



Illinois State Board of Education

100 North First Street • Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001
www.isbe.net

Gery J. Chico
Chairman

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

TO: Eligible Applicants

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

DATE: December 1, 2011

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP): Child Find Public Awareness Project

General Information

Purpose of RFP: The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) seeks to continue the implementation of the Child Find Project by soliciting proposals from eligible applicants to provide resources and materials for local education agencies (LEAs) and other child referral sources to assist them in meeting their requirements for Child Find. Child Find is a component of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) that requires states to identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities, aged birth to 21, who are in need of early intervention or special education services.

Eligible Applicants: All entities including local education agencies (LEAs), regional offices of education (ROEs), intermediate service centers (ISCS), institutions of higher education (IHEs), educational associations, not-for-profit organizations, and for-profit agencies are eligible to apply.

Grant Period: The initial grant period will begin no sooner than February 1, 2012 and will extend from the execution date of the grant agreement until June 30, 2012. The successful applicant may reapply via continuing application for up to four additional years (i.e., FY 2013 through 2016), with subsequent grant periods generally extending from July 1 of each year through June 30 of the following year. Funding in the subsequent years will be contingent upon a sufficient appropriation for the project and satisfactory progress in the preceding grant period.

Grant Award: One grant will be awarded in fiscal year (FY) 2012 (i.e., year 1 of the project) in an amount not to exceed \$146,000. For purposes of compliance with Section 511 of P.L. 101-166 (the "Stevens Amendment"), applicants are advised that 100 percent of the funds for this program are derived from federal sources.

The grant award amounts in each of years 2-5 (i.e., FY 2013, FY 2014, FY 2015, and FY 2016) are not expected to exceed \$350,000 per year. Annual allocations will depend on project needs and scope of activities in each year as well as total appropriation for the project.

Application Deadline: Mail the original and five copies to *Illinois State Board of Education, 100 North First Street, E-225, Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001, Attn: Pamela Reising Rechner, Early Childhood Education.* Proposals must be received no later than **4:00 p.m. on December 29, 2011.** No electronic submissions including

facsimiles will be accepted. The original and five copies must be received by the due date in order for the proposal to be considered. Late or substantively incomplete proposals will not be eligible for consideration.

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

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 Pamela Reising Rechner, 217/524-4835, preising@isbe.net.

Background

Child Find is a component of the [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act](#) (IDEA) that requires states to have a comprehensive system to locate, identify, and refer as early as possible all children with disabilities, aged birth to 21, for early intervention or special education services. Infants and toddlers with disabilities (birth-2) and their families receive early intervention services under IDEA Part C. Children and youth (ages 3-21) receive special education and related services under IDEA Part B. Since 1998, ISBE and the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) have shared, via an intergovernmental agreement, Child Find responsibilities specifically for infants and toddlers as mandated by IDEA. IDHS serves as the administrative agent for the early intervention program funded by IDEA Part C. The intergovernmental agreement is part of Illinois' comprehensive Child Find system. Further information about Child Find can be found at <http://www.childfindidea.org/>

In Illinois, the *Child Find Project* provides public awareness services as part of the comprehensive Child Find system. The goal of the Child Find Project is to educate the public about the importance of early intervention and early childhood special education services for eligible children as early as possible in their development. The Child Find Project is charged with the development and statewide dissemination of resources and service information to Illinois school districts, early intervention providers, health care providers, and the general public.

The Child Find Project specifically supports school districts and early intervention programs by providing resources for the early identification of young children with suspected disabilities. The Project publishes the availability of developmental screenings and evaluations to assist school districts and other entities in their efforts to locate, identify, and refer all young children in Illinois who may have developmental delays or disabilities that would impede their educational achievement. The Child Find Project is also responsible for shipping early intervention informational material supplied by IDHS to potential child referral sources throughout the state. Through the distribution of this educational material, the Child Find Project assists professionals with meeting Child Find mandates.

