program* that is available at this website:


<http://www.ed.gov/programs/earlyreading/applicant.html>

Purpose of *Early Reading First*

Title I, Part B, Subpart 2 of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)* is known as *Early Reading First*. The ultimate goal of the *ERF* is to improve the school readiness of our nation's young children, especially those from low-income families, by providing support for Early Childhood Education programs serving preschool-age children.

Specifically, *Early Reading First* grants will provide funds to:

1. Support local efforts to enhance the early language, cognitive, and early reading development of preschool-age children, particularly those from low-income families, through strategies and professional development that are based on scientifically based reading research
2. Provide preschool-age children with cognitive learning opportunities in high-quality language and print-rich environments so that they can attain the fundamental knowledge and skills necessary for optimal reading development in Kindergarten and beyond
3. Use language and literacy activities based on scientifically based reading research to support the age-appropriate development of:
 - ◆ *Oral language*—vocabulary development, expressive language, and listening comprehension
 - ◆ *Phonological awareness*—rhyming, blending, segmenting
 - ◆ *Print awareness*
 - ◆ *Alphabet knowledge*—letter recognition
4. Use screening assessments or other appropriate measures to identify preschool-age children who may be at risk for reading failure, and to determine whether those children are developing the language, cognitive, and early reading skills they need for later reading success
5. Integrate instructional materials and programs based on scientifically based reading research into existing preschool programs

 *The Scholastic Early Childhood Program is designed to ensure that children develop language and early reading skills in the four critical areas outlined by ERF including: oral language, phonological awareness, print awareness, and alphabetic knowledge. The central goal of the program is to help guarantee that young children develop the critical skills, knowledge, and life habits necessary to become successful learners, especially in the areas of language and literacy development.*

Eligibility

The USDOE determines which applicants will be invited to submit full applications, considering the rank ordering of the pre-applications based on the pre-application selection criteria and the competitive priority. Those pre-applicants who have been invited to submit full applications are posted on the *Early Reading First* website at:

<http://www.ed.gov/programs/earlyreading/applicant.html>

A peer review panel of experts evaluates full applications and awards points based on the selection criteria and competitive priority, if any. The USDOE selects applicants for funding based on the quality of their full application and their rank order.

Full Application Deadline: May 2, 2005

Full applications for grants under this program must be submitted electronically using the Department's e-Grants system, accessible through the e-Grants portal page at:

<http://e-grants.ed.gov>

The deadline for electronic submission of *Early Reading First* program Full Applications is 4:30 p.m. (Washington DC time), **May 2, 2005**

What Projects Must Do


Early Reading First provides funding and support to turn preschool programs into Centers of Excellence by improving instruction and classroom environments through scientific research-based practices in language, cognition, and early reading.

All *Early Reading First* projects must provide the following activities:

 ***For more information about these activities, as well as research-based approaches and strategies, the Early Reading First Guidance is available at:***

<http://www.ed.gov/programs/earlyreading/legislation.html>

1. **Classroom Environment:** Provide preschool-age children with high-quality oral language and print-rich environments in which to acquire oral language skills, phonological awareness, print awareness, and alphabet knowledge.

 ***The Scholastic Early Childhood Program is a Pre-Kindergarten curriculum that provides a rich environment of print and non-print experiences related to language and literacy development. Children engage in meaningful, fun activities that help them build their awareness of the sounds of language. They are exposed to a variety of print, including fiction and nonfiction trade books, Big Books, poems, signs, lists, word cards, and science posters.***

2. **Professional Development:** Provide professional development for staff that is based on scientifically based reading research knowledge of language, cognitive, and early reading development that will assist in developing the preschool-age children's:

- ◆ *Oral language*—expressive and receptive language, including vocabulary development
- ◆ *Phonological awareness*—rhyming, blending, and segmenting
- ◆ *Print awareness*
- ◆ *Alphabet knowledge*—letter recognition



SECP research-based professional development opportunities include:

- *“My Guide for Ongoing Assessment and Curriculum Development,”* which provides teachers with an in-depth background on all areas of child development and learning.
- *Integrated Teacher Workshops,* which are a series of 12 cooperative workshop sessions designed to facilitate discussions with teaching teams. Each workshop consists of a four-step plan centered on research-based articles written by noted Early Childhood Education experts.
- *Scholastic Early Childhood Seminar Series,* which consists of one-day seminars that cover the essentials of early literacy and language development, strategies supporting the English language learner, and other critical topics.

3. **Services and Instructional Materials:** Identify and provide activities and instructional materials that are based on scientifically based reading research for use in developing children's language, cognitive, and early reading skills.



Research Foundation: *The language and early literacy curriculum of SECP is based upon the National Research Council report, “Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children.” In addition, the research foundation paper published by Scholastic, “10 Big Ideas About Early Childhood Education,” provides a complete overview of the proven research used to develop the Scholastic Early Childhood Program.*



Classroom Management: *SECP includes Welcome to Pre-Kindergarten: A Guide for Setting Up and Managing Your Classroom. This tool, which is based on best practices in Early Childhood Education, provides teachers with ideas for organizing their classroom, managing their daily routine, modifying the program for children with special needs, putting in place flexible grouping, and incorporating other strategies.*




Cohesive Curriculum: *SECP is organized around 10 relevant themes reflecting real-world experiences common in the lives of preschoolers. Each theme comes with a Teacher's Guide organized for preparing and executing the weekly curriculum plans. The instructional framework puts language and literacy first within an integrated curriculum ensuring children achieve readiness in oral language, phonological awareness, letter and sound knowledge, and print awareness. The program integrates these skills across the domains of Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Personal and Social Development, and the Fine Arts.*



Support for English Language Learners: *Realizing that many students are learning English as a second language, SECP includes intensive support for ESL students. To support the large and growing Spanish-speaking population, SECP provides all materials in both English and Spanish.*

4. **Screening Assessments:** Acquire, provide training in the use of, and implement screening reading assessments or other appropriate measures that are based on scientifically based reading research to determine whether preschool-age children are developing the language, cognitive, and early reading skills they need for later reading success.

 **SECP** provides informal and formal assessment tools in print and on CD-ROM, where individual student data can be stored.


Informal Assessment: **SECP** provides guidance in assessing daily work, portfolio review, and learning over time. Examples include how to use and develop:


- Observational records and individuals' profiles
- Anecdotal records
- Oral language checklists
- Meaningful portfolios that document progress

Formal Assessment: The program includes formal assessments in these key areas of early literacy:

- Book and print awareness
- Phonological awareness
- Letter knowledge assessment
- Writing assessment

5. **Integration:** Integrate the above instructional materials, activities, tools, and measures into the applicant's overall programs.

 The instructional design of the **Scholastic Early Childhood Program** allows for both teacher-initiated direct instruction and child-initiated explorations. The central goal of the program is to help guarantee that young children develop the critical skills, knowledge, and life habits to become successful learners, especially in the areas of language and literacy development.

 **SECP** provides planning flexibility with themes and lessons that adapt easily to classroom needs, as well as grouping flexibility with suggestions and activities for different collaborative settings.

6. **Coordinate with Reading First:** If applicants are located in a school district that receives a subgrant under the *Reading First* program, coordinate their *Early Reading First* activities with the school district's *Reading First* activities to ensure continuity for children between the Pre-Kindergarten program and Kindergarten through Grade 3 reading instruction.

7. **Report Annually:** Submit to the USDOE annual performance reports. Additionally, the annual performance report must report the project's performance against the GPRA indicators using the following two measures for evaluating the overall effectiveness of the *Early Reading First* program:

- ◆ The percentage of preschool-age children who demonstrate age-appropriate oral language skills as measured by the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-III
- ◆ The average number of letters that preschool-age children are able to identify as measured by the K Upper Case Alphabet Knowledge subtask on the PALS Pre-K assessment

8. **Cooperate with any Evaluation:** Participate fully in any evaluation of the *Early Reading First* program carried out by the USDOE.

The Full Application Process

All full applications must include the following:

Part I of the Full Application

- ◆ ED 424 form
- ◆ Abstract—Applicants must submit a one-page, double-spaced Abstract, briefly describing their proposed project.

Part II of the Full Application

- ◆ Full Application Narrative—The Full Application Narrative is limited to 35 double-spaced pages. The applicant should prepare the narrative to respond to the selection criteria in the order in which they are listed:
 - A. Quality of the Project Design
 - B. Quality of Project Personnel
 - C. Adequacy of Resources
 - D. Quality of Management Plan
 - E. Quality of the Project Evaluation
 - F. Significance
 - G. Competitive Preference—Novice Applicants

Part III of the Full Application

- ◆ ED 524 Form, Budget Information—Part A only, columns for Project Years 1, 2, and 3, and Total column.
- ◆ Budget Narrative—Explanation of proposed costs in narrative form—the equivalent of no more than 5 pages, double-spaced, 12-point font.

Part IV of the Full Application

- ◆ Appendices
 - List of name(s) and address(es) of the existing preschool programs that the *Early Reading First* project would support, including a brief description indicated under Quality of Project Design, (Selection Criteria 1), Note, Purpose 1.
 - Curriculum vitae for key personnel—no more than five people. Include no more than three one-sided pages for each curriculum vita submitted.
 - Numbered endnote citations
 - SF 424B Form—Assurance—Non-Construction Programs
 - Demonstration of Stakeholders' Support—limited to five one-sided pages.
 - ED 80-0013 Form
 - SF LLL Form (submit if applicable)
 - Response to Notice to All Applicants (Section 427, GEPA)
- ✍ ***For a complete list of all required forms and information, please consult the Full Application Final Checklist located in Section E of the Early Reading First application package, CFDA No. 84.359B.***

Instructions for Transmitting Full Applications

Full applications for grants under the *Early Reading First* program must be submitted electronically using the Department's e-Grants system, accessible through the e-Grants portal page at: <http://e-grants.ed.gov>.

