

background and technical expertise to carry out the proposed evaluation.

**Invitational Priority:** We are particularly interested in applications that meet the following priority:

Applications from high-poverty rural and urban LEAs for projects designed to improve traditional American history instruction in chronically low-performing schools and improve achievement of disadvantaged students.

Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(1), we do not give an application that meets the invitational priority a competitive or absolute preference over other applications.

### Selection Criteria

The Secretary uses the following selection criteria to evaluate applications for grants under this competition. In all instances where the word "project" appears in the selection criteria, the reference to a Teaching American History program should be made. The maximum composite score for all of these criteria is 100 points. The maximum score for each criterion is indicated in parentheses. Within each criterion, unless otherwise noted, the Secretary evaluates each factor equally. We evaluate an application by determining how well the proposed project meets the following provisions. Please note that the *Notes* following each criterion are meant to serve as guidance to assist the applicant in creating a stronger application, and are not required by statute or regulation.

(a) *Meeting the purpose of the statute.* (Total of 70 points)

(1) *Quality of the project design.* (40 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of the project design for the proposed project by considering how well the applicant describes a plan for development, implementation, and strengthening of programs to teach traditional American history as a separate academic subject (not as a component of social studies) within elementary school and secondary school curricula, including the implementation of activities—

(i) To provide professional development and teacher education activities with respect to American history; and

(ii) To improve the quality of instruction, as demonstrated by the specific instructional activities teachers would implement to improve the quality of student work and knowledge of American History.

**Note:** The Secretary encourages the applicant to include a discussion of the specific history content to be covered by the grant; the format in which the applicant will

deliver the history content; and the quality of the staff and consultants responsible for delivering these content-based professional development activities. The applicant may also, to the extent possible, attach curriculum vitae for individuals who will provide the content training to the teachers.

The applicant should also provide a description of plans to demonstrate how teachers are using the knowledge acquired from project activities to improve the quality of instruction. This description may include plans for reviewing how teachers' lesson planning and classroom teaching was affected by their participation in project activities.

(2) *Need for project.* (20 points)

The extent to which specific weaknesses in teacher knowledge of traditional American History and student performance in this subject have been identified and will be met by the project.

**Note:** The Secretary encourages the applicant to discuss the need for the proposed project and the significance of the project, including national significance. For example, the applicant could include information on: the extent to which teachers in the LEA are not certified in history or social studies; student achievement data in American history; and rates of student participation in courses such as Advanced Placement American history.

(3) *Partnership(s).* (10 points)

How well the applicant describes a plan that meets the statutory requirement to carry out activities under the grant in partnership with one or more of the following:

- (i) An institution of higher education.
- (ii) A nonprofit history or humanities organization.
- (iii) A library or museum.

**Note:** The applicant should provide the rationale for selecting the partners and explain the specific activities that the partner(s) will contribute to the grant during each year of the project. The applicant should include a memorandum of understanding or detailed letters of commitment from the partner(s) in an appendix to the application narrative.

(b) *Quality of the management plan.* (10 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) 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.

(2) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.

(c) *Quality of the project evaluation.* (20 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.

**Note:** The evaluation plan provided under this criterion should align with the project design explained under the Quality of project design criterion.

### Reporting Requirements and Expected Outcomes

The Secretary requires successful applicants to submit annual performance reports that document the grantee's yearly progress toward meeting expected programmatic outcomes. These outcomes must be based on measurable performance objectives. The Secretary will use these reports to measure the success of the grantee's project, and the reports will contribute to a broader knowledge base about high-quality, effective professional development strategies that can improve the teaching and learning of American history nationwide.

In addition, grantees will be required to submit a final performance report, due no later than 90 days after the end of the project period.

### Waiver of Proposed Rulemaking

Under the Administrative Procedure Act (5 U.S.C. 553) the Department generally offers interested parties the opportunity to comment on proposed selection criteria and other proposed program requirements. However, section 437(d)(2) of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) exempts from this rulemaking requirement those rules where the Secretary determines it would cause extreme hardship to the intended beneficiaries of the program. In order to make timely grant awards in FY 2003, the Secretary has decided to issue these final regulations without first publishing them for public comment, in accordance with section 437(d)(2) of GEPA. These regulations will apply to the FY 2003 grant competition only.