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REGULATION ASSIGNMENT CONTROL SHEET

LOG CONTROL NUMBER: 135 ANALYST
ASSIGNED: AXT

TYPE OF ACTION: NFP

TITLE: PARENTAL INFORMATION AND RESOURCE CENTERS
PROGRAM

RECEIVED: 5/17/2002

DATE ASSIGNED: 5/17/2002

DATE DUE: 5/20/02

ANALYST SIGNATURE: _____

Harold Axt

COMPLETION DATE: _____

5/20/02

FINAL APPROVAL: _____

Joseph Schubert

DATE: *May 23, 2002*

OMB NO: _____

1810-0578

Exp. 5/05

REG PART: _____

Rudolph, Kim

From: Axt, Kathy
Sent: Monday, May 20, 2002 8:00 AM
To: Cunningham, Marlene
Cc: Rudolph, Kim
Subject: FW: PIRC notices - notice of final priority and notice inviting applications for new awards

Importance: High

RIMG concurs.

-----Original Message-----

From: Cunningham, Marlene
Sent: Friday, May 17, 2002 2:50 PM
To: Scott, Robert; Richardson, Sandra; Jones, Lonna; Lapointe, Richard; Depew, Ken; Corwin, Thomas; Axt, Kathy
Cc: Freid, Steve; Koepfel, Dennis; Rosenfelt, Phil; Greenfield, Daisy; Smith, Audrey
Subject: PIRC notices - notice of final priority and notice inviting applications for new awards
Importance: High

The PIRC notices have been sent for your review/approval with a due date of COB, Monday, May 20, 2002. You can e-mail your concurrence/comments or fax (260-5085). There were no changes -- the NPRM and the final are the same. The program office need to have both notices published in the Federal Register ASAP or else we risk lapsing funds. Your cooperation and assistance is greatly appreciated.



PIRCs 5-16.doc



pirc-2002.doc

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

(CFDA No.: 84.310A)

Parental Information and Resource Centers Program

AGENCY: Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice of final priority, selection criteria, and eligibility requirements.

SUMMARY: We announce a competitive preference, selection criteria, and eligibility requirements for grants for fiscal year (FY) 2002 under the Parental Information and Resource Centers (PIRC) Program. We are taking this action to implement a competition authorized under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. These grants will assist eligible parties in establishing school-based or school-linked PIRCs.

EFFECTIVE DATE: [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On April 4, 2002, we published in the Federal Register (67 FR 16096-16099) a notice of proposed priority, selection criteria, and eligibility requirements. In that notice, we announced our intent to give a competitive preference of 10 additional points to the highest-scoring applicant from each of the States in which the current PIRC project is ending. We also proposed selection criteria for the FY 2002 PIRC competition and

interpreted the term "non-profit organization" for purposes of eligibility under the competition. The present notice announces the final competitive preference, selection criteria, and eligibility requirements for the FY 2002 PIRC competition.

NOTE: This notice does not solicit applications. A notice inviting applications for the FY 2002 PIRC competition is published elsewhere in this issue of the Federal Register.

ANALYSIS OF COMMENTS AND CHANGES

Five parties submitted comments in response to the notice of proposed priority, selection criteria, and eligibility requirements. Most of these comments were unrelated to the issues on which we solicited comments in that notice. The following is a summary of the comments that were provided and our responses to those comments. We did not make any changes to the competitive preference, selection criteria, or eligibility requirements as a result of the comments.

Comment: One commenter requested that we eliminate the requirement that each PIRC must serve both urban and rural areas.

Discussion: We had not requested comments on this particular requirement. However, the legislation expressly requires each PIRC to serve both urban and rural areas.

The intent of this provision is to help ensure that centers serve a broad region of their respective States.

Changes: None.

Comment: One commenter sought clarification on whether a national nonprofit organization is eligible for funding.

