



Illinois State Board of Education


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Chairman

Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Education

June 2009

TO: Eligible Applicants

FROM: Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D. 
State Superintendent of Education

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP): Reading Recovery Training and Ongoing Professional Development Site Grants

General Information

Eligible Applicants: School districts, charter schools, public university laboratory schools approved by the Illinois State Board of Education, regional offices of education, postsecondary institutions, and reading recovery consortia are eligible to apply as training sites.

Grant Award: Approximately \$100,000 will be awarded in FY10. The number of grants to be awarded will not be determined until the application scoring and ranking process is completed.

Grant Period: The grant period will begin no sooner than **July 15, 2009**, and will extend from the execution date of the grant until **June 30, 2010**. Funding may also be available for two additional years. Funding in the subsequent years will be contingent upon a sufficient appropriation for the program and satisfactory progress in the preceding grant period.

Letter of Intent: Eligible applicants are encouraged to submit a non-binding letter of intent to participate electronically to smccuske@isbe.net by June 30, 2009. This letter must include district contact information and requested grant amount.

Application Deadline: Proposals will be received, by mail or in person, in the Curriculum and Instruction Division of the Illinois State Board of Education, 100 North First Street, C-215, Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001, to ensure receipt no later than 4:00 p.m. **July 20, 2009.**

Proposals also may be hand-delivered to the following location:

Springfield Office
Information Center
1st Floor
100 North First Street

Chicago Office
Reception Area
Suite 14-300
100 West Randolph Street

Contact Person: For more information on this RFP, contact Sarah McCusker, Curriculum and Instruction Division, 217/557-7323, or by email at smccuske@isbe.net.

Background

Section 2-3.51(a) of the School Code [105 ILCS 5/2-3.51(a)] authorizes the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) to use up to 2 percent of the money received for the Reading Improvement Block Grant Program to provide teacher training and re-training in the teaching of reading.

The purpose of this RFP is to identify Reading Recovery® training sites throughout the state that can train Reading Recovery® teachers and provide ongoing professional development that is required of both Reading Recovery® teachers and teacher leaders.

Reading Recovery®, first implemented by New Zealand psychologist and researcher Dr. Marie Clay, is a short-term, one-to-one intervention taught by specifically trained teachers. Teachers tutor the lowest achieving first-grade students for 30 minutes daily. The tutoring typically is provided within the school day as a pull-out program and consists of a 12 to 20 week set of customized lessons that supplement the regular education program provided by classroom teachers. The goal is to accelerate progress for children in first grade who are having the greatest difficulty learning to read and write.

Each lesson is comprised of assessing a child's text level through the use of a running record and using the data to plan subsequent lessons. In addition, the teacher has the student read a new book, reread a book read on a previous day, work with letters, and write a story. The child is invited to use problem-solving strategies about his reading with guidance from the Reading Recovery® teacher. Each lesson focuses on letter and sound relationships, spelling patterns, fluency and comprehension strategies.

For more information about the Reading Recovery® program, see the Reading Recovery® Council of North America's (RRCNA) website at www.readingrecovery.org/reading_recovery/lessons/index.asp.

Program Specifications

Training sites will be responsible for training new Reading Recovery® teachers and providing opportunities for ongoing professional development for both teachers and teacher-leaders. To review the full scope of a training site's responsibilities, please see http://www.readingrecovery.org/pdf/implementation/Standards_Guidelines-Section-3.pdf.

An applicant who is not yet a recognized training site will be required to submit a site application to the university training center with which the applicant wishes to affiliate. National-Louis University, located in the Chicago suburb of Lisle, is the only accredited university training center in Illinois. Out-of-state training centers located near certain regions of Illinois include the University of Wisconsin in Madison, Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau, and Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana. Further information about university training centers can be found at <http://www.readingrecovery.org/development/centers/index.asp>.

Training sites must work with the university training center to establish graduate credit for teacher training courses taught by a registered teacher-leader and provide a training facility that includes a room with one-way glass, sound system, meeting room and office space.

1. Training Reading Recovery® Teachers. According to the RRCNA website, training classes are “based on the principles of collaborative discussion of in-progress lessons”. Teacher candidates receive graduate credit, work with four children on a daily basis, and attend one class each week. The teacher-leader observes each teacher candidate at least four times during the training year.

