

2011 Technical Assistance Workshop Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Will there be an attempt to balance math and ELA funding?

A: No. The awards will be based on merit.

Q: Can teacher surveys be utilized to determine if teachers are highly qualified?

A: It is preferable to use existing data to determine this eligibility standard. Teacher surveys, pre and post would be useful as part of the project evaluation. For more detailed information please review the Partnership Guidance for Improving Teacher Quality (ITQ) Program Grants at:

<http://www.cpec.ca.gov/FederalPrograms/PartnershipGuidance.pdf>

Q: How much should we discuss the second year funding option in the proposal?

A: Very little. The emphasis should not be on work that may not occur. The LEA may have needs that will exist beyond a year, but for the purposes of this grant, proposers should focus on one content area for the specified timeframe. Goals should be ambitious yet achievable. However, depending on congressional appropriations and/or the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (also referred to as No Child Left Behind) continuation awards may be negotiated. If adequate ITQ funding exists, projects requesting a second year will be awarded based on substantial evidence that the project sufficiently met its Year One objectives.

Q: What are the expectations for these grants in regards to use of control groups and research?

A: A proposal is strengthened by showing how it will measure obtaining its objectives, however, in one year it can difficult to implement controls and comparison. These projects will not have the same research requirement as projects from previous years, but proposers should not neglect the corresponding evaluation expectation that accompanies NCLB funding.

Q: Can the Institution of Higher Education receive Professional Development for the CaCCSS using this funding source?

A: No. The IHE faculty will likely benefit from participation in the professional development, but the expressed purpose of these grants and primary target are teachers. It is a given that the IHE faculty will not be familiar with common CaCCSS-M or CaCCSS-ELA, but their role as presenters assumes they will educate themselves, work alongside knowledgeable teachers, and receive some training as consultants to the project.

Q: If a County Office of Education sees this as an opportunity to learn about the California Common Core Standards, would that be viewed as a benefit in the proposal?

A: Absolutely, but keep in mind that the target of these grants is professional development for teachers. The COE staff may act as consultants and benefit by learning, but that is not the target of this competition. A conversation about what a COE will bring to the partnership will have a variety of answers, depending on which county office is involved. These initial and ongoing conversations will define the work of the partners and insure that their contribution is valuable to meet the goals of the project.

Q: What role can community colleges play?

A: NCLB dictates that community colleges may not be a mandatory and primary partner, but may be an additional and very valuable partner. Community colleges frequently have

established partnerships with schools and especially rural areas where there is no local four year institution. Where possible, they should be included in the developed partnership for these projects as they can be major contributors for professional development for teachers. Since approximately 60 percent of California teachers have met some or all of their general education requirements at a community college, it seems sensible that they should be integral to ongoing professional needs of teachers.

Q: What are the indirect cost restrictions?

A: The maximum indirect cost recovery rate is 8 percent. In the event that funds are allocated by the grantee institution through contracts or sub grants to other partners, the indirect cost recovery rate may be applied only to the first \$25,000 of the contract or sub grant. Additionally, grantees are expected to apply the 8% maximum to indirect charges by other agencies in those contracts or sub grants. Ideally, the IHE should receive some indirect cost recovery for meeting its fiduciary responsibilities. If each contract or sub-grant takes indirect for a grant that is only \$250,000 it will leave fewer dollars for teacher professional development.

Q: In some rural districts, every teacher appears to be highly qualified. How will we determine if we meet the second eligibility criteria to compete?

A: Provide data to justify the 2% that are not highly qualified. The mandated partner must meet this requirement; the optional additional partners do not. Provide evidence to support the legal definition.

Q: Can an IHE partner on more than one proposal?

A: Yes, an IHE may submit more than one proposal. This often, however, depends on the policies and procedures each IHE relies on.

Q: Can faculty from the Institution of Higher Education be listed as staff on more than one proposal?

A: Yes, faculty may be listed as project staff on multiple proposals.

Q: What is the time frame for planning for grant activities?

A: Projects that are awarded will be expected to “hit the ground running,” in regards to activities. Activities should begin immediately. However, planning will likely be a continuous process throughout the life of the grant and hopefully beyond.

Q: How long before we hear about whether our Notice of Intent has been accepted?

A: Notification should be given within a few days of submission.

Q: When will we hear about whether or not our proposal has been recommended for funding?

A: The tentative answer is mid-August.

Q: Will there be proposer interviews this year?

A: Due to time constraints, no.

Q: Can student achievement outcomes be included in the proposal even though they are not required?

A: Yes.

Q: Can a “sub-superintendent” or “deputy” of the superintendent sign the Notice of Intent?

A: No, the district superintendent must sign the required forms.

Q: What are the geographic requirements of the partnerships?

A: County offices and LEAs need to be within the same region. This requirement is intended to help foster new partnerships and promote geographical diversity. LEAs and COEs identified as additional partners should also be in the same region.