

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION****National Awards Program for Model Professional Development; Notice Inviting Applications for Awards**

*Purpose of Program:* The National Awards Program will recognize a variety of schools and school districts with model professional development activities in the pre-K through twelfth grade levels that have led to increased student achievement.

*Eligible Applicants:* All local educational agencies and public and private schools are eligible to apply.

*Supplementary Information:* Schools and school districts throughout the Nation are undertaking efforts to raise academic standards and to improve the academic achievement of all students. For these efforts to be successful, it has become clear that they must include strategies for permitting teachers (and other school and local educational agency (LEA) staff) to obtain the skills and knowledge they need to enable all students to achieve. Indeed, whatever the school reform initiative, teachers are the core. However, teachers need access to new knowledge and skills to enable them to continue to teach to higher standards and to respond to the challenges facing education today.

Realizing that high-quality professional development must be at the core of any effort to achieve educational excellence, the Secretary in 1994 directed a broadly representative team within the U.S. Department of Education to examine the best available research and exemplary practices related to professional development, and work with the field to develop a set of basic principles of high-quality professional development. Out of this national effort came the Department's Statement of Mission and Principles of Professional Development. This statement reflected both extensive collaboration with a wide range of education constituents and review of public comment received on a draft Statement of Mission and Principles of Professional Development published in the Federal Register on December 9, 1994 (59 FR 63773). The Department issued the final Statement of Mission and Principles (Attachment A) in 1995 after review of public comment and reexamination of the best available research on exemplary practices. This statement is grounded in the practical wisdom of leading educators across the country about the kind of professional development that, if implemented, maintained, and supported, will have a positive and lasting effect on teaching and learning in America.

The Statement of Mission and Principles of Professional Development represents a framework for guiding school and school district staff as they design and implement their professional development activities. Many of the same national education organizations that worked with the Department to develop the Mission and Principles of Professional Development now have sought the Department's help this year in identifying and recognizing those professional development efforts across the pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade spectrum that reflect the Mission and Principles. Given the efforts of schools and school districts throughout the Nation to pursue school reform initiatives, the Secretary agrees with these organizations that there is an urgent need to identify sites whose professional development activities can be models for other schools and districts that are working to enhance their own professional development activities.

Therefore, the Secretary announces a National Awards Program that, by January 1, 1997, will recognize up to ten schools and school districts throughout the Nation whose professional development activities are aligned with the Statement of Mission and Principles of Professional Development, and have led to improved student learning. As explained in the application material contained in Appendix B, successful applicants will be schools and school districts that: (1) Demonstrate that their professional development activities are fully aligned with the Mission and Principles of Professional Development and (2) demonstrate how, consistent with the Mission and Principles, their professional development activities benefit all affected students, and have led to improved student learning and improved teacher effectiveness. The application itself is very simple.

After an initial screening, the Department will use outside panels of experts to evaluate the quality of the application against the basic elements noted above, and conduct site visits of the highest-ranked applicants. The Secretary intends to recognize those schools and school districts with the very best professional development practices at a national ceremony in Washington, DC. Successful applicants also will receive other forms of recognition including a privately-funded monetary award that the Department anticipates will be no less than \$5,000 per recipient. Recipients will be able to use these funds to support their professional development activities and make them known to others.

In announcing this program, the Department is helping to implement a decision made by these national organizations that a first national awards program for professional development extend only to schools and LEAs throughout the Nation that offer pre-K through twelfth grade education. While the Department will help to coordinate the program, non-Departmental experts will select the schools or districts to be recognized. Moreover, the monetary recognition awards that recipients will receive will be provided from private funds specifically made available for a recognition program focusing on professional development activities in the pre-K through twelfth grade spectrum. However, if the awards program continues in future years, the Secretary intends to work with the national education organizations and others in an attempt to include in the awards program professional development activities conducted in other areas such as adult or postsecondary education.

Finally, the National Awards Program depends upon the availability of sufficient funds to support a peer review and site visit process. The Department expects to have adequate funds to support this process, as needed, for applicants from schools and LEAs in States (including schools located on Indian reservations), the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. However, in the case of applicants from schools or LEAs in the insular areas, it is not known whether sufficient funds will be available to pay the costs of the peer review and on-site visits that are preconditions to national recognition.

