

Archived Information

FUND FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF EDUCATION

Goal: To contribute to the achievement of the National Education Goals by supporting nationally significant and innovative projects for improving K-12 education. Legislation: Title X, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, as amended by the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (20 U.S.C. 8001).	Funding History (\$ in millions)			
	Fiscal Year	Appropriation	Fiscal Year	Appropriation
	1985	\$0	2000	\$244
	1990	\$0	2001	\$339
	1995	\$37	2002 (Requested)	\$0

Program Description

The purpose of this program is to support nationally significant programs and projects that improve the quality of education, assist all students to meet challenging state content standards and student performance standards, and contribute to achievement of the National Education Goals.

Activities may be carried out directly or through grants or contracts to State and local educational agencies, institutions of higher education, and other public and private agencies, organizations, and institutions. The Secretary may make awards under this program on the basis of announced competitions, or funds may support meritorious unsolicited proposals.

In FY 2000 several programs received ongoing funding under the Fund for the Improvement of Education (FIE), including the non-Title I Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration effort, Character Education, the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education, the Blue Ribbon Schools recognition program, and the Christa McAuliffe fellowships. A competition for Comprehensive School Reform Capacity Building Grants was held. In addition, two new major competitive grant programs were launched: the Elementary Counseling Demonstration and the Smaller Learning Communities program. Finally, funds supported many projects for which support was earmarked.

Program Performance

OBJECTIVE 1: SUPPORT THE DEPARTMENT'S STRATEGIC PRIORITIES IN ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION THROUGH NATIONALLY SIGNIFICANT PROJECTS OF HIGH QUALITY.

Indicator 1.1 Nationally significant projects are supportive of strategic priorities: Ninety percent of all FIE-funded projects will support the Department's strategic priorities in elementary and secondary education, and 90 percent of the peer-reviewed projects will receive at least an 80 percent rating for national significance.						
Targets and Performance Data			Assessment of Progress		Sources and Data Quality	
Year	Alignment With Strategic Priorities		National Significance		<p>Status: Target met for alignment with strategic priorities and exceeded the target for national significance.</p> <p>Explanation: 100 percent of all FIE projects in FY 2000 supported the Department's priorities. Of peer-reviewed projects, 95 percent of FY 2000 projects scored at least 80 percent for national significance, while only 72 percent of FY 1999 projects scored at least 80 percent for national significance. The average score for national significance for character education projects was 89 percent; for comprehensive school reform capacity building projects, 100 percent; for unsolicited projects, 80 percent; and for elementary school counseling projects, 95 percent.</p> <p>The competition for Smaller Learning Communities is reporting under its own set of GPRA indicators.</p> <p>Earmarked projects were not included in the analysis of national significance because their applications do not receive scores and are not peer reviewed. These non-competitive projects are often locally focused and their significance cannot easily be assessed from their original applications. However, overall, the projects are expected to produce nationally significant results by the end of the project period.</p>	<p>Source: Peer-reviewer ratings of applications, 2000. <i>Frequency:</i> Annually. <i>Next collection update:</i> 2001. <i>Date to be reported:</i> Unknown.</p> <p>Validation Procedure: Data collected from peer-review instruments.</p> <p>Limitations of Data and Planned Improvements: The Comprehensive School Reform Capacity Building Grants did not use the criteria for national significance as the absolute priority required applicants to provide evidence of national significance; i.e., the priority required applicants to convince reviewers that their model was (a) effective in improving student achievement; (b) operating in 15 or more schools; and (c) in demand from schools interested in adopting the model. The program office continues to develop plans to conduct external review of selected key projects at the end of their grant period. This indicator will be continued to measure the quality of applications funded under competitive processes. The Elementary School Counseling Program will develop a specific set of indicators for the 2001 Report.</p>
	Actual Performance	Performance Targets	Actual Performance	Performance Targets		
1999:	100%	100%	72%	90%		
2000:	100%	100%	95%	90%		
2001:		100%		90%		
2002:						

Indicator 1.2 High quality: Ninety percent of peer-reviewed projects will receive at least an 80 percent rating for quality of project design.				
Targets and Performance Data		Assessment of Progress	Sources and Data Quality	
<i>Criteria: project design</i>		<p>Status: Positive trend toward the target.</p> <p>Explanation: Earmarked projects were not included in the analysis of project design because their applications are not peer reviewed. Of peer-reviewed projects, 48 percent of FY 1999 projects scored at least 80 percent for project design while 92 percent of FY 2000 projects achieved the target. The average rating for project design also increased from 82 percent in FY 1999 to 92 percent in FY 2000. Seventy-eight percent of the character education projects scored 80 percent or above for project design; 100 percent of the comprehensive school reform projects and 100 percent of the elementary school counseling projects met the target; none of the unsolicited projects met the target. The average score for project design for character education projects was 88 percent; for comprehensive school reform was 90 percent; for elementary school counseling was 95 percent; and for unsolicited projects 69 percent.</p>	<p>Source: Peer-reviewer ratings of applications, 2000. <i>Frequency:</i> Annually. <i>Next collection update:</i> 2001. <i>Date to be reported:</i> Unknown.</p> <p>Validation Procedure: Data collected from peer-review instruments.</p> <p>Limitations of Data and Planned Improvements: This indicator will be used in the future to measure the quality of funded applications. The program office continues to develop plans to conduct external review of selected key projects at the end of their grant period. The Elementary School Counseling Program will develop a set of indicators for the 2001 report.</p>	
Year	Actual Performance			Performance Targets
1999:	48%			90%
2000:	92%			90%
2001:				90%
2002:				

Indicator 1.3 Progress: Eighty percent of projects will be judged to have successfully implemented strategies or yielded results that can contribute to improving education.

Targets and Performance Data		Assessment of Progress	Sources and Data Quality	
Year	Actual Performance	Performance Targets	<p>Status: Program office developed a review instrument to be used by external peer reviewers to critique final reports for contracts awarded in FY 1999 dealing with capacity building of comprehensive school reform models.</p> <p>Explanation: The peer review panel will be asked to comment on the effectiveness of the review instrument and on the process as a whole. Information gleaned from this process will be used to refine the review instrument. For FY 2001, the revised instrument will be used on a larger sample of projects with feedback from reviewers and grantees preparing the sample final reports used to improve the process.</p>	<p>Source: Final reports, which will be externally reviewed. <i>Frequency:</i> Annually. <i>Next collection update:</i> 2001. <i>Date to be reported:</i> Unknown.</p> <p>Validation Procedure: Data collected from peer reviewing a sample of final reports.</p> <p>Limitations of Data and Planned Improvements: Comments from peer reviewers will be used to improve the review instrument.</p>
1999:	No Data Available	N/A		
2000:	Review Instrument Developed*	N/A		
2001:		80%		
2002:				
<p>*In 2000, a sample of projects submitting final reports (all from the same competition) were identified and a review instrument designed. Peer reviewers will be asked to review the final reports and also comment on the review instrument.</p>				