County of Los Angeles
Child Care Planning Committee
INVESTING IN EARLY EDUCATORS STIPEND PROGRAM

CYCLE 11B: For Persons Working in Family Child Care Homes
Instructions Only

FUNDING FOR CYCLE 11 IS DEPENDENT ON THE AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS FROM THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION/CHILD DEVELOPMENT DIVISION (CDE/CDD).

Schedule for Stipend Program – Cycle 11	
Stipend Program Cycle 11 applications posted on the Web site at www.childcare.lacounty.gov	August 2009
Applications with supporting documents due	**Mail in: Thursday, October 22, 2009 (postmarked)** **Walk in: Thursday, October 29, 2009**
Application Disqualification Letters mailed by:	Thursday, January 7, 2010
Appeal Letters for Application Disqualification due:	Thursday, January 21, 2010
Verification Forms mailed to eligible applicants by:	Friday, February 5, 2010
Verification Forms with supporting documents due:	**Mail in: Thursday, March 4, 2010 (postmarked)** **Walk in: Thursday, March 11, 2010**
Verification Disqualification Letters mailed by:	Friday, May 7, 2010
Appeal Letters for Verification Disqualification due:	Friday, May 21, 2010
Stipends sent to qualifying applicants:	**July/August 2010**

READ ALL INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY BEFORE AND WHILE COMPLETING THE APPLICATION AND PROVIDE ALL INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTS REQUESTED.

Overview

The *Investing in Early Educators Stipend Program,* funded by the California Department of Education/Child Development Division (CDE/CDD) and developed by the County of Los Angeles Child Care Planning Committee, is designed to increase the retention and academic preparedness of teachers working in child development programs – centers and family child care homes – in which most of the children are subsidized by the CDE/CDD. In addition, the *Stipend Program* helps teachers work towards completing college coursework that informs their work with children and families, and/or contributes to a degree in child development or a closely related field.

The instructions serve as your guide for completing your application to the *Stipend Program.* It is critically important that you **read the instructions** carefully and provide all information and documents as requested. Note that each cycle is separate; therefore, you must submit all supporting documents requested for this cycle. **Applications that have missing information and/or missing documents will be considered incomplete and will not be reviewed.**

The instructions also provide you with information on the process leading up to awarding stipends, including the appeal process and a detailed timeline.

Applying to the *Stipend Program* is a two-part process:
1. **Application:** determines that you meet the employment eligibility criteria.
2. **Verification:** verifies that you have met the educational requirements, hold a Child Development Permit, and continue to meet the employment criteria.

If you work in a Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP) classroom only, you may be eligible for their Professional Growth Plan (PGP) Stipend Program. Visit www.laup.net and click on Professional Growth Opportunities for more information.

STEP 1: Determining Eligibility[1] (see note below)

To be eligible to apply for a stipend, you ***must:***

1. Work in a family child care home that participates in a California Department of Education/Child Development Division (CDE/CDD)-contracted Family Child Care Home Education Network certified by the Network Program Coordinator/Administrator, **OR**

   Work in a licensed family child care home in which the majority (51% or more) of the children receive a child care subsidy from the CDE/CDD-contracted agency at the time you submit your application; **AND**

2. Work directly teaching children on a consistent and continual basis at least 15 hours per week; **AND**

3. Have been licensed and operating for one year or employed in a family child care home in the County of Los Angeles from July 1, 2009 through March 11, 2010; **AND**

4. Hold a Child Development Permit issued by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) to be submitted with the Verification Form (see Schedule). See Step 2, Item 2 under ***Eligible Coursework*** for more information on obtaining or upgrading a permit.

If you meet the eligibility criteria, then continue to Step 2.

