

federal register

**Tuesday
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Part VII

**Department of
Education**

**Upward Bound Math and Science
Initiative; Notice**

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Upward Bound Math and Science Initiative

AGENCY: Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice of final priority for Fiscal Year 1992.

SUMMARY: The Secretary of Education announces a priority for fiscal year 1992 for a special Math and Science Initiative to be supported under the Upward Bound Program. This priority sets aside \$14,200,000 for the Secretary to fund applications to establish and operate regional centers that will offer intensive mathematics and science instruction for six-week periods during the summers of 1993, 1994, and 1995. The Upward Bound Math and Science Initiative supports AMERICA 2000, the President's strategy for moving the Nation toward the National Education Goals. The Initiative seeks to strengthen the mathematics and science education of participating students and assist them to demonstrate competency in mathematics and science. It also seeks to encourage students to pursue postsecondary degrees in mathematics or science.

EFFECTIVE DATE: This priority takes effect either 45 days after publication in the *Federal Register*, or later if the Congress takes certain adjournments. If you want to now the effective date of this priority, call or write the Department of Education contact person.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Goldia Hodgdon, Division of Student Services, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW., (room 3060 ROB-3), Washington, DC 20202-5249. Telephone (202) 708-4804. Deaf and hearing-impaired individuals may call 1-800-877-8339 (in the Washington, DC, 202 area code, telephone 708-9300) between 8 a.m. and 7 p.m., eastern time.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Upward Bound Program is designed to generate the skills and motivation necessary for success in education beyond high school among low-income and potential first-generation college students who are enrolled in high school or who are veterans seeking to prepare themselves for entry into postsecondary programs.

The Secretary has decided to set aside \$14,200,000 of Upward Bound Program funds in fiscal year 1992 for a special Math and Science Initiative and to establish an absolute priority in the competition for funding under the initiative. A funded regional center under this initiative will provide intensive math and science instruction to students who are eligible program

participants under the Upward Bound Program. The instruction will be provided during a six-week period during the course of the summer. The regional center is expected to pay the round-trip costs of the students participating in the summer program. Each center will establish cooperative working relationships with other math and science projects serving the same geographic area.

On August 7, 1991, the Secretary published a notice of proposed priority in the *Federal Register* (56 FR 37620).

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

Analysis of Comments and Changes

In response to the Secretary's invitation for public comment in the notice of proposed priority, seven parties submitted comments. An analysis of the comments and of the changes in the priority since publication of the notice of proposed priority follows. Technical and other minor changes—and suggested changes the Secretary legally is not authorized to make under the applicable statutory authority—are not addressed.

Comments: Three commenters recommended that current grantees under the Upward Bound Program be given first priority under this initiative to receive additional math and science funds to upgrade or add math and science components to existing projects.

Discussion: The purpose of the Math and Science Initiative is to fund regional centers that will provide intensive math and science instruction during the summer. The purpose of the initiative is not to include or strengthen a math or science component in an existing Upward Bound project.

Changes: None.

Comments: One commenter recommended that the regional centers be funded for periods longer than 12 months to yield maximum benefits.

Discussion: The Secretary agrees with this comment and will make awards to regional centers for a three-year period under this priority, subject to the availability of funds and the regulatory criteria that apply to continuation awards. (See 34 CFR 75.253.)

Changes: Applications will be accepted for projects for a three-year duration.

Comments: One commenter recommended that priority be given to those projects that establish cooperative relationships with other Federal and non-Federal math and science teaching and learning activities and that

applicants not be required to establish those relationships with projects or groups that may not be willing or able to cooperate.

Discussion: All funded projects will be required to establish a cooperative relationship with other Federal and non-Federal math and science projects in their areas. The Math and Science Regional Centers must work cooperatively with these projects in addressing this national initiative.

Changes: None.

Comments: One commenter recommended that students should be required to have at least a 2.5 grade-point average on a 4.0 point scale in math and science and have completed the ninth grade.

Discussion: The Secretary agrees that students should have completed the ninth grade to participate in one of the regional centers. By the end of the ninth grade, students have completed their first secondary-level science and math courses, and, therefore, are better prepared to participate in an intensive math and science project.

On the other hand, the Secretary believes that a minimum grade-point average may not be the best predictor of a student's interest or ability to achieve competency in a mathematics or science course of study. Further, grade-point averages vary widely among school systems, when they are used at all, and, therefore, are not the most objective means of identifying disadvantaged students with the potential to excel in math or science. There are other and equally appropriate indicators such as level of accomplishments as a participant in a regular Upward Bound project, interest in reading in the subject areas, extracurricular math and science activities, and evidence of a strong motivation to achieve in a focused environment.

Changes: Students must have completed the ninth grade to participate in a regional center project.

