August 26, 2013

Dear prospective grantees and partners,

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF) is pleased to announce a new approach to work in the field of family engagement and a challenge to communities and schools to see families – regardless of race, ethnicity or income level – as powerful assets for their children’s education and as partners with a shared responsibility for student learning and achievement.

We want you to be a part of these important efforts in your communities, which will be supported by WKKF with an investment of up to $5 million this year in organizations and groups striving to build innovative, equitable and effective family engagement models that address obstacles faced by low-income families and focus on engaging families during their children’s earliest years, from birth through age 8.

We welcome your ideas on how to help schools, communities and families make a positive impact on children’s learning and development, while also addressing the needs of the parents of those children – our “two generation” strategy.

You’ll find full information about the grant process in this attachment or by visiting www.wkkf.org. Interested nonprofits or public entities with nonprofit partners should complete initial submissions of intent by September 23, 2013, for possible funding of up to $500,000 for one to three years.

Thank you for your efforts to create environments in which empowered parents and families are leaders and every child can succeed. We look forward to reading your submissions.

Sincerely,

Carla D. Thompson
Vice President – Program Strategy
W.K. Kellogg Foundation
Family Engagement:
A Shared Responsibility Among Families, Schools and Communities

OVERVIEW
Across the country, early childhood education is emerging as a powerful strategy to improve the long-term academic, physical and emotional outcomes for all children. Until recently, though, this intervention was often neglecting one of the most critical elements for success – family engagement. We at the W.K. Kellogg Foundation have heard the call for increased family engagement on the national level.

To promote local efforts in family engagement, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation is taking a new approach: challenging communities to see families, regardless of race, ethnicity or income level, as powerful assets for their children’s education. The foundation defines family engagement as a shared responsibility of families, schools and communities for student learning and achievement. It is a continuous process from birth to third grade and beyond. It occurs across multiple settings where children learn, and it creates environments where empowered parents and families are leaders.

To further the goal of empowering families to participate actively in their children’s education, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation now seeks initial submissions of intent from organizations and groups striving to build innovative, equitable, and effective family-engagement approaches. We are particularly interested in strategies that build upon the strengths of families and focus on engaging them during their children’s earliest years, from birth through age 8.

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation will invest up to $5 million in 2013-14 to support innovation in approaches to engaging families in their children’s education.

To accomplish this work, we will encourage and promote the field of family engagement by supporting efforts that:

- Advance the practice of family engagement to more strongly impact children’s learning outcomes by supporting and elevating programs, policies and community solutions;
- Seed and grow a community of practice among leaders and innovators;
- Generate a movement by developing family leaders who can come together to inspire other family leaders, elevate their voices and perspectives and provoke change in constructive ways;
- Build the capacity of community-based organizations to act as partners between schools and families, thus strengthening the family-engagement infrastructure;
- Engage new and diverse players in advocating for educational change in policies, practices and funding;
- Create new visions for family engagement that support and are in concert with innovative sources and ways of learning that include inventive tools, knowledge, settings and strategies.
BACKGROUND AND PHILOSOPHY

Vision of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation’s Education & Learning and Family Economic Security Programs

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation works in partnership with communities to educate children and support all aspects of their growth – cognitive, physical, social and emotional – while also creating more financially secure families. We want to help schools, communities and families make a positive impact on their children’s learning and development.

Central to the foundation’s work is a commitment to strengthen two generations simultaneously. Children and families do not exist independently, and neither should solutions to the challenges they face. To be effective, we must support high-quality education for young children and create opportunities for caregivers to improve their families’ lives. We support families gaining access to resources available to build their skills, so they qualify for better-paying and more secure jobs. To this end, our work focuses on the following strategies:

- **Family Engagement** – supporting the shared responsibility of families, schools and communities to help students learn and achieve.

- **Systems Alignment** – strengthening and integrating educational practices and policies that are community-based and connected to family improvement efforts that mobilize voices, resources and solutions.

- **Effective Teaching** – supporting leadership and professional development in which educators receive the support and training they need to deliver high-quality early learning for all students.

- **Comprehensive Bundled Services** – providing families access to every available resource that helps them achieve economic stability and build skills for secure jobs.

- **Asset Development** – increasing families’ knowledge about financial resources and services that help increase families’ assets and create long-term financial stability.

- **Employer Partnerships** – connecting people with high-quality jobs that support their families with employers who invest in skills-building and training.

WHY A FAMILY ENGAGEMENT APPROACH?

More than five decades of research confirms that engaging families in their children’s education early in their lives improves school readiness, produces higher gains in reading and math achievement and increases graduation rates (Mapp, 2012). Research in “A New Wave of Evidence” also shows that family engagement is a more accurate predictor of student achievement than family income or socio-economic status (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). That same report concludes that when schools, families and community groups work together to support learning, children do better in school, stay in school longer and enjoy their educational experiences.

We believe that family-engagement efforts that support family leadership development and build organizational capacity to use family-centered approaches can transform the early childhood education system, resulting in high-quality teaching and connected systems that support the economic stability and security of families.
SUCCESSFUL SUBMISSIONS WILL:

1. Be one of the six types of efforts we are planning to support (“Overview,” Page 2),

2. Address one or more of the six Education & Learning and Family Economic Security program strategies (“Background and Philosophy,” Page 3), and

3. Have goals that include some or all of the following critical components:

**Two-Generation Impact**

Our experiences with working in different communities have taught us that it is not enough to focus our efforts on the child only. The work must address the needs of parents and children (birth through age 8) together. To address this family empowerment and ensure long-term education and economic opportunity, resources will be focused on two-generation approaches that build families’ and children’s (birth through age 8) skills.