The Child Find Project also operates a toll-free statewide referral hotline, a public awareness materials website (<http://www.roe20.k12.il.us/partners/childfind.html>), and a developmental screening database. The database serves as a repository of screening information (i.e., number and age of children statewide who participate in developmental screenings) from all Child and Family Connections offices, Chicago Public Schools, Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS) offices in Cook County, downstate health departments, suburban Cook County health departments, and Chicago health departments and clinics. The Child Find Project also coordinates and assists with the provision of transition activities and materials, as recommended by the ISBE Early Intervention to Early Childhood Special Education Transition Guidance Committee, specifically designed to help children move from early intervention programs to early childhood special education programs.

Since 1989, ISBE has awarded IDEA grant funding to Regional Office of Education #20 (Edwards, Gallatin, Hardin, Pope, Saline, Wabash, Wayne, and White Counties) to administer the statewide Child Find Project. At this time,

ISBE seeks to continue the implementation of the Child Find Project by conducting a grant competition among eligible bidders.

Program Specifications

The grantee will be responsible for the following activities relative to the Child Find Project.

1. Hire a project coordinator and other staff necessary to implement the Project. The project coordinator will supervise all aspects of the project and work closely with the ISBE staff.
2. With input from referral sources such as LEAs and early intervention Child and Family Connections (CFCs) offices, coordinate the development of new Child Find public awareness materials in English, Spanish, and other languages as necessary. Produce existing and/or new early intervention and early childhood public awareness materials and disseminate materials to LEAs, CFCs, and other possible referral sources.
3. Establish and maintain a Child Find website with useful information for families and other potential referral sources. The website must be easy to navigate and useful for families of young children with disabilities as well as other referral sources. The website should include resources and links to local service agencies searchable by zip code or city name.
4. Establish and maintain a Child Find toll-free hotline for information on where and how to make a referral.
5. Serve as a member of the ISBE Early Intervention to Early Childhood Special Education Transition Guidance Committee to maximize Child Find outreach efforts and improve the transition process from early intervention programs to early childhood programs. Collaborate with the Transition Guidance Committee for the development of materials and the website.
6. Establish and maintain a screening database including the number and age of children in the state who have been screened. The grantee must obey all applicable state and federal laws, regulations, and executive orders, including without limitation those regarding the confidentiality of student records, such as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. 1232g) and the Illinois School Student Records Act (ISSRA) (105 ILCS 10/1 et seq.).
7. Submit quarterly progress reports and an end-of-year report to ISBE on screening information and materials distribution. The content and format of the report will be jointly determined by the grantee and ISBE staff.

Fiscal Information

Funds for the Child Find Project under this RFP are available through Section 619 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Eligible applicants may apply for funds not to exceed \$146,000 in FY 2012. The proposal should include a budget for the period of February 1, 2012 through June 30, 2012. Examples of allowable and non-allowable expenditures are listed below. Applicants are advised that these lists are not exhaustive, all budget items must be clearly delineated in the proposed budget, and all costs are subject to ISBE approval prior to expenditure.

Allowable Expenditures: Child Find Project funds **may be** used for the following activities.

- Salaries of a project coordinator and other personnel for which a need is clearly demonstrated in the proposal;
- Costs related to the production and dissemination of Child Find public awareness materials;

- Costs related to project staff travel for committee activities (e.g., quarterly travel to attend the Early Childhood Special Education Transition Guidance Committee typically held in Bloomington/Normal);
- Language translators for public awareness materials;
- Warehouse and office space rental when grantee does not own the office space;
- Purchase of equipment to support activities of the project;
- Postage, printing, duplicating, telephone, and fax related costs; and
- Administrative OR indirect costs.

Non-Allowable Expenditures: Child Find Project funds **may not** be used for the following activities.

- Supplant salaries of existing staff;
- Supplant activities and services funded by other federal, state, and local sources; or
- Cover costs of moving, remodeling, or new construction.

