

*A Conference Call with Tribal Officials on*

# The Promise Neighborhoods Competitive Grant Program: Serving Tribal Communities

*Facilitated by the U.S. Department of Education's  
Office of Innovation and Improvement*

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Promise Neighborhoods is a new competitive grant program that will provide planning funds to eligible entities to design comprehensive approaches for addressing the needs of children in distressed communities.

Setting the context for the Promise Neighborhoods program in July of 2007, then-Senator Obama said:

*"If poverty is a disease that infects an entire community in the form of unemployment and violence, failing schools and broken homes, then we can't just treat those symptoms in isolation. We have to heal the entire community. And we have to focus on what actually works."*

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Please visit [www.ed.gov/programs/promiseneighborhoods](http://www.ed.gov/programs/promiseneighborhoods)  
to review all available materials prior to the call.

Send any advance inquiries to [promiseneighborhoods@ed.gov](mailto:promiseneighborhoods@ed.gov)



**WHEN:** Thursday, May 13  
4 - 5:30pm EDT  
**CALL-IN #:** 888-233-8011  
6416674 #



# I. THE PROMISE NEIGHBORHOODS GRANT COMPETITION



THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION  
WASHINGTON, DC 20202

April 2010

Dear Applicant:

Thank you for your interest in Promise Neighborhoods, a new competitive grant program that will provide funds to eligible entities to design comprehensive approaches for addressing the needs of children in distressed, high-poverty communities. The program, building on the experiences of initiatives such as the Harlem Children's Zone, is the realization of President Obama's vision for the creation of high-quality projects that transform whole neighborhoods and improve educational and developmental outcomes for the children in those neighborhoods.

Setting the context for the program in July of 2007, then-Senator Obama said:

If poverty is a disease that infects an entire community in the form of unemployment and violence, failing schools and broken homes, then we can't just treat those symptoms in isolation. We have to heal that entire community. And we have to focus on what actually works.

Evidence shows that children who are from low-income families and grow up in high-poverty neighborhoods face academic and life challenges above and beyond those faced by children who are low-income and grow up in neighborhoods with low levels of poverty (Westat, 2001; Rumberger and Palardy, 2005). President Obama, the Department of Education, and Congress have responded to these findings by introducing Promise Neighborhoods as a comprehensive approach to addressing the interrelated adversities faced by students in schools in distressed communities.

In fiscal year 2010, the first year of the program, Congress appropriated \$10 million for Promise Neighborhoods. With these funds, the Department will award one-year planning grants for projects in up to 20 of the nation's most distressed neighborhoods. The grants will support the development of a continuum of cradle-through-college-to-career solutions designed to result in positive outcomes for all children within those neighborhoods. In fiscal year 2011 and beyond, contingent on the availability of funds, the Department plans to make additional planning grants while also providing grants for the implementation of Promise Neighborhoods projects.

I invite you to apply to take advantage of this incredible opportunity to improve the educational and developmental outcomes of children in our most distressed communities by transforming the neighborhoods in which they live. Through strong community leadership and support both inside and outside of education, the innovative and comprehensive approach of Promise Neighborhoods has the potential to make a significant difference for students and communities.

Sincerely,

/s/

Arne Duncan

**Promise Neighborhoods Planning Grants At-A-Glance**  
Office of Innovation and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education  
April 2010

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The Department of Education Appropriations Act, 2010 provided funds for Promise Neighborhoods under the legislative authority of the Fund for the Improvement of Education Program (FIE). FIE supports nationally significant programs to improve the quality of elementary and secondary education at the State and local levels and help all children meet challenging State academic content and student academic achievement standards.

- **Purpose.** The Promise Neighborhoods Program is intended to significantly improve the educational and developmental outcomes of children in our most distressed communities, and to transform those communities. Because the challenges faced by communities with high concentrations of poverty are interrelated, Promise Neighborhoods is taking a comprehensive approach designed to ensure that children have access to a continuum of cradle-through-college-to-career solutions, with strong schools at the center, that will support academic achievement, healthy development, and college and career success.
- **Eligibility Requirements.** Entities eligible to receive Promise Neighborhoods planning grants include: (1) nonprofit organizations, which may include faith-based nonprofit organizations, and (2) institutions of higher education. An eligible entity must also:
  - Operate a school; or partner with at least one school in the geographic area proposed to be served in coordination with the school’s local educational agency (LEA).
  - Focus on a neighborhood in which there are multiple signs of distress based on indicators of need.
  - Currently provide at least one of the solutions from the applicant’s proposed continuum of cradle-through-college-to-career solutions in the neighborhood proposed to be served.
  - Be representative of the neighborhood proposed to be served.
  - If applying under Absolute Priority 3, be an eligible entity that partners with an Indian Tribe, or be an Indian Tribe that meets the definition of an eligible entity.
- **Cost-Sharing or Matching:** To be eligible for an award, an applicant must demonstrate that it has established a commitment from one or more entities in the public or private sector to provide matching funds or in-kind donations for the planning process. An applicant under Absolute Priority 1 must secure funds equal to at least 50 percent of its grant award. An applicant that meets the criteria for Absolute Priority 2 (Rural Communities) or Absolute Priority 3 (Tribal Communities) must obtain matching funds or in-kind donations equal to at least 25 percent of the grant award.
- **FY 2010 Planning Grants:** The Promise Neighborhoods program will award one-year grants to support the development of a plan to implement a Promise Neighborhood in which schools, academic programs, and family and community supports include the following core features:
  - a. The capacity to collect, analyze, and use data to evaluate their efforts.
  - b. Close integration so that time and resource gaps that contribute to children missing academic and developmental milestones do not occur.
  - c. A leader and an organization that can engage the community and are accountable for results.
  - d. A “place-based” approach, which leverages investments by focusing resources in targeted places.