STEP 2: Meeting the Educational Requirements

To earn a stipend, you ***must***:

1. Complete at least three (3) semester units (4.5 quarter units) or a maximum of six (6) semester units (9 quarter units) of eligible coursework at a community college, college, or university; **AND**

2. Complete the class(es) **after** February 27, 2009 and **before** March 1, 2010; **AND**

3. Pass the class(es) with a grade of "C" or better; **AND**

4. Submit your transcript(s) and Child Development Permit when requested with your Verification Form.

Eligible Coursework

All coursework must be unit-bearing and fulfill the requirements for a degree in child development. Extension or continuing education courses are ***not*** eligible unless the applicant has a Bachelor Degree (BA/BS) or higher. If you have any questions regarding coursework eligible for the Stipend Program, you are encouraged to contact Renatta Cooper by telephone at (213) 974-4453 or by e-mail at rcooper@ceo.lacounty.gov.

Eligible coursework is limited to the following five categories:

1. If you are not proficient in English as indicated on your application, you may take English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) classes at a community college if directed to do so by your college. This option is intended for applicants needing to improve their English language skills in order to enroll in college classes toward earning a degree in child development.

[1] State law limits eligibility to the *Investing in Early Educators Stipend Program* to persons serving a majority of children receiving CDE/CDD subsidies. Staff working in Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP) and Head Start Programs only are ineligible to apply.

2. If you do NOT have a child development permit issued by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC), you should take required child development classes, such as child/human growth and development, child/family/community, or curriculum. If you already have a permit, you may take classes needed to upgrade or renew your permit.

Note*:** *If you do not have a permit, contact CTC by visiting their Web site at www.ctc.ca.gov or contact the child development department at your community college. Click on "Credentialing", then "Child Development Permits" and following the instructions for obtaining or upgrading your permit. Community colleges can often process permit applications more quickly than the CTC. In addition, the Child Development Training Consortium offers support to eligible person applying for, renewing, or upgrading their permits; more information is available at www.childdevelopment.org. You will need a valid permit to qualify for a stipend at the time of verification; it takes approximately* ***nine months or more *for your permit to be issued.*

3. If you do NOT have an Associate Degree (AA/AS), you should take child development, English, math or general education classes; or prerequisites to classes that are transferable for a degree in child development at a four year college. Check with an advisor at your college or university before enrolling in a class if you are not sure it is a prerequisite or transferable class.

4. If you have an AA/AS or are working toward a BA/BS, you should take classes that are transferable and are counted as credit toward a four-year college or university degree; or classes at a four-year college or university that count towards a degree. Acceptable degrees include Early Childhood Education, Early Special Education, Child Psychology, and Child Development.

5. If you have a BA/BS OR higher, you should take college or university classes that are directly related to your work with children and families in a child development program. Sample topics include: special needs children, diversity, dual language learners, parent relations, adult supervision, program evaluation, and advanced child development. Unit bearing extension or continuing education courses can be counted as eligible only for individuals who already hold a BA/BS or higher.

If you meet the eligibility criteria **and** understand the educational requirements, then continue with your application.

STEP 3: Completing the Application

Be sure you have the correct application:

- If you work in a **child development center**, complete the application for **Cycle 11A** (see separate instructions and application for Cycle 11A).
- If you work in a **family child care home**, complete the application for **Cycle 11B.**

Section 1. Applicant Information

- Enter your full name in the appropriate box on the top of each page of your application.
- Fill in every box; do not leave blanks. If the information is not applicable, then write in "N/A".
- Enter **all** telephone numbers where we can reach you from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Special instructions:

- *Enter your full name* ***exactly*** *as it appears on your social security card.*
- *Enter your social security number (SSN)* ***exactly*** *as it appears on your card.*
- *All SSNs are verified with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), so accuracy is critical.*

Section 2. Applicant Education and Permit Levels

- Check the highest level of education that you have completed**.**

***Note**: If you are working toward a degree, **DO NOT** check that you have the degree.*

- Check the type of Child Development Permit you currently hold**.**

Section 3. Continuing Education Requirement

- Check all that apply; indicate major if you have checked that you are working to obtain an AA, BA/BS or MA/MS degree.