The deadline for electronic submission of *ERF* Full Applications is 4:30 p.m. (Washington DC time), May 2, 2005

Applicants must submit all documents electronically, including the Application for Federal Education Assistance (ED 424), Budget Information (ED 524), and all necessary assurances and certifications. Electronic full applications must comply with any page-limit requirements described in Section D of the application package. Applicants may NOT e-mail an electronic copy of a pre-grant application to USDOE.

 **Please see Section D for specific instructions for electronic submission of Full Applications and hours of operation for the e-Grants web site.**

After Submitting the Application Electronically

After applicants submit the Full Application, they will receive an automatic acknowledgement that will include a PR/Award Number (an identifying number unique to their application).

Within three working days after submitting the electronic application, applicants are required to fax a signed copy of the ED 424 to the Application Control Center after following these steps:

1. Print ED 424 from e-Application.
2. The applicant's Authorizing Representative must sign this form.
3. Place the PR/Award Number in the upper right hand corner of the hard-copy signature page of the ED 424.
4. Fax the signed ED 424 to the Application Control Center at (202) 245-6272.

Tips for Electronic Submission

- ◆ USDOE strongly recommends that applicants do not wait until the deadline date to begin the Full Application process.
- ◆ Prior to submitting the electronic Full Application, USOE recommends that applicants print a copy of it for their records.
- ◆ For technical assistance, with the e-Application process, contact the e-Grants Help Desk at 1-888-336-8930.


Competitive Priority
NOVICE APPLICANT

Early Reading First Full Applications that meet the following competitive priority will receive 5 extra points. To obtain points under this Full Application competitive priority, an applicant must:

1. Qualify as a novice applicant as described below
2. Check “Yes” in response to Question 6 on the Application for Federal Assistance Form (ED Form 424) that the applicant files with its Full Application

A “novice applicant” means any applicant for a grant from USDOE that:

- A. Has never received a grant or subgrant under the *Early Reading First* program
- B. Has never been a member of a group application that received an *Early Reading First* grant award
- C. Has not had an active discretionary grant from the Federal Government in the five years before the deadline date for applications under *Early Reading First*


 ***For more information regarding the definitions for a “novice applicant,” please refer to the ERF Full Application Package, Section E.***


Scholastic Early Childhood Program Aligns to Early Reading First Criteria


Early Reading First is a federal grant program that is part of the President’s Early Childhood Initiative, “Good Start, Grow Smart.” These grants are designed to help existing Early Childhood Education programs become Centers of Educational Excellence for preschool-age children. Through improvements in the instruction and classroom environment, children will develop the critical language, literacy, and cognitive skills that will prepare them for success in Kindergarten.


Applicants for *ERF* funds must ensure that their program aligns with the following key emergent literacy skills:

- Oral Language
- Phonological Awareness
- Print Awareness
- Alphabet Knowledge

<i>Early Reading First</i> Criteria	 <i>Scholastic Early Childhood Program</i>
<p>Oral Language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of expressive and receptive language including vocabulary, the contextual use of speech and syntax, and oral comprehension abilities 	<p>Early reading research on oral language development shows that the quality and amount of adult/child discourse is critical. <i>Scholastic Early Childhood Program</i> directly introduces cognitively challenging talk and conversational opportunities through its Circle Time, Story Time, and Learning Centers activities that are centered on thematic investigations.</p> <p><u>Circle Time</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sing songs, recite poetry, and play games to increase vocabulary, listening skills, and use of language ▪ Participate in conversations and class discussions ▪ Respond to open-ended questions <p><u>Story Time</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop reading comprehension skills through shared readings ▪ Practice and explore vocabulary and language use through group discussions <p><u>Learning Centers & Teacher Table</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Engage in adult/child conversation during small groups and at the Teacher Table to build oral language. ▪ Recount and interpret stories through dramatic play ▪ Play words games using CD-ROMS ▪ Listen to Big Book audiocassette recordings and recount stories <p>Children work at the Teacher Table while other children are working independently at Learning Centers. Teachers deliver small-group instruction during Circle Time activities, math lessons on the Math Concept Cards, and rereadings of theme books.</p>

Early Reading First Criteria	 Scholastic Early Childhood Program
<p>Phonological Awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identifying and making oral rhymes ▪ Identifying and working with syllables in spoken words through segmentation and blending ▪ Identifying and working with “onsets and rimes” ▪ Identifying and working with individual sounds in words 	<p>Early reading research on phonological awareness shows that repetition and interactions with new and familiar songs and poems help children become aware of sounds and their combinations. SECP provides multiple opportunities for both teacher-led and child-initiated activities that develop phonological awareness.</p> <p><u>Circle Time</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Practice phonological awareness through modeled lessons ▪ Respond and interact with Phonological Awareness Picture Cards with guidance from teachers ▪ Listen to and sing along with the Songs and Fingerplays CD <p><u>Story Time</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attend to sounds in books with repetitive and rhyming text ▪ Practice phoneme isolation, segmentation, and blending through lessons focused on words and letters from stories they are reading <p><u>Learning Centers & Teacher Table</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explore beginning word sounds and match pictures to initial sounds through hands-on activities ▪ Learn letter/sound relationships and learn the connection between how their names sound and how they appear in print ▪ Identify and match words that rhyme
<p>Print Awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Knowledge of the purposes and conventions of print 	<p>Throughout SECP, children are exposed to a variety of print. Activities include having teachers and children construct print in a variety of forms and for many different purposes. These activities are designed to help children understand that print carries a message. Through multiple encounters with the provided materials, and the recommended teacher modeling strategies, children develop critical concepts of print that aid the reading and writing process.</p> <p><u>Circle Time</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create and read class charts related to the content studied ▪ Read and track print on poem charts <p><u>Story Time</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learn the conventions of books through daily modeled readings ▪ Begin to develop a sight word vocabulary through high-frequency word charts ▪ Develop concepts of words, sentences, and punctuation by following along and tracking print <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued)</i></p>

Early Reading First Criteria	 Scholastic Early Childhood Program
Print Awareness, Continued	<p><u>Learning Centers & Teacher Table</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Track print while listening to Big Book audiocassette recordings ▪ Begin to understand the connection between reading and writing and obtaining information ▪ Develop book-handling skills in the Reading Corner
<p>Alphabet Knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Letter recognition 	<p>SECP provides multiple means to teach children letter sounds, letter forms, and letter/sound correspondence.</p> <p>Teacher Resources:</p> <p><u>Teaching Letters and Sounds Teacher's Guide</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Presents systematic and explicit instruction for teaching letter names and formations to be conducted in small groups ▪ Offers strategies and activities for helping children make meaning of the letters <p><u>Teacher Table "ABC & Writing Center"</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provides small-group instruction of ABC lessons. <p><u>Teacher's Guides</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Give teachers guidelines for introducing and reinforcing letter names and formation through multiple approaches: Circle Time (singing and movement), Story Time (letters and sounds in books), and Learning Centers (paint, make letters in sand). <p>Curriculum:</p> <p><u>Circle Time</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learn letter sound relationships ▪ Attend to letter sounds by sorting and playing games with picture cards ▪ Form letters through movement (signing, dancing, walking the letter shape, etc.) <p><u>Story Time</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learn the letters of the alphabet in a planned sequence through explicit lessons ▪ Practice writing letters and words through activities connected to books <p><u>Learning Centers & Teacher Table</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Begin to recognize letters by creating labels and writing messages ▪ Begin to sign their names on cards


 Please contact your Scholastic representative for Scholastic Early Childhood Program's complete Scope and Sequence.



SECP Aligns to Early Reading First Required Activities


In addition, *Early Reading First* programs must include the following components:

- Classroom Environment
- Professional Development
- Services and Instructional Materials
- Screening Assessments
- Integration

The following chart details how the **Scholastic Early Childhood Program** fulfills the above *ERF* required activities.

Early Reading First Activity	 Scholastic Early Childhood Program
<p>Classroom Environment</p> <p>A high-quality oral language and print-rich environment</p>	<p>The SECP is organized around routines based upon best practices in Early Childhood Education. <i>Welcome to Pre-K</i> supports teachers in setting-up and managing their classroom, as well as creating a literacy-rich environment. Furthermore, the theme Teacher’s Guides provide lessons in English and Spanish, as well as intensive support for ESL students.</p> <p>Each theme includes many lessons and activities that encourage oral discussion and interaction with print materials. In addition to the collection of fiction and non-fiction literature (Little and Big Books), there are science and letter posters, math cards, and word cards that help provide a literacy-rich environment for the child.</p> <p>Each daily lesson is structured in the following manner and can be tailored for half-day or full-day preschool programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Circle Time</u>: Teacher-directed, explicit instruction in oral language, phonological awareness, mathematics, and additional vocabulary and concept building across the content areas ▪ <u>Story Time</u>: Teacher-directed, explicit instruction in language and early literacy skills especially in oral language, phonological awareness, letter and sound knowledge, print awareness, and writing ▪ <u>Learning Centers and Teacher’s Table</u>: Child-directed explorations across the curriculum that focus on the targeted skills and concepts for the week, as well as provide extra practice and reinforcement in previously taught skills and concepts ▪ <u>Transitions</u>: Teacher-led opportunities that use oral language and thinking skills to develop additional literacy area concepts <p>Each theme is supported with instruction for preparing the classroom, launching the activities, and wrapping up the topic.</p>