At the conclusion of the planning grant period, grantees should have a feasible plan to implement a continuum of solutions that will significantly improve results for children in the community being served.
- **Funding Status:** The following table summarizes the funding status for the FY 2010 PN planning grants.

**Table 1: FY 2010 Promise Neighborhoods planning grants**

<b>Estimated Funding Available</b>	Up to \$10MM
<b>Estimated Number of Grants</b>	Up to 20
<b>Estimated Range of Awards</b>	\$400K - \$500K
<b>Project Period</b>	12 months

- **Implementation Grants:** In subsequent years, contingent on the availability of funds, the Department intends to conduct competitions for implementation grants, as well as competitions for new planning grants. While all eligible entities will be able to apply for implementation grants, eligible entities that have effectively carried out the planning activities described in the planning

notice, whether independently or with a Promise Neighborhoods planning grant, are likely to be well positioned to develop a quality application for an implementation grant.

- **Absolute Priorities:**

- **Absolute Priority 1.** All applicants must meet the requirements of Absolute Priority 1 to be considered for a Promise Neighborhoods planning grant. To meet this priority, an applicant must submit a proposal for how it will plan to create a Promise Neighborhood. This proposal must--
  1. Describe the geographically defined area to be served and the level of distress in that area;
  2. Describe how the applicant will plan to build a continuum of cradle-through-college-to-career solutions for children in the neighborhood;
  3. Describe the applicant’s organizational capacity to plan and implement a Promise Neighborhood;
  4. Describe how the applicant will plan to sustain and “scale up” the project over time;
  5. Describe the commitment the applicant anticipates receiving from partners;
  6. Describe how the applicant will plan to track available funding sources;
  7. Describe how the applicant will identify policies or regulations that would impede the project;
  8. Describe how the applicant will use data;
  9. Describe how the applicant will work with a national evaluator for Promise Neighborhoods; and
  10. Identify and describe the indicators that the applicant will use for a needs assessment.
- **Absolute Priority 2:** Promise Neighborhoods in rural communities. The Secretary establishes a priority for applicants that meet all requirements in absolute priority 1 AND serve one or more rural communities only.
- **Absolute Priority 3:** Promise Neighborhoods in tribal communities. The Secretary establishes a priority for applicants that meet all requirements in absolute priority 1 AND serve one or more Indian tribes.

- **Invitational Priority:** Unique learning needs, quality internet connectivity, civic engagement, or arts and humanities. The Secretary is interested in receiving applications that meet this invitational priority, but an application that meets this priority will not receive preference over other applications.

- **Selection Criteria.** The following table lists the selection criteria for the Promise Neighborhoods planning grants and summarizes the points per selection criteria:

**Table 2: Summary of Selection Criteria Points for FY 2010 PN Planning Grants Competition**

Selection Criteria	Points
<b>1. Need for Project</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>2. Quality of Project Design</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>3. Quality of Project Services</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>4. Quality of Project Personnel</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>5. Quality of Management Plan</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>6. Significance</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Total Points</b>	<b>100</b>

- **Timing.** We anticipate publishing the final notice in the Federal Register during the week of May 3, 2010. We will host several informational and application webinars in the coming weeks. Notices of intent to apply are due on May 21, 2010. Applications will be due on June 25th, 2010. Applications will be reviewed in Summer 2010. All grant awards will be announced in September 2010.
- **Additional inquiries should be submitted to [promiseneighborhoods@ed.gov](mailto:promiseneighborhoods@ed.gov).** We are not able to respond to each inquiry with an individual response, but we will review all questions submitted and post answers to the most frequently asked questions on our Web site, [www.ed.gov/programs/promiseneighborhoods/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/programs/promiseneighborhoods/index.html)