

## TITLE II FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Please round your budget figures to the nearest dollar!

***The RFP says that no partner can receive more than 50% of the benefit. Are the College of Education and College of Arts & Sciences one partner (the university), or are they two?***

They are **two** of the three required partners AS LONG AS they are in distinct (separate) colleges. If the project faculty/staff are within the same college or center at the same university, they comprise one partner.

***Is it okay to round the poverty index numbers to the nearest whole percent? I would like to partner with a school with an index number of 19.5+, which would round to 20.***

Yes--this question was asked at the annual conference in DC, and the Dept. of Ed does allow rounding.

***Does the institution applying need to be a college that prepares teachers, or can any institution apply for the grant money?***

One of the partners needs to be a college that prepares teachers. If the college or university that applies does not prepare teachers, it must have a partnership with another college or university that does. It can still be the applicant. The partnership can be established for the specific purpose of providing professional development under the Title II program. The Department of Education's intent is to ensure that content and pedagogy are both emphasized in the workshops, and that the content and pedagogy experts work together with the high-need district(s) in advance to develop professional development that is meaningful and sustained. College of Ed partners are likely to have established relationships with K-12 schools and principals, or at least have some knowledge of needy districts.

***Does the high need district partner have to be involved in writing the proposal?***

Title II expects that a proposal will result *from the partnership* and that the K-12 partner will be very involved in determining the focus of the professional development. It is usually obvious to the reviewers when a faculty member has an idea for a workshop s/he wants to do, and then looks for willing "partners" because the RFP requires it. The high need partner does not necessarily need to be involved in writing the proposal as long as the required administrator's letter confirms the district's commitment to participating in the project, and documents the district's eligibility.

***We are planning on submitting an NCLB partnership grant and we are unclear as to what school districts are considered high-need. Do they have to meet both criteria A AND B on the bottom of page 3 of the rfp? Is the RFP intended to be this restrictive in terms of eligible school districts?***

Yes to both questions. The project is designed to be somewhat restrictive because the districts that really need the training can be the most difficult to work with and are often passed over in favor of districts that are easier to work with but have less need. It's easy to understand why and how that happens. ED wants to make sure attention is given first to the districts that really need work.

***Can an ESA serve as the LEA partner, representing high needs districts within that ESA's district?***

Title II only requires one high need district partner (one that is eligible, has participated in determining and/or designing the professional development, and is committed to its implementation because it meets

an obvious need within the district), and other districts and teachers can participate in the workshops as space allows. If the ESA can represent and commit to the partnership on behalf of the high need partner(s), the ESA can serve as the partner. Remember that the professional development planning should be done in conjunction with the teachers and administrators at the districts, either through the ESA representatives or with the districts directly.

***The poverty level threshold is straightforward, and I don't have any difficulties getting that list. The challenge is in the second criteria category -- "High percentage of teachers not teaching in the academic subjects or grade levels that the teachers were trained to teach; OR for which there is a high percentage of teachers with emergency, provisional, or temporary certification or licensing." These tidbits of data are more or less available on the Dept. of Ed's NCLB Report Card, which show the percentage of teachers in each of those criteria categories. But what percentage is considered "high"? If 1.1 percent is the state average for the second clause, is anything above that "high"? If so, then using that criteria, there are only 12 districts in the state which meet that criteria and are also low income eligible. Can that be right? Or, if the administrator of any low income district states (and can somehow document) that their percentage is "high" in his or her opinion, is that adequate?***

This is made even more complicated by the fact that NCLB requires 100% of teachers to be highly qualified...so technically we should not have ANY districts that employ teachers that are not highly qualified for the courses they teach...any number above 0 is high! Percentage data does not work well in rural SD where districts often employ a very small number of math or science teachers. If a district employs two math teachers and one is provisionally qualified, 50% of that district's math teachers are not highly qualified. However, another district may employ 20 teachers with 5 (25%) who are provisionally qualified. Which district has greater need for professional development for its teachers? Both qualify as eligible partners, so a lot depends upon the district's commitment to participating. That, along with the fact that situations change and these changes may not be reflected in annual data, is why we accept an administrator's documentation. Keep in mind that the reviewers will be weighing the documentation across proposals, so the administrator should be able to make a sound case--obviously, the reviewers will find proposals involving districts with the highest need and strongest evidence of partnership the most compelling.

***Can Title II grants can reimburse school districts that hire substitute teachers to allow participating teachers to attend workshops that are held during the school week?***

School districts can be reimbursed for actual costs of hiring substitute teachers in lieu of awarding stipends to participants. It's an either-or situation; if workshops are scheduled during the school week, teachers cannot be paid a stipend on top of their contracted salary--but the districts can be reimbursed for the actual cost of hiring substitute teachers to replace them. Teachers can of course be paid a stipend when they are not under contract to teach (e.g., weekends, summers), in which case there is no need for a substitute.