**Racial Equity**

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation has a strong commitment to racial equity. We work with diverse organizations that emphasize racial equity by:

- Mitigating the effects of structural racism;
- Working to eliminate institutionalized and structural racism by dismantling structural barriers, interrupting inequitable practices, reducing the harmful effects of bias, challenging the status quo and honoring or communicating shared fate.

**Changing Perceptions of Low-Income Families and Communities of Color**

In the current conversations about low-income and other vulnerable families, they often are talked about as a “barrier” to their children’s education. At the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, we believe this perception needs to change to successfully create the conditions that support well-educated, healthy children and secure families. We want to work with organizations that will help shift the conversations within communities to one in which low-income families’ strengths are used fully and effectively to promote their children’s success.

**Infants and Toddlers**

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation believes it is critically important that we engage families and offer comprehensive learning supports from the beginning of a child’s life. A majority of children are cared for in homes by family, friends or neighbors. To support a successful transition into school, we must engage the families and caregivers of infants and toddlers in meaningful ways and connect them to the formal early education system.

**Systems Change**

Disrupting ineffective systems is essential to creating integrated, sustained and strategic change for children and families. We must move to a systemic and sustained approach to make family engagement a core component of education approaches and goals. Introducing family engagement into educators’ professional development, promoting community collaboration in schools and understanding families’ importance in student achievement are all crucial. Family-engagement approaches must be grounded in data, adequately funded and embedded into education structures and processes designed to support the long-term success of young children and families.
ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for W.K. Kellogg Foundation Family Engagement grants, applicant organizations must:

- Be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization (Note: Public and for-profit entities are encouraged to identify 501(c)(3) nonprofit partners with whom to complete initial submissions.);

- Clearly articulate a focus on both children (birth through age 8) and families with incomes below 200 percent of the federal poverty level;

- Demonstrate evidence of family participation in the design, planning and implementation of the planned programs and initiatives;

- Demonstrate evidence of a deep organizational commitment to racial equity;

- Focus on or highlight cross-sector or cross-issue collaborations and partnerships;

- Be committed to participating in and contributing to the foundation’s Family Engagement learning community through participation in convenings, evaluation activities, social networking platforms, etc.;

- Be committed to documenting and sharing with the field results, learning and tools;

- Be located within the United States. No requests should be submitted for work to be done in W.K. Kellogg Foundation’s priority places of Michigan, New Mexico, New Orleans or Mississippi as this ongoing work is coordinated through our placed-based focus teams.

INITIAL SUBMISSION

- The grant pool available is up to $5 million in FY 2013-14;

- Organizations may submit only one initial submission, in which they are the lead applicant;

- Applications from previous recipients of Family Engagement grants from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation will be considered only on the merit of their current submission, not on the basis of previous work;

- Initial submissions are due on Sept. 23, 2013 by 11:59 p.m. EDT. If selected, applicants will be asked to provide a full proposal in October 2013 with a due date of November 2013 and will receive guidelines upon selection. Selected grantees will be notified of their awards in December 2013 (timeline for details appears below);

- Organizations may apply for grants totaling up to $500,000 and for a grant period ranging from one to three years.

PRIORITY CONSIDERATION

Priority consideration will be given to applicants whose organizations:

- Have a track record of leading an effort with significant potential to apply a two-generation approach that improves learning outcomes for children (birth through age 8);

- Bring a racial equity focus to their work;

- Propose to share or develop new or improved tools, knowledge and strategies;

- Have access to and broad reach within a system or potential dissemination network;

- Show evidence (if selected to submit a full proposal) of committed financial resources that would leverage W.K. Kellogg Foundation resources with a cash match of at least 20 percent of the proposed amount.
EVALUATION AND MONITORING

Participation in evaluation activities will be agreed upon in the final proposal stage for all grantees.

All grantees must meet W.K. Kellogg Foundation requirements for timely submission of narrative and financial reports. Grantees may also receive periodic financial audits.

COMMUNICATIONS

Applicants who are invited to submit full proposals will be expected to include a communications plan as part of their submission. Because this grant initiative focuses on shifting the national conversation about family engagement and low-income families, we seek to partner with grantees that can and will make visible innovative approaches to family-engagement work.

TIMELINE

The grant award selection process is comprised of six stages. Being selected to move forward from one stage to the next does not guarantee eventual funding of the request. The stages are:

1. Deadline for submitting Initial Submission web form (Sept. 23, 2013, by 11:59 p.m. EDT);
2. W.K. Kellogg Foundation invitation for selected potential grantees to submit a full proposal web form (October 2013);
3. Mandatory webinar for selected organizations (October 2013);
4. Proposal deadline for selected organizations (November 2013);
5. Final selection of grant recipients (December 2013);

HOW TO APPLY

Visit www.wkkf.org for more information.
Initial submission will only be accepted through our online web form. Please email questions to familyengagement@wkkf.org.

About the W.K. Kellogg Foundation

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF), founded in 1930 as an independent, private foundation by breakfast cereal pioneer, Will Keith Kellogg, is among the largest philanthropic foundations in the United States. Guided by the belief that all children should have an equal opportunity to thrive, WKKF works with communities to create conditions for vulnerable children so they can realize their full potential in school, work and life.

The Kellogg Foundation is based in Battle Creek, Mich., and works throughout the United States and internationally, as well as with sovereign tribes. Special emphasis is paid to priority places where there are high concentrations of poverty and where children face significant barriers to success. WKKF priority places in the U.S. are in Michigan, Mississippi, New Mexico and New Orleans; and internationally, are in Mexico and Haiti. For more information, visit www.wkkf.org.

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation
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