*Deadline for Transmittal of Applications:* July 15, 1996.

*Estimated Range of Awards:* No less than \$5,000.

*Estimated Number of Awards:* 10.

*For Applications or Information*

*Contact:* To obtain a copy of the application, call or write Margaret O'Keefe, Office of the Secretary, U.S. Department of Education, 600 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20202-0100. (Telephone: (202) 401 1078; For information on the program, contact Terry Dozier, Special Advisor on Teaching, Office of the Secretary, U.S. Department of Education, 600 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20202-0100. The FAX number for obtaining further information or requesting the application packages is (202) 401-0596. 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.

Information about the Department's funding opportunities, including copies of application notices for discretionary grant competitions, can be viewed on the Department's electronic bulletin board (ED Board), telephone (202) 260-9950; on the Internet Gopher Service at GOPHER.ED.GOV (under Announcements, Bulletins, and Press Releases) or on the World Wide Web (at <http://www.ed.gov/money.html>). However, the official application notice for a discretionary grant competition is the notice published in the Federal Register.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1221e-3. (Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: Not applicable)

Dated: June 10, 1996.

Richard W. Riley,  
Secretary of Education.

Appendix A—Mission and Principles of Professional Development; U.S. Department of Education—Professional Development Team

July 5, 1995.

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.

#### Appendix B—Application Instructions

##### Overview

As part of the continuing effort to honor excellence in education, the National Awards Program for Model Professional Development will identify and disseminate information about high-quality professional development efforts which provide evidence of improved student learning and increased teacher effectiveness. Since the focus of this competition is on development programs for teachers and other educators in pre-K-12 settings, only individual schools (public or private) or school districts may apply. However, partnerships with other entities, especially higher education institutions, are encouraged. Recognition in this awards program is based on how well applicants address criteria in three areas: (1) Evidence of success; (2) program quality; and (3) usefulness to others. Subsequent recognition may focus on higher education and other education personnel.

##### Questions

Our goal is to identify a wide variety of pre-K-12 professional development efforts that are aligned with the attached U.S. Department of Education Mission and Principles of Professional Development. Because the purpose of the Mission and Principles is to promote excellence in teaching and learning, the most important criterion for eligibility is evidence of improved student learning and increased teacher effectiveness. Consistent with the Mission and Principles, those schools and

districts have professional growth as an integral part of school culture, address the needs of ALL students, and have professional development practices that ensure equity by being accessible to all educators and free of bias.

Responses to all of the following four questions should be limited to a total of 2500 words, as opposed to 2500 words per question.

While we are not accepting attachments to this first round of the evaluation process, we do ask that, where appropriate, you *describe* the type of evidence you have on your program's effectiveness. If your school or district makes the semifinals you will be asked to provide documentation of this evidence. This may include such things as schedules, student and teacher portfolios, assessment data, videos, and audio tapes, internal and external communications, and other documents. This evidence will be necessary information to help evaluators understand the depth and scope of your program.

*Completed applications must be received no later than July 15, 1996.*

Note: *The criteria section that follows these questions may help you structure and focus your responses.*

(1) Describe the extent to which the Mission and Principles are reflected in your approach to professional development. Although it is not necessary to address each Principle separately, you must explain how you are working to fulfill *all* of the Principles.

(2) Portray the direct and ongoing connection between your professional development practice and improved student learning.

(3) Discuss evidence of how professional development efforts have improved teaching effectiveness and student learning.

(4) Describe any plans to strengthen and/or expand your professional development efforts and why you believe others might want to consider adopting/adapting them.

##### Criteria

Your response will be reviewed for how well your professional development activities are aligned with the Mission and Principles of Professional Development. While reviewers will use their best professional judgment, we anticipate that they also will use the following kinds of criteria and emphases as a guide to help them assess the quality of responses. You do not have to address each criterion separately, but you should be sure to include sufficient information throughout your responses for reviewers to make judgments about such basic factors as evidence of success, quality of the professional development activities, and usefulness to others.