Comments: One commenter recommended that regional centers also serve Upward Bound bridge students by placing them in research and work sites under the guidance of trained math and science professionals. (An Upward Bound bridge student is an Upward Bound participant who has graduated from secondary school and intends to enroll at a postsecondary institution in the upcoming fall semester.) The commenter also recommended that the Centers pay tuition, room and board, and stipends for these participants.

Discussion: Only bridge students who have participated in a regional center project may be served. While the

secretary agrees that bridge students might benefit from on-site research training opportunities, the Secretary believes that the primary focus of the regional centers is providing intensive mathematics and science instruction to eligible students rather than research training. Therefore, centers must provide that instruction to any bridge student served rather than simply placing them in a research or laboratory work site. There are other Federal programs that provide students who already have demonstrated competency in mathematics and science with the opportunity to participate in research internships.

A regional center serving bridge students may pay any costs cited as allowable costs for bridge students by the Upward Bound Program regulations in 34 CFR 645.40.

Changes: None.

Comments: One commenter recommended that local school districts be allowed to submit proposals under this competition.

Discussion: Local school districts qualify as public agencies and, therefore, under 34 CFR 645.2 of the Upward Bound Program regulations are eligible to apply for grants under this initiative.

Changes: None.

Comments: Two commenters stated that the projects sending students will have difficulty carrying out the follow-up activities they will be required to conduct in cooperation with the regional centers. (Projects sending students are the regular Upward Bound projects that nominate their students to participate in the regional centers and will work with the regional centers to provide follow-up activities for their center participants during the academic year.) Concerns raised included: (1) The lack of comparable or state-of-the-art equipment of projects sending students; (2) the limited facilities and resources of some projects sending students; (3) the substantial cost of transporting students back to the regional centers for participation in follow-up activities; and (4) grant cycles that are not conducive to providing adequate follow-up activities once the students leave the regional centers.

Discussion: The commenter misconstrued the nature of the follow-up activities the regional centers will be expected to arrange. The Secretary expects the projects sending students to work cooperatively with the regional centers in arranging for appropriate follow-up activities. These are to take place at the sites of the projects sending

students to reinforce the activities the centers provided during the summer. Examples of appropriate follow-up activities include, but are not limited to, assigning a mentor to each student; ensuring the students enroll in science and math courses during the school year; requiring the students to participate in science fairs or independent study; and arranging for the students to serve as laboratory assistants. The Secretary does not expect each project sending students to be able to duplicate the equipment, facilities, and resources of the regional centers. As the follow-up activities will occur at the projects sending students, rather than at the regional centers, the projects should not incur substantial costs for transporting students.

To the extent possible, the Secretary will make awards that start early in the calendar year. This will allow sufficient time for the regional centers to plan, hire staff, and recruit participants prior to the six-week summer session. It also will allow them to coordinate the follow-up activities to be conducted during the fall semester of the academic year with the projects that send students.

Changes: The regional centers are to work with the projects sending students to ensure that the students participate in follow-up activities that will reinforce the activities the centers provided.

Comments: Two commenters stated that requiring a regional center to serve a multi-state geographic area, for example, one of the Department's 10 regions, places an undue burden on grantees and may be impractical in some instances. They recommended that an applicant be allowed to define and justify its target area.

Discussion: Individual grantees will not be required to serve an entire region, and, therefore, the comment is in agreement with the Secretary's intent. The Secretary will consider the applicant's definition and justification for the regional area it proposes to serve. To the extent possible, the Secretary also will provide for an equitable geographic distribution of regional centers throughout the United States.

Changes: None.

Priority

Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), the Secretary gives an absolute preference to applications for grants under a special Math and Science Initiative that meet the following priority. The Secretary funds under this competition

only applications that meet this absolute priority.

Under this priority, the Secretary will make awards for a three-year period to establish and operate regional centers. Funding after the first budget period is subject to the criteria in 34 CFR 75.253. These regional centers shall, for six weeks during the summers of 1993, 1994, and 1995, provide intensive math and science instruction to students who have completed the ninth grade. The regional centers shall arrange follow-up activities for the participants to reinforce the instruction the students received during their summer program. Notwithstanding 34 CFR 645.10(b), regional centers will not have to provide an academic year component. The regional centers also shall encourage participants to major in science and math in college and pursue careers in science and math following college.

Regional centers shall establish cooperative relationships with other federally and non-federally funded programs in their areas that teach science and mathematics, such as the Eisenhower Mathematics and Science Education and National Science Foundation programs, and with laboratories and science facilities participating in the Federal Government's initiative to improve elementary and secondary-school science training. Cooperative relationships may be used, for example, to recruit project participants, share teaching strategies and approaches, provide enrichment activities, share faculty, and evaluate project activities.

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.

Applicable Program Regulations: 34 CFR part 645.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070d-1a.

Dated: January 28, 1992.

Lamar Alexander,

Secretary of Education.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 84.047—Upward Bound Program)

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