Section 4. Applicant Employment Information

- If your family child care home is part of a Family Child Care Home Education Network (FCCHEN), enter the name of the administering agency and the name of the Network Coordinator/Administrator in the appropriate boxes. **Be sure to attach the Network Coordinator/Administrator's business card to your application.**

  Family Child Care Home Education Networks include:

  - California State University Northridge Children's Center
  - Center for Community & Family Services
  - Child Development Consortium of Los Angeles
  - Child Care Resource Center
  - Children's Home Society of California
  - Children's Institute, Inc
  - City of Gardena Child Development
  - City of Santa Fe Springs
  - Claremont Unified School District
  - Community Development Center
  - Comprehensive Child Development, Inc.
  - Estrada Courts
  - Hope Street Family Center
  - International Institute of Los Angeles
  - Kids First Learning Center
  - Little Tokyo Service Center Community Development
  - Los Angeles Mission College
  - Mexican American Opportunity Foundation (MAOF)
  - Options – A Child Care & Human Services Agency
  - Pathways
  - Venice Family Clinic
  - Vista del Mar/Home Safe
  - Westside Children's Center

***Note:** Certification by the Network Coordinator/Administrator for applicants participating in a FCCHEN is required. (See Section 7.)*

- Licensee/owners and assistants applying for the *Stipend Program* **MUST** include a copy of the family child care home license with your application.

- Indicate if the family child care home in which you work serves as a Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP) site in addition to participating in a FCCHEN or serving a majority of children subsidized by the CDE/CDD-contracted agency.

- Indicate if the family child care home is participating in the Steps to Excellence Project (STEP).

Section 5. Applicant Wage/Income Information

- Be sure to complete the appropriate box.

Section 6. Children with Whom Applicant is Currently Working

- Check all that apply.

Definitions – Children with Disabilities or Special Needs:
- Children protected by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); OR
- Children at risk of a developmental disability as defined by the Early Intervention Act; OR
- Children whose behavior and/or health affect the family's ability to find and maintain child care services.
- Children with Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) or Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Section 7. Employment and Eligibility Certification

- It is your responsibility as the applicant to make sure that your Network Coordinator/Administrator or Licensee-Owner completes this section, signs and dates it **and attaches their business card.**

- There are three options to this section, depending on whether the family child care home is part of a FCCHEN and, if part of a FCCHEN, whether the applicant is the licensee-owner or assistant. Be sure your Network Coordinator/Administrator or Licensee-Owner completes only one portion of this section:

  - For applicants (license-owner) with FCCHENs, OR
  - For applicants who are assistants in licensed family child care homes that are with a FCCHN, OR
  - For applicants (licensee or assistants) serving low-income children and who are not in a FCCHN.

Special instructions for FCCHENs:
- *Enter the name of the FCCHEN on the line as requested (see page 4 of the instructions).*
- *This section **must** be signed by the Network Coordinator/Administrator.*
- *Providers participating in FCCHENs do not need to provide proof that they are serving subsidized children.*

Special instructions for family child care programs that do not participate in a FCCHEN:
- *Enter the name of the family child care home.*
- *Enter the total number of children currently enrolled and of those children, the total number of **subsidized** children.*
- *Check the boxes of the agencies providing subsidy funds for the children in your care.*
- *Attach to the application a copy of the invoice or contract documents listing **all** of the subsidized children. The documents should be copies of the most current printout(s) you received from the funding agency(ies) with the agency's(ies') name on it and list the children's names; the payment amounts may be blocked out. Write the Stipend applicant's name in the upper right hand corner of the document(s).*
- *The licensee-owner signs for their employees. Licensee-Owners applying for stipends may self-certify.*

Section 8. Applicant Certification and Signature

- Read and initial each of the eight statements of certification.

- Be sure to sign and date this section.

STEP 4: Submitting Your Application

1. Be sure that you have completed every section of the application and your name is entered at the top of each page. **It is highly recommended that you have someone review your application for you before you submit it.**

2. Be sure that your name is included at the top of the supporting documents.

3. Check to make sure that your Network Administrator or Licensee-Owner has completed, signed, and dated Section 7 and attached their business card.