Response: The intent of the legislation is that each PIRC address the needs of parents in individual States. A national nonprofit organization may submit a State-specific application to provide services within a given State. The organization may not, however, submit a single application to address the needs of multiple States. This position is consistent with the legislation and we not believe that rulemaking on this issue is necessary.

Changes: None.

Comment: One commenter suggested that we (1) add language to other provisions of the ESEA to ensure that those programs collaborate and coordinate with the PIRCs; (2) identify how an applicant may demonstrate that its programs would be school-based or school-linked; (3) require applicants to identify how they are working with LEAs and the SEA; (4) indicate which types of early childhood parent education programs may be supported by the PIRCs; (5) indicate whether we will award the 10 point competitive preference in PIRC competitions in future years; and (6)

specify more directly that the non-profit organizations and consortia must be parent-focused.

Response: These comments do not address the particular matters on which comments were sought in the notice of proposed priority, selection criteria, and eligibility requirements, and we do not believe that rulemaking on these issues is necessary. However, we are responding as follows to the comments:

First, in implementing Federal programs, we are working to ensure that activities supported under different programs are coordinated as appropriate.

The new PIRC legislation and application package emphasize that the centers must be school-based or school-linked. Each applicant must devise specific strategies to meet this requirement. In doing so, applicants should consider the specific types of services identified in section 5564 of the ESEA and examine carefully the selection criteria for the competition, particularly the criteria concerning quality of the design of the proposed PIRC and quality of the services. A high-quality application would describe, among other things, how the PIRC would specifically work with schools, LEAs, and the SEA.

At least 30 percent of a grantee's PIRC funds must be used to establish, expand, or operate Parents as Teachers programs, Home Instruction for Preschool Youngsters programs, or other early childhood parent education programs. In deciding which early childhood parent education programs to support, PIRCs should consider factors such as whether a program (a) is research-based; (b) is comprehensive; (c) is of sufficient duration and intensity to ensure the likelihood of outcomes for parents and children; and (d) focuses on building the capacity of parents to support their children's learning and development over time.

The Department has made no decisions regarding what priorities, if any, might apply to any future PIRC competitions.

Finally, we believe that the application, including the selection criteria for the program, will adequately ensure that all funded PIRCS will be parent-focused, with the ultimate aim of improving student academic achievement.

Changes: None.

Comment: One commenter supported our interpretation of the term "non-profit organization," which excludes institutions of higher education, State educational agencies, LEAs, intermediate school districts, schools, government

entities, or hospitals. This commenter, however, questioned the appropriateness of the competitive preference, particularly with respect to large States. The commenter indicated that the preference makes it very difficult for a second or third proposal from the same State to receive funding. This commenter also suggested that we award more points under the need criterion and that the need be based on a specific geographic area in square miles.

Response: The competitive preference will permit us to comply with the Congressional mandate that grant funds be distributed, to the extent practicable, to all regions of the United States. The priority will increase the likelihood of establishing at least one PIRC in every State while allowing nonprofit organizations from any State to compete for a PIRC grant. Regarding the suggestion concerning assigning the need criterion additional points, we note that the need criterion is currently worth one-fifth of the total points under the selection criterion. Furthermore, the factors that we will consider under this criterion are directly related to the authorizing legislation and will therefore help ensure that applicants have described needs that are consistent with the intended purpose of the legislation.

Changes: None.

Comment: One commenter suggested that we give a 10 point competitive preference to each currently funded one-year PIRC grantee.

Response: We do not believe that giving a 10 point competitive preference to each currently funded one-year PIRC grantee is appropriate. Rather, we believe that the competitive preference that we proposed will help ensure that PRIC funds are distributed, to the extent practicable, to all regions of the country and that the highest quality applicants from each State will be funded.

Changes: None.

COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE: Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2), we give a competitive preference in the FY 2002 PIRC competition.

