
Rudolph, Kim

From: Axt, Kathy
Sent: Friday, March 29, 2002 12:09 PM
To: 'kfee@OMB.eop.gov'
Cc: Rudolph, Kim
Subject: #1648 1810-0621 (1890-0006)

Karen -- OESE submitted the attached request under the EDGAR Streamlined Process (1890-0006). It relates the currently approved information collection, Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative, OMB# 1810-0621 which expires on May 31, 2004. The program needed to revise the criteria to EDGAR criteria. In addition, they simplified the currently approved program-specific criteria by eliminating unnecessary examples. The attached memo provides more explanation. We were hoping to still make the request under this EDGAR 10-day process since they are not moving to new program-specific criteria but just simplifying what has already been approved. If this is a problem, please let me know. I will be out most of next week except for half a day on Wednesday and Thursday. If I'm out, please let Deborah Rudy know.

As you may recall, the EDGAR process is a 10-day approval process and we usually receive email approvals and no NOAs for these type of requests. Only a memo and the revisions have been submitted for this process.

Thanks for your help.

March 29,2002

MEMORANDUM

TO: Karen Lee
Office of Management and Budget

THROUGH: Kathy Axt

FROM: Deborah Rudy
Group Leader, Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program

SUBJECT: Request for Approval of Changes to Safe Schools/Healthy
Students Information Collection – CFDA # 84.184L/OMB #
1810-0621

This memo requests your approval of changes in the selection criteria for the information collection package for the Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative, CFDA #84.184L, OMB # 1810-0621, expiring May 31, 2004. We request that you consider this request under OMB # 1890-0006, the streamlined EDGAR criteria process.

The requested changes include simplification of the previously cleared program-specific criteria, and the substitution of EDGAR criteria in the package in other instances. These changes are requested based on our experience with using the package for the Fiscal Year 2001 competition, and address concerns that applicants, reviewers, and Federal program officers had about the implementation of some selection criteria.

In particular, applicants and reviewers had difficulty in implementing selection criteria related to "Problems to be Addressed". The selection criteria in the cleared package concerning data include long lists data required to be furnished. Virtually no applicants had access to all of the data elements required and as a result reviewers had difficulty in treating gaps in the required list consistently. We've tried to address this problem by eliminating the lists of data required.

The second significant revision deals with a criterion in the "Design of Proposed Strategy" section. The criterion included in that section concerning evidence-based programs has proven very difficult to implement in a consistent manner. We propose simplifying that criterion in the attached revision. We also propose

eliminating some criteria entirely because they overlap with other existing criteria, and to help simplify the review process.

We believe that these proposed modifications will streamline the application preparation and review process and improve the consistency of the review process for this program. I have prepared and attached a detailed mark-up of the existing selection criteria that highlights changes from the criteria in the cleared package, as well as a clean copy of the proposed criteria for use in the Fiscal Year 2002 competition.

We request that you complete your review of this request by April 12, 2002. If we can provide any additional information concerning this request, please do not hesitate to contact me at 260-1875.

Selection Criteria

We use the following selection criteria to evaluate applications for new grants under this competition. The maximum total score for all of these criteria is 100 points.

The maximum score for each criterion or factor under that criterion is indicated in parentheses.

(a) Problems to be addressed (15 points).

In assessing the extent to which the application is based on a clear and accurate statement of the significant problems faced by the target community, the following factors are considered:

(1) The magnitude or severity of the problem(s) to be addressed by the proposed strategy;

(2) The extent to which existing gaps in services, infrastructure and resources exist, and the magnitude of those gaps and weaknesses; and the extent to which the community is ready to improve current conditions;

(3) The factual basis for the problem statement, based on data including, at a minimum but not limited to, the rates of the following:

- Students engaged in alcohol and drug use and violent behavior.
- Incidence and prevalence of alcohol and drug use by youth.
- Prevalence of weapons in schools.
- Incidents of serious and violent crime in schools.
- Truancy and other unauthorized absences.
- Suicidal behaviors.
- Student suspensions and expulsions.

