

Priorities

Absolute Priority

Under Section 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), the Secretary gives an absolute preference to applications that meet the priority selected. The program regulations at 34 CFR 263.5(c) identify the absolute priorities for the Professional Development program that may be selected by the Secretary. For the FY 2003 grant competition, the Secretary reserves all of the funds available for new awards under the Professional Development program to fund only those applications that meet the following absolute priority found at 34 CFR 263.5(c)(1):

Pre-Service Training for Teachers—

Provides support and training to Indian individuals to complete a pre-service education program that enables these individuals to meet the requirements for full State certification or licensure as a teacher through:

- (i) Training that leads to a bachelor's degree in education before the end of the award period; or
- (ii) For States allowing a degree in a specific subject area, training that leads to a bachelor's degree in the subject area as long as the training meets the requirements for full State teacher certification or licensure; or
- (iii) Training in a current or new specialized teaching assignment that requires at least a bachelor's degree and in which a documented teacher shortage exists; and
- (iv) One-year induction services after graduation, certification, or licensure provided during the award period to graduates of the pre-service program while they are completing their first year of work in schools with significant Indian student populations.

Note: In working with various institutions of higher education and State certification/licensure requirements, we found that States requiring a degree in a specific subject area (e.g., specialty areas or teaching at the secondary level) generally require a Master's degree or fifth-year requirement before an individual can be certified or licensed as a teacher. These students would be eligible to participate so long as their training meets the requirements for full State certification or licensure as a teacher.

Competitive Preference

(1) The Secretary will award five (5) additional points to an application submitted by an Indian tribe, organization, or institution of higher education. A consortium application of eligible entities that meets the requirements of 34 CFR 75.127 through 75.129 and includes an Indian tribe, organization or institution of higher

education will be considered eligible to receive the five (5) additional priority points. The consortium agreement, signed by all parties, must be submitted with the application in order to be considered a consortium application.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 7473.)

(2) The Secretary will award a total of five additional points to an application submitted by a consortium of eligible applicants that includes a tribal college or university and that designates that tribal college or university as the fiscal agent for the application. The consortium application of eligible entities must meet the requirements of 34 CFR 75.127 through 75.129 of EDGAR to be considered eligible to receive the five priority points. The consortium agreement, signed by all parties, must be submitted with the application in order to be considered a consortium application.

Note: Letters of support do not meet the consortium requirements. The Secretary rejects any application that does not meet these requirements.

These competitive preference points are in addition to the five competitive preference points that may be given under Competitive Preference 1.

Tribal 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 College or University Assistance Act of 1978 (25 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*), and Dine College, authorized in the Navajo Community College Assistance Act of 1978, Public Law 95-471, Title II (25 U.S.C. 640a note).

Selection Criteria

The selection criteria are included in full in the application package for this competition. These selection criteria are established in 34 CFR 263.6. Under the selection criteria "Quality of project services" and "Quality of the project evaluation," the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant demonstrates a strong capacity to provide reliable data on these indicators and to help achieve the program target.

Performance Measure: The Secretary has established the following key performance measure for assessing the effectiveness of the Professional Development program: To increase the percentages of the teacher and principal workforces serving American Indian and Alaska Native students who are themselves American Indian and Alaska Native. The program target is to increase the percentage of American Indian and Alaska Native principals and teachers in

public schools with 25 percent or more American Indian and Alaska Native students.

Fiscal Information: Stipends may be paid only to full-time students. For the payment of stipends to project participants being trained, the Secretary expects to set the stipend maximum at \$1,775 per month for full-time students and \$275 allowance per month per dependent during an academic term. The terms "stipend," "full-time student," and "dependent allowance" are defined in 34 CFR 263.3.

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 policy. Therefore, under 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(A), the Secretary has determined that proposed rulemaking is not required.

Pilot Project for Electronic Submission of Applications

In FY 2003, the U.S. Department of Education is continuing to expand its pilot project of electronic submission of applications to include additional formula grant programs and additional discretionary grant competitions. The Professional Development program, CFDA 84.299B, is one of the programs included in the pilot project. If you are an applicant under the Professional Development program, you may submit your application to us in either electronic or paper format.

The pilot project involves the use of the Electronic Grant Application System (e-Application) portion of the Grant Administration and Payment System (GAPS). Users of e-Application will be entering data on-line while completing their applications. You may not e-mail a soft copy of a grant application to us. If you participate in this voluntary pilot project by submitting an application electronically, the data you enter on-line will be saved into a database. We request your participation in e-Application. We shall continue to evaluate its success and solicit suggestions for improvement.

If you participate in e-APPLICATION, please note the following:

- Your participation is voluntary.
- You will not receive any additional point value or penalty because you submit a grant application in electronic format, nor will we penalize you if you submit an application in paper format.