



**Thursday
January 2, 1992**

Part V

**Department of
Education**

**Integration of Vocational and Academic
Learning Program (Model Tech-Prep
Education Projects); Demonstration
Projects; Notice**

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Demonstration Projects for the Integration of Vocational and Academic Learning Program (Model Tech-Prep Education Projects)

ACTION: Department of Education.

AGENCY: Notice of proposed priority, selection criteria, and other requirements for grants to be made in fiscal year 1992.

SUMMARY: The Secretary proposes to establish a priority for a grant competition for awards to be made in Fiscal Year (FY) 1992 using funds appropriated in FY 1991 under the Demonstration Projects for the Integration of Vocational and Academic Learning Program, authorized by section 420 of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act (Perkins Act), as added by Public Law 101-392, 104 Stat. 753 (1990). Under the proposed absolute priority, funds for the competition would be reserved absolutely for applications proposing to demonstrate model tech-prep education programs. The proposed projects would have to be based on successfully designed, established, and operating tech-prep education programs that integrate vocational and academic learning and that would serve as models for programs to be developed under the State-Administered Tech-Prep Education Program. The Secretary also proposes to prohibit the use of Federal funds received under this program for equipment. Lastly, the Secretary proposes other requirements and new selection criteria for evaluating applications submitted for this competition only.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before February 3, 1992.

ADDRESSES: All comments concerning this proposed priority should be addressed to Richard F. DiCola, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 4512-MES, Washington, DC 20202-7242.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Richard F. DiCola. Telephone: 202-732-2370. Deaf and hearing impaired individuals may call the Federal Dual Party Relay Service at 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: Section 420 of the Perkins Act provides for the development, implementation, and operation of programs using different models of curricula that integrate vocational and academic learning. One area in which the integration of

vocational and academic learning is vital to the success of projects is tech-prep education. The Perkins Act requires projects funded under the State-Administered Tech-Prep Education Program (title III, part E of the Perkins Act) to provide technical preparation in a particular field and to "build student competence in mathematics, science, and communications (including through applied academics) through a sequential course of study * * *." Moreover, the widespread interest in, and need for, integrating vocational and academic learning and in tech-prep education support establishing a priority for tech-prep education programs under the Demonstration Projects for the Integration of Vocational and Academic Learning Program in order to provide meaningful direction, resources, and expertise to others wanting to replicate these models.

The Secretary wishes to highlight for potential applicants that this priority would also help further the purposes of AMERICA 2000, the President's education strategy to help America move itself toward the National Education Goals. The integration of vocational and academic learning in tech-prep education projects will directly support National Education Goal 5—ensuring that every adult American will be literate and possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. The integration of vocational and academic learning also can contribute to the President's objective—as stated in Track III of the AMERICA 2000 strategy ("Transforming America into 'A Nation of Students'")—of reviewing current Federal job training efforts and identifying successful ways of motivating and enabling individuals to receive the comprehensive services, education, and skills necessary to achieve economic independence.

Background on Tech-Prep Program

Under the State-Administered Tech-Prep Education Program authorized by title III, part E, of the Perkins Act, the States will award grants to consortia of local educational agencies and postsecondary educational institutions to develop and operate tech-prep education programs. Congress appropriated \$63,434,000 for use in FY 1992 for this purpose.

Section 347(1) of the Perkins Act defines a "tech-prep education program," for purposes of the State-administered program, as a combined secondary and postsecondary program that—

(a) Leads to an associate degree or two-year certificate;

(b) Provides technical preparation in at least one field of engineering technology, applied science, mechanical, industrial, or practical art or trade, or agriculture, health, or business;

(c) Builds student competence in mathematics, science, and communications (including through applied academics) through a sequential course of study; and

(d) Leads to placement in employment.

The local projects funded under the State-Administered Tech-Prep Education Program are intended to be developmental in nature, with each local project being authorized to acquire, as part of its planning activities, technical assistance from State or local entities that have successfully designed, established, and operated tech-prep education programs.