- ~~Students on probation.~~
- ~~Students in juvenile justice placements.~~
- ~~Students in foster care and child protective services.~~
- ~~Child abuse and neglect.~~
- ~~School attendance and academic performance data.~~
- ~~Students with emotional and behavioral disorders.~~

(4) Evidence of community risk factors that may contribute to youth violence, drug use, and delinquency, such as the following:

- ~~Socioeconomic conditions as measured by the percentage of families at or below the poverty level and percentage of students receiving free and reduced price lunch at school.~~
- ~~Population turnover.~~
- ~~Racial and ethnic heterogeneity.~~
- ~~Housing density.~~
- ~~Household composition.~~
- ~~Crime and delinquency rates including domestic violence and rape.~~
- ~~Suicide rates.~~
- ~~Violence crime victimization rate for youth under the age of 18.~~

(5) The extent to which the problem statement includes an assessment of the community resources available for children and adolescents, including:

- ~~Number of afterschool programs.~~
- ~~Number of youth served by programs to build social skills.~~

- ~~Number and quality of community mental health and social service organizations available to provide services to children, adolescents, and families.~~
- ~~Number of youth participating in academic readiness programs.~~
- ~~Number and types of law enforcement prevention programs.~~
- ~~Number and quality of substance abuse prevention programs.~~
- ~~Presence of a community anti drug coalition.~~
- ~~Presence of a community mediation or victim-offender mediation programs.~~

~~(6) Extent of community readiness to collaborate and improve current conditions.~~

b) Goals and objectives (10 points).

In assessing the goals and objectives of the proposed application, the following factors are considered:

(1) The extent to which the goals and objectives for the proposed strategy are clearly specified and measurable~~defined, measurable, and attainable.~~; **[EDGAR criterion]**

~~(2) The extent to which the proposed strategy will meet the established goals and objectives and lead to healthy childhood development and positive mental health and to safe, disciplined, and alcohol and drug free learning environments.~~

~~(23) The extent to which the objectives identified are related to measurable action steps needed to achieve the goal(s).~~

(c) Design of Proposed Strategy (30 points).

In assessing the design of the proposed strategy, the following factors are considered:

(1) The extent to which the proposed strategy represents a comprehensive, integrated approach that addresses the six elements ~~network in which each element of the Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative is addressed and incorporated in an integrated fashion;~~

(2) The extent to which the intervention is ~~strategies and programs are~~ appropriate for the age and developmental levels, gender, and ethnic and cultural diversity of the target population, and demonstrates an ability to engage and respond to the needs of identified ethnic/racial minority populations;

(3) The extent to which the application clearly describes the programs, activities, and services that comprise the proposed strategy, and details how they will be implemented;

(4) The extent to which the proposed programs and activities are evidence based; For elements 2,3, and 4 of the comprehensive plan, the extent to which the proposed programs meet criteria for high levels of evidence that they are effective and do not harm. (Up to 1 point out of the maximum 30 points for this criterion will be used to assess the strength of the applicant's design for these elements); (See Appendix B for definition of "evidence based" and levels of evidence).

(5) The extent to which the proposed strategy will be coordinated with similar or related efforts and will establish linkages with other appropriate agencies and organizations providing services to the target population;

(6) Potential for continued support of the strategy after Federal funding ends, including, as appropriate, demonstrated commitment of appropriate entities to such support.

(7) The likelihood that the proposed project will result in system change or improvement. [EDGAR criterion]

~~(7) The extent to which the implementation process is adequately documented.~~

~~(8) The extent to which the program selected is designed to help meet the goals and objectives of the community's comprehensive plan.~~

(d) Evaluation Plan (15 points)

In determining the quality of the evaluation plan, the following factors will be considered:

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation provide for examining the effectiveness of project implementation strategies;~~evaluation plan provides detailed information for increasing the effectiveness of management and administration of the comprehensive plan, documents that objectives have been met, and determines the overall effectiveness of the plan, its programs and strategies~~ [EDGAR criterion].

(2) The extent to which the proposed methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project comprehensive plan;

(3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes; [EDGAR criterion]

(43) The adequacy of the identified performance measures to demonstrate whether and to what extent the proposed strategy is meeting its short-term, intermediate, and long-term objectives.

~~(4) Adequacy and appropriateness of the plan to collect data related to violence from a variety of sources such as mental health services, social services, schools, law enforcement agencies, and the juvenile justice system.~~

~~(5) Extent to which the methods of evaluation plan address data needs for sustainability of the SS/HS comprehensive plan after Federal support has ended.~~

(e) Management and Organizational Capability (20 points).