To receive this preference, an applicant must--

(1) Be from one of the following States: Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Connecticut, Delaware, the Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Montana, Mississippi, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, Puerto Rico, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Republic of Palau, Rhode Island, South Carolina, U.S. Virgin Islands, Utah, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wyoming; and

(2) Be the highest-scoring applicant from its State on the basis of the selection criteria for the competition.

We will award 10 points to any applicant that meets the priority. These points will be in addition to any points the applicant earns under the selection criteria.

SELECTION CRITERIA:

We will use the following selection criteria to evaluate applications under the PIRC competition. The maximum points for each criterion is indicated in parentheses after the heading for that criterion.

(a) Need for the project (20)

In evaluating the need for the proposed project, we consider the extent to which--

(1) The proposed project will provide services to or otherwise address the needs of parents who are educationally or economically disadvantaged;

(2) The training, information, and support services currently available inadequately address the needs of the parents the proposed project will serve; and

(3) The children of the parents the proposed project will serve are not meeting State or local academic achievement standards.

(b) Quality of the design of the proposed PIRC (25)

In evaluating the quality of the design of the proposed PIRC, we consider the extent to which--

(1) The proposed PIRC will be a school-based or school-linked center of adequate size, scope, and quality to serve effectively the parents in the area;

(2) The proposed PIRC is designed to work in coordination with the SEA and affected LEAs (i) in determining the needs of the parents who will be targeted for assistance; and (ii) in developing an effective means for providing services to those parents;

(3) The proposed PIRC is designed to coordinate and integrate activities funded under this grant with parental involvement activities funded from other sources, particularly Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;

(4) The proposed PIRC will support effective early childhood parent education programs that will enhance school readiness;

(5) The proposed project includes multiple strategies for providing direct and indirect services for parents targeted for assistance; and

(6) The proposed PIRC will implement a management plan that includes clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for achieving the objectives of the project.

(c) Quality of the services (20)

In evaluating the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed PIRC, we consider--

(1) The quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access by, and treatment of eligible project participants who are members of groups that have been traditionally underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability; and

(2) The extent to which the proposed PIRC will--

(i) Provide comprehensive training, information, and support services to develop and strengthen the relationship between parents and their child's school;

(ii) Assist parents in understanding the student academic achievement standards to which their child is being held and the measures of student and school academic achievement;

(iii) Assist parents in becoming involved in their child's education in meaningful ways that are likely to improve the child's academic achievement;

(iv) Provide services that reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practices; and

(v) Provide to parents services that will likely improve the developmental progress of children, including children from birth through age five.

(d) Quality of the PIRC personnel (10)

In evaluating the quality of the personnel who will carry out the PIRC activities, we consider--

(1) The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have been traditionally underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability;

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the PIRC director;

(3) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key PIRC personnel; and

(4) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of PIRC consultants or subcontractors.

(e) Evaluation (25)

In evaluating the quality of the evaluation the applicant proposes to conduct of the proposed project, we consider the extent to which the methods of evaluation--

(1) Are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project;

- (2) Produce quantitative and qualitative data; and
- (3) Will result in data on whether the policies and practices of the PIRC are effective in improving home-school communication, student academic achievement, school academic achievement, and parental involvement in school planning, review, and improvement.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS: Organizations seeking funding under the PIRC Program, either individually or in consortia with one or more LEAs, must demonstrate that they are nonprofit organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. For purposes of the PIRC Program, the term "nonprofit organization" does not include institutions of higher education, State educational agencies, local educational agencies, intermediate school districts, schools, government entities, or hospitals.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Daisy Greenfield, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., Room 2W104, FOB-6, Washington, DC 20202-6254. Telephone: (202) 401-0039 or via Internet:

daisy.greenfield@ed.gov

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PROGRAM AUTHORITY: Subpart 16 of title V of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (Pub. L. 107-110), 20 U.S.C. 7273 et seq.

Dated:

Susan B. Neuman, Ed.D.,
Assistant Secretary for
Elementary and Secondary Education.