Early Reading First Activity	 Scholastic Early Childhood Program
<p>Professional Development</p> <p>Professional development that is based on scientifically based reading research knowledge of language, cognitive, and early reading development</p>	<p>Multiple professional development opportunities and support exist for the Scholastic Early Childhood Program.</p> <p><u><i>My Guide for Ongoing Assessment and Professional Development</i></u>, which is integrated into the curriculum, includes a library of professional readings on the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Observation and Assessment ▪ Child Development ▪ Language Acquisition ▪ Early Literacy ▪ Technology ▪ Cross-Curriculum Content Areas ▪ Embracing Diversity ▪ Inclusion in the Classroom <p><u>Integrated Teacher Workshops</u>, a series of 12 cooperative workshop sessions, are based upon the above readings written by experts such as Dr. Susan Neuman, Dr. Stanley Greenspan, and Lillian Katz. (Please e-mail secp@scholastic.com to obtain details on these workshops, which may be eligible in your district for professional development credit hours.)</p> <p><u>Scholastic Early Childhood Seminar Series</u> consists of one-day seminars that can be customized to meet district needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Essentials of Early Literacy and Language Development ▪ Integrating Content Area Themes ▪ Learning Literacy through Interactive Activities ▪ Linking Literacy and Mathematics ▪ Supporting the English Language Learner <p><u>In-service day</u> conducted by a Scholastic Reading Specialist is offered free of charge for grantees using the Scholastic Early Childhood Program as part of their curriculum.</p>
<p>Services and Instructional Materials</p> <p>Activities and instructional materials that are based on scientifically based reading research for use in developing language, cognitive, and early reading skills</p>	<p>The instructional design of SECP is based upon a model of sociocultural theory that promotes the importance of educators and caregivers providing young children with informed instruction, support, and meaningful activities. The central goal of the program is to help guarantee that young children develop the critical skills, knowledge, and life habits to become successful learners, especially in the areas of language and literacy development.</p> <p> <i>For the Research Foundation of SECP, see page 49.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Welcome to Pre-K Guide</u>: SECP provides this professional guide to help teachers organize their classroom, manage their schedule, and create daily routines. It includes ideas for modifying the program to support all children, including those with visual, hearing, physical, cognitive, and social/emotional challenges <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued)</i></p>

Early Reading First Activity	 Scholastic Early Childhood Program
<p>Services and Instructional Materials—Continued</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Theme Teacher Guides: There is a Teacher’s Guide for each of the 10 themes, which is organized by weekly and daily lesson plans. These provide structured activities for Circle Time and Story Time, as well as numerous options for independent exploration in Learning Centers. Tied into each theme is a four-page checklist of very specific skills and behaviors that should be covered in any high-quality Pre-Kindergarten program. ▪ Teacher Tool Kit CD-ROM: This contains all the important administrative tools for the teacher stored in one place: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Assessment guidelines and documents ○ Weekly lesson plans, which can be printed or saved on disk ○ Implementation monitoring checklist ○ Parent Letters ○ Certificates for positive reinforcement of good behavior
<p>Screening Assessments</p> <p>Screening reading assessments or other appropriate measures that are based on scientifically based reading research to determine whether preschool-age children are developing the language, cognitive, and early reading skills they need for later reading success.</p>	<p>SECP provides informal and formal assessment tools in print and on CD-ROM, where individual student data can be stored.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Informal Assessment: SECP provides guidance in assessing daily work, portfolio review, and learning over time. Examples include how to use and develop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Observational records and individuals’ profiles ○ Anecdotal records ○ Oral language checklists ○ Meaningful portfolios that document progress ▪ Formal Assessment: The program includes formal assessments in these key areas of early literacy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Book and print awareness ○ Phonological awareness ○ Letter knowledge assessment ○ Writing assessment <p>In addition, there are checklists for monitoring the Pre-Kindergarten Curriculum Goals: Language & Early Literacy, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Personal & Social Development, Fine Arts, and Physical Development.</p>
<p>Integration</p> <p>The preschool program integrates the instructional materials, activities, tools, and measures described above into the overall Early Childhood Education program offered.</p>	<p>The SECP curriculum model is designed to support children’s development of knowledge, skills, and processes that will help them make sense of themselves and the world around them. The SECP curriculum is thematic, integrated, and rich with culturally relevant materials in both English and, upon request, Spanish.</p>

Customize Your *Early Reading First* Application


This section of the Toolkit provides basic information for those preparing to write an *ERF* grant. It is *not* intended to fully explain every part of the grant application, but should help you understand how to organize information within the *ERF* full application.

The *Early Reading First* Full Application

-  **Be sure to obtain the application for *Early Reading First* from the U.S. Department of Education as it contains the official instructions, schedules, and requirements.**


All USDOE forms for the *ERF* full application are available at the following web site:

<http://www.ed.gov/programs/earlyreading/applicant.html>

-  **Be sure to double-space all text in the full application narrative, including titles, headings, quotations, and references. Text in endnotes, charts, tables, figures, and graphs may be single-spaced.**

Part I of the Full Application


1. ED Form 424

-  **Applicants that meet the Full Application Competitive Priority—Novice Applicant must check “Yes” in response to Question 6 on ED Form 424 in order to receive five additional points in the scoring process. Please see page 7 of the Toolkit for a definition of a Novice Applicant.**

2. Title Page (Optional for e-Applicants)
3. Table of Contents— (Optional for e-Applicants)
4. Abstract (one-page, double-spaced, not numbered, with project name at top)

The *summary* or *abstract* encapsulates all the components of the proposal and gives an overview of the proposed program; it is basically, the program “in a nutshell.” The summary/abstract includes the following information:

- ◆ The audience—Who will the program directly impact?
- ◆ The need/problem—What need will the program address?
- ◆ The educational goals—What does the program strive to ultimately accomplish?
- ◆ The objectives and effectiveness indicators—Who will do what by when?
- ◆ The evaluation plan—What are the guiding questions in the evaluation plan?

-  **Because the abstract is essentially a summary of the program, you should write it after the grant proposal is completed. It can be summarized from other parts of the proposal.**

Part II of the Full Application

Full Application Narrative (35 pages, double-spaced)

The 35-page application narrative should respond to the Full Application Selection Criteria in the order in which they are listed. Applicants should not assume that reviewers have read their pre-applications and should ensure that their full applications include all information needed by the reviewers to evaluate their proposals. Information that applicants provide in one section may be cross-referenced in another section.

QUALITY OF PROJECT DESIGN—0-60 points


Selection Criterion 1, Factor 1: The extent to which the design of the proposed project reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice.

Selection Criterion 1, Factor 2: The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach for meeting statutory purposes and requirements.

Selection Criterion 1, Factor 3: The extent to which the proposed project will be coordinated with similar or related efforts, and with other appropriate community, State, and Federal resources.

Applicants are encouraged to include the following information when addressing *Selection Criterion 1, Factor 1*:


- ◆ Full endnote citations supporting the research basis for the Quality of Project Design (Selection Criteria 1) narrative
- ◆ An explanation of the extent to which the body of research on which the project is based meets the definition of Scientifically Based Reading Research

 **Please see page 49 of the Toolkit for the Scholastic Early Childhood Program's Research Foundation.**


For *Selection Criterion 1, Factor 2*, the ERF statute lists the following five purposes for the *Early Reading First Program*; applicants should address these five purposes in the order indicated.

Purpose 1: To integrate such scientific reading research-based instructional materials and literacy activities (*from Purpose 2*) with existing programs of preschools, child care agencies and programs, Head Start Centers, and family literacy services.


Applicants are encouraged to include the following information when addressing *Selection Criterion 1, Factor 1, Purpose 1*:

- ◆ Specify the existing preschool program(s) that the project proposes to support and improve with *Early Reading First* funds.
-  **The Secretary recommends that, in the case of center-based programs, applicants generally include no more than five centers in order to ensure that funds are sufficiently concentrated to achieve the program goals.**

- ◆ Explain how each existing center selected for the proposal has the capacity and potential to become an *ERF* preschool Center of Educational Excellence. The Secretary believes that such centers are likely to be preschool programs that currently:
 - a. Have existing, appropriately equipped, preschool classrooms in which the *Early Reading First* program will be implemented
 - b. Have high rates of daily attendance for enrolled children
 - c. Are staffed by teachers with the qualifications necessary to implement a language and literacy focused project
 - d. Demonstrate a history of low staff turnover
 - e. Effectively attend to the developmental domains traditionally supported by preschool programs, including social, emotional, and physical; and are ready to implement an added component focused on developing young children's oral language, cognition, and early reading skills.

 ***The Secretary recommends that the applicant demonstrate the program's current capacity when describing the context of the existing program. For examples of how to indicate capacity, please refer to the ERF Full Application Package, Section E.***

- ◆ Include in the appendices the name(s) and address(es) of the preschool program(s) that the project will support.

 ***For specific information to include in each of the above criteria, please refer to Section E of the ERF Full Application package.***


Purpose 2: To demonstrate language and literacy activities based on scientifically based reading research that supports the age-appropriate development of:

- a. Recognition, leading to automatic recognition, of letters of the alphabet
- b. Knowledge of letter sounds, the blending of sounds, and the use of increasingly complex vocabulary
- c. An understanding that written language is composed of phonemes and letters each representing one or more speech sounds that in combination make up syllables, words, and sentences
- d. Spoken language, including vocabulary and oral comprehension abilities
- e. Knowledge of the purposes and conventions of print


Applicants are encouraged to include the following information when addressing *Selection Criterion 1, Factor 1, Purpose 2*:


- ◆ Outline the proposed project's goals for improving young children's oral language, phonological awareness, print awareness, and alphabet knowledge.
- ◆ Outline the curriculum's defined scope and sequence and describe how it is structured, systematic, and aligned to support the development of children's oral language, phonological awareness, print awareness, and alphabet knowledge.
- ◆ Describe how the curriculum, combined with project procedures and other supports, will ensure that each day teachers know what they are supposed to do in order to support the development of children's oral language, phonological awareness, print awareness, and alphabet knowledge, and the extent to which the curriculum and other project supports will provide teachers with the materials to do it.

