

# EDUCATION POLICY ALERT

EducationCounsel, LLC | March 18, 2011

## PROMISE NEIGHBORHOODS: NOTICE OF PROPOSED PRIORITIES, REQUIREMENTS, DEFINITIONS AND SELECTION CRITERIA – INITIAL SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

This paper summarizes the core elements of the Department of Education's ("Department") notice of proposed priorities, requirements, definitions and selection criteria for the Promise Neighborhoods program ("Notice") for Fiscal Year 2011 (FY11) and later years. Public comments must be filed no later than April 11.

The purpose of the Promise Neighborhoods program is to significantly improve the educational and developmental outcomes of children and youth in the nation's most distressed communities and to transform those communities through the planning and implementation of comprehensive, community-wide, birth-to-workforce systems. Proposed by President Obama shortly after he took office, Congress provided first time funding (\$10 million) for the program for Fiscal Year 2010. The program has not, however, been formally authorized, which could make the Administration's goal of securing FY11 and future funding difficult in the current budget and partisan political climate. Despite this budgetary challenge, the Department released the Notice with the expectation that Congress will allocate new funding for the program. If Congress does not provide FY11 funding, the Notice will likely still have significance for future Promise Neighborhoods grant competitions.

### GENERAL BACKGROUND AND REQUIREMENTS

**Eligible Applicants and Collaboration:** Non profit organizations (including faith-based entities); institutions of higher education; and (3) Indian tribes.

**Types and Levels of Grants:** Applicants may apply for Planning Grants or Implementation Grants. Grant levels and allocation of funding between planning and implementation grants will depend on the final Fiscal Year 2011 budget.

**Cost Sharing:** To be eligible for a planning grant, the applicant must demonstrate a commitment from one or more public or private entities to provide matching funds/in-kind donations (50% match generally and 25% match for rural and tribal focused applications) for the planning process. Implementation applicants must also demonstrate a commitment to match program funds with public or private funds/in-kind donations (100% match generally and 50% match for rural and tribal focused applications). At least 10% of the implementation grant match must come from the private sector. Match must be demonstrated in the application through an attached letter describing the type and quantity of the match. The Secretary would have discretion to make exceptions in "exceptional" circumstances.

**Comment Deadline/Program Timeline:** Public comments must be filed with the Department no later than April 11, 2011. The agency hopes to solicit applications in late spring with a 60 day application window, but this timeline depends on timing of congressional action on the budget.

**PLANNING GRANTS**

Planning grants would support the development of "feasible" plans to create a continuum of solutions with the potential to significantly improve the educational and developmental outcomes of children and youth in a neighborhood. The Department may choose to use one or more of these priorities in any fiscal year in which a Promise Neighborhoods competition is held. "Other Priorities" described below will be designated as absolute, competitive or invitational on a competition-by- competition basis

PLANNING GRANT –ABSOLUTE PRIORITIES	PLANNING APPLICANTS MUST DESCRIBE...
<p><b>1. Proposal to Develop a Promise Neighborhood Plan (Absolute Priority 1)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The geographically defined areas to be served and level of distress in the area based on indicators of need and other relevant indicators.</li> <li>• A plan to deliver a continuum of solutions with the potential to drive results. The plan must describe how the applicant will build a continuum and must include, high quality early learning programs/services birth to third grade; ambitious P-12 reforms; programs that prepare students to be college- and career-ready; family and community supports; and establishing/facilitating communities of practice .</li> <li>• A plan to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment and segmentation analysis of children and youth in the neighborhood. (Including collecting data on indicators specified in the Notice.)</li> <li>• The experience and lessons learned, and describe how the applicant will build the capacity of its management team and project director. (Examples include,</li> </ul>

	<p>capacity to work with the neighborhood, collect and analyze data, build/expand a data system for learning, improvement and accountability, link the data systems to school based systems; document the planning process, creating partnerships, and establish a governance structure.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant's commitment to work with U.S. Ed and a national evaluator to ensure rigorous evaluation.</li> </ul>
<b>2. Proposal to Serve Rural Communities (Absolute Priority 2)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Above activities; and</li> <li>• Serve one or more rural communities ONLY.</li> </ul>
<b>3. Proposal to Serve Tribal Communities (Absolute Priority 3)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Above activities; and</li> <li>– Serve one or more Indian tribes ONLY</li> </ul>
<b>PLANNING GRANT – OTHER PROPOSED PRIORITIES</b>	<b>PRIORITY OVERVIEW</b>
<b>4. Comprehensive Early Learning Network</b>	<p>Proposes a priority for applicants that wish to develop a plan to expand, enhance or modify an existing network of early learning programs and services to ensure that they are high-quality and comprehensive for children birth through third grade. Among other steps, must establish a high standard of quality across early learning settings and be designed to improve health, social-emotional, and cognitive outcomes for young children. Coordinate across ALL early learning services/programs in the neighborhood. Incorporate ongoing state-level efforts regarding major components of high-quality early learning programs and services. Include method of measuring, monitoring and evaluating program quality.</p>
<b>5. Quality Internet Connectivity</b>	<p>Proposes a priority for applicants that wish to develop a plan to ensure that almost all students in the target area be served by broadband internet access at home and at school, and the knowledge and skills to use broadband access effectively, and be connected to a computing device to support school work.</p>
<b>6. Arts and Humanities</b>	<p>Proposes a priority for applicants to develop a plan to include opportunities for children to experience and participate actively in the arts and humanities in their</p>

