

RTT: Early Learning Challenge Grant Update

To: All FBCS Parents

Early Learning Documentation Brings a Sigh of Relief

Dear Parents:

We have finally received state confirmation that we are not under any requirements under the Early Learning Challenge Grant provided we do not participate in Parent Aware or accept any scholarships or day care assistance associated with the grant.

Dr. Karen Cadigan, Director of the Office of Early Learning, has been working on a “Frequently Asked Questions” (FAQ) sheet that documents answers to our specific concerns regarding participation, licensure, kindergarten testing, and Early Learning Indicators of Progress (ECIPS). The final draft of that document has been reviewed by our office and seems to answer and address our questions and concerns.

While we are not sure when that document is set to be released and published, we expect that it will be posted on the Department of Education website very soon.

I want to make several points crystal clear:

1. Our school must be very careful not to accept any federal funding associated with the Early Learning Grant. The acceptance of funding would tie our programs into Parent Aware for, at least, the four year grant period. It would also mean that our programs would be required to participate in the stipulations and requirements of the grant. We would also caution our schools not to accept any federal or state funding of any kind as a matter of policy.
2. We are going to place a disclaimer on our (Fourth Baptist) application for the 2012-2013 school year that we will not accept any daycare assistance funding or scholarships from the Early Learning Grant for our school. We would recommend strongly that all our MACS

Minnesota Association of Christian Schools

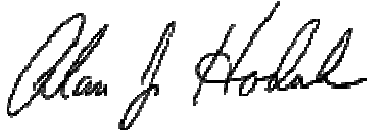
schools do the same. At this point, we are unsure if parents will receive the grant monies to spend at the school of their choice or if schools would be paid the grant monies directly. But we are going to be proactive in the process of letting families know of our position, in advance of the application being turned in.

The target areas of the MN grant are in areas where our MACS schools are typically not located. Target areas are primarily lower income areas as the grant's purpose is to narrow the achievement gap. We may never receive any requests from parents regarding these scholarships. However, we must be careful to protect our school from any government funding which would tie us into Parent Aware.

We are grateful to the Lord for Dr. Cadigan and her willingness to hear us and address our concerns. Also, Congresswoman Michele Bachmann's office has been a tremendous help as they have also contributed considerably to this document.

We will keep you posted as we learn more.

For Christian education in MN,



Mr. Alan J. Hodak

Administrator