

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**Technology Innovation Challenge Grants; Notice of Final Priority and Selection Criteria**

SUMMARY: The Secretary announces a final priority for the Technology Innovation Challenge Grant Program, administered by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI). The Secretary also establishes selection criteria for evaluating and selecting applications submitted under this priority. The Secretary may use this priority only in fiscal year 1998. The Secretary takes these actions to focus Federal assistance on professional development programs that foster the use and integration of advanced technology into the curriculum in compelling and effective ways.

EFFECTIVE DATE: This priority takes effect April 6, 1998.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Elizabeth Payer or Shirley Steele, U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 555 New Jersey Avenue, NW., Suite 522, Washington, DC 20208-5544. Telephone: (202) 208-3882. E-mail addresses are: elizabeth__payer@ed.gov or shirley__steele@ed.gov. Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339 between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m., Eastern time, Monday through Friday.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain this document in an alternate format (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) on request to either contact person listed in the preceding paragraph.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Technology Innovation Challenge Grant Program is authorized in Title III, section 3136, of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended (20 U.S.C. 6846).

Under this program the Secretary makes grants to consortia. A consortium must include at least one local educational agency (LEA) with a high percentage or number of children living below the poverty line and may include other LEAs, private schools, State educational agencies, institutions of higher education, businesses, academic content experts, software designers, museums, libraries, and other appropriate entities. In fiscal year 1998, the Technology Innovation Challenge Grant program will focus on professional development by providing support to consortia that have developed programs, or are adapting or expanding existing programs, for

technology training for teachers and other educators to improve instruction.

Access to computers and the use of networked, multimedia computers in the schools is on the rise. In part, this is the result of support provided by the Technology Literacy Challenge Fund, the Technology Innovation Challenge Grant Program, the National Science Foundation, the Department of Commerce, and other Federal departments and agencies. In addition, the Universal Service Program, often referred to as the "E-Rate", will help to ensure that all eligible schools and libraries have affordable access to modern telecommunications and information services.

While the numbers of computers and connections to the Information Superhighway have increased in the schools, the capacity of the teaching force to use this technology in instructional practice has not kept pace. A 1994 survey by the U.S. Department of Education shows that only 15 percent of the nation's teachers had had at least nine hours of instruction in educational technology.

It is increasingly apparent that the lack of professional development in the use of educational technology is a critical factor that limits the benefits of technology for student learning. A 1995 Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) study, *Teachers and Technology: Making the Connection*, concluded that "helping teachers use technology effectively may be the most important step to assuring that current and future investments in technology are realized." The 1997 report of the President's Committee of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST) has also emphasized this point by stressing that "the substantial investment in hardware, infrastructure, software, and content that is recommended by this report will be largely wasted if K-12 teachers are not provided with the preparation and support they will need to effectively integrate information technology into their teaching." According to the National Center for Education Statistics, only 15-20 percent of teachers are regularly using advanced telecommunications for curriculum development, professional development, and teaching.

Over the next ten years, two million new teachers will need to be hired to accommodate expanding enrollment and to replace retiring teachers. All of these teachers should be prepared to use advanced technology and to integrate education technology into teaching methods and content areas to help students learn. And yet, as the OTA report has pointed out, "* * * most

new teachers graduate from teacher preparation institutions with limited knowledge of the ways technology can be used in their professional practice." The Secretary believes that focusing this year's Technology Innovation Challenge Grant Program competition on professional development will help to provide the additional support that is needed for preparing teachers to teach effectively using technology. Therefore, the Secretary is establishing an absolute preference for those applications submitted by consortia that have developed or adopted innovative programs to prepare teachers, administrators, and other educators to integrate education technology into teaching methods that improve instruction.

Applications under this competition will be evaluated on the extent to which they address the most pressing *professional development* needs as reflected in statewide technology plans. Students from low income communities and other areas in need of technology must not be left behind in the acquisition of knowledge and skills for responsible citizenship and productive work in the 21st century. In awarding Technology Innovation Challenge Grants, the Secretary will evaluate the extent to which the proposed project is designed to serve areas with a high number or percentage of disadvantaged students or the greatest need for educational technology.