- ◆ Describe how instruction in new knowledge and skills is explicit and intentional and starts as teacher directed and moves towards more independent activity with the context of whole-group instruction and practice, small-group instruction and practice, and independent practice.
- ◆ Outline the content, or subject matter, that will be provided as the context for improving children’s oral language and background knowledge.
- ◆ Detail the amount of time the proposed program will spend developing each child’s language, cognition, and early reading skills.


 **Goals:** *The Scholastic Early Childhood Program is designed to ensure that children develop language and early reading skills in the four critical areas outlined by ERF: oral language, phonological awareness, print awareness, and alphabetic knowledge. Children engage in cognitively challenging talk and conversations, child-initiated explorations at learning centers, and activities designed to develop their language skills. Teacher-led sessions provide direct instruction, modeling, and guidance.*

 **Please see pages 32-35 of the Toolkit for examples of ways to organize your goals.**

 **Scope and Sequence:** *SECP, which aligns to widely accepted Pre-Curriculum Guidelines, includes skills development in oral language, phonological awareness, print awareness, and alphabetic knowledge. Please contact your Scholastic Representative for the complete scope and sequence.*

 **Teacher Supports:** *SECP is organized around and provides routines based upon best practices in Early Childhood Education.*


- *The handbook, “Welcome to PreKindergarten,” offers teachers ideas for effectively arranging and managing their classrooms.*
- *Teacher’s Guides include embedded professional development that provides point-of-use connections between lessons and Pre-Kindergarten Curriculum Guidelines.*
- *SECP provides significant support for children who are learning English as a Second Language or have low language acquisition. “Welcome to PreKindergarten” includes a section devoted to personalizing instruction for ELL students. There is an ESL Bridge or Support with each Circle Time and Story Time activity. Furthermore, the theme Teacher’s Guides and all materials are available in English and Spanish.*


 **Content:** *SECP’s instructional framework puts language and literacy first within an integrated curriculum. The program is organized around 10 relevant themes reflecting real-world experiences common in the lives of preschoolers. Each theme comes with a Teacher’s Guide organized for preparing and executing the weekly curriculum plans. The themes include “Friends and School,” “Home and Family,” “Inside and Outside of Me,” “Our Community,” and other topics that have been selected by Early Childhood educators as being the most important and popular.*


Purpose 3: To provide preschool-age children with cognitive learning opportunities in high-quality language and literature-rich environments, so that children can attain the fundamental knowledge and skills necessary for optimal reading development in Kindergarten and beyond.

Applicants are encouraged to include the following information when addressing *Selection Criterion 1, Factor 1, Purpose 3:*

- ◆ Outline the proposed project’s goals for improving the language and print richness of the environment.
- ◆ Describe the strategies and materials that the project proposes to enhance the literature and print richness of the environment.
- ◆ Describe the strategies and materials that the project proposes to implement so that the physical environment will provide support for the development of children’s oral language.
- ◆ Describe the strategies and materials that the project proposes to implement so that the physical environment will provide support for the development of children’s background knowledge.

 **Language and Print-Richness:** *The SECP curriculum provides a rich environment of print and non-print experiences related to language and literacy development. Children are exposed to a variety of print—fiction and nonfiction trade books, Big Books, poems, printed words of songs, signs, word lists, word cards, and science posters. Children engage in “read-aloud” experiences, tracking print while listening to audiocassette recordings, as well as activities with alphabet picture cards and word games on CD-ROM.*


 **Literature:** *SECP provides a wealth of fiction and nonfiction literature in a variety of genres and topics. Please contact your Scholastic Representative for a complete listing of program materials, all of which are available in Spanish and English.*


 **Oral Language:** *Multiple encounters with the provided materials, coupled with conversational opportunities and class discussions, help deepen children’s oral language and vocabulary.*

Purpose 4: To support local efforts to enhance the early language, literacy, and prereading development of preschool-age children, particularly those from low-income families, through strategies and professional development that are based on scientifically based reading research.

Applicants are encouraged to include the following information when addressing *Selection Criterion 1, Factor 1, Purpose 4*:

- ◆ Outline the goals for the project's proposed professional development program.
- ◆ Describe the content and scope and sequence of the professional development to be provided.
- ◆ Explain the strategies and materials that will be implemented in the professional development that will ensure that it will be classroom focused and will enhance the implementation of the curricula, materials, and instructional strategies outlined in *Purpose 2*.
- ◆ Delineate the number of hours, the frequency, and the method of delivery of the professional development for each teacher and the extent to which the professional development will be high-quality, sustained, and intensive.
- ◆ If teacher mentoring is provided as part of the professional development plan, specify the qualifications of the teacher mentor and explain the link between the teacher mentoring and the professional development delivered in a classroom or workshop setting.

 ***Applicants may cross-reference demographic information from Purpose 1, regarding the income level of children whose early language, literacy, and prereading development will be enhanced through professional development provided to the teachers.***

 ***Content and Strategies: Teachers using the Scholastic Early Childhood Program have multiple, varied professional development opportunities:***


- *“My Guide for Ongoing Assessment and Professional Development,” which integrates professional development into the curriculum, provides an in-depth background in all areas of child development and learning through articles written by Early Childhood Education experts.*
- *“Welcome to PreKindergarten: A Guide for Setting Up and Managing Your Classroom” gives teachers practical suggestions for implementing the program.*
- *“Creating Family Partnerships: A Guide to Family Involvement” contains materials and strategies to help parents participate in their children’s learning.*
- *Teacher’s Tool Kit CD-ROM contains lesson plans, guidelines for portfolio assessment, an implementation monitoring checklist, and important administrative tools.*
- *Twelve Integrated Teacher Workshops are designed to facilitate discussions with the Early Childhood Education teaching team.*
- *Scholastic Early Childhood Seminar Series provides customizable seminars to strengthen Pre-Kindergarten teachers’ knowledge and skills in instruction of early literacy and language skills.*

Purpose 5: To use screening reading assessments to effectively identify preschool-age children who may be at risk for reading failure.

Applicants are encouraged to include the following information when addressing *Selection Criterion 1, Factor 1, Purpose 5*:


- ◆ Specify screening instruments for young children’s oral language, phonological awareness, print awareness, and alphabet knowledge.
- ◆ Specify progress-monitoring instruments for young children’s oral language, phonological awareness, print awareness, and alphabet knowledge.
- ◆ Provide validity and reliability date for specified measures, when it exists.
- ◆ Describe strategies, systems, and professional development activities that will ensure teachers gather high-quality data and will assist teachers with using information gained from screening reading and progress monitoring assessments to improve instruction for individual children.

 **Applicants may cross reference information from Purpose 4 regarding the content of professional development.**


 **Assessment Instruments:** Various assessment tools are embedded in **SECP**, as well as included in the “My Guide for Ongoing Assessment and Professional Development” and on the Teacher Tool Kit CD-ROM. **SECP** contains the following formal assessments:

- *Book and Print Awareness*
- *Phonological Awareness*
- *Letter Knowledge*
- *Writing Skills*
- *Behavior*

In addition, the program includes checklists for monitoring the Pre-Kindergarten Curriculum Goals in the domains of Language & Early Literacy, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Personal & Social Development, Fine Arts, and Physical Development.


 **Progress Monitoring:** **SECP** assessments allow teachers to observe children on a daily basis, and more formally, semi-annually. The frequent, thorough assessments enable teachers to identify at-risk children. **SECP** also provides informal assessment techniques and suggestions within the context of learning and instruction, such as:

- *Daily Work*
- *Portfolio Review*
- *Learning Over Time*


 **Professional Development:** **SECP** Teacher’s Guides include an “observational assessment” at the point of practice, and the Integrated Teacher Workshops contain an assessment section. In addition, teachers participating in the Scholastic Early Childhood Seminar Series workshops learn assessment strategies.

For Selection Criterion 1, Factor 3, applicants are encouraged to include the following information:


- ◆ Demonstrate how the proposed project will coordinate with the LEA to prepare students with the foundational language, cognitive, and early reading skills to ensure a successful transition into the LEA's *Reading First* program

 The **Scholastic Early Childhood Program** curriculum model is designed to provide the foundation for reading. Using the same research that was used to develop *Reading First* legislation, **SECP** prioritizes the essential, foundational skills for reading:


- Phonemic Awareness
- Oral Language
- Alphabet Knowledge
- Concepts of Print (and Writing)

 **SECP** supports children's development of knowledge, skills, and processes that will help them make sense of themselves and the world around them. The curriculum is thematic, integrated, and rich with culturally relevant materials in both English and, upon request, Spanish. The curriculum is organized around real-world themes. These include:

- Friends and School
- Home and Family
- Inside and Outside Me
- Staying Well/Staying Safe
- Our Community
- Working and Playing Together
- Make It/Build It
- Let's Explore
- Animals and Where They Live
- Everything Changes

 The **SECP** curriculum puts the development of language and early literacy first within the integration of the following domains:

- Mathematics
- Science
- Social studies
- The Arts
- Physical Development
- Personal and Social Development

 Children in the **Scholastic Early Childhood Program** begin to develop the skills emphasized in *Reading First*. For example, the "Teaching Letters and Sounds" Teacher's Guide contains lessons for letter-sound correspondence; children listen to stories read and reread, which helps them build fluency and listening comprehension; and oral language lessons and activities help them acquire vocabulary.