In determining the quality of management and organizational capability, the following factors are considered:

~~(1) Level of commitment proposed by written agreement signed by the school superintendent, the head of the local public mental health authority, and the chief law enforcement executive, and written agreements with other partners.~~

(12) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed strategy (as demonstrated in the written agreements) to the implementation and success of the strategy, and how they will participate in the proposed project;

(32) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks;

(34) The adequacy of procedures for communicating and sharing information among all partners to ensure feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed comprehensive plan;

(45) The skills, experience, time commitments, and educational requirements of key staff and their relevance to the objectives of the proposed strategy; and

(56) The extent to which staff qualifications and training represent diverse and relevant experience in engaging and providing services to underserved, underrepresented, and diverse racial and ethnic groups.

(f) Budget (10 points).

In determining the quality of the budget, the following factors will be considered:

(1) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of students to be served and to the anticipated benefits and results;

(2) The extent to which fiscal control and accounting procedures will ensure prudent use, proper and timely disbursement, and accurate accounting of funds received under the grant.

Selection Criteria

We use the following selection criteria to evaluate applications for new grants under this competition. The maximum total score for all of these criteria is 100 points.

The maximum score for each criterion or factor under that criterion is indicated in parentheses.

(a) Problems to be addressed (15 points).

In assessing the extent to which the application is based on a clear and accurate statement of the significant problems faced by the target community, the following factors are considered:

(1) The magnitude or severity of the problem(s) to be addressed by the proposed strategy;

(2) The extent to which existing gaps in services, infrastructure and resources exist, and the magnitude of those gaps and weaknesses;

(3) Evidence of community risk factors that may contribute to youth violence, drug use, and delinquency; and

(4) The extent to which the problem statement includes an assessment of the community resources available for children and adolescents.

b) Goals and objectives (10 points).

In assessing the goals and objectives of the proposed application, the following factors are considered:

(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable; and

(2) The extent to which the objectives identified are related to measurable action steps needed to achieve the goal(s).

(c) Design of Proposed Strategy (30 points).

In assessing the design of the proposed strategy, the following factors are considered:

(1) The extent to which the proposed strategy represents a comprehensive, integrated approach that addresses the six elements of the Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative;

(2) The extent to which the intervention is appropriate for the age and developmental levels, gender, and ethnic and cultural diversity of the target population, and demonstrates the ability to engage and respond to the needs of identified ethnic and racial minority populations;

(3) The extent to which the application clearly describes the programs, activities, and services that comprise the proposed strategy, and details how they will be implemented;

(4) The extent to which the proposed programs and activities are evidence based;

(5) The extent to which the proposed strategy will be coordinated with similar or related efforts and will establish linkages with other appropriate agencies and organizations providing services to the target population;

(6) The likelihood that the proposed project will result in system change or improvement; and

(7) The potential for continued support of the strategy after Federal funding ends, including, as appropriate, the demonstrated commitment of appropriate entities to such support.

(d) Evaluation Plan (15 points)

In determining the quality of the evaluation plan, the following factors will be considered:

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation provide for examining the effectiveness of project implementation strategies.

(2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

(3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project; and

(4) The adequacy of the identified performance measures to demonstrate whether and to what extent the proposed strategy is meeting its short-term, intermediate, and long-term objectives.

(e) Management and Organizational Capability (20 points).

In determining the quality of management and organizational capability, the following factors are considered:

(1) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed strategy (as demonstrated in the written agreements) to the implementation and success of the strategy, and how they will participate in the proposed project;

(2) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks;

(3) The adequacy of procedures for communicating and sharing information among all partners to ensure feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed comprehensive plan;

(4) The skills, experience, time commitments, and educational requirements of key staff and their relevance to the objectives of the proposed comprehensive plan; and

(5) The extent to which staff qualifications and training represent diverse and relevant experience in engaging and providing services to underserved, underrepresented, and diverse racial and ethnic groups.

(f) Budget (10 points).

In determining the quality of the budget, the following factors will be considered:

(1) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of students to be served and to the anticipated benefits and results;

(2) The extent to which fiscal control and accounting procedures will ensure prudent use, proper and timely disbursement, and accurate accounting of funds received under the grant.