January 15, 2010

Three Grants Opportunities that Could be Integrated into Efforts to Build a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports

Below is information about the grants opportunities. First, however, we stress how to pursue these in ways that helps you build a comprehensive approach to student and learning supports.

Propose to Use New Funds in Ways that Extend System Building

Building a comprehensive system of learning supports is not first and foremost about finding new money. The process begins with redeploying and weaving together existing programs, personnel, and resources currently available in schools, districts, and state departments of education. This takes leadership, and it starts with mapping existing resources using a well-conceptualized and a comprehensive framework.

For example, see Mapping & Analyzing Learning Supports (A School Improvement Tool for Moving toward a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports)

When related new funds (e.g., a grant opportunities) become available, it also takes leadership to propose and use the new funds in ways that integrate the funding into a strategic plan that moves the system of learning supports forward and avoids projectitis and mission drift.

See, for example, Another Initiative? Where Does it Fit? A Unifying Framework and an Integrated Infrastructure for Schools to Address Barriers to Learning and Promote Healthy Development -

The Grant Programs

There are three currently available grants from the U. S. Department of Education that might be helpful in strengthening a comprehensive system of learning support. In considering these grants, use the opportunity to pull together key staff to review what is being done already and what still is needed to support all students. The question to be explored with respect to these grants is: How might each fit into the core of your learning supports system and help to build capacity and infrastructure that will sustain the work long after the grant period ends?

All three grants are from the Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools, U. S. Department of Education. Here is an excerpt from the email announcement sent by OSDFS:

“(1) Elementary and Secondary School Counseling program grant application (CFDA 84.215E).

The application deadline date is February 26, 2010.

The purpose of the Elementary and Secondary School Counseling program is to support efforts by LEAs (public school districts) to establish or expand counseling programs.
The estimated available funds for this grant are $15,437,591 and the estimated range of awards being $250,000-$400,000 with the estimated average size of awards being $350,000 and the estimated number of awards being 44.

For specific questions regarding the Elementary and Secondary School Counseling program, please contact the Competition Manager, Loretta McDaniel at loretta.mcdaniel@ed.gov

(2) Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools (REMS) grant application (CFDA 84.184E).


The application deadline date is February 26, 2010.

The FY 2010 REMS application has undergone several changes since the FY 2009 grant competition. Applicants are encouraged to carefully review the application package to ensure that they are responding directly to this year's priority, eligibility requirements, grant requirements, selection criteria, and the Government Performance and Results Act measure for this program.

We will be scheduling a series of Question and Answer telephone calls during the grant application period to respond to applicant questions. To view the dates and times for those calls, please visit the REMS TA Center Website at http://rems.ed.gov/

For specific questions regarding the REMS grant program, please contact the Competition Manager, Sara Strizzi at sara.strizzi@ed.gov

(3) Grants for the Integration of Schools and Mental Health Systems Program grant application (CFDA 84.215M).


The application deadline date is February 22, 2010.

The purpose of the Grants for the Integration of Schools and Mental Health Systems program is to increase student access to high-quality mental health care by developing innovative approaches that link school systems with the local mental health system. Projects funded under this program support infrastructure development to develop and/or improve collaborative efforts between schools, mental health service systems and juvenile justice systems to provide, enhance, or improve prevention, diagnosis, and treatment services to students; enhance crisis intervention services; provide professional training; provide technical assistance to systems and families; ensure linguistically appropriate and culturally competent services; and evaluate the effectiveness of the program.

This Grant Competition eligibility is limited to State educational agencies (SEAs), local educational agencies (LEAs), including charter schools that are considered LEAs under State law, and Indian Tribes.

The estimated available funds for this grant are $5,913,000 and the estimated range of awards being $150,000-$400,000 with the estimated average size of awards being $347,800 and the estimated number of awards being 16-18.

For specific questions regarding the Grants for the Integration of Schools and Mental Health Systems program,
With regard to the grant for the Integration of Schools and Mental Health Systems, we were pleased to have our Center’s work again highlighted in the background section of the application:

“As described by the University of California, Los Angeles’ Center for Mental Health in Schools, development and implementation of a comprehensive, systemic approach to improving the mental health status of children as called for requires a broad, systems change in which services move from:

'(1) serving the few to ensuring an equal opportunity to succeed for the many;

(2) fragmented practices to integrated approaches;

(3) narrowly focused, discrete, problem specific, and specialist-oriented services to comprehensive, multifaceted, cohesive systems approaches;

(4) an efficacy research-base toward effectiveness research as the base for student support interventions, with articulated standards that are reflected in an expanded approach to school accountability; and

(5) projects and pilot demonstrations toward sustainable initiatives that are designed to go to scale.'