

more courses in early childhood education and/or child development. Teachers who have degrees in related fields must also have experience teaching pre-school children. The Head Start Bureau is providing various forms of assistance to local Head Start programs to implement this teacher qualification legislative mandate. For example, to enhance the numbers of teachers with degrees in early childhood education, grantees have received \$43,000,000 in funding in 1999 and an additional \$43,000,000 in 2000 to increase teacher salaries and expand access to higher education courses and degree programs. Head Start-State Collaboration Offices and training and technical assistance providers currently help Head Start programs work with higher education institutions on challenges such as linking training obtained in conjunction with the CDA credential with academic credit and courses leading to AA and BA degrees in early childhood education.

In January 2001, the President signed into law the "No Child Left Behind Act" to make the education of every child in America one of the country's top priorities. The Act seeks to ensure that public schools teach children what they need to know to be successful in life and that they also set high education standards in the classroom. In his 2002 State of the Union address, the President indicated the need to prepare our children to read and succeed in school, including the improvement of Head Start and early childhood development programs. In response to these goals, the White House has developed an early childhood initiative, which is built on raising the bar for Head Start Education through researched methods that create a better learning environment and improved outcomes for children. In his announcement of the Good Start, Grow Smart Early Childhood Initiative in April 2002, the President identified children's early literacy as a key focus for Head Start program improvement. In this initiative, the President presented three areas of focus for Head Start: (1) Strengthening Head Start programs; (2) partnering with states to improve early childhood education, and (3) providing information to teachers, caregivers, and parents. The Head Start Bureau quickly responded to the President's mandate by developing the Strategic Teacher Education Project (STEP) in June 2002. The purpose of Project STEP is to ensure that all Head Start teachers engage in research-based strategies to support children's early literacy and positive social and emotional

development, which, in turn, will lead to positive child outcomes and school readiness.

Under this announcement, TCUs must form a partnership with one or more AIANPB Head Start grantees, to develop curriculums and provide education and/or training to Head Start teachers. The partnership agreements must be beneficial to both the TCUs and the participating Head Start grantees.

Partnership agreements must provide academic training and credit hours for a specified number of Head Start teachers. Partnership agreements must provide culturally appropriate education for Head Start teachers that would lead to academic degrees. These agreements must help Head Start teachers to provide courses on how to enhance early literacy, how to assess outcomes of Head Start children, and/or how to involve fathers in the lives of their children.

All project applications must address one of the following priority areas:

1. Partnerships to increase the number of center-based teachers with two-year degrees in early childhood education, and
2. Partnerships to increase the competency of Head Start in building quality Head Start programs, particularly in enhancing language development, early literacy and socio-emotional development, as well as assessing child outcomes.

Part II. Program Information

A. Statutory Authority

The Head Start Act, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 9801 *et seq.*

B. Eligible Applicants

Tribally Controlled Land Grant Colleges and Universities are those institutions cited in section 532 of the Equity in Educational Land Grant Status Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 301 note), any other institution that qualifies for funding under the Tribally Controlled Community College Assistance Act of 1978, (25 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*), and Navajo Community College, Authorized in the Navajo Community College Assistance Act of 1978, Public Law 95-471, title II (25 U.S.C. 640a note). Those TCUs that are not accredited are not eligible to apply under this announcement. TCUs that received the Head Start Partnerships with TCUs grant in 2001 are not eligible to compete under this announcement. These institutions are listed in Appendix A.

C. Project Duration

The length of the project period must not exceed 60 months. This

announcement is soliciting applications for project periods up to five years. Awards, on a competitive basis, will be for a one-year budget period, although project periods may be for five years. Applications for continuation grants funded under these awards beyond the one-year budget period but within the five-year project period will be reviewed in subsequent years on a non-competitive basis, subject to availability of funds, satisfactory progress of the grantee, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the Government.

D. Federal Share of Project Costs

It is anticipated that up to \$1,500,000 in ACF funds will be made available annually. The maximum share for each project is not to exceed \$150,000 per year per project.

E. Number of Projects To Be Funded

It is anticipated that up to 10 projects will be funded.

F. Matching Requirement

There are no matching requirements, however applicants are encouraged to provide non-Federal contributions to the project.

Part III. Application Requirements

The following Uniform Project Description (UPD) has been approved by OMB under control number 0970-0139.

A. Purpose

The project description provides a major means by which an application is evaluated and ranked to compete with other applications for available assistance. The project description should be concise and complete and should address the activity for which Federal funds are being requested. Supporting documents should be included where they can present information clearly and succinctly. In preparing your project description, all information requested through each specific evaluation criteria should be provided. Awarding offices use this and other information in making their funding recommendations. It is important, therefore, that this information be included in the application.

B. General Instructions

ACF is particularly interested in specific factual information and statements of measurable goals in quantitative terms. Project descriptions are evaluated on the basis of substance, not length. Extensive exhibits are not required. Supporting information concerning activities that will not be