Because the State plays a critical role in the licensure of new teachers and recertification of experienced teachers, the Secretary believes that a strong application under this competition should propose that the State educational agency (SEA) have a significant role in the consortium that is applying. Also, the SEA has comprehensive information about the range of technology programs in school districts throughout the State and is in a unique position to coordinate a consortium initiative with other complementary efforts. Therefore, the Secretary is particularly interested in receiving applications in which the SEA has a leadership role in the consortium and is committed to the activities that are proposed. The Secretary believes that consortium activities should be designed to create new partnerships or strengthen already existing partnerships among SEAs, schools of education, LEAs, and the education technology private sector. Cooperation and collaboration among all of these partners will provide benefits to teachers, students, and the community through the improved use of

educational technology in schools and classrooms.

In addition to an SEA, there are other important stakeholders in a consortium that can influence the ability of teachers to successfully use technology in the classroom. These stakeholders include school districts that hire teachers and provide for their on-going professional development, academic content specialists, those segments of the private sector that develop and market educational technology products and services, and colleges and universities with teacher preparation programs. Institutions of higher education that are approved by the State to provide both pre-service and in-service teacher training are particularly important in these collaborative efforts. Yet, a majority of teacher preparation programs are falling far short of what needs to be done. As the 1997 National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education Report *Technology and the New Professional Teacher* points out, colleges of teacher education treat "technology" as a special addition to the teacher education curriculum rather than a topic that needs to be incorporated across the entire teacher education program. The Report emphasizes that "* * * teachers-in-training are provided instruction in 'computer literacy' and are shown examples of computer software, but they rarely are required to apply technology in their courses and are denied role models of faculty employing technology in their own work." It is critical that schools of education lead the way in preparing tomorrow's classroom teachers to incorporate technology into their teaching.

In submitting applications under this competition, the Secretary strongly urges applicants to use the *Mission and Principles of Professional Development* prepared by the U. S. Department of Education in 1995. The *Mission and Principles* describes those characteristics that exemplify high-quality professional development programs. A statement of the mission and principles is published as Appendix A to this notice.

Priorities

Absolute Priority

The Secretary gives an absolute preference to applications that meet the absolute priority in the next paragraph. The Secretary funds under this competition only applications that meet this absolute priority (34 CFR 75.105(c)(3)).

Activities to Strengthen and Enhance Professional Development

The Secretary funds only those applications that are submitted by LEAs on behalf of consortia that have developed or adopted innovative professional development programs for teachers, administrators and other educators to use advanced technology and to integrate innovative applications of education technology into teaching methods that will directly benefit students through improved instruction. The Secretary will fund only those applications that propose to improve, expand, and disseminate those successful training models.

Invitational Priority

The Secretary is particularly interested in applications that meet the invitational priority in the next paragraph. However, an application that meets this invitational priority does not receive competitive or absolute preference over other applications (34 CFR 75.105(c)(1)).

Applications submitted by an LEA on behalf of a consortium that is dedicated to teacher training in technology should involve, as members of the consortium, the SEA, at least one college of education, private sector education technology firms, non-profit education organizations, one or more LEAs, and other appropriate entities. In addition, the Secretary is particularly interested in applications in which: (1) the SEA has a leadership role in the consortium and promises to give its full support and commitment to the activities that are being planned, (2) proposed consortium activities would strengthen or create a partnership among the SEA, schools of education, LEAs, and the education technology private sector, and (3) the model technology training programs for teachers can be adapted and replicated at other sites. Because of the key role that an SEA will play in a consortium, the Secretary is particularly interested in receiving a single application from a State. However, more than one application from within a State is allowable. Furthermore, applications involving more than one State or SEA would not be inconsistent with this invitational priority.

