

July 1, 2016

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' (CNMI) application for Federal fiscal year (FFY) 2016 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 CNMI Public School System (CNMI PSS) to the U.S. Department of Education (Department), Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), on April 13, 2016.

Our approval of the CNMI's FFY 2016 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 the CNMI's certification in Section II.D of its FFY 2016 application that the CNMI's provisions meet the requirements of IDEA Part C as found in 20 U.S.C. §§1431 through 1443 and the regulations in 34 CFR Part 303, and that the 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.

The CNMI's FFY 2016 IDEA Part C grant is also subject to Special Conditions identified in the Department's June 29, 2016 letter to the CNMI, which is Enclosure B to this grant letter and which is hereby expressly incorporated into the terms of the CNMI's FFY 2016 IDEA Part C grant. These Special Conditions are being imposed pursuant to the Department's authority in 2 CFR §200.207. By accepting the enclosed grant award, the 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 the CNMI, including the IDEA Part C FFY 2016 grant funds awarded by the Department to the CNMI PSS.

Enclosed is the CNMI's FFY 2016 grant award for funds currently available under the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, P.L. 114-113, for the IDEA Part C program. These funds are available for obligation by IDEA grant recipients from July 1, 2016 through September 30, 2018 in accordance with 34 CFR §76.709.

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, the 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.

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The enclosed grant award of FFY 2016 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 the CNMI revises those IDEA Part C policies or procedures that are required under Part C of the IDEA or the regulations in 34 CFR Part 303, the 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,

/S/

Ruth E. Ryder
Acting Director
Office of Special Education Programs

Enclosures

Enclosure A
Enclosure B

cc: Part C Coordinator