

(5) Provide the six Regional Parent TACs with information on effective models for collaborative training that involves both parents and professionals who provide education and services to children with disabilities; and

(6) Provide technical assistance to the PTIs and the CPRCs to identify and implement effective strategies for working with families from underserved and underrepresented populations; and

(k) Coordinate and collaborate with the Regional Parent TACs, OSEP, the FRC, and RRCs to improve collaboration and coordination of effort among RRCs, PTIs, and CPRCs on the preparation of training materials that include scientifically based research and best practices and information on the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB).

### Focus Area 2

The six Regional Parent TACs funded under this priority will coordinate with the National Parent TAC in order to promote a unified system for the provision of technical assistance to PTIs and CPRCs and to strengthen and enhance OSEP's Technical Assistance and Dissemination (TA&D) Network.

Each project must—

(a) Provide direct technical assistance to PTIs and CPRCs in its region;

(b) Provide direct technical assistance and disseminate information through a variety of mechanisms to individual parent centers on management processes or content areas (e.g., NCLB, special education and related services issues, system reform, laws and regulations, alternative dispute resolution, and networking), as identified through a needs assessment;

(c) Provide direct technical assistance to each PTI and CPRC in its region on outreach efforts to underserved and underrepresented populations;

(d) Collaborate with other technical assistance providers, such as the FRC, RRCs, and the Dissemination Center, to use available resources, to access research-based practices and findings, and to participate in educational and system reform activities;

(e) Collaborate with the National Parent TAC, the FRC, and RRCs to improve collaboration and coordination of efforts among RRCs, PTIs, and CPRCs on the preparation of training materials that include scientifically based research and best practices and information on the NCLB; and

(f) Coordinate and collaborate with the National Parent TAC to—

(1) Conduct an assessment of the training and information needs of the PTIs and CPRCs;

(2) Provide direct technical assistance to each parent center to assist them in

measuring program effectiveness and outcomes for children and to make changes as needed;

(3) Maximize the computer and technological capabilities of the PTIs and CPRCs by identifying training needs and providing access to training, supporting a national database of training materials in multiple languages and accessible formats, supporting an electronic linkage across all the funded centers using a Web page and bulletin boards that are user friendly, and implementing other appropriate strategies; and

(4) Participate in planning the national conference each year and conduct one regional conference each year.

### Geographic Regions

There will be one award in each of the regions identified as follows:

*Region 1 Parent TAC:* CT, ME, MA, NH, NJ, NY, RI, VT.

*Region 2 Parent TAC:* DE, KY, MD, NC, SC, TN, VA, DC, WV.

*Region 3 Parent TAC:* AL, AR, FL, GA, LA, MS, OK, Puerto Rico, TX, U.S. Virgin Islands.

*Region 4 Parent TAC:* IL, IN, IA, MI, MN, MO, OH, PA, WI.

*Region 5 Parent TAC:* AZ, CO, KS, MT, NE, ND, NM, SD, UT, WY.

*Region 6 Parent TAC:* AK, CA, HI, ID, NV, OR, WA, the outlying areas of the Pacific Basin, and the Freely Associated States.

#### Competitive Preference Priorities:

Within the absolute priority, we will award additional points under the following competitive preference priority under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i) to applicant organizations that are otherwise eligible for funding under the absolute priority:

We will award 10 points to applicants that are organizations that meet the following definition:

Parent organizations, as defined in section 682(g) of IDEA. A parent organization is a private nonprofit organization (other than an institution of higher education) that—

(a) Has a board of directors, (1) the parent and professional members of which are broadly representative of the population to be served, (2) the majority of whom are parents of children with disabilities, and (3) that includes individuals with disabilities and individuals working in the fields of special education, related services, and early intervention; or

(b) Has a membership that represents the interests of individuals with disabilities and has established a special governing committee meeting the

requirements for a board of directors in paragraph (a) and has a memorandum of understanding between this special governing committee and the board of directors of the organization that clearly outlines the relationship between the board and the committee and the decisionmaking responsibilities and authority of each.

Any parent organization that establishes a special governing committee under section 682(g)(2) of IDEA must demonstrate that the bylaws of its organization allow the governing committee to be responsible for operating the project (consistent with existing fiscal policies of its organization).

In addition, we will award additional points under the following competitive preference priority under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i) to applicant organizations that are otherwise eligible for funding under the absolute priority:

We will award 10 points under Focus 2 of the absolute priority to applicants who are located in the region they are proposing to serve.

Therefore, for the purposes of these competitive preference priorities, applicants under Focus 1 can be awarded a total of 10 points in addition to those awarded under the published selection criteria for this program. That is, an applicant meeting the first competitive preference could earn a maximum total of 110 points.

Applicants under Focus 2 can be awarded a total of 10 points in addition to those awarded under the published selection criteria for this program. That is, an applicant meeting the second competitive preference could earn a maximum total of 110 points. An applicant meeting both competitive preferences could earn a maximum total of 120 points.

*Waiver of Proposed Rulemaking:* It is generally our practice to offer interested parties the opportunity to comment on proposed priorities. However, section 661(e)(2) of IDEA makes the public comment requirements in the Administrative Procedure Act (5 U.S.C. 553) inapplicable to the priorities in this notice.

### Application Procedures

**Note:** Some of the procedures in these instructions for transmitting applications differ from those in the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) (34 CFR 75.102). Under the Administrative Procedure Act (5 U.S.C. 553) the Department generally offers interested parties the opportunity to comment on proposed regulations. However, these amendments make procedural changes only and do not establish new substantive