RRCNA standards provide that training classes must consist of at least eight and no more than 12 teachers. The university training center with which the site is affiliated will determine the contact-hour requirements for the training. At least 80 percent of the class sessions, or a minimum of 18 sessions (whichever is greater), in an academic year must include two sessions using “behind-the-glass” lessons. In a behind-the-glass session, the teacher leader leads the discussion among the Reading Recovery® teachers who are observing. Collectively, they analyze the teacher's and the student's behaviors to determine strengths and suggestions for improvement.

RRCNA advises that candidates for training, who must be certified teachers, be carefully selected and recommends that the site use an interview and selection committee that includes the site coordinator and teacher-leader(s) to “assure selection of the strongest candidates.” Further information about the training requirements are found at http://www.readingrecovery.org/pdf/implementation/Standards_Guidelines-Section-4.pdf.

2. Professional Development. Ongoing professional development is an important component of the Reading Recovery® program. According to RRCNA, professional development must integrate theory and practice.

In order to maintain “registered” status, teacher-leaders must participate in professional development opportunities sponsored by the university training center, attend the annual Teacher Leader Institute, and attend an approved Reading Recovery® Council of North America (RRCNA) conference each year.

The ongoing professional development (i.e., continuing contact) for Reading Recovery® teachers consists of at least six sessions each year led by their teacher-leader(s). At least four of these sessions include observing at least two lessons each session through a one-way mirror while talking about child behaviors and teaching moves. Other activities that satisfy the requirement for continuing contact include teaching a child behind the one-way mirror for colleagues to observe, and arranging for and participating in annual school visits by the teacher-leader.

Fiscal Information

It is anticipated that \$100,000 will be available to fund Reading Recovery® Training and Ongoing Professional Development grants in FY10. Grant funds will be distributed as follows.

Training Sites

1. Training Reading Recovery® Teachers

A maximum grant of \$9,000 can be requested to offset the salary of the teacher-leader who will be training new Reading Recovery® teachers. Funds must be used toward the salary of the teacher-leader when he or she is:

- a. training new Reading Recovery® teachers; and
- b. providing information, materials, and workshops to help relate the Reading Recovery® program to existing programs and activities in schools and districts where the Reading Recovery® program is currently operating.

2. Ongoing Professional Development

Teacher Leaders. Training sites will receive a maximum grant of \$1,000 for each Reading Recovery® teacher-leader participating in professional development. All training provided under this component must assist the teacher-leader in meeting the RRCNA’s standards and guidelines for ongoing professional development required to maintain registered status. Funds must be used for:

- a. training activities sponsored by the applicant or another RRNCA-approved professional development site (individual tuition costs are not allowable expenses), and
- b. travel and expenses directly attributable to Reading Recovery®-related conferences and institutes.

Reading Recovery® Teachers. An applicant may request a maximum of \$350 per Reading Recovery® teacher for costs associated with the provision of ongoing professional

development (i.e., continuing contact). Funds should be used to support the four to six continuing contact sessions recommended by the RRCNA's standards and guidelines. Funds must be used to:

- a. reimburse each district with participating Reading Recovery® teachers,
- b. reduce fees for continuing professional development, and
- c. purchase additional high-quality reading materials for use by Reading Recovery® teachers.

Proposal Format

Each proposal must be submitted in the format outlined below. Please use the following as a checklist in assembling your completed proposal.

- ___ **1. Cover Page (Attachment 1):** Must be signed by the school district superintendent or official authorized to submit the proposal.

- ___ **2. Proposal Abstract:** Briefly describe in 250 words or less the overall need for and benefits of the Reading Recovery training.

- ___ **3. Proposal Narrative:** Respond to each of the following in the order provided below.
 - a. **Need.** Indicate whether the site will train new Reading Recovery® teachers or provide ongoing professional development, or both. For each component, list the schools that will be involved either in new teacher training and/or professional development. Describe the reading achievement levels of the students in the schools to be involved. For example, the averages of the beginning and exiting levels on the Observational Survey would show the reading achievement gains. Other testing data with comparable results can also be provided. If Reading Recovery is an existing program, provide measurable gains in data from previous years to support continued funding. Provide other statistical district information, if applicable.