Proposal Format

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

The proposal cover page must be completed and affixed with original signature. Proposal pages should be numbered and stapled; do not bind or clip. Do not use things such as folders, three-ring binders, or report covers.

- ___ **1. Cover Page (Attachment 1):** Must be signed by the official authorized to submit the proposal on behalf of the applying entity.
- ___ **2. Proposal Abstract (Attachment 2):** Briefly describe (200 words or less) the program, including the anticipated outcomes.
- ___ **3. Proposal Narrative (Attachment 3):** Follow the specifications found in the *Proposal Narrative Requirements* section below.
- ___ **4. Budget Summary (Attachment 4):** Must be submitted on the form provided and signed by the official authorized to submit the proposal. The budget must be prepared in accordance with the State and Federal Grant Administration Policy and Fiscal Requirements and Procedures handbook found at http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/fiscal_procedure_handbk.pdf.
- ___ **5. Budget Summary Breakdown (Attachment 5):** Must include descriptions of the anticipated expenditures, correlated to the line items set forth on the Budget Summary.
- ___ **6. Certification and Assurances (Attachments 6-11):** Each applicant is required to submit the following certifications and assurances. These must be signed by the official legally authorized to submit the proposal and to bind the applicant to its contents.
 - Program-Specific Terms of the Grant, Attachment 6
 - Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act, Attachment 7

- Certifications and Assurances and Standard Terms of the Grant, Attachment 8
- Certification Regarding Debarment, Attachment 9
- Certificate Regarding Lobbying, Attachment 10
- General Education Provisions Act, Attachment 11

Proposal Narrative Requirements

The proposal narrative must include the information requested below.

1. **Expertise and Experience:** Describe the applicant’s expertise and experience with developing and disseminating information and materials on a statewide basis.
2. **Project Personnel:** Describe in detail the qualifications including education and experience of proposed personnel to be employed under the project. Identify the full time equivalency to be paid with grant funds for each staff member.
3. **Project Components:** Describe and discuss the following components of the project.
 - A. Describe how new public awareness materials will be conceptualized and developed with input from referral sources and ISBE.
 - B. Discuss how potential referral sources will be identified, how they will be informed of the Child Find Project and related federal mandates, and how materials will be disseminated.
 - C. Describe how input from referral sources, families, and other stakeholders will be utilized in the development of the website. Discuss proposed website features.
 - D. Discuss the establishment of the toll free hotline with regard to staffing, information shared with callers, and follow up activities as necessary.
 - E. Describe how project staff will collaborate with the ISBE Transition Guidance Committee in materials and website development.
4. **Capacity:** Discuss the capacity of the applicant to administer the project. The description must include administrative, organizational, and fiscal capacity to manage a project of the scope and magnitude set forth in this RFP.

Criteria for Review and Approval of Proposals

The grantee will be selected through a competitive proposal review process conducted by a panel of reviewers. Proposals will be scored according to the criteria outlined below and ranked by score. The total number of points possible is 100. Proposals will be considered ineligible if not submitted in the format set forth above or if substantively incomplete. Final determination of funding will be made by the State Superintendent of Education based upon the recommendations resulting from the review process.

1. **Proposed Project (30 points):** The proposed plan demonstrates a sound approach to carrying out the project.
2. **Capacity (30 points):** The applicant demonstrates the administrative, organizational, and fiscal capacity to implement a project of this magnitude and scope within the established timeframe.

3. **Expertise and Experience (30 points):** The applicant demonstrates sufficient expertise in the development and dissemination of public awareness materials, data collection and reporting, and development/maintenance of a website.
4. **Budget and Cost-Effectiveness (10 points):** The proposed budget is cost-effective and reasonable in relation to the proposed activities and expected outcomes and provides sufficient evidence that funds from the Child Find Project will supplement, rather than supplant, other local, state, and federal funding.

Following the notification of grant awards, applicants may request copies of reviewer comments by contacting the Early Childhood Education Division by phone at (217)524-4835 or by email at earlychi@isbe.net.