

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Special Education—Training and Information for Parents of Children with Disabilities; Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year 1999

AGENCY: Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year 1999.

SUMMARY: This notice provides closing dates and other information regarding the transmittal of applications for fiscal year 1999 competitions under one program authorized by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), as amended: Special Education—Training and Information for Parents of Children with Disabilities (one priority).

This notice supports the National Education Goals by helping to improve results for children with disabilities.

Waiver of Rulemaking

It is generally the practice of the Secretary to offer interested parties the opportunity to comment on proposed priorities. However, section 661(e)(2) of IDEA makes the Administrative Procedure Act (5 U.S.C. 553) inapplicable to the priority in this notice.

General Requirements

(a) Projects funded under this notice must make positive efforts to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities in project activities (see Section 606 of IDEA);

(b) Applicants and grant recipients funded under this notice must involve individuals with disabilities or parents of individuals with disabilities in planning, implementing, and evaluating the projects (see Section 661(f)(1)(A) of IDEA); and

(c) Projects funded under this priority must budget for a two-day Project Directors' meeting in Washington, D.C. during each year of the project.

Information collection resulting from this notice has been submitted to OMB for review under the Paperwork Reduction Act and has been approved under control number 1820-0028, expiration date July 31, 2000.

Purpose of Program: The purpose of this program is to ensure that parents of children with disabilities receive training and information help them to improve results for their children with disabilities.

Eligible Applicants: Local parent organizations must meet the criteria in section 682(g) of the Act, and also must meet one of the following criteria—

(a) Have a board of directors the majority of whom are from the community to be served; or

(b) Have as part of its mission, serving the interests of individuals with disabilities from such community; and have a special governing committee to administer the project, a majority of the members of which are individuals from such community; examples of administrative responsibilities include controlling the use of the project funds, and hiring and managing project personnel.

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 74, 75, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, and 85; and (b) The selection criteria for this priority are drawn from the EDGAR general selection criteria menu. The specific selection criteria for this priority are included in the funding application packet for this competition.

Priority

Under sections 661(e)(2) and 683 of the Act, and 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), the Secretary gives an absolute preference to applications that meet the following priority. The Secretary funds under this competition only those applications that meet this absolute priority:

Absolute Priority—Community Parent Resource Centers (84.328C)

The purpose of this statutory priority is to support local parent training and information centers that will help ensure that underserved parents of children with disabilities, including low-income parents, parents of children with limited English proficiency, and parents with disabilities, have the training and information they need to enable them to participate effectively in helping their children with disabilities to—

(a) Meet developmental goals and, to the maximum extent possible, those challenging standards that have been established for all children; and

(b) Be prepared to lead productive independent adult lives, to the maximum extent possible.

Each community parent training and information center supported under this priority must—

(a) Provide training and information that meets the training and information needs of parents of children with disabilities proposed to be served by the project;

(b) Assist parents to understand the availability of, and how to effectively use, procedural safeguards under Section 615 of IDEA, including encouraging the use, and explaining the benefits, of alternative methods of

dispute resolution, such as the mediation process described in IDEA;

(c) Serve the parents of infants, toddlers, and children with the full range of disabilities by assisting parents to—

(1) Better understand the nature of their children's disabilities and their educational and developmental needs;

(2) Communicate effectively with personnel responsible for providing special education, early intervention, and related services;

(3) Participate in decision making processes and the development of individualized education programs and individualized family service plans;

(4) Obtain appropriate information about the range of options, programs, services, and resources available to assist children with disabilities and their families;

(5) Understand the provisions of IDEA for the education of, and the provision of early intervention services to, children with disabilities; and

(6) Participate in school reform activities;

(d) Contract with the State education agencies, if the State elects to contract with the community parent resource center, for the purpose of meeting with parents who choose not to use the mediation process, to encourage the use and explain the benefits of mediation, consistent with Sections 615(e)(2)(B) and (D) of IDEA;

(e) In order to serve parents and families of children with the full range of disabilities, network with appropriate clearinghouses, including organizations conducting national dissemination activities under section 685(d) of IDEA, and with other national, State, and local organizations and agencies, such as protection and advocacy agencies;

(f) Establish cooperative partnerships with the parent training and information centers funded under Section 682 of IDEA;

(g) Be designed to meet the specific needs of families who experience significant isolation from available sources of information and support; and

(h) Annually report to the Secretary on—

(1) The number of parents to whom it provided information and training in the most recently concluded fiscal year; and

(2) The effectiveness of strategies used to reach and serve parents, including underserved parents of children with disabilities.

The Secretary intends to fund a maximum of three awards. **Competitive Priorities:** Within this Absolute Priority, the Secretary, under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i), gives preference to

applications that meet one or both of the following competitive priorities:

The Secretary awards 20 points to an application submitted by a local parent organization that has a board of directors, the majority of whom are parents of children with disabilities, from the community to be served. These points are in addition to any points the application earns under the selection criteria for the program.

The Secretary awards 10 points to an application that provides parent training and information in one or more Empowerment Zones or Enterprise Communities in a manner that meets the competitive priority relating to Empowerment Zones or Enterprise Communities published in the **Federal Register** on November 7, 1994 (59 FR 55534). A list of areas that have been selected as Empowerment Zones or Enterprise Communities is included in the application package. These points are in addition to any points the

application earns under the selection criteria for the program.

Project Period: Up to 36 months.

Project Award: Projects will not be funded in excess of \$100,000 for any single budget period of 12 months.

For Applications and General Information Contact: Requests for applications and general information should be addressed to the Grants and Contracts Services Team, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, room 3317, Switzer Building, Washington, DC 20202-2641. The preferred method for requesting information is to FAX your request to: (202) 205-8717. Telephone: (202) 260-9182.

Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the TDD number: (202) 205-8953.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain a copy of this notice or the application packages referred to in this notice in an alternate format (e.g.

Braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) by contacting the Department as listed above. However, the Department is not able to reproduce in an alternate format the standard forms included in the application package.

Intergovernmental Review

This program is subject to the requirements of Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. The objective of the Executive order is to foster an intergovernmental partnership and a strengthened federalism by relying on processes developed by State and local governments for coordination and review of proposed Federal financial assistance.

In accordance with the order, this document is intended to provide early notification of the Department's specific plans and actions for those programs.

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT, APPLICATION NOTICE FOR FISCAL YEAR 1999

CFDA No. and name	Application available	Application deadline date	Deadline for intergovernmental review	Maximum award (per year) ¹	Project period	Page limit	Estimated number of awards
84.328C Community Parent Resource Centers.	4/20/99	6/01/99	8/02/99	\$100,000	Up to 36 mos.	(²)	3

¹ The Secretary rejects and does not consider an application that proposes a budget exceeding the amount listed for the priority for any single budget period of 12 months.

² As noted above, there is no page limit for this priority.

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

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Note: The official version of a document is the document published in the **Federal Register**.

Dated: April 8, 1999.

Curtis L. Richards,

Acting Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.

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