Minnesota Department of Education

DATE: July 25, 2013

TO: Superintendents of Minnesota Public Schools, Executive Directors of Minnesota Education Cooperative Service Units, Minnesota Education Districts, For-profit and Non-profit Organizations and other local Governmental Entities

FROM: Jessie Montano, Deputy Commissioner
Bobbie Burnham, Director, Early Learning Services

SUBJECT: Grant Opportunity: Competitive – State Early Learning Scholarships – Regional Administration

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) invites qualified applications to be submitted from Minnesota's public schools, Minnesota educational cooperative service units, Minnesota education districts, for-profit and non-profit organizations and other local governmental entities for the coordination and administration of the State Early Learning Scholarships in communities within the governor's 13 Economic Development Regions throughout the state of Minnesota.

The amount of $22,050,000 is available to fund approximately 13 grants using state funds appropriated through Minnesota 2013 Session Law, Chapter 116, Article 8, Section 2. This law established the Early Learning Scholarships program in order to increase access to high-quality early childhood programs for children ages 3 to 5.

Once a grantee is chosen in each region, they will administer Early Learning Scholarships for the entire region. This will include the following:

- Pathway I Early Learning Scholarships awarded directly to eligible children in identified counties, and
- Pathway II Early Learning Scholarships awarded to children through an eligible Four Star Parent Aware rated program, including prekindergarten and preschool programs in school districts, Head Start, and child care programs, in areas to be identified by MDE.

This grant opportunity is not an application for specific programs that wish to apply to become a designated Early Learning Scholarships Pathway II site. Additional information about how programs can apply to become a designated Early Learning Scholarships Pathway II site will be available after July 25, 2013, on the Early Learning Web page.

Applicants who wish to apply in response to this grant opportunity and for more than one regional award must submit a separate signed application for each regional award. Applicants must reside in the region their application will serve or, have a draft of a formal agreement with a partner who resides in that region who will lead outreach and implementation. If that agreement results in payment of funds, a formal contract will need to be executed in the event an award is made. Refer to the grant instructions for additional information.

Please visit the Grant Opportunities Web page and scroll down to the grant opportunity for the application documents. **Applications must be received physically (not postmarked) by August 13, 2013, 3:30 p.m., Central Time.** Applications should not be submitted into the SERVS application system.

Please contact Lisa Cariveau (651-582-8332) if you have questions. The questions are due to her by July 29, 2013.