Projects Demonstrating the Integration of Vocational and Academic Learning in Tech-Prep

The purpose of this proposed priority notice, which would fund federally administered tech-prep demonstration projects, is to provide for evaluations of the funded projects, and for models and other forms of assistance for the local projects funded under the State-administered program as well as for other localities that may not receive these funds. Unlike State and locally funded projects, which will be primarily developmental in nature, the projects funded under this proposed priority would:

- Be based on existing programs that demonstrate success through evidence of student achievement, completion and placement rates;

- Conduct rigorous evaluation activities which may include refining existing data or collecting additional data to yield results that can be submitted to the Secretary for review by the Department's Program Effectiveness Panel;

- Demonstrate curricula and courses that integrate vocational and academic learning; and

- Provide resources, materials, technical assistance, inservice training, and other forms of professional development to help others replicate successful tech-prep education programs.

Pursuant to section 420 of the Perkins Act, the model tech-prep education projects that are funded under this competition must demonstrate programs using different models of curricula that

integrate vocational and academic learning by—

(1) Designing integrated curricula and courses;

(2) Providing inservice training for teachers and administrators in integrated curricula; and

(3) Disseminating information regarding effective integrative strategies to other school districts through the National Diffusion Network (NDN) established under section 1562 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended.

The Secretary will announce the final priority in a notice in the *Federal Register*. The final priority will be determined by responses to this notice, available funds, and other considerations of the Department. Funding of particular projects depends on the availability of funds, the nature of the final priority, and the quality of the applications received. The publication of this proposed priority does not preclude the Secretary from proposing additional priorities, subject to meeting applicable rulemaking requirements, nor does it limit the Secretary to funding only this priority.

Note: This notice of proposed priority does not solicit applications. A notice inviting applications under this competition will be published in the *Federal Register* concurrent with or following publication of the notice of final priority.

Absolute Priority

Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), the Secretary proposes to give an absolute preference to applications that meet the following priority. In order to provide models for programs to be developed and funded under the State-Administered Tech-Prep Education Program (title III, part E of the Perkins Act), the Secretary proposes to fund under this competition only applications that demonstrate tech-prep education programs, as defined in section 347 of the Perkins Act, that—

(a) Are based on successfully designed, established, and operating tech-prep education programs; and
(b) Meet the requirements for funding under Title III-E of the Perkins Act.

In order to be funded under title III-E of the Perkins Act, a tech-prep program must—

(1) Be carried out under an articulation agreement between the secondary and postsecondary participants in the project. *Articulation agreement* means a commitment to a program designed to provide students with a nonduplicative sequence of progressive achievement leading to competencies in a tech-prep education program;

(2) Consist of the two years of secondary school preceding graduation and two years of higher education, or an apprenticeship program of at least two years following secondary instruction, with a common core of required proficiency in mathematics, science, communications, and technologies designed to lead to an associate arts degree or certificate in a specific career field;

(3) Include the development of tech-prep education program curricula appropriate to the needs of the secondary and postsecondary participants;

(4) Include inservice training for teachers that—

(A) Is designed to train teachers to effectively implement tech-prep education curricula;

(B) Provides for joint training for teachers from all secondary and postsecondary participants; and

(C) May provide this training in weekend, evening, and summer sessions, institutes, or workshops;

(5) Include training programs for counselors designed to enable counselors to more effectively—

(A) Recruit students for tech-prep education programs;

(B) Ensure that these students successfully complete the programs; and

(C) Ensure that these students are placed in appropriate employment;
(6) Provide equal access to the full range of technical preparation programs to individuals who are members of special populations, including the development of tech-prep education program services appropriate to the needs of such individuals; and

(7) Provide for preparatory services which assist all participants in the programs.

