



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

JUL 3 2006

Honorable Rita H. Inos
Commissioner of Education
CNMI State Board of Education
Public School System
P.O. Box 501370 CK
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Commissioner Inos:

This is to inform you that we have conditionally approved the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands' (CNMI) Eligibility Documents, including assurances and certifications, for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2006 under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Our determination that you are eligible for conditional approval is based on our receipt of CNMI's application submitted by the CNMI Public School System to the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), on March 14, 2006 in which it assures that it will:

1. Operate consistent with the Part B requirements of PL 108-446 and applicable regulations; and
2. Make such changes to existing policies and procedures as are necessary to bring those policies and procedures into compliance with the requirements of Part B of the IDEA, as amended, as soon as possible, and not later than July 1, 2007. Section II of CNMI's application (which is incorporated by reference and enclosed with this grant letter) identifies the IDEA statutory sections for which CNMI needs to amend policies and procedures and the timelines by which CNMI will amend its policies and procedures in order to comply with Part B of the IDEA. Within Section II, CNMI has included the date by which it expects to complete necessary changes associated with any policies and procedures that are not yet in compliance with the requirements of Part B of the IDEA, as amended.

Enclosed is a grant award for funds currently available under the Department of Education FFY 2006 Appropriations Act for the Part B Section 611 (Grants to States) program. These funds are for use primarily in school year 2006-2007 and are available for obligation by States from July 1, 2006 through September 30, 2008.

Please note that as part of your Eligibility Documents for FFY 2006, CNMI has made an assurance, under 34 CFR §80.11(c), that it will comply with all applicable Federal statutes and regulations in effect with respect to the period for which it receives grant funding. Any changes made by CNMI after OSEP approval, to policies and procedures needed to comply with Part B of the IDEA, must meet the applicable public participation requirements, including those in 20 U.S.C. 1232d(b)(7).

The amount shown in your award for the Section 611 program is only part of the total funds that will be awarded to you for FFY 2006. Of the \$10,582,960,540 appropriated for Section 611 in FFY 2006, \$5,158,760,540 is available for awards on July 1, 2006, and \$5,424,200,000 will be available on October 1, 2006.

Enclosure B provides a short description of how Section 611 funds were allocated and how those funds can be used. In addition, Table I in Enclosure B shows funding levels for distribution of Section 611 funds and the parameters for within-State allocations.

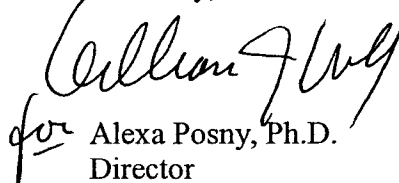
CNMI's FFY 2006 IDEA Part B grant award is being released subject to the conditions identified in the enclosed U. S. Department of Education's June 1, 2006 letter to CNMI (which is incorporated to the grant letter by this reference) regarding program and fiscal accountability (see Enclosure C).

The enclosed grant award for FFY 2006 is made with the continued understanding that this Office may, from time to time, require clarification of information within your application, if necessary. These inquiries are needed to allow us to appropriately carry out our administrative responsibilities related to Part B.

Section 606 provides that each recipient of assistance under IDEA make positive efforts to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities. Therefore, by accepting this grant CNMI is expressly agreeing as a condition of IDEA funding to ensuring that positive efforts are made to employ and advance employment of qualified individuals with disabilities.

We appreciate your ongoing commitment to the provision of quality educational services to children with disabilities.

Sincerely,


for Alexa Posny, Ph.D.

Director

Office of Special Education Programs

Enclosures

Enclosure A
Enclosure B
Enclosure C

cc: Ms. Joanne Nicholls
Director, Special Education Programs