QUALITY OF PROJECT PERSONNEL—0-8

Selection Criterion 2, Factor 1: The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator.

Selection Criterion 2, Factor 2: The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

Selection Criterion 2, Factor 3: The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of project consultants or subcontractors.

Applicants are expected to specify the steps the proposed project will take to ensure equitable employment practices. The response to this selection criterion will constitute the applicant's response to Section 427 of the General Education Provision's Act.

For *Selection Criterion 2, Factor 1*, applicants are encouraged to include the following information:

- ◆ Demonstrate the leadership experience of the proposed project director or principal investigator, including his/her past success with implementing large projects, bringing together different entities to work together towards a common goal, and building capacity for sustained improvement within an organization.
- ◆ Demonstrate the ability of the project director or principal investigator to serve as the instructional leader for a project grounded in scientifically based reading research and early literacy practices.

For *Selection Criterion 2, Factor 2*, applicants are encouraged to include the following information:

- ◆ Discuss the training, qualifications, and experience of other key personnel, including those who play vital roles in the quality of implementation of the proposed project. Include in this discussion such staff as teachers, mentors, and other providers of professional development, evaluators, and members of the management team.
- ◆ Discuss the extent to which *Early Reading First* funds will be used to ensure that newly hired instructional personnel will have the qualifications necessary to support the development of young children's oral language, cognitive, and early reading skills.

For *Selection Criterion 2, Factor 3*, applicants are encouraged to include the following information:

- ◆ Discuss the training, qualifications, and experience of all entities with whom the proposed project will contract, especially those providing the professional development and evaluation services, if applicable.
- ✍ ***Applicants may include up to five résumés or curriculum vitae in the appendices in support of their response to Selection Criterion 2, Factors 1, 2, and 3. Each résumé or vita may be no more than three one-sided pages.***
- ✍ ***Information about the project personnel can be presented in a chart similar to the one on page 36.***

ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES—0-8 points

Selection Criterion 3, Factor 1: The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.


Selection Criterion 3, Factor 2: The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.

For *Selection Criterion 3, Factor 1*, applicants are encouraged to include the following information:

- ◆ Demonstrate the support of the application by those stakeholders who would implement it, particularly teachers, paraprofessionals, and center directors. Although not required, 5 one-sided pages of documentation providing evidence that the individuals and entities, whose cooperation is crucial to the successful implementation of the proposed project, understand it and are willing to support it may be included in the appendices.

For *Selection Criterion 3, Factor 2*, applicants are encouraged to include the following information:

- ◆ Explain the adequacy of the proposed costs in relation to the proposed activities, the number of persons to be served, and the anticipated results and benefits.
- ◆ Explain the adequacy of the proposed costs in relation to the significance of improvements of the proposed project over the existing project.
- ◆ Explain the adequacy of the proposed costs in relation to the increases in student achievement that would likely be attained by young children who are served by the proposed project.

 *Comprehensive, cost-effective SECP contains all the materials needed to deliver a high-quality Early Childhood Education curriculum. SECP provides theme literature, support literature, Clifford's Kit for Personal and Social Development, science posters, manipulatives, math materials, teacher resource materials, Phonological Awareness Picture Cards, and alphabet, phonics, and fluency materials. Please contact your Scholastic Representative for a complete list of program materials.*

QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT PLAN—0-8 points

Selection Criterion 4, Factor 1: The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

Selection Criterion 4, Factor 2: The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

Selection Criterion 4, Factor 3: The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.


For *Selection Criterion 4, Factor 1*, applicants are encouraged to include the following information:

- ◆ Provide a management plan for achieving the proposed project's goals, including those proposed in *Selection Criterion 1, Factor 1, Purposes 2, 3, and 4*.
- ◆ Include benchmarks for each goal, project activities that support each benchmark, and a timeline that indicates when each of the activities will begin and target dates for completion.
- ◆ Specify objective indicators of achievement for each benchmark.
- ◆ Demonstrate that measurable progress towards achieving benchmarks and goals will occur within the first year of the proposed project's operation.
- ◆ Assign responsibility for each activity.

For *Selection Criterion 4, Factor 2*, applicants are encouraged to include the following information:

- ◆ Outline process and procedures for gathering and analyzing progress data to ensure that the proposed project is meeting the goals, including those proposed in *Selection Criterion 1, Factor 1, Purposes 2, 3, and 4*.
- ◆ Describe the process and procedures that will be used to develop and institute strategies that will result in project improvement based on progress data that are efficient, feasible, and are likely to result in continuous improvement.

For *Selection Criterion 5, Factor 3*, applicants are encouraged to include the following information:

- ◆ Specify the number of hours per week each key person will dedicate to project activities. Include the specific number of hours per week for the project director or principal investigator, project manager or coordinator, the provider(s) of the professional development, and the evaluator.
-  ***For suggestions on what to include in a Management Plan, please see pages 37-39 of the Toolkit.***

QUALITY OF THE PROJECT EVALUATION—0-8 points

Selection Criterion 5, Factor 1: The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.


Selection Criterion 5, Factor 2: The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.


For *Selection Criterion 5, Factor 1*, applicants are encouraged to include the following information:

- ◆ Specify the methods and instruments the proposed project will use to evaluate the achievement of each of the proposed goals, including those proposed in *Selection Criterion 1, Factor 1, Purposes 2, 3, and 4*.
- ◆ When feasible and appropriate, utilize child outcome data collected from screening reading assessments administered to all children. Describe the relationship between the progress monitoring instruments and the child outcome instruments proposed for use in the evaluation
- ◆ Provide validity and reliability data for specified evaluation measures.

For *Selection Criterion 5, Factor 2*, applicants are encouraged to include the following information:

- ◆ Explain how the measures selected, including those proposed for *Selection Criterion 1, Factor 1, Purposes 2, 3, and 4*, provide both qualitative and quantitative data.
- ◆ Utilize measures other than or in addition to teacher self-report surveys and attendance records to evaluate professional development.

 *“My Guide for Ongoing Assessment and Curriculum Development” includes an assessment guide with formal and informal assessment forms for phonological awareness, oral language, print awareness, and alphabet knowledge. In addition, the guide explains and provides details on how to set up and keep anecdotal records and portfolios. The Teacher Tool Kit CD-ROM provides teachers with electronic tracking and reports of the formal and informal assessments.*

 *Five theme checklists (one for every two units) help teachers track each student’s progress. Teachers also informally assess students during every Circle Time and Story Time lesson and during Learning Center activities. Teachers observe and review daily work, portfolios of recorded work, and students’ cumulative learning gains.*

 **For a sample Project Evaluation Plan, please see pages 40-42 of the Toolkit.**

SIGNIFICANCE—0-8 points

Selection Criterion 6, Factor 1: The potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of theory, knowledge, and practices in the field of study.

For *Selection Criterion 6, Factor 1*, applicants are encouraged to include the following information:

- ◆ Demonstrate that the proposed project is likely to result in the creation of a preschool Center of Educational Excellence that will result in the age-appropriate development of young children’s oral language, phonological awareness, print awareness, alphabet knowledge, and background knowledge.
- ◆ Demonstrate that the implementation of the proposed project has the potential to suggest new best practices and effective strategies in the field of early literacy that are tied to the scientifically based reading research.




*Research-based **SECP** is founded upon a model of sociocultural theory that promotes the importance of educators and caregivers providing young children with informed instruction and support, while children actively explore novel and reexamine known concepts, skills, and processes. **SECP** supports the Pre-Kindergarten curriculum standards of many states.*


Part III of the Full Application

Budget and Budget Narrative

1. ED Form 524, Section A

 **Applicants must complete Section A, columns for the first, second, and third years, and the total column. For specific instructions for completing ED Form 524, refer to the Full Application Package, Section E.**

2. Budget Narrative (5 pages, double-spaced)

 **There should be enough detail in the Budget Narrative to enable reviewers and project staff to understand how funds will be used, how much will be expended, and the relationship between expended funds and project activities and outcomes. Please see Section E of the ERF application for all the information that must be included.**

Applicants are encouraged to include the following information in the Detailed Budget Narrative:

Personnel

- Provide the title of each position
- Provide the salary for each position
- Provide the amount of time each person will devote to the project
- Explain the importance of each position to the success of the project

Fringe Benefits

- Give the fringe benefit percentages of all personnel in the project

Travel

- Explain the purpose of the travel and how it relates to the project success, and which staff will participate. Include travel to at least one *Early Reading First* conference in Year 1 of the project

Equipment

- Identify each type of equipment
- Provide the cost per equipment item
- Explain the purpose of the equipment, and how it relates to project success

Supplies

- Identify the type of supplies by general category (e.g. instructional materials, office supplies, etc.)
- Provide the purpose for purchasing the supplies

Contractual

- Provide the purpose and relation to project success
- Identify the name of the contracting party, including consultants, if available
- Provide the cost per contractor
- Provide the amount of time that the project will be working with the contractor(s)

Other Direct Costs

- Identify each type of cost in the *Other* category (e.g. communications, printing, postage, equipment rental, etc.)
- Provide the cost per item (printing = \$500, postage = \$750)
- Provide the purpose for the expenditures and relation to project success

Total Direct Costs

- The amount that is the sum of expenditures, per budget category, of lines 1-8

Indirect Costs

- Indicate the applicant's approved, unrestricted, indirect cost rate.