Selection Criteria

The Secretary establishes the following unweighted selection criteria to evaluate applications:

(a) *Significance*. The Secretary reviews each proposed project for its significance by determining the extent to which the project—

(1) Is designed to serve Empowerment Zones, Enterprise Communities, or other

areas with a high number or percentage of disadvantaged students or the greatest need for educational technology;

(2) Includes strategies and activities that address the most pressing professional development needs identified in the statewide educational technology plan submitted under ESEA, section 3133 for the State or States in which the applying members of the consortium are located;

(3) Involves approaches for which there is explicit evidence of innovation and effectiveness;

(4) Establishes and supports high standards for professional development in education technology and its use in schools consistent with statewide reform initiatives, including State content and performance standards;

(5) Includes specific efforts by consortium members to be publicly accountable for improving education through the use of technology; and

(6) Involves a coherent plan for improving, expanding, and disseminating a successful professional development model(s).

(b) *Feasibility*. The Secretary reviews each proposed project for its feasibility by determining the extent to which—

(1) The project will prepare teachers for successful, effective, and efficient uses of technologies for improved instruction that will be sustainable beyond the period of the grant;

(2) The members of the consortium or other appropriate entities will contribute substantial financial and other resources to achieve the goals of the project;

(3) The applicant is capable of carrying out the project, as evidenced by the extent to which the project will meet the problems identified; the quality of the project design, including objectives, approaches, evaluation plan, and dissemination strategies; the adequacy of resources, including money, personnel, facilities, equipment, and supplies; the qualifications of key personnel who would conduct the project; and the applicant's prior experience relevant to the objectives of the project; and

(4) The methods of evaluation examine the effectiveness of project implementation strategies, use objective performance measures related to the intended outcomes of the project, and produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible. The evaluation provides guidance on effective strategies suitable for replication in other settings.

Note: A list of areas that have been designated as Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities is published as Appendix B to this notice.

Note: This notice of final priority and selection criteria does *not* solicit applications. A notice inviting applications under this competition is published in a separate announcement in this issue of the **Federal Register**.

Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number assigned to the collection of information in this notice is 1850-0743.

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 this program.

Waiver of Proposed Rulemaking

In accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act (5 U.S.C. 553), it is the practice of the Department of Education to offer interested parties the opportunity to comment on proposed priorities that are not taken directly from statute. Ordinarily, this practice would have applied to the priority and selection criteria in this notice. Section 437(d)(1) of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), however, exempts rules that apply to the first competition under a new program from this requirement. The Conference Report for the Department's fiscal year 1998 appropriation describes the program covered by this notice as "a new competitive grants program." The Assistant Secretary, in accordance with section 437(d)(1) of GEPA, to ensure timely awards, has decided to forego public comment with respect to the absolute priority and selection criteria. The absolute priority and selection criteria will apply only to the fiscal year 1998 grant competition.

Electronic Access to This Document

Anyone may view this document, as well as all other Department of Education documents published in the **Federal Register**, in text or portable document format (pdf) on the World Wide Web at either of the following sites:

<http://gcs.ed.gov/fedreg.htm>

<http://www.ed.gov/news.html>

To use the pdf you must have the Adobe Acrobat Reader Program with Search, which is available free at either of the previous sites. If you have questions about using the pdf, call the U.S. Government Printing Office toll free at 1-888-293-6498.

Anyone may also view these documents in text copy only on an electronic bulletin board of the Department. Telephone: (202) 219-1511 or, toll free, 1-800-222-4922. The documents are located under Option G—Files/Announcements, Bulletins and Press Releases.

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

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number 84.303A, Technology Innovation Challenge Grants)

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 6846.

Dated: February 27, 1998.

Ricky T. Takai,

Acting Assistant Secretary for Educational Research and Improvement.

Appendix A—Mission and Principles of Professional Development

Professional development plays an essential role in successful education reform. Professional development serves as the bridge between where prospective and experienced educators are now and where they will need to be to meet the new challenges of guiding all students in achieving to higher standards of learning and development.

High-quality professional development as envisioned here refers to rigorous and relevant content, strategies, and organizational supports that ensure the preparation and career-long development of teachers and others whose competence, expectations and actions influence the teaching and learning environment. Both pre- and in-service professional development require partnerships among schools, higher education institutions and other appropriate entities to promote inclusive learning communities of everyone who impacts students and their learning. Those within and outside schools need to work together to bring to bear the ideas, commitment and other resources that will be necessary to address important and complex educational issues in a variety of settings and for a diverse student body.

