



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

July 1, 2015

Honorable Rita Sablan
Commissioner of Education
CNMI Public School System
Post Office Box 501370 CK
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Commissioner Sablan:

We have approved the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands' application for Federal fiscal year (FFY) 2015 funds, under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA Part C). Our approval is based on our review of the IDEA Part C application, submitted by the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) to the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), on April 23, 2015, May 9, 2015, and May 19, 2015.

Our approval of CNMI's FFY 2015 IDEA Part C grant includes approval of policies, procedures, methods, descriptions, assurances, and certifications identified in Section II.A, II.B, and II.C, which is incorporated by reference to this grant award letter as Enclosure A. Our approval is also based on CNMI's certification in Section II.D of its FFY 2015 application that CNMI's provisions meet the requirements of IDEA Part C as found in 20 U.S.C. §§1431 through 1443 and the final regulations in 34 CFR Part 303 (as published on September 28, 2011), and that CNMI will operate its Part C program in accordance with all of the IDEA Part C requirements including required policies, procedures, methods, descriptions, assurances and certifications. See, 34 CFR §76.104.

CNMI's FFY 2015 IDEA Part C grant is also subject to Special Conditions identified in the U.S. Department of Education's (Department's) June 30, 2015 letter to CNMI, which is Enclosure B to this grant letter and which letter is hereby expressly incorporated into the terms of CNMI's FFY 2015 IDEA Part C grant. These Special Conditions are being imposed by OSEP pursuant to the Department's authority in IDEA sections 616(g) and 642 and 2 CFR §200.207. By accepting the enclosed grant award, CNMI expressly agrees to comply with the Special Conditions identified in Enclosure B, which conditions are imposed to ensure continued fiscal accountability of Department grant funds awarded to CNMI, including the IDEA Part C FFY 2015 grant funds awarded by the Department to the CNMI Public School System.

Please note that as part of CNMI's IDEA Part C application for FFY 2015, CNMI has provided a certification, under Section II.D of its FFY 2015 application and pursuant to 34 CFR §76.104, that it will comply with all applicable Federal statutes and regulations in effect during the FFY 2015 grant period.

Enclosed is CNMI's FFY 2015 grant award for funds currently available under the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015, P.L. 113-235 for the IDEA Part C program. These funds are available for obligation by IDEA grant recipients from July 1, 2015 through

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September 30, 2017 in accordance with 34 CFR §76.709.

Please note that effective with this IDEA Part C FFY 2015 grant award, IDEA Part C funds are subject to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, codified in 2 CFR Part 200 and commonly referred to as the Uniform Guidance. The Uniform Guidance provisions in 2 CFR Part 200 replace provisions previously found in the Education Department General Administrative Regulations or EDGAR in 34 CFR Parts 74 and 80 and prior OMB Circulars A-87 and A-133. Under 2 CFR §200.308(e), a State must obtain the prior approval of OSEP, by submitting a revised Section III (Use of Funds), for a transfer of funds among direct cost categories, programs, or activities that exceed 10% of the total grant award or are expected to exceed 10% of that total, and the Federal share in the grant exceeds the Simplified Acquisition Threshold (currently set at \$150,000). This replaces a similar provision previously found in 34 CFR §80.30(c)(1). Please review the Department's technical assistance resources on the Uniform Guidance at <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/fund/guid/uniform-guidance/index.html>.

Section 604 of the IDEA provides that “[a] State shall not be immune under the 11th amendment to the Constitution of the United States from suit in Federal court for a violation of this [Act].” Section 606 provides that each recipient of assistance under IDEA make positive efforts to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities in programs assisted under the IDEA. Therefore, by accepting this grant, CNMI is expressly agreeing as a condition of IDEA funding to a waiver of Eleventh Amendment immunity and to ensuring that positive efforts are made to employ and advance employment of qualified individuals with disabilities in programs assisted under the IDEA.

The enclosed grant award of FFY 2015 funds 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 may be necessary to allow us to appropriately carry out our administrative responsibilities related to IDEA Part C. If CNMI revises those IDEA Part C policies or procedures that are required under Part C of the IDEA or the final regulations in 34 CFR Part 303, CNMI must subject those policies and procedures to the public participation requirements in 34 CFR §303.208 and receive OSEP approval for those policies and procedures referenced in 34 CFR §303.101(c) prior to their implementation.

As a reminder, all prime recipients of IDEA (Part B or Part C) funds, must report subaward information as required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (FFATA), as amended in 2008. First-tier subaward information must be reported by the end of the following month from when the award was made or obligated. FFATA guidance is found at <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/recovery/rms-web-conferences.html>. Please contact your Fiscal Accountability Facilitator if you have further questions.

We appreciate your ongoing commitment to the provision of quality early intervention services to infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Melody Musgrove". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Melody Musgrove, Ed.D.
Director
Office of Special Education Programs

Enclosure

Enclosure A
Enclosure B

cc: Part C Coordinator