Required Activities

The Secretary further proposes to require that any project funded under this competition must—

(a) Disseminate its results in a manner designed to provide information on integration of vocational and academic learning to improve the training of teachers, other instructional personnel, counselors, and administrators who are needed to carry out tech-prep programs;

(b) Provide resources, materials, technical assistance, inservice training, and other forms of professional development to help others replicate successful tech-prep education programs;

(c) Provide, and budget for, an independent evaluation of grant activities. The evaluation must—

(1) Include activities during the formative stages of the project to help

guide and improve the project, as well as a summative evaluation that includes recommendations for replicating project activities and results;

(2) Be based on student achievement, completion, and placement rates, and the effectiveness of disseminating information and materials produced by the project to appropriate audiences; and

(3) Provide a summary of evaluation activities and results that the grantee shall submit to the Secretary for review by the Department's Program Effectiveness Panel; and

(e) Expend no Federal funds received under this program for equipment, as defined in 34 CFR 74.132 and 80.32.

Criteria for Evaluating Applications

For the FY 1992 grant competition under the Demonstration Projects for the Integration of Vocational and Academic Learning Program (Model Tech-Prep Education Projects), the Secretary proposes to use the following selection criteria and to assign points to the selection criteria as indicated:

(a) *Program factors.* (15 points) The Secretary reviews each application to assess the quality of the proposed project, including—

(1) The extent to which the project provides a model for programs to be funded under the State-Administered Tech-Prep Education Program;

(2) The extent to which the project involves creative or innovative methods for integrating vocational and academic learning;

(3) The extent to which the project will serve—

(i) Individuals who are members of special populations;

(ii) Vocational students in secondary schools and at post secondary institutions;

(iii) Individuals enrolled in adult programs; or

(iv) Single parents, displaced homemakers, and single pregnant women.

(b) *Educational significance.* (15 points) The Secretary reviews each application to determine the extent to which the applicant—

(1) Bases the proposed project on successfully designed, established, and currently operating model tech-prep education programs that include components similar to the components required by this program, as evidenced by empirical data from those programs in such factors as—

(i) Student performance and achievement;

(ii) High school graduation;

(iii) Successful transfer of students to a variety of postsecondary education programs at the completion of the tech-prep education program; and

(iv) Placement of students in jobs, including military service, at the completion of the tech-prep education program;

(2) Proposes project objectives that contribute to the improvement of education; and

(3) Proposes to use unique and innovative techniques that address the need to integrate vocational and academic learning, and produce benefits that are of national significance.

(c) *Plan of operation.* (15 points) The Secretary reviews each application to determine the quality of the plan of operation for the project, including—

(1) The quality of the project design, especially the establishment of measurable objectives for the project that are based on the project's overall goals;

(2) The extent to which the plan of management is effective and ensures proper and efficient administration of the project over the award period;

(3) How well the objectives of the project relate to the purpose of the program;

(4) The quality of the applicant's plan to use its resources and personnel to achieve each objective; and

(5) How the applicant will ensure that project participants who are otherwise eligible to participate are selected without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

(d) *Evaluation plan.* (15 points) The Secretary reviews each application to determine the quality of the project's evaluation plan, including the extent to which the plan—

(1) Carries out the requirements for an independent evaluation;

(2) Is clearly explained and is appropriate to the project;

(3) To the extent possible, is objective and will produce data that are quantifiable;

(4) Includes quality measures to assess the effectiveness of the curriculum developed by the project;

(5) Identifies expected outcomes of the participants and how those outcomes will be measured;

(6) Includes activities during the formative stages of the project to help guide and improve the project, as well as a summative evaluation that includes recommendations for replicating project activities and results;

(7) Will provide a comparison between intended and observed results, and lead to the demonstration of a clear link between the observed results and

the specific treatment of project participants; and

(6) Will yield results that can be summarized and submitted to the Secretary for review by the Department's Program Effectiveness Panel.

