

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION****Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities National Programs—Grants to Institutions of Higher Education (Validation Competition)****AGENCY:** Department of Education**ACTION:** Notice of final priorities and selection criteria for fiscal year 1997.

**SUMMARY:** The Secretary announces final priorities and selection criteria for fiscal year (FY) 1997 under the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities (SDFSC) National Programs Grants to Institutions of Higher Education (IHES) Validation Competition. The Secretary takes this action to focus Federal financial assistance on an identified national need. The priorities are intended to increase knowledge about effective programs by validating model strategies, policies, and activities to prevent violent behavior and the illegal use of alcohol and other drugs by college students. To achieve this goal, the Department will fund projects designed to work in partnership with neighborhood campus-communities to correct students' normative beliefs about their peers' illegal use of alcohol and other drugs or limit access and availability of illegal alcohol and other drugs in the campus-community.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** These priorities take effect June 5, 1997.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program, U.S. Department of Education, 600 Independence Ave., SW, Room 604 Portals, Washington, DC. 20202-6123. Telephone: (202) 260-3954. Individuals who use a telecommunication device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339 between 8 am and 8 pm, Eastern time, Monday through Friday.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Despite progress, enabled in part by a significant ongoing commitment of Federal financial resources to support programs designed to prevent college students' illegal use of alcohol and other drugs, recent national data reflect high rates of use by college students, resulting in negative consequences, including violence on campus. Little research has been conducted on prevention programs in higher education, resulting in a lack of useful information to guide prevention professionals in the design and implementation of effective programs on college campuses. While information about promising alcohol and other drug prevention programs and strategies is gradually becoming more available, most programs still are neither based on solid research nor

evaluated rigorously. Only recently have data been collected about the incidence of violence and crime on college campuses. Little information is available about the effectiveness of violence prevention programs on college campuses.

The results of these validated projects may be used by the Secretary of Education to identify and disseminate to IHES successful programs that prevent violent behavior and illegal use of alcohol and other drugs by college students. Applicants should be prepared to provide statistics and information on crimes occurring on campus, especially liquor law violations, drug abuse violations, and weapons possession, as required under current law.

Under previously funded priorities under this program, Federal funds have supported the development and implementation of a wide range of prevention activities. The priorities supported in this year's competition will focus on the validation of two promising, research-based approaches that have yet to be tested rigorously in the campus-community. Research shows that students who perceive a permissive campus alcohol use environment tend to drink more heavily than they would otherwise based on their personal attitudes (Perkins, Wechsler, *Journal of Drug Issues*, Vol. 26 No.4, pp. 961-974, 1996). Also, considerable research at the community level shows that access to and availability of alcohol strongly influence the rate of alcohol problems within a given population among both moderate and heavy drinkers (Gruenewald, Millar, and Roeper, *Alcohol Health and Research World*, Vol. 20, No. 4, pp. 244-245, 1996). Research also shows that there is a correlation between heavy alcohol consumption and violence. Binge drinkers were more likely than their non-binging counterparts to encounter actual physical violence, experience forced sexual touching, and endure unwanted sexual intercourse. (Presley, Meilman, Cashin, and Lechlitter, in press)

IHES need to reassess the alcohol, other drug, and violence prevention programs they are currently conducting and modify or replace programs that fail to show a measurable impact on reducing alcohol, other drug use, and violence with programs that are effective or promising. To promote effective prevention programming, the Department of Education encourages IHES to: design programs based on an assessment of objective data (such as needs assessments, student-use surveys, assessments of students' dispositions toward drug use); develop measurable

goals and objectives linked to the identified needs; use prevention approaches that research or evaluation has shown to be effective in preventing or reducing violent behavior or the illegal use of alcohol and other drugs; and use evaluation results as part of a continuous improvement process to correct approaches that are not working and strengthen approaches that are working.

Applicants should show the ability to start their campus-community program soon after receiving federal funding in order to maximize the time available to show impact within the grant period of two years. Projects supported through this competition should be designed to demonstrate and document significant reductions in alcohol and other drug use and violence at colleges and universities over the grant period. Because of the need for a sound evaluation plan, applicants are advised to obtain outside expert consultation prior to submitting applications.