Training Stipends (Scholarships)

- Identify who will benefit from a scholarship/stipend
- Provide the purpose of the scholarship/stipend award
- Identify the cost per scholarship/stipend
- Explain the importance of the scholarship/stipend to the success of the project

Part IV of the Full Application


- I. List of names and addresses of existing preschool programs that the proposed *ERF* project would support, including a brief description indicated under Quality of the Project Design, Note, Purpose 1. Include the following information in your description:

- The ages and number of the children being served
- Demographic and socioeconomic information on those children
- Information on the types of special needs that any of the children may have
- The average hours the children attend the program in hours/day, days/week, and months/year
- Primary funding source(s)
- The basic instructional program
- The number of staff and their qualifications

 ***This information may be organized into chart form.***


- II. Curriculum vitae for key personnel for no more than five people
Include no more than three one-sided pages for each curriculum vita submitted.

- III. Endnote citations

 ***Do NOT include a general reference bibliography; include ONLY endnote citations for those quotations included in the 10-page narrative. Please see pages 43-48 of the Toolkit for Early Childhood research citations and endnote citations.***

- IV. SF 424 B Form—Assurance—Non Construction Programs

- V. Stakeholders' support (five one-sided pages)

 ***This documentation should demonstrate the support of the project from teachers, paraprofessionals, and center directors. It should reflect an understanding of the proposed project and their willingness to carry out and participate in the proposed project's activities.***

- VI. ED 80-0013 Form Certification Regarding Lobbying

- VII. SF LLL Form—Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (Submit if applicable)

- VIII. Response to Notice to All Applicants (Section 427, GEPA)

Grant Writing Samples and Tools


Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

Writing clear and precise goals, objectives, and strategies is crucial to implementing and evaluating an effective, research-based grant project.


Goals state the planned outcome that will solve the problem addressed in the needs statement. First and foremost, your goals must be aligned with the project's assessed educational needs and consistent with the goals of the *Early Reading First* grant program. Project goals should be *educational* goals and not merely the acquisition of materials.

Objectives help meet the educational goals. They clearly define the performance targets that must be measurable and related to a specific time. A series of objectives, or performance targets, should increase in expectation as they progress on a timeline, culminating in an overall performance or educational goal. The expectation is that at the end of the grant project calendar, the applicant meets the goals. Objectives should be **Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timely (SMART)**.

Strategies describe the steps to be taken to achieve the desired outcomes outlined in the objectives. Strategies should flow naturally from the objectives, and present a reasonable scope or sequence of activities.

 ***The following three charts provide examples of how goals, objectives, and strategies are related and can be identified for these areas:***


- ***Language and Literacy Development***
- ***Language and Literature-Rich Environments***
- ***Professional Development***


 ***Please see pages 10-15 of the Toolkit for more information on how the **Scholastic Early Childhood Program** can help meet the goals and objectives of a grant project as required by Selection Criterion 1.***

<p>Language and Literacy Development:</p> <p>Goal #1 <i>Provide scientifically based language and literacy activities, within a structured and systemic learning environment, that support the development of oral language, phonological awareness, print awareness and alphabet knowledge for all preschool-age children, especially for those considered Economically Disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient, or with disabilities</i></p>	<p>Selection Criterion 1, Factor 2, Purpose 2 <i>To demonstrate language and literacy activities based on scientifically based reading research that supports the age-appropriate development of:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Recognition, leading to automatic recognition, of letters of the alphabet</i> b. <i>Knowledge of letter sounds, the blending of sounds, and the use of increasingly complex vocabulary</i> c. <i>An understanding that written language is composed of phonemes and letters each representing one or more speech sounds that in combination make up syllables, words, and sentences</i> d. <i>Spoken language, including vocabulary and oral comprehension abilities</i> e. <i>Knowledge of the purposes and conventions of print</i>
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Objective: By June of <YEAR>, 100% of Pre-K students will demonstrate mastery of early reading skills in the areas of oral language, phonological awareness, print awareness, and alphabet knowledge as evidenced by benchmark testing.

<p>Strategy 1: Conduct a needs assessment survey to determine teacher knowledge level and instructional skills in the areas of oral language, phonological awareness, print awareness, and alphabet knowledge</p>	<p>Strategy 2: Implement the Scholastic Early Childhood Program, a scientifically, research-based intervention curriculum with systematic instructional strategies to maximize the amount of direct intervention for every Pre-K student.</p>	<p>Strategy 3: Provide teacher directed, whole group instruction and practice, small group instruction and practice, and independent practice of the early reading skills</p>	<p>Strategy 4: Increase reading opportunities at school with parent/community volunteers and at home with parents.</p>	<p>Strategy 5: Using benchmark testing, monitor and conduct ongoing assessment to identify implementation and effectiveness of the program.</p>
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 *Each SECP lesson helps preschool-age children learn the letters of the alphabet, associate a letter with a sound, build phonological awareness skills, and develop oral language—all in a print-rich environment.*

 *Fostering family relationships and involvement is an integral part of the **Scholastic Early Childhood Program**. “Creating Family Partnerships” handbook provides resources in Spanish and English, as well as suggestions for meeting and greeting families, teacher-family conferences, family meetings, home projects, and family learning nights.*


<p>Language and Literature-Rich Environments:</p> <p>Goal #2 <i>Improve preschool-age children’s language, cognitive, and early reading skills by providing opportunities for at-risk, Limited English Proficient, and children with disabilities to participate in high-quality language and literature-rich environments that promote the fundamental knowledge and skills necessary for optimal reading development in Kindergarten and beyond.</i></p>		<p>Selection Criterion 1, Factor 2, Purpose 3 <i>To provide preschool-age children with cognitive learning opportunities in high-quality language and literature-rich environments, so that children can attain the fundamental knowledge and skills necessary for optimal reading development in Kindergarten and beyond</i></p>	
<p>Objective: By June of <YEAR>, 100% of Pre-K students will demonstrate measured improvement in language and literacy skills, as evidenced by benchmark testing.</p>			
<p>Strategy 1: Provide teacher-directed whole and small-group language and literacy activities that develop prereading skills</p>	<p>Strategy 2: Within each Pre-K classroom, establish Emergent Literacy Libraries, that include leveled books, magazines, charts, calendars, signs, bulletin boards, children’s writing, and alphabet letters</p>	<p>Strategy 3: Provide Pre-K students with supplementary literacy materials to read with community mentors and independently at school</p>	<p>Strategy 4: Educate and provide families with age-appropriate emergent literacy materials, including leveled texts in both English and Spanish, for increasing literature-based literacy practice at home</p>

-  *High-quality literature in the **Scholastic Early Childhood Program** engages children and fosters language and literacy growth. **SECP** contains Big Books for shared reading, Read Aloud Books, content-area Big Books, Mini-Books, and theme books.*
-  ***SECP** is organized around 10 themes that are familiar to children and connect to the world around them. Themes include Friends and School, Home and Family, and Inside and Outside Me. Each theme includes lessons and activities that encourage oral discussion and interaction with print materials. In addition to the collection of fiction and nonfiction literature, **SECP** provides science and phonics posters, math cards, and phonological awareness cards that help provide a literacy-rich environment for the child.*
-  *Spanish versions of all components are also available to capitalize on young children’s capacity for language learning.*

<p>Professional Development:</p> <p>Goal #3 <i>Improve teachers' knowledge, instruction, and planning by providing professional development based on scientifically based reading research, knowledge of language, cognitive, and early reading development.</i></p>	<p>Selection Criterion 1, Factor 2, Purpose 4 To support local efforts to enhance the early language, literacy, and prereading development of preschool-age children, particularly those from low-income families, through strategies and professional development that are based on scientifically based reading research</p>	
<p>Objective: By September of <YEAR>, 100% of Pre-K teachers and staff will use scientifically based instructional strategies to enhance the early language, literacy, and prereading development of preschool-age children, as evidenced by individual classroom lesson plans.</p>		
<p>Strategy 1: Based upon Needs Assessment Survey, determine specific professional development needs in Pre-K program, intervention, and Scientifically Based Reading Research for Pre-K teachers and paraprofessionals at all Early Childhood Centers</p>	<p>Strategy 2: Provide intensive, high quality, and sustained professional development for teachers on the Scholastic Early Childhood Program, a scientifically, research-based intervention curriculum with systematic instructional strategies</p>	<p>Strategy 3: Support vertical alignment of literacy practices, professional development, and assessment by facilitating quarterly meetings between Pre-K and Kindergarten teachers to discuss an instructionally appropriate continuum of skills and programmatic methodologies</p>

 Professional development for the **Scholastic Early Childhood Program** is integrated into the curriculum through the “My Guide for Ongoing Assessment and Professional Development.” My Guide includes a library of professional readings on the following topics:

- Observation and Assessment
- Child Development
- Language Acquisition
- Early Literacy
- Technology
- Cross-Curriculum Content Areas
- Embracing Diversity
- Inclusion in the Classroom

 In addition, **SECP** provides integrated Teacher Workshops—a series of 12 cooperative workshop sessions based upon the above articles written by noted experts, such as Dr. Susan Neuman, Dr. Stanley Greenspan, and Lillian Katz.

Quality of Project Personnel (Sample Chart)

Selection Criterion 2, Factor 1: The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator.