(e) *Demonstration and dissemination.* (15 points) The Secretary reviews each application for information to determine the effectiveness and efficiency of the plan for demonstrating and disseminating information about project activities and results throughout the project period, including—

(1) High quality in the design of the dissemination plan and procedures for evaluating the effectiveness of the dissemination plan;

(2) Identification of the audience to which the project activities will be disseminated and provisions for publicizing the project at the local, State, and national levels by conducting, or delivering presentations at, conferences, workshops, and other professional meetings and by preparing materials for journal articles, newsletters, and brochures;

(3) Provisions for demonstrating the methods and techniques used by the project to others interested in replicating these methods and techniques, such as by inviting them to observe project activities;

(4) A description of the types of materials the applicant plans to make available to help others replicate project activities and the methods for making the materials available; and

(5) Provisions for assisting others to adopt and successfully implement the methods, approaches, and techniques developed by the project.

(f) *Key personnel.* (10 points)

(1) The Secretary reviews each application to determine the quality of key personnel the applicant plans to use on the project, including—

(i) The qualifications, in relation to project requirements, of the project director;

(ii) The qualifications, in relation to project requirements, of each of the other key personnel to be used in the project;

(iii) The appropriateness of the time that each person referred to in paragraphs (f)(1)(i) and (ii) of this section will commit to the project; and

(iv) How the applicant, as part of its nondiscriminatory employment practices, will ensure that its personnel are selected for employment without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

(2) To determine personnel qualifications under paragraphs (f)(1)(i)

and (ii) of this section, the Secretary considers—

(i) The experience and training of key personnel in project management and in fields related to the objectives of the project; and

(ii) Any other qualifications of key personnel that pertain to the quality of the project.

(g) *Budget and cost effectiveness.* (10 points) The Secretary reviews each application to determine the extent to which the budget—

(1) Is cost effective and adequate to support the project activities;

(2) Contains costs that are reasonable and necessary in relation to the objectives of the project; and

(3) Proposes using non-Federal resources available from appropriate employment, training, and education agencies in the State to provide project services and activities and to acquire project equipment and facilities, to ensure that funds awarded under this part are used to provide instructional services.

(h) *Adequacy of resources and commitment.* (5 points)

(1) The Secretary reviews each application to determine the extent to which the applicant plans to devote adequate resources to the project. The Secretary considers the extent to which—

(i) The facilities that the applicant plans to use are adequate; and

(ii) The equipment and supplies that the applicant plans to use are adequate.

(2) The Secretary reviews each application to determine the commitment to the project, including whether the—

(i) Uses of non-Federal resources are adequate to provide project services and activities, especially resources of community organizations and State and local educational agencies; and

(ii) Applicant has the capacity to continue, expand, and build upon the project when Federal assistance under this part ends.

Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980

This proposed priority contains information collection requirements. As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980, the Department of Education will submit a copy of the proposed priority to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for its review. (44 U.S.C. 3504(h))

This proposed priority would affect the following types of entities eligible to apply for a grant under this program: Institutions of higher education, area vocational education schools, State boards of vocational education, public

or private nonprofit organizations, and any combination of these types of entities. The Secretary needs this information to determine whether proposed projects are likely to meet identified national needs. Annual public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 90 hours per response for one hundred fifty respondents, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

Organizations and individuals desiring to submit comments on the information collection requirements should direct them to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, OMB, room 3002, New Executive Office Building, Washington, DC 20503; Attention: Daniel J. Chenok.

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.

Invitation to Comment

Interested persons are invited to submit comments and recommendations regarding (a) the proposed absolute

priority, (b) the proposed selection criteria, and the other requirements.

All comments submitted in response to this notice will be available for public inspection, during and after the comment period in room 4512, Switzer Building, 330 C Street, SW., Washington, DC, between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday of each week except Federal holidays.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 2420.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number 84.248 Demonstration Projects for the Integration of Vocational and Academic Learning Program)

Dated: September 19, 1991.

Lamar Alexander,

Secretary of Education.

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