	community (in-school and out-of-school settings).
<b>7. Quality Affordable Housing</b>	Proposes a priority for target neighborhoods that are also subject to affordable housing transformation through the HOPE or Choice Neighborhoods grants provided by HUD.
<b>8. Family Engagement in Learning through Adult Education</b>	Proposes a priority for applicants that wish to coordinate with adult education providers serving the target neighborhood. Coordinated services may include adult basic and secondary education and programs that provide training and opportunities for family members and other members of the community to support student learning.

## IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS

Implementation grants support execution of plans to create a continuum of solutions that will significantly improve the educational and developmental outcomes of children and youth in the target neighborhood. Implementation applicants must describe the need in the neighborhood, a strategy to build a continuum of solutions, and the applicant's capacity to achieve results.

IMPLEMENTATION GRANT – ABSOLUTE PRIORITIES	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY OVERVIEW
<p><b>1. Proposal to Implement a Promise Neighborhood Plan (Absolute Priority 1)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe the geographically defined areas to be served and level of distress in the area based on indicators of need and other relevant indicators (based in part on comprehensive needs assessment and segmentation analysis).</li> <li>Describe a strategy to build a continuum of solutions (based on best available evidence) to address challenges identified in the needs assessment. The strategy must identify each solution to be used and must include high quality early learning programs/services birth to third grade; ambitious P-12 reforms; programs that prepare students to be college- and career-ready; family and community supports; and establishing/facilitating communities of practice. The strategy must also include clear annual goals for evaluating progress in improving systems and</li> </ul>

IMPLEMENTATION GRANT – ABSOLUTE PRIORITIES	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY OVERVIEW
	<p>establish clear annual goals for evaluating progress in leveraging resources .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe how the applicant used a comprehensive needs assessment and segmentation analysis to identify children of highest needs and how each child will receive appropriate services (including reporting how the specific indicators listed in the Notice were used in the analysis).</li> <li>• Describe the experience and lessons learned, and a plan to build the capacity of its management team and project director (e.g., capacity to work with the neighborhood; collect and analyze data; build/expand a data system for learning, improvement and accountability; link the data systems to school based systems; document the planning process; create partnerships; and establish a governance structure)</li> <li>• Describe the applicant's commitment to work with U.S. Ed and a national evaluator to ensure rigorous evaluation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Promise Neighborhoods in Rural Communities (Absolute Priority 2)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Above activities; and</li> <li>• Serve one or more rural communities ONLY.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Promise Neighborhoods in Tribal Communities (Absolute Priority 3)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Above activities; and</li> <li>• Serve one or more Indian tribes ONLY.</li> </ul>
IMPLEMENTATION GRANT – OTHER PROPOSED PRIORITIES	PRIORITY OVERVIEW
<p><b>4. Comprehensive Early Learning Network</b></p>	<p>Proposes a priority for applicants that wish to develop a plan to expand, enhance or modify an existing network of early learning programs and services to ensure that they are high-quality and comprehensive for children birth through third grade. Among other steps, grantees must establish a high standard of quality across early learning settings and be designed to improve health, social-emotional, and cognitive outcomes for young children. Coordinate across ALL early learning services/programs in the</p>

IMPLEMENTATION GRANT – ABSOLUTE PRIORITIES	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY OVERVIEW
	neighborhood. Incorporate ongoing state-level efforts regarding major components of high-quality early learning programs and services. Include method of measuring, monitoring and evaluating program quality.
<b>5. Quality Internet Connectivity</b>	Proposes a priority for applicants that wish to develop a plan to ensure that almost all students in the target area be served by broadband internet access at home and at school, and the knowledge and skills to use broadband access effectively, and be connected to a computing device to support school work.
<b>6. Arts and Humanities</b>	Develop plan to include opportunities for children to experience and participate actively in the arts and humanities in their community (in-school and out-of-school settings).
<b>7. Quality Affordable Housing</b>	Proposes a priority for target neighborhoods that are also subject to affordable housing transformation through the HOPE or Choice Neighborhoods grant provided by HUD.
<b>8. Family Engagement in Learning through Adult Education</b>	Proposes a priority for applicants that wish to coordinate with adult education providers serving the target neighborhood. Coordinated services may include adult basic and secondary education and programs that provide training and opportunities for family members and other members of the community to support student learning.