Selection Criterion 2, Factor 2: The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

Selection Criterion 2, Factor 3: The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of project consultants or subcontractors

Program Personnel	Qualifications	Responsibilities	Time Commitments
Project Director or Principal Investigator: <i>List name and title</i>	<i>List degrees, certifications, and professional experience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Member, Project Executive Committee ▪ Coordinate project implementation and purchasing for grant activities ▪ File all programmatic reports with funding agency ▪ Manage financial activities of grant program ▪ File all financial reports with funding agency 	<i>List amount of time staff member will devote to each responsibility or activity</i> <u>Recommended 100%</u>
Early Childhood Center Directors: <i>List names and titles</i>	<i>List degrees, certifications, and professional experience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Member, Project Executive Committee ▪ Manage programmatic grant activities/strategies ▪ Coordinate professional development activities ▪ Coordinate parental involvement activities ▪ Collect student data for external evaluation 	<i>List amount of time staff member will devote to each responsibility or activity</i> <u>Recommended 100%</u>
Early Childhood Teachers: <i>List names and titles</i>	<i>List degrees, certifications, and professional experience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Member, Project Executive Committee ▪ Implement <i>Scholastic Early Childhood Program</i> ▪ Communicate with parents regarding student progress ▪ Assess student progress using benchmark assessments ▪ Collect and report student data to EC Center Directors 	<i>List amount of time staff member will devote to each responsibility or activity</i> <u>Recommended 100%</u>
Consultants: <i>List names, titles, and services to be provided</i>	<i>List degrees, certifications, and professional experience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide professional development for EC Teachers and Administrators ▪ Support <i>Scholastic Early Childhood Program</i>, as requested 	<i>List amount of time each consultant will devote to each responsibility or activity</i>
External Evaluator: <i>List name and title</i>	<i>List degrees, certifications, and professional experience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Member, Project Executive Committee ▪ Using both project and process data, evaluate the effectiveness of the <i>Early Reading First</i> program 	<i>List amount of time staff member will devote to each responsibility or activity</i> <u>Recommended 100%</u>

Quality of Management Plan


Selection Criterion 4, Factor 1: The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

Activities are more specific than goals, objectives, and strategies. While strategies present a scope or sequence, activities explain *who will do what, when, where, and for how long*. For each goal, identify the related objective, strategy, and specific activities. For each activity, determine a timeframe, person responsible, and effectiveness indicator that will be used to evaluate the activity. The activities should address these areas:

- ◆ Methods used to integrate scientific reading research-based instructional materials and literacy activities
- ◆ Steps taken to ensure access to literature- and print-rich learning environments
- ◆ Strategies for implementing classroom focused professional development

Effectiveness indicators detail the type of information used to measure whether or not an objective is reached. These indicators should be objective and quantifiable. Effectiveness indicators can include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ Number of teachers trained
- ◆ Cost per student for technology services
- ◆ Number, types, and frequency of technology staff development sessions
- ◆ Percent of parents participating
- ◆ Student achievement scores
- ◆ Drop out rates
- ◆ Percent of students in high-needs schools with increased access to technology
- ◆ Percent increase in all students' technology skills

 ***The following chart provides an example of how to show the planned activities, responsibilities of project personnel, timeline, and effectiveness indicators for a specific strategy.***

Educational Goal #1:


Provide scientifically based language and literacy activities, within a structured and systemic learning environment, that support the development of oral language, phonological awareness, print awareness and alphabet knowledge for all preschool-age children, especially for those considered Economically Disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient, or with disabilities


Objective:

By June <YEAR>, 100% of Pre-K students will demonstrate mastery of early reading skills in the areas of oral language, phonological awareness, print awareness, and alphabet knowledge as evidenced by benchmark testing.


Strategy 2: Implement the **Scholastic Early Childhood Program** to maximize the amount of direct intervention for every Pre-K student.

Specific Activities	Positions Responsible	Timeline	Effectiveness Indicators
1. Purchase Scholastic Early Childhood Program .	ERF Project Director	<YEAR>	Purchase orders
2. Apply scientific research-based instructional strategies to maximize the language and literacy development for all Pre-K students	Early Childhood Teachers	Academic <YEAR>	Teacher lesson plans
3. Provide Pre-K students with emergent literacy books and other materials	Early Childhood Teachers	Academic <YEAR>	Purchase orders and inventory records
4. Assess the literacy and language development of all Pre-K students using benchmark assessments	Early Childhood Teachers	Quarterly	Benchmark assessments

 **These are provided as examples or suggestions. You should develop your own activities specific to your needs.**

 **Research-based SECP** is organized around routines based on best practices in Early Childhood Education. The program combines teacher-directed instruction with child-initiated explorations.

 **SECP** includes a rich variety of literacy materials, including theme Big Books and their little versions for take-home learning, Read Aloud Books, and content-area books.

 “My Guide for Ongoing Assessment and Curriculum Development” includes an assessment guide with formal and informal assessment forms for phonological awareness, oral language, print awareness, and alphabet knowledge.

Selection Criterion 4, Factor 2: The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

✎ In this section, applicants are encouraged to discuss the following outcomes:

- *Number of preschool-age children to be served*
- *Improvements in preschool curriculum*
- *Number of parents to be served*
- *Types of parental involvement or training activities to be conducted*
- *Number of teachers who receive professional development services*
- *Types of professional development to be delivered*
- *Total numbers of students, parents, and teachers to benefit from the project services*
- *Cost per participant for project services*

Selection Criterion 4, Factor 3: The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.


✎ Applicants can cross reference the Quality of Project Personnel chart included in the application on a previous page. In addition to referencing this chart, applicants are encouraged to discuss specific time commitments for all key personnel. Include required qualifications for these key personnel, as well.

✎ Any existing partnerships that will contribute to or be expanded by the project should be discussed in this section.

Quality of the Project Evaluation

Selection Criterion 5, Factor 1: The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

Selection Criterion 5, Factor 2: The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.

-  ***The evaluation plan is one of the most critical elements of your proposal. Because every grant project is unique, it is important to adapt this sample plan to reflect your specific project names, goals, objectives, and activities, rather than copy it.***

Evaluation Design

(Project Name) includes a comprehensive evaluation plan developed to determine success in meeting aggressive goals for improving the language and literacy development of all Pre-K students. Specific goals, objectives, and activities have been delineated above in the Quality of Management Plan. (District Name) and (Name of external evaluator) will conduct the final evaluation of (Project Name.) The Project Director will collect information, collect the Early Childhood Centers' data, and provide the progress reports throughout the project period to (Name of funding agency) as per the RFA requirements.

The evaluation design includes both process and product evaluation. The Project Executive Committee will gather information during the implementation process and evaluation activities to recommend modifications for improving the project. Questions to be answered in this evaluation include the following:

- ◆ *To what extent were the activities of the project implemented as planned? If not, what barriers or obstacles prevented parts or all of the activities from being executed?*
- ◆ *How effective were the activities of the project in achieving the goals of the project?*
- ◆ *What is the impact of the activities of the project on the participants?*



Product Evaluation

Product evaluation will focus on measuring final outcomes against project goals, objectives, and benchmarks. Changes that have occurred will be identified and analyzed to determine whether the program is effective for students and teachers. Like the process evaluation, the product evaluation will be collected both formatively and summatively. The product performance measures will focus on:

- ◆ *Improvement in teacher knowledge and qualifications*
- ◆ *Improvement in outcomes for children's language, cognitive, literature, and early reading skills*

The following product evaluative data will be collected:


Benchmark Tests to measure student achievement

-  ***Specify the methods and instruments the proposed project will use to evaluate the achievement of each of the proposed project goals, including those proposed in Selection Criterion 1, Factor 1, Purposes 2, 3, and 4.***
-  ***Include screening reading assessments, progress monitoring assessments, and child outcome data in your evaluation plan.***


Student Work Samples

-  ***Specify how and when these samples will be collected.***

Evaluation of Professional Development

-  ***In addition to teachers' evaluation of the professional development, applicants are encouraged to use lesson plans or administrative walk-through forms as a means to evaluate the effectiveness of professional development.***

End-of-Project Survey

-  ***An end-of-project survey distributed to all parents of Pre-K students can be used to provide opportunity for parents to evaluate the effectiveness of the program for their children.***


Process Evaluation

Process evaluation will gather information about how successfully the strategies of the project were implemented as planned, and assess their impact on the target populations. Process evaluation data is both quantitative and qualitative in nature, and it is intended to assess the outcome of the project. This data, collected formatively and summatively, will describe how students and teachers are affected by the project. The process evaluative data will focus on:

- ◆ *Improvement in classroom environment*
- ◆ *Improvement in teacher instruction and planning*

The following process evaluative data will be collected:


School/District Records

-  ***The Project Evaluator can track project objectives through quantitative data such as purchase orders, numbers of students/teachers served, and inventory records.***


Project Meetings

-  ***Specify how often the Project Executive Committee will meet and on what the meetings will focus.***

Classroom Observations



-  **Early Childhood Center Directors can visit Pre-K classrooms randomly to acquire information on how teachers have adapted the program to student needs. Evaluative information can be drawn from observations of classroom applications, in the form of administrative walk-through forms.**

Anecdotal Records

-  **To address the “So what?” question, anecdotal records from students and teachers can be collected. The following questions should be addressed:**
 - **How has the project provided preschool-age children with cognitive learning opportunities in high-quality language, literature- and print-rich environments?**
 - **How has the Early Childhood Program enhanced the early language, cognitive, and early reading development of preschool children?**

Final Evaluative Report

The Project Director and External Evaluator will use the data gathered in the product and process evaluation activities to prepare and present an annual Project Summary Report, to be shared with the local Board of Trustees and U.S. Department of Education. The product and process evaluative data will be analyzed in the final report to answer the following questions:

- ◆ *What improvements has the project made in how we teach our preschool-age children and prepare them for future reading and school success?*
- ◆ *To what extent, by (Date), are all preschool children ready to transition to Kindergarten?*
- ◆ *To what extent, by (Date), do all teachers have increased knowledge, skill, and instructional methodologies in early literacy development of preschool children?*
- ◆ *To what extent, by (Date), do 100% of parents of participating preschool students show increased involvement in their children’s reading success and school activities?*
-  **Assessments in *SECP* are administered on a regular basis and embedded in the program. Five theme checklists (one for every two units) help teachers track each student’s progress. Teachers also informally assess students during every Circle Time and Story Time lesson and during Learning Center activities. Teachers observe and review daily work, portfolios of recorded work, and students’ cumulative learning gains.**
-  **“My Guide for Ongoing Assessment and Curriculum Development” includes an assessment guide with formal and informal assessment forms for phonological awareness, oral language, print awareness, and alphabet knowledge. In addition, the guide explains and provides details on how to set up and keep anecdotal records and portfolios. The Teacher Tool Kit CD-ROM provides teachers with electronic tracking and reports of the formal and informal assessments.**

Early Childhood Research Citations & Endnote Citations

The ultimate goal of *Early Reading First* is to prevent later reading difficulties. The program is designed to prepare children to enter Kindergarten with the necessary cognitive, early language, and literacy skills for success in school.