For additional information or data about college drug prevention programs, policies, strategies, and activities, contact the Department of Education's Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention. The Center is a national resource for training and technical assistance to postsecondary institutions. The Center can be contacted at 1-800-676-1730 or through its web site at [www.edc.org/hec/](http://www.edc.org/hec/)

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

*Applications for this competition must be received at the address specified in the notice inviting applications for this competition no later than 4:30 p.m. on the deadline date in the notice inviting application. Applications received after that time will not be eligible for funding. Postmarked dates will not be accepted.*

In making awards under this program, the Secretary may take into consideration the geographic distribution and diversity of activities addressed by the projects, in addition to the rank order of applications.

Contingent upon the availability of funds, the Secretary may make additional awards in fiscal year 1998 from the rank-ordered list of unfunded applicants from this competition.

**Absolute Priorities**

Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3) and the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1994, the Secretary

gives an absolute preference to applications that meet one or both of the following priorities. The Secretary funds under this competition only applications that meet one or both of these absolute priorities: *Absolute Priority #1—Correcting Misperceptions of Student Alcohol and Other Drug Use by Students Attending Institutions of Higher Education*

Under this priority, applicants must propose projects that develop, implement, and validate approaches to prevent violent behavior and the illegal use of alcohol and other drugs by students attending institutions of higher education by correcting misperceptions of student alcohol and drug use norms. Projects must:

(a) Correct the misperceptions among the campus-community population (including college students, faculty, administrators, and parents) about levels of student campus alcohol and drug use, student alcohol and drug use norms, and the consequences of student alcohol and drug use;

(b) implement a rigorous evaluation of the project, using outcome-based performance indicators, that documents strategies used and measures the effectiveness of the program or strategy in reducing student drug use and violent behavior;

(c) use a campus-community coalition to plan and implement the project; and

(d) at the request of the Secretary, coordinate with any report being prepared under section 204(a)(4)(B) of the Student Right-to-Know and Campus Security Act on policies, procedures and practices which have proven effective in the reduction of campus crime.

*Absolute Priority #2—Limiting Student Access to and Availability of Alcohol and Other Drugs at Institutions of Higher Education*

Under this priority, applicants must propose projects that develop, implement, and validate approaches to prevent violent behavior and the illegal use of alcohol and other drugs by students attending institutions of higher education by limiting student access to and availability of alcohol and other drugs. Projects must:

(a) Establish or expand, and enforce policies that limit student access to, and availability of, alcohol and other drugs in the campus-community for college students;

(b) implement a rigorous evaluation of the project, using outcome-based performance indicators, that documents strategies used and measures the effectiveness of the program or strategy

in reducing student drug use and violent behavior;

(c) use a campus-community coalition to plan and implement the project; and

(d) at the request of the Secretary, coordinate with any report being prepared under section 204(a)(4)(B) of the Student Right-to-Know and Campus Security Act on policies, procedures and practices which have proven effective in the reduction of campus crime.

**Selection Criteria**

(a) (1) The Secretary uses the following selection criteria to evaluate applications for new grants under this competition.

(2) The maximum score for all of these criteria is 100 points.

(3) The maximum score for each criterion or factor under that criterion is indicated in parentheses.

(b) *The criteria.*—

(1) *Need for project.* (10 points)

(i) The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project.

(ii) In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the magnitude or severity of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project.

(2) *Significance.* (25 points)

(i) The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project.

(ii) In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(A) The potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of theory, knowledge, and practices in the field of study. (5 points)

(B) The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies. (10 points)

(C) The likelihood that the proposed project will result in system change or improvement. (5 points)

(D) The potential replicability of the proposed project or strategies, including, as appropriate, the potential for implementation in a variety of settings. (5 points)

(3) *Quality of the project design.* (20 points)

(i) The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project.

(ii) In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(A) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable. (5 points)

(B) The extent to which the design for implementing and evaluating the proposed project will result in information to guide possible replication of project activities or strategies, including information about the effectiveness of the approach or strategies employed by the project. (5 points)

(C) The quality of the proposed demonstration design and procedures for documenting project activities and results. (5 points)

(D) The extent to which the design of the proposed project reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice. (5 points)

(4) *Quality of the management plan.* (20 points)

(i) The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project.