4. If you operate or work in a family child care home that does not participate in a FCCHEN, be sure that you have attached a copy of the most current invoice/contract documents listing **all** of the subsidized children enrolled in the program. The invoice/contract(s) should be a copy of the printout(s) received from the funding agency(ies) with their name on it. You will **not** be eligible for a stipend without the invoice/contract documents.

5. **Make a copy of your completed application, with supporting documents, for your records.**

6. Submit your completed original application, with supporting documents, in person or by U.S. mail, certified mail or Domestic Return Receipt, to:

Investing in Early Educators Stipend Program – Cycle 11B
Office of Child Care, SIB/CEO
County of Los Angeles
222 South Hill Street, 5th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Office Hours: 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Application due dates:
Mail in: Thursday, October 22, 2009 (postmarked)
Walk in: Thursday, October 29, 2009

DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE DEADLINE TO APPLY!

- *Applicants are encouraged to **apply early**. If you walk your application into the Office of Child Care, you will receive a stamp-dated receipt with all documents noted on the receipt***.**
- *Persons submitting applications in person on behalf of several colleagues should request individual receipts per applicant.*
- ***Do not mail groups of applications in same packets*.**
- *If you choose to mail your application, send certified mail or Domestic Return Receipt.*
- *Faxed, late, or incomplete applications will not be considered.*
- *Stipend Program staff will not call to remind you to send missing information. This is your responsibility.*

STEP 5: Application Review

1. Upon receipt of your application, *Stipend Program* staff will screen your application for completeness. Only complete applications will be fully reviewed. Applications that have missing information and/or missing supporting documents will not be reviewed.

2. Staff will review your complete application to ensure that you meet the eligibility criteria to participate.

3. If you are eligible, your information is entered into the *Stipend Program* database and a Verification Form with instructions will be sent to you by U.S. mail by Friday, February 5, 2010. If you do not receive a Verification Form by mid-February 2010, contact the Office of Child Care at (213) 974-4674.

4. If your application is incomplete or you are not eligible, you will be notified with an Application Disqualification Letter by U.S. mail in early January 2010. You may appeal this decision. Instructions for submitting a letter of appeal are outlined in Step 6 of these instructions.

***Note**: Due to the anticipated number of applications, the review process can take several weeks. Please **do not** call to ask about your application. Your Verification Form or letter of disqualification will serve as notice regarding your application.*

STEP 6: Submitting a Letter of Appeal

- If you are disqualified, you may submit a letter of appeal. **Appeals must be submitted in writing.**

*An appeal is **not** the time to submit new information or supporting documents. Rather, it is an opportunity to prove that your application was complete, included the required supporting documents, was submitted by the due date, and you meet the eligibility criteria based on your original application.*

- Your letter of appeal should include the following information:
  - The date your appeal letter is written
  - Your full name and social security number (SSN) as written on your application
  - Reference to the reason you were disqualified as indicated in the letter you received from the Office of Child Care
  - A brief description of why you think the decision to disqualify your application is incorrect
  - A copy of your application and supporting documents **as submitted** by the due date
  - A copy of the receipt you were provided when you submitted your application in person or a copy of your certified mail receipt

- Make a copy of your letter of appeal and supporting documents for your records.

- Letters of appeal with supporting documents are due by Thursday, January 21, 2010 to:

Investing in Early Educators Stipend Program – Cycle 11B
Office of Child Care, SIB/CEO
County of Los Angeles
222 South Hill Street, 5th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90012

- The Office of Child Care management team reviews appeals, including review of the original application. Decisions to grant or not grant the appeal, based on whether the applicant met the application requirements and deadlines, are made within two weeks of receipt of the letter of appeal. The applicant will be notified by U.S. mail. **ALL DECISIONS ARE FINAL**.

For more information on the *Investing in Early Educators Stipend Program* and to download the instructions and application, visit www.childcare.lacounty.gov. Instructions and application forms are also available by contacting the Office of Child Care at (213) 974-4674.

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