

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

[CFDA No.: 84.215V]

Fund for the Improvement of Education: Partnerships in Character Education Pilot Projects; Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Years (FY) 1998 and 1999

Purpose of Program: The purpose of the Fund for the Improvement of Education (FIE) is to support nationally significant programs to improve the quality of education, assist all students to meet challenging State content standards, and contribute to the achievement of the National Education Goals. The purpose of this competition is to support pilot projects that design and implement character education programs as a way to address the broader FIE objectives.

Eligible Applicants: Only State educational agencies, in partnership with one or more local educational agencies, may apply for grants under this program.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: 3/16/98.

Applications Available: 1/20/98.

Available Funds: Up to \$4,000,000.

Estimated Range of Awards: \$100,000–\$1,000,000.

Estimated Number of Awards: Up to 10.

Maximum Award: The Secretary will not consider an application that proposes a budget exceeding a total of \$1,000,000.

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

Project Period: Up to 60 months.

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) 34 CFR Parts 74, 75, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 85, and 86; and (b) the regulations in 34 CFR Parts 98, 99, 700, and 299 (General Provisions, Elementary and Secondary Education Act, published on May 22, 1997, in the **Federal Register** (62 FR 28247)).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: It is the Department's intent to fund two cycles of awards from this competition. The first cycle of awards will be made from FY 1998 funds. If applications of high quality remain unfunded, additional awards will be made in the second cycle in FY 1999, pending availability of FY 1999 funds.

The statute governing the Partnerships in Character Education Pilot Projects program, limits the amount awarded to any State to \$1,000,000 and limits the funding period to five years. Within those parameters, for the previous funding cycles for this program, the Secretary established a ceiling of \$250,000 per year for up to four years. However, based on the experiences of previous grantees, and on suggestions made by State educational agency officials who have not participated in this program, the Secretary has decided to offer a more flexible funding structure for this competition. Therefore, in designing character education activities, each applicant may determine the combination of funding and time that is most appropriate. The total funding requested for the entire grant period may not exceed \$1,000,000; the total project period may not exceed five years; and not more than one year may be used for planning and program design. For example, one applicant may request \$500,000 per year for two years, while another may request \$100,000 for the first year, \$400,000 for the second and third years, and \$100,000 for the fourth year.

In preparing an application, each applicant should take special care to provide a timeline and a narrative that explains the costs requested for each budget period.

Under the Character Education program, State educational agencies provide technical and professional assistance to local educational agencies in the development and implementation of curriculum materials, teacher training, and other activities related to character education. Applicants must propose projects designed to develop character education programs that incorporate the following elements of character:

- (a) Caring.
- (b) Civic virtue and citizenship.
- (c) Justice and fairness.
- (d) Respect.
- (e) Responsibility.
- (f) Trustworthiness.
- (g) Any other elements deemed appropriate by the members of the partnership.

Other program requirements are described in the application package.

FOR APPLICATIONS OR INFORMATION CONTACT: To request an application:

Facsimile machine: 202-219-2053; *Voice Mail:* 202-219-2116; *E-Mail:* Judy_Collins@ed.gov; or *Mail:* OERI/FIE Application, 555 New Jersey Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20208-5645. 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 the contact person listed in the preceding paragraph.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain a copy of the application package in an alternate format, also, by contacting that person. However, the Department is not able to reproduce in an alternate format the standard forms included in the application package.

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

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 8003.

Dated: December 30, 1997.

Ricky T. Takai,

Acting Assistant Secretary, Office of Educational Research and Improvement.

[FR Doc. 98-178 Filed 1-5-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000-01-P