(ii) In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(A) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timeliness, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks. (4 points)

(B) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project. (8 points)

(C) How the applicant will ensure that a diversity of perspectives are brought to bear in the operation of the proposed project, including those of students, faculty, parents, the business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients or beneficiaries of services, or others, as appropriate. (8 points)

(5) *Quality of the project evaluation.* (25 points)

(i) The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project.

(ii) In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(A) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives and outcomes of the proposed project. (5 points)

(B) The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible. (10 points)

(C) The extent to which the evaluation will provide guidance about effective

strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings. (10 points)

#### **Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995**

The selection criteria for this program contain information collection requirements. As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 USC 3504(h)), the Department of Education will submit a copy of this notice to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for its review.

Collection of Information: Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities National Programs—Grants to Institutions of Higher Education Validation Competition.

These selection criteria will affect the following types of entities eligible to apply for a grant under this program: institutions of higher education, and consortia thereof. The Department needs, and will use, the information related to the selection criteria for this program to enable the Secretary to determine which applicants would most likely develop, implement, and validate successful model projects for demonstration throughout the nation. Annual public reporting and record-keeping burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 32 hours per response for 100 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 10235, New Executive Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20503; Attention: Desk Officer for U.S. Department of Education.

The Department considers comments by the public on this proposed collection of information in—

- Evaluating whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Department, including whether the information will have practical utility;
- Evaluating the accuracy of the Department's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;
- Enhancing the quality, usefulness, and clarity of the information to be collected; and
- Minimizing the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other

technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology; e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses.

OMB is required to make a decision concerning the information collection requirements between 30 and 60 days after publication in the **Federal Register**. Therefore, a comment to OMB is best assured of having its full effect if OMB receives it within 30 days of publication of this notice.

#### **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 to offer interested parties the opportunity to comment on proposed rules. Ordinarily, this practice would have applied to the rules in this notice. However, the Secretary waives rulemaking under section 553(b)(B) of the Administrative Procedure Act. This section provides that rulemaking is not required when the agency for good cause finds that notice and public procedure are impracticable, unnecessary, or contrary to the public interest. The Secretary believes that, in order to make timely grant awards using Fiscal Year (FY) 1997 funds, public comment on those rules is impracticable. Congress did not provide FY 1997 funds for SDFSC National Program until March 1997. The Secretary must make new awards no later than September 30, 1997, and recipients should be able to implement projects as early as possible in the 1997–98 school year.

Therefore, in order to give applicants enough time to prepare their applications and the Department sufficient time to conduct the lengthy review process in this notice, it is now impracticable to receive public comments and still allow FY 1997 awards to be made by September 30, 1997.

**Program Authority:** 20 U.S.C. 7132.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number 84.184H Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act National Programs—Grants to Institutions of Higher Education)

**Gerald N. Tirozzi,**

*Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education.*

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#### **DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

#### **Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities National Programs—Federal Activities Grants Program**

**AGENCY:** Department of Education.

**ACTION:** Notice of final priorities and selection criteria for fiscal year 1997.

**SUMMARY:** The Secretary announces final priorities and selection criteria for fiscal year 1997 under the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities National Programs Federal Activities Grants Program. The Secretary takes this action to focus Federal financial assistance on identified needs to improve programs to prevent drug use and violence among youth.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** These priorities and selection criteria take effect June 5, 1997.

#### **DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS:**

Applications for these competitions must be received at the address specified in the application package for these competitions no later than 4:30 p.m. on the deadline date in the notice inviting applications. Applications received after that time will not be eligible for funding. Postmarked dates will not be accepted.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For further information about the two priorities under the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities National Programs Federal Activities Grants Program, contact the U.S. Department of Education, Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program, 600 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20202–6123. Telephone: (202) 260–3954. FAX (202) 260–7767. Internet: [http://www.Bryan\\_Williams@ed.gov](http://www.Bryan_Williams@ed.gov). Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service at 1–800–877–8339 (in the Washington, DC 202 area code, telephone 708–9300) between 8 am and 8 pm, Eastern time, Monday through Friday.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This notice contains two final priorities and related selection criteria under the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities National Programs Federal