

July 1, 2003

Honorable Cecil J. Picard
State Superintendent
Louisiana Department of Education
626 North 4th Street, 12th Floor
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804-9064

Dear Superintendent Picard:

This is to inform you that we have conditionally approved Louisiana's Eligibility Document Submission for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2003 under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Our determination that you are eligible for a conditional approval is based on our receipt of the following documents submitted by the Louisiana State Department of Education to the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP):

1. The Part B Eligibility Document Submission for FFY 2003 including the Eligibility Documents submitted April 14, 2000, and subsequent revisions to those Eligibility Documents and the Submission Statement submitted date, May 9, 2003; and
2. The June 27, 2003 letter from Louisiana to OSEP, assuring that, as soon as possible, but no later than July 1, 2004, the State will revise Bulletin 1706, as specified in the memorandum from Susan Batson to Cynthia Bryant, dated June 24, 2003, and in the issues chart (page 3) attached to the memorandum from Cynthia Bryant to Virginia Beridon, dated June 26, 2003, to be consistent with the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and its implementing regulations in 34 CFR Part 300, and will provide the Secretary with a copy of the revised documents showing the change (Louisiana has provided proposed regulatory language, approved by OSEP, however the State must, after the amendment to Bulletin 1706 is made, send OSEP the final regulations).

In the June 27, 2003 letter, Louisiana also assures that it will take steps to ensure that, throughout the period of this grant award, all public agencies in the State that provide special education and related services to children with disabilities will operate their programs in a manner fully consistent with Part B. Louisiana further assures that it will provide OSEP with a copy of a memorandum notifying all public agencies of the changes that impact on public agencies' provision of special education and related services that OSEP requires as a result of its review of the State's eligibility documents.

Please note that as part of your Eligibility Document Submission for FFY 2003, your State 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 periods for which it receives grant funding. Any changes made by the State, after OSEP approval, to information that is a part of a State's eligibility documentation, must meet the public participation requirements of the IDEA and must be approved by OSEP before implementation.

Enclosed are grant awards for funds currently available under the Department of Education FFY 2003 Appropriations Act for the Part B Section 611 (Grants to States) and Section 619 (Preschool Grants) programs. These funds are for use primarily in school year 2003-2004 and are available for obligation by States from July 1, 2003 through September 30, 2005.

The amount in your award for Section 619 represents the full amount of funds to which you are entitled. However, 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 2003. Of the \$8,874,397,536 appropriated for Section 611 in FFY 2003, \$3,202,397,536 is available for awards on July 1, 2003, and \$5,672,000,000 will be available on October 1, 2003.

The funding formula for the Section 611 program is the same as was implemented for FFY 2000. Subject to certain maximum and minimum funding requirements, State allocations are based on the amount that each State received from FFY 1999 funds, the general population in the age range for which each State ensures a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to all children with disabilities, and the number of children living in poverty in the age range for which each State ensures FAPE to all children with disabilities.

Enclosure A provides a short description of how Section 611 funds were allocated and how those funds can be used. In addition, Table I in Enclosure A shows funding levels for distribution of Section 611 funds.

Enclosure B provides a short description of how Section 619 funds were allocated and how those funds can be used. In addition, Table II in Enclosure B shows State-by-State funding levels for distribution of Section 619 funds.

These awards are based on submission of a complete eligibility document package, a signed assurance statement regarding resolution of issues identified in OSEP's review of that eligibility document package, and implementation of the provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. The complete eligibility document package and assurances must be made available for public inspection.

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

Sincerely,

/s/Patricia J. Guard for

Stephanie S. Lee
Director
Office of Special Education Programs

Enclosures

cc: Virginia C. Beridon