##### Evidence of Success—50 Points

- Indicators are provided that the school or district's students are progressing toward or achieving at high standards of learning.
- Based on a range of assessments, the professional development program is shown to be connected directly to enhanced teaching effectiveness and student learning.

*Related Questions*

Portray the direct and ongoing connection between your professional development practice and improved student learning.

Submit evidence of how teaching practice has become more effective and student learning has improved.

*Quality of the Program—30 Points*

—The extent to which the school or district's professional development is aligned with the Mission and Principles of Professional Development.

*Related Question*

Describe the extent to which the Mission and Principles are reflected in your approach to professional development. Although it is not necessary to address each Principle separately, you must explain how you are working to fulfill *all* of the Principles.

*Usefulness to Others—20 Points*

—The program's content, strategies and supports can be adopted or adapted by other schools and districts working to improve their professional development practices.

—Resources are reasonable in light of expected benefits and in comparison with

other professional development alternatives.

*Related Question\**

Describe any plans to strengthen and/or expand your professional development efforts and why you believe others might want to consider adopting/adapting them.

*\* Please note that your overall application and program description also will be used for evaluating this criterion.*

*Review Process*

An initial reading of applications will be done by the Professional Development Team and other knowledgeable staff of the U.S. Department of Education representing diverse expertise and perspectives related to professional development and education reform. This first reading will eliminate applications which do not respond to or minimally meet the criteria. The next stage of review will include broad outside representation of expert practitioners and policymakers. Each application will have multiple readers and will be ranked according to how well it does when judged against an evaluation framework based on the criteria and Principles. Up to twenty semifinalists will be chosen through this process, which may include telephone

interviews with project contacts to discuss and clarify information. Site visits will be conducted to collect additional data on the semifinalist. This data will be used in selecting up to ten schools or districts for recognition.

According to 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 for this information collection is 1880-0534. It expires in June of 1999. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 20 hours per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimates or suggestions for improving the form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20202-4651. If you have any comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to: Terry Dozier, Special Advisor on Teaching, Office of the Secretary, U.S. Department, 600 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20202-0100.

**BILLING CODE 4000-01-P**

**APPLICATION FORM**

Please give the names and positions of the Professional Development Planning Team involved in the completion of this application.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Position \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant \_\_\_\_\_

I. If Applying At the School Level

School Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Principal/Lead Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

II. If Applying At the District Level

Name of Superintendent: \_\_\_\_\_

District Name: \_\_\_\_\_

District Address: \_\_\_\_\_

District Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Name and Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list the sources of funding for your school or district's professional development.

Please attach your responses to the essay questions to this page.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SITES

- (1) Total Number of Students: \_\_\_\_\_
- (2) Type of School(s): \_\_\_\_\_
- Pre-Kindergarten \_\_\_\_\_
- Elementary \_\_\_\_\_
- Middle \_\_\_\_\_
- Junior High \_\_\_\_\_
- Senior High \_\_\_\_\_
- (3) Population Category:
- Urban \_\_\_\_\_
- Suburban \_\_\_\_\_
- Rural \_\_\_\_\_
- (4) Racial/ethnic composition of the students in your school(s):
- \_\_\_\_\_ % Native American or Native Alaskan
- \_\_\_\_\_ % Asian or Pacific Islander
- \_\_\_\_\_ % African American, not Hispanic origin
- \_\_\_\_\_ % Hispanic
- \_\_\_\_\_ % White, not Hispanic origin
- (5) Limited English Proficient students in the school \_\_\_\_\_%
- \_\_\_\_\_ Number of languages Specify languages: \_\_\_\_\_
- (6) \_\_\_\_\_ % Students who qualify for free/reduced price lunch
- (7) \_\_\_\_\_ % Students receiving special education services
- (8) Special characteristics of your school or district which you believe are relevant to your application.

Submit your application to Terry Dozier, Special Advisor on Teaching, Office of the Secretary, U.S. Department of Education, 600 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20202. *The completed application must be received no later than July 15, 1996.*