

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION****[CFDA NO: 84.349A]****Early Childhood Educator Professional Development Program; Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year (FY) 2003****Purpose of Program**

The purpose of the Early Childhood Educator Professional Development Program, authorized by section 2151(e) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) as added by the No Child Left Behind Act, Public Law 107-110, is to enhance the school readiness of young children, particularly disadvantaged young children, and to prevent them from encountering difficulties once they enter school. The program is designed to improve the knowledge and skills of early childhood educators who work in communities that have high concentrations of children living in poverty.

Projects funded under the Early Childhood Educator Professional Development Program provide high-quality, sustained, and intensive professional development for these early childhood educators in how to provide developmentally appropriate school-readiness services for preschool-age children that are based on the best available research on early childhood pedagogy and on child development and learning, including the age-appropriate development of oral language, phonological awareness, print awareness, alphabet knowledge, and numeracy skills. These grants are part of the President's early childhood initiative, "Good Start, Grow Smart," and complement other early learning grant programs, such as Early Reading First, by helping States and local communities strengthen early learning for young children. The Department intends to disseminate information about the funded projects that prove to be effective professional development.

**Eligible Applicants**

A partnership consisting of at least one entity from each of the following categories, as indicated below—

(i) One or more institutions of higher education, or other public or private entities (including faith-based organizations), that provide professional development for early childhood educators who work with children from low-income families in high-need communities; and

(ii) One or more public agencies (including local educational agencies, State educational agencies, State human

services agencies, and State and local agencies administering programs under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990), Head Start agencies, or private organizations (including faith-based organizations); and

(iii) If feasible, an entity with demonstrated experience in providing training to educators in early childhood education programs concerning identifying and preventing behavior problems or working with children identified as or suspected to be victims of abuse. This entity may be one of the partners described above, if appropriate.

*Applications Available:* March 31, 2003.

*Deadline for Transmittal of Applications:* May 16, 2003.

*Deadline for Intergovernmental Review:* July 15, 2003.

*Estimated Available Funds:* \$14,875,000.

*Estimated Range of Awards:* \$1,200,000–\$2,800,000.

*Estimated Average Size of Awards:* \$2,000,000.

*Estimated Number of Awards:* 5–12 awards.

**Note:** The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

*Project Period:* Up to 2 years.

*Applicable Regulations:* The following provisions of the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) apply to these Early Childhood Educator Professional Development program grants: 34 CFR parts 74, 75, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 85, 86, 97, 98, and 99.

These regulations are available at the following Web site: <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OCFO/grants/edgar.html>.

**Matching and Use of Funds Requirements**

*Cost-sharing:* Each partnership carrying out a project through an Early Childhood Educator Professional Development Program grant under this program must provide a cost share of (1) at least 50 percent of the total cost of the project for the entire grant period; and (2) at least 20 percent of the project cost for each year. The project may provide this cost share from any source other than funds under this program, including other Federal sources.

The partnership may provide the project cost share through contributions of cash or in-kind, fairly evaluated, including plant, equipment, and services. Only allowable costs may be counted as part of the cost share. For example, any indirect costs over and above the allowable amount (see "Indirect Costs" section under this heading) may not be counted toward a grantee's cost share.

*Indirect Costs:* For purposes of indirect cost charges, the Secretary considers all Early Childhood Educator Professional Development Program grants to be "educational training grants" within the meaning of section 75.562(a) of EDGAR (34 CFR 75.562(a)). Consistent with 34 CFR 75.562, the indirect cost rate for any fiscal agent other than a State agency or agency of local government (such as a local educational agency) is limited to a maximum of eight percent or the amount permitted by the fiscal agent's negotiated indirect cost rate agreement, whichever is less. Further information about indirect cost rates, and on how to apply for a negotiated indirect cost rate for fiscal agents that do not yet have one, is available at the following Web site: <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OCFO/FIPAO/icgindex.html>.

*Pre-award Costs:* The Department's regulations authorize grant recipients to incur allowable pre-award costs up to 90 calendar days before the grant award (sections 75.263 and 74.25(e)(1) of EDGAR, 34 CFR 75.263 and 74.25(e)(1)). In this case, pre-award costs may include the necessary and reasonable costs of the needs assessment that the statute requires applicants to conduct before submitting their applications, to determine the most critical professional development needs of the early childhood educators to be served by the project and in the broader community. The Secretary extends the period for recipients to charge necessary and reasonable pre-award costs incurred related to the needs assessment for these grants for up to 90 days before the application due date. Applicants incur any pre-award costs at their own risk. That is, the Secretary is under no obligation to reimburse these costs if for any reason the applicant does not receive an award or if the award is less than anticipated and inadequate to cover these costs.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:****Background**

These Early Childhood Educator Professional Development Program grants will provide a small but significant base of high-quality, intensive, replicable, professional development programs for early childhood educators. These programs will be based on the best available research on both effective adult professional development approaches, and on early childhood pedagogy and on child development and learning, including the age-appropriate development of oral language, phonological awareness, print