## PROPOSED SELECTION CRITERIA

The Department proposes the following criteria (aligned with the proposed absolute priorities). The notice inviting applications, the application package, or both, will announce the maximum possible points assigned to each criterion. The Department may apply one or more of the criteria in any year in which the program is in effect:

**PLANNING GRANT CRITERIA**

<b>PROPOSED PLANNING GRANT CRITERIA</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>
<p><b>1. Need for Project</b></p>	<p>In determining the need for the project, the Secretary will consider the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– magnitude or severity of the problems to be addressed by the proposed project as described by indicators of need and other relevant indicators; and</li> <li>– extent to which the geographically described area has been described.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Quality of the Project Design</b></p>	<p>In determining the quality of project design, the Secretary will consider the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– extent to which the continuum of solutions will be aligned with an ambitious, rigorous, and comprehensive strategy for improvement of schools in the neighborhood;</li> <li>– extent to which the applicant describes a proposal to plan to create a complete continuum of solutions, including early learning through grade 12, college- and career-readiness, and family and community supports, without time and resource gaps that will prepare all children in the neighborhood to attain an excellent education and successfully transition to college and a career; and</li> <li>– extent to which solutions leverage existing neighborhood assets and coordinate with other efforts, including programs supported by Federal, State, local, and private funds.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Quality of Project Services</b></p>	<p>When considering the quality of project services, the Secretary will consider the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– extent to which the applicant describes how the needs assessment and segmentation analysis, including identifying and describing indicators, will be used during the planning phase to determine each solution within the continuum; and</li> <li>– (extent to which the applicant describes how it will determine that solutions are based on the best available evidence including, where available, strong or moderate evidence, and ensure that solutions drive results and lead to changes on indicators.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Quality of the Management Plan</b></p>	<p>In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary will consider the experience, lessons learned, and proposal to build capacity</p>

PROPOSED PLANNING GRANT CRITERIA	DESCRIPTION
	<p>of the applicant’s management team and project director in all of the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– working with the neighborhood and its residents; the schools described in Absolute Priority 1; the LEA in which those schools are located; Federal, State, and local government leaders; and other service providers;</li> <li>– collecting, analyzing, and using data for decision-making, learning, continuous improvement, and accountability;</li> <li>– creating formal and informal partnerships, including the alignment of the visions, theories of action, and theories of change described in its memorandum of understanding; and</li> <li>– integrating funding streams from multiple public and private sources, including its proposal to leverage and integrate high-quality programs in the neighborhood into the continuum of solutions.</li> </ul>

**IMPLEMENTATION GRANT CRITERIA**

PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION GRANT CRITERIA	DESCRIPTION
<p><b>1. Need for Project</b></p>	<p>In determining the need for the project, the Secretary will consider the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– magnitude or severity of the problems to be addressed by the proposed project as described by indicators of need and other relevant indicators; and</li> <li>– extent to which the geographically described area has been described.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Quality of the Project Design</b></p>	<p>In determining the quality of project design, the Secretary will consider the extent to which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– the continuum of solutions will be aligned with an ambitious, rigorous, and comprehensive strategy for improvement of schools in the neighborhood;</li> <li>– the applicant describes an implementation plan to create a continuum of solutions, including early learning through grade 12, college- and career-readiness, and family and community supports, without time and resource gaps that will prepare all children in the neighborhood to attain an excellent</li> </ul>

PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION GRANT CRITERIA	DESCRIPTION
	<p>education and successfully transition to college and a career; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– the applicant identifies existing neighborhood assets and coordinates with other efforts, including programs supported by Federal, State, local, and private funds.</li> <li>– the applicant describes its implementation plan, including clear, annual goals for improving systems and leveraging resources.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Quality of Project Services</b></p>	<p>In determining the quality of project services, the Secretary will consider the extent to which the applicant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– describes how the needs assessment and segmentation analysis, including identifying and describing indicators, were used to determine each solution within the continuum; and</li> <li>– documents that the solutions are based on the best available evidence including, where available, strong or moderate evidence; and</li> <li>– describes clear, annual goals for changes on indicators.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Quality of the Management Plan</b></p>	<p>In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the experience, lessons learned, and proposal to build capacity of the applicant’s management team and project director in all of the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– working with the neighborhood and its residents; the schools described in paragraph (2)(b) of Absolute Priority 1; the LEA in which those schools are located; Federal, State, and local government leaders; and other service providers;</li> <li>– collecting, analyzing, and using data for decision-making, learning, continuous improvement, and accountability, including whether the applicant has a plan to build, adapt, or expand a longitudinal data system that integrates student-level data from multiple sources in order to measure progress;</li> <li>– creating formal and informal partnerships, including the alignment of the visions, theories of action, and theories of change described in its memorandum of understanding; and</li> <li>– integrating funding streams from multiple public and private sources, including its proposal to leverage and integrate high-quality programs in the</li> </ul>

PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION GRANT CRITERIA	DESCRIPTION
	neighborhood into the continuum of solutions.

**PROPOSED DEFINITIONS**

Given the large number definitions included in the rulemaking, please refer to the Notice.

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