Equitable access for all educators to such professional development opportunities is imperative. Moreover, professional development works best when it is part of a systemwide effort to improve and integrate the recruitment, selection, preparation, initial licensing, induction, ongoing development and support, and advanced certification of educators.

High-quality professional development should incorporate *all* of the principles stated below. Adequately addressing each of these principles is necessary for a full realization of the potential of individuals, school

communities and institutions to improve and excel.

The mission of professional development is to prepare and support educators to help all students achieve to high standards of learning and development.

Professional Development:

- Focuses on teachers as central to student learning, yet includes all other members of the school community;
- Focuses on individual, collegial, and organizational improvement;
- Respects and nurtures the intellectual and leadership capacity of teachers, principals, and others in the school community;
- Reflects best available research and practice in teaching, learning, and leadership;
- Enables teachers to develop further expertise in subject content, teaching strategies, uses of technologies, and other essential elements in teaching to high standards;
- Promotes continuous inquiry and improvement embedded in the daily life of schools;
- Is planned collaboratively by those who will participate in and facilitate that development;
- Requires substantial time and other resources;
- Is driven by a coherent long-term plan;
- Is evaluated ultimately on the basis of its impact on teacher effectiveness and student learning; and this assessment guides subsequent professional development efforts.

The mission statement and principles of professional development outlined above were published in draft form in the **Federal Register** in December, 1994, and disseminated to more than 600 people and organizations with interests in education. After careful consideration of the extensive comments the Department received, the principles were revised and finalized. We share them with you in the firm belief that high-quality professional development reflecting these principles, which are grounded in the practical wisdom of leading educators across the country, will have a positive and lasting effect on teaching and learning.

Appendix B—Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities

Empowerment Zones

California: Los Angeles
 California: Oakland
 Georgia: Atlanta
 Illinois: Chicago
 Kentucky: Kentucky Highlands*
 Maryland: Baltimore
 Massachusetts: Boston
 Michigan: Detroit
 Mississippi: Mid Delta*
 Missouri/Kansas: Kansas City, Kansas City
 New York: Harlem, Bronx
 Ohio: Cleveland
 Pennsylvania/New Jersey: Philadelphia, Camden
 Texas: Houston
 Texas: Rio Grande Valley*

Enterprise Communities

Alabama: Birmingham

Alabama: Chambers County*
 Alabama: Greene, Sumter Counties*
 Arizona: Phoenix
 Arizona: Arizona Border*
 Arkansas: East Central*
 Arkansas: Mississippi County*
 Arkansas: Pulaski County
 California: Imperial County*
 California: L.A., Huntington Park
 California: San Diego
 California: San Francisco, Bayview, Hunter's Point
 California: Watsonville*
 Colorado: Denver
 Connecticut: Bridgeport
 Connecticut: New Haven
 Delaware: Wilmington
 District of Columbia: Washington
 Florida: Jackson County*
 Florida: Tampa
 Florida: Miami, Dade County
 Georgia: Albany
 Georgia: Central Savannah*
 Georgia: Crisp, Dooley Counties*
 Illinois: East St. Louis
 Illinois: Springfield
 Indiana: Indianapolis
 Iowa: Des Moines
 Kentucky: Louisville
 Louisiana: Northeast Delta*
 Louisiana: Macon Ridge*
 Louisiana: New Orleans
 Louisiana: Ouachita Parish
 Massachusetts: Lowell
 Massachusetts: Springfield
 Michigan: Five Cap*
 Michigan: Flint
 Michigan: Muskegon
 Minnesota: Minneapolis
 Minnesota: St. Paul
 Mississippi: Jackson
 Mississippi: North Delta*
 Missouri: East Prairie*
 Missouri: St. Louis
 Nebraska: Omaha
 Nevada: Clarke County, Las Vegas
 New Hampshire: Manchester
 New Jersey: Newark
 New Mexico: Albuquerque
 New Mexico: Mora, Rio Arriba, Taos Counties*
 New York: Albany, Schenectady, Troy
 New York: Buffalo
 New York: Newburgh, Kingston
 New York: Rochester
 North Carolina: Charlotte
 North Carolina: Halifax, Edgecombe, Wilson Counties*
 North Carolina: Robeson County*
 Ohio: Akron
 Ohio: Columbus
 Ohio: Greater Portsmouth*
 Oklahoma: Choctaw, McCurtain Counties*
 Oklahoma: Oklahoma City
 Oregon: Josephine*
 Oregon: Portland
 Pennsylvania: Harrisburg
 Pennsylvania: Lock Haven*
 Pennsylvania: Pittsburgh
 Rhode Island: Providence
 South Dakota: Deadle, Spink Counties*
 South Carolina: Charleston
 South Carolina: Williamsburg County*
 Tennessee: Fayette, Haywood Counties*
 Tennessee: Memphis
 Tennessee: Nashville