 - b. **Reading Recovery® Teacher Candidates:** Describe the process used (or to be used) to select teachers for participation in the training. If participants have been identified, then provide detailed information about the teachers selected. Include in the description information about educational background, certification status, current assignment, general experience and experience specific to the teaching of reading, and other qualities relevant to successfully completing the training and becoming effective Reading Recovery® teachers. If participants have not yet been identified, then describe the criteria and qualifications to be considered to screen and select training candidates.

 - c. **Teacher-Leaders (Attachment 1A):** Provide the information requested for each teacher-leader who will be conducting the training and/or ongoing professional development.

- d. **Participants (Attachment 1B):** Provide the information requested about the teachers to be trained as Reading Recovery® teachers and/or the Reading Recovery® teachers and teacher-leaders who will be participating, including any reading training the participant has previously attended or any reading credentials achieved.
- e. **Proposed Activities. (Attachments 1C and 1D)** Describe the proposed activities of teacher-leaders and teacher training or continuing contact/support.
- f. **Commitment.** Provide in 250 words or less evidence of the school administration’s and staff’s commitment to implementing the Reading Recovery® Program upon completion of the training. If an applicant proposes to train its own staff to be a teacher-leader, then it must commit to employing the teacher-leader for three years.
- g. **Dissemination.** Describe in 250 words or less the strategies that will be used for teachers who received the training to share with other teachers in the school. Include a discussion about how the Reading Recovery® teachers will use the successful techniques learned with populations other than students participating in Reading Recovery® or in other teaching assignments.

___ **4. Budget Summary and Payment Schedule (Attachment 2A):** Must be submitted on the form provided and signed by the district superintendent or official authorized to submit the proposal. The payment schedule should be based on the projected date of expenditures. Salaries and fringe benefits should be requested in equal intervals on the schedule. Supplies, equipment, contracted services and professional development activities should be requested in the month for which the expenditure is anticipated.

___ **5. Budget Breakdown (Attachment 2B):** Must include descriptions of the anticipated expenditures, correlated to the line items set forth on the Budget Summary. Must include subcontract information, if applicable. Provide additional information about costs.

___ **6. Certifications and Assurances (Attachments 4 and 5):** Each applicant is required to submit the certification forms attached (“Certification and Assurances, and Standard Terms of the Grant” and “Reading Recovery® Training Program-Specific Terms of the Grant”). These must be signed by the official legally authorized to submit the proposal and to bind the applicant to its contents.

Criteria for Review and Approval of Proposals

Proposals will be evaluated in comparison with other proposals, based upon the criteria listed below. The total points possible are 100. Final determination for selection will be made by the State Superintendent of Education and will be based upon recommendations resulting from the review process.

Following the notification of grant awards, an applicant may request copies of reviewer comments by contacting the division responsible for issuing the RFP (see “Contact Person” under “General Information”.)

1. The proposal presents a convincing rationale about the need for the professional development based upon the students’ reading progress and the school’s continuing need for improvements, as indicated by testing data or other relevant information. The number of staff estimated to participate in the professional development and the grade levels to be served are appropriate based on this need and will strengthen the ability of the school to improve reading achievement in measurable ways. (25 points)
2. The proposal sets forth a clear understanding of why current reading instruction is not successful with all students and knowledgeably articulates how intensive, ongoing professional development will lead to improvements in reading achievement for those students. (25 points)
3. The content, sequence and duration of the initial and any follow-up professional development appears to be of sufficient quality and length to have a positive effect on instructional practices. (15 points)
4. Sufficient evidence is presented of the commitment of the school’s administrators and teachers to implement or continue the targeted reading improvement strategies and methods after the conclusion of the professional development. Identified sources of funding for the planning and implementation are sufficient to successfully sustain the approach to reading instruction that was the focus of the professional development. (15 points)
5. Appropriate strategies are proposed for participants to share the knowledge gained and lessons learned in the professional development with others in the school, and these strategies will allow for successful implementation of the reading program throughout the school. (10 points)
6. The proposed budget is cost-effective based on the number of teachers to be trained and the activities proposed. (10 points)