The ultimate goal of *Early Reading First* is to prevent later reading difficulties. The program is designed to prepare children to enter Kindergarten with the necessary cognitive, early language, and literacy skills for success in school.

Applicants must use *ERF* funds to:

- ◆ Provide preschool-age children with high-quality oral language and print-rich environments in which to acquire oral language skills, phonological awareness, print awareness, and alphabet knowledge
- ◆ Provide professional development for staff that is based on scientifically based reading research knowledge of language, cognitive, and early reading development that will assist in developing the preschool-age children's oral language, phonological awareness, print awareness, and alphabet knowledge
- ◆ Identify and provide activities and instructional materials that are based on scientifically based reading research for use in developing children's language, cognitive, and early reading skills
- ◆ Acquire, provide training in the use of, and implement screening reading assessments or other appropriate measures that are based on scientifically based reading research to determine whether preschool-age children are developing the language, cognitive, and early reading skills they need for later reading success
- ◆ Integrate these instructional materials, activities, tools, and measures into the applicant's overall programs

RESEARCH CITATIONS

Because *Early Reading First* requires an emphasis on instructional materials and professional development grounded in scientific research, applicants are encouraged to include research citations within the narrative sections of their pre-applications. The following quotes can be used when drafting the indicated sections of the pre-application.

 ***Make sure you ONLY include endnote citations for each of the quotations used in your narrative.***

CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

The number of months that children spend in preschool has been found to be related to achievement test scores in second grade, behavior problems in third grade, and school retention in kindergarten through third grade. Children with more preschool experience had higher achievement scores and fewer behavior problems and were less likely to be required to repeat a grade (*Pianta & McCoy, 1997*).

In order to develop their language capabilities, children need a language and conversation-rich environment. Research demonstrates that the number of words and variety of conversations children hear affect the speed of their language growth (*Snow et al., 1995*).

Studies have firmly established the importance of reading aloud as one of the most important activities for reading success (*Bredekamp, Copple, & Neuman, 2000*). However, simply reading aloud to children does not by itself impact children's reading abilities; dialogue about and beyond the immediate context of the book is critical (*Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998; Dickinson & Tabors, 2001*).

Importantly, studies show that book discussions that focus beyond the immediate context of the book have a greater impact on children's literacy (*Dickinson & Tabors 2001; Snow et al., 1995*).

Overall children learn by talking with adults: during daily routines, storytelling, reading, by relating personal experience, and having complex conversations in which they offer opinions (*Burns, Griffin, & Snow, 1999*).

Intentional, focused instruction should be based on clearly defined goals and embedded in daily routines (NAEYC & NAECS/SDE 2002). To achieve these goals, teachers need to provide both planned experiences and ones that emerge as an outgrowth of children's interests, offering a balance between teacher-centered and child-initiated activities (*Hohmann & Weikart, 1995*).

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

"The knowledge and skills of the teacher account for the largest difference in academic achievement than any other single factor. (*Darling-Hammond et al., 1999*). The professional development of teachers has been shown to be integrally related to the overall quality of early childhood programs and thus, the overall effect of those programs in having a positive outcome for children" (*Kontos et al., 1997*).

Well-designed and effective professional development programs are job-embedded, continuous, collaborative, and research-based" (*Epstein, 1993*). Therefore, **SECP** provides integrated Teacher Workshops—a series of 12 cooperative workshop sessions designed to facilitate discussions with the teaching team. Each workshop consists of a four-step plan centered around a research-based article written by a noted expert such as Dr. Susan B. Neuman, Lilian Katz, Dr. Stanley Greenspan, or Doug Clements. Through discussion and an action plan, teachers can develop and integrate new activities into their daily schedule.

SERVICES AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Approximately 20% of children have difficulty acquiring reading skills, particularly awareness of sound-symbol relationships. These children decode text at a slower rate than average (*Lyon, 1995 and Lyon & Motats, 1997*).

The building blocks of literacy for young children, in addition to oral language development, have been identified as print awareness, alphabetic knowledge, and phonological awareness (*Burns, Griffin, & Snow, 1999*).

In learning to read, children must unlock the relationships between the sounds they use to say words and the letters of the alphabet (*Juel, 1996; Chall & Popp, 1996; Torgeson, 1998*). Children's ability to discern the sounds in words and link them to alphabetic symbols is a strong predictor of reading success (*Stanovich & Seigel, 1994; Stanovich, 1993; Vellutino, Scanlon, & Sipay et al., 1996*).

SCREENING ASSESSMENTS

The primary role of assessment in early childhood education is to provide insight into the educational experiences that will be the most valuable for individual children (*Burns, 1996; Bodrova & Leong, 1996*).

Teaching and assessment need to be inseparably fused in an ongoing cycle of refinement (*Meisels & Attkins-Burnett, 2000*).

Appropriate assessment and monitoring of children's learning contributes to decision-making about practice, designing programs and planning curricula (*Wiggins, 1998*). To achieve these aims, teachers should use multiple methods of assessment over time, including observation, investigation, and interviews, as well as more formal assessments (*Shepard et al., 1998*).

The primary role of assessment in early childhood education is to provide insight into the educational experiences that will be the most valuable for individual children (*Burns, 1996; Bodrova & Leong, 1996*). Assessment should support and inform instruction (*Shepard, Kagan & Wurtz, 1998*).

Curriculum-embedded forms of assessment allow children to demonstrate their knowledge or skills through active engagement in classroom activities (*Meisels, 1996*).

For all children, it is individually, culturally, and linguistically appropriate measures of their strengths, development, progress, and needs that will provide vital information to professionals involved in promoting children's learning (*Stiggins, 2001; McAfee & Leong, 2002*).

INTEGRATION

"A recent comprehensive review of early childhood programs for children from low-income families concludes that preschool programs can produce large effects on IQ during the early childhood years and sizable persistent effects on achievement, grade retention, special education, high school graduation, and socialization" (*Barnett, 1995*).

"Research is beginning to delineate the key experiences and circumstances that will enable children to realize their potential. These include nurturing relationships with caregivers, experiences that encourage social interchange, varied opportunities for expression, appropriate physical activity, cognitive stimulation and challenge, opportunities to explore the environment, and involvement with language, print, and other forms of communication" (*Brazelton & Greenspan, 2000; Denton & West, 2002; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 2001*).

"Children use language for complex and varied purposes. Language and literacy development is not only vital to specific reading skills and overall cognitive development, but recent research reveals that it plays an important role in children's social competencies. For instance, one study has correlated children's literacy with their ability to empathize with others" (*M.Regalado et al., 2001*).

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Scholastic Early Childhood Program Research Foundation

SECP is based on the educational research reported in the following publications, as well as guidance from our academic authorship team and pilot study.

- *Beyond Baby Talk: From Sounds to Sentences – A Parent’s Guide to Language Development* (Apel, K. & Masterson, J., 2001)
- *Eager to Learn, Educating our Preschoolers* (National Research Council, 2000)
- *From Neurons to Neighborhoods, The Science of Early Childhood Development* (National Research Council and the Institute of Medicine, 2000)
- *Handbook of Early Literacy Research* (Neuman, S.B. & Dickinson, D.K., Eds., 2001)
- *The Young Child and Mathematics* (National Association for the Education of Young Children and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, 2000)
- *Learning to Read and Write: Developmentally Appropriate Practices for Young Children* (Neuman, S., Copple, C., & Bredekamp, S., 2000)
- *Phonemic Awareness in Young Children* (Adams, M.J., Foorman, B.R., Lundberg, I., and Beeler, T., 1998)
- *Principles and Recommendations for Early Childhood Assessments* (National Education Goals Panel, 1998)
- *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children* (Snow, C.E., Burns, S., & Griffin, P., Eds., 1998)
- *Starting Out Right: A Guide to Promoting Children’s Reading Success* (Burns, M.S., Griffin, P., & Snow, C.E. Eds., 1999)
- *The Scientist in the Crib* (Gopnik, A., Meltzoff, A.N., & Kuhl, P.K., 1999)

About Scholastic Inc.

Scholastic is committed to providing teachers with effective materials for every stage of reading instruction to ensure that students develop the skills and strategies needed to succeed in school. Our reputation is built on an 84-year history of helping foster and support effective learning for all students. For years, we have worked with leading researchers to develop scientifically based products that produce significant results in student achievement, as well as meaningful changes in teacher effectiveness.

We look forward to partnering with you to improve reading achievement, and would like the opportunity to talk with you about how we can best support your efforts to implement ***No Child Left Behind (NCLB)*** over the next several years.