Tennessee/Kentucky: Scott, McCreary Counties*
 Texas: Dallas
 Texas: El Paso
 Texas: San Antonio
 Texas: Waco
 Utah: Ogden
 Vermont: Burlington
 Virginia: Accomack*
 Virginia: Norfolk
 Washington: Lower Yakima*
 Washington: Seattle
 Washington: Tacoma
 West Virginia: West Central*
 West Virginia: Huntington
 West Virginia: McDowell*
 Wisconsin: Milwaukee
 * Denotes rural designee.

[FR Doc. 98-5736 Filed 3-4-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

[CFDA No. 84.303A]

Technology Innovation Challenge Grants; Notice Inviting Applications For New Awards for Fiscal Year (FY) 1998

Purpose of Program

The Technology Innovation Challenge Grant Program provides grants to consortia that are working to improve and expand new applications of technology to strengthen school reform efforts, improve student achievement, and provide for sustained professional development of teachers, administrators, and school library media personnel. In FY 1998, the Technology Innovation Challenge Grant Program will focus on professional development by providing support to consortia that have developed programs, or are adapting or expanding existing programs, for technology training for teachers and other educators to improve instruction.

Eligible Applicants

Only consortia may receive grants under this program. A consortium must include at least one local educational agency (LEA) with a high percentage or number of children living below the poverty line. A consortium may also include other LEAs, private schools, State educational agencies, institutions of higher education, businesses, academic content experts, software designers, museums, libraries, and other appropriate entities.

Note: In each consortium a participating LEA shall submit the application on behalf of the consortium and serve as the fiscal agent for the grant.

Deadline For Receipt of Applications: May 29, 1998.

Deadline For Intergovernmental Review: July 29, 1998.

Applications Available: March 31, 1998.

Estimated Available Funds: \$30,000,000.

Estimated Range of Awards:

\$1,000,000 to \$2,000,000 per year.

Estimated Average Size of Awards:

\$1,500,000 per year.

Estimated Number of Awards: 20.

Project Period: 5 years. Please note that all applicants for multi-year awards are required to provide detailed budget information for the total grant period requested. The Department will negotiate at the time of the initial award the funding levels for each year of the grant award.

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

Maximum Award: The Secretary will not consider an application that proposes a budget exceeding \$2,000,000 for one or more 12-month budget periods.

Applicable Regulations: (a) the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR Parts 74, 75 (except 34 CFR 75.102(b), 75.200(b)(3), 75.210, and 75.217), 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 85, and 86, and (b) 34 CFR Part 299.

Priorities: The absolute and invitational priorities in the notice of final priority and selection criteria for this program, as published elsewhere in this issue of the **Federal Register**, apply to this competition.

Selection Criteria

The selection criteria in the notice of final priority and selection criteria for this program, as published elsewhere in this issue of the **Federal Register**, apply to this competition.

Other Requirements

The procedures for evaluation and selection of applications in the notice of final selection criteria, selection procedures, and application procedures for Technology Innovation Challenge Grants, published in the **Federal Register** on May 12, 1997 (62 FR 26175), apply to this competition.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Technology Innovation Challenge Grant Program is authorized under Title III, section 3136, of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. 6846). The statute authorizes the use of funds for activities similar to the following activities:

(a) Developing, adapting, or expanding existing and new applications of technology to support the school reform effort.