Minnesota Department of Education

DATE: August 22, 2013

TO: Superintendents of Minnesota public schools, executive directors of Minnesota education cooperative service units, Minnesota education districts, Minnesota regional management information centers (RMICs),Minnesota Head Start agencies and Minnesota non-profit organizations

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

SUBJECT: **Announcing Federal Race to the Top Competitive Grant Opportunity: Local Early Childhood Software System Upgrade**

The Minnesota Department of Education is seeking applications from interested and qualified Minnesota education cooperative service units, Minnesota education Districts, Minnesota RMICs, Minnesota Head Start agencies and Minnesota non-profit organizations that will coordinate efforts in school districts and/or Head Start programs in upgrading their local early childhood student/child software data collection systems. This effort is to improve local efficiencies as they transition to reporting to MDE private protected early childhood level data for understanding children's experiences prior to kindergarten.

Federal funding in the amount of $1,500,000 is available at this time from CFDA 84.412A, Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge, Award S412A120019. If additional funds become available, the department reserves the right to grant awards to the next highest scoring entities or offer additional funding to those selected from this competitive round. We anticipate funding approximately 40 grants with the maximum grant award not exceeding $250,000. The department reserves the right to award more or less than 40 awards and in amounts that differ than the amount requested in the application.

Please visit the Grant Opportunity webpage and scroll down to this grant opportunity for the application documents. The documents will be available at that site after August 23, 2013.

The term of the grant period is anticipated to be early November, 2013 through November 30, 2015.

The state reserves their right to cancel this solicitation and is not obligated to award any grants if it is considered to be in the state's best interest.

Applications must be physically received (not postmarked) **by October 4, 2013, 3:30 p.m., Central Time.**

Contact Avisia Whiteman at Avisia.Whiteman@state.mn.us or 651-582-8329 for additional information. Questions are due to her through email by September 9, 2013, 3:30 pm, Central Time.