

FEDERAL RENOVATION PROGRAM

Frequently Asked Questions

Q Can you please tell me where the poverty percentage information was acquired? Our district serves approximately 60% of the students free or reduces lunches, not 25% as the Information List indicates.

A The poverty information was received from the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) who received it from the U.S. Bureau of the Census. This is the same information that the USDOE uses in making Title I allocations to States.

Unfortunately, the free and reduced price lunch program (FRPLP) data cannot be used to determine an LEA's High Poverty status, poverty percentage, or number of poor children because children ages 5 to 17 who reside in families with an income above the poverty line can qualify for the FRPLP. The federal law stipulates that in order for an LEA to be considered "High Poverty", 30 percent or more of the children ages 5 to 17, inclusive, in an LEA, must be from families with incomes below the poverty line (as defined by the Office of Management and Budget).

In the discussions of this program at the SAB Implementation Committee, it was made clear that the federal census data is not only outdated, but not realistic. Unfortunately, for purposes of this allocation of federal money, we must abide by the law. However, in the attempts to garner future fiscal: year funding for this program, this issue is proposed to be addressed.

Q Is OPSC setting a standard for LEA's clarifying how they need to notify charter and non-profit private schools about this program? Will it be required that they be notified by posting a notice in the local newspaper? How should this be handled on the LEA's part to meet the requirements they are signing off on in the application?

A The OPSC is not dictating how the charter and non-profit private schools should be notified. CDE and OPSC sent a letter to the non-profit private schools as a "double safeguard" that they are notified about the availability of funds. This does not preclude the LEA from doing a public notice. The federal law requires that the LEA "provide adequate and efficient notice of the opportunity of funds to all interested parties including non-profit private schools, charter schools, and the community in a widely read and distributed medium....". We do not define any further. It is up to the LEAs to determine and interpret this requirement. The LEA does not have to notify the charter and non-profit private schools individually. We have designed the program mirroring the flexibility of the SFP to provide and empower the LEAs with local control with less State intervention.

FEDERAL RENOVATION PROGRAM

Frequently Asked Questions

Q Must LEAs provide an opportunity for public comment on the use of funds/ how the funds will be spent?

A LEAs that receive school repair and renovation grants must provide parents, educators, and interested community members with an opportunity to consult and comment on the use of funds. Adequate and efficient notice of that opportunity shall be included in a widely read and distributed vehicle and in accordance with State or local law regarding how comments may be received and reviewed by the public. The notice may either be combined with the notice to notify charter and non-profit private schools about this program or separately after the LEA has received notification of an award.

Q Can a grant that an LEA receives from this program be used to lease or purchase a building, or building and land to start up a charter school or does the charter school have to exist to use the grants in this manner?

A The grant received by an LEA cannot be used/given to a start-up charter school as the grant amount is based upon the enrollment of the LEA and qualifying charter and non-profit private schools. The start-up charter school would not “contribute” any enrollment. Also, the mere fact that the grants are for emergency repair and renovation implies the school facilities already exist.

Q We have a new Charter School that was just recently established in our District. CBEDS for this school do not exist. How are we to fill out the 60-01 when the time comes?

A Unfortunately, per Regulation Section 1859.213, you must use the pupils enrolled in the LEA as reported in the latest CBEDS report. If this charter school is not included in October 2001 CBEDS, you can’t count that school’s enrollment on your application.

Q Can you tell me where the rural information is gathered from, or direct me to a source that could tell me?

A The rural data is from the USDOE’s National Center for Education Statistics which uses a system called Locale Codes. They use a rural definition that basically identifies an LEA as rural if the “plurality” of the pupils are in schools that are in Locale Codes of 7 and 8. Locale Code 7 is for places not within Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area (CSMA) or Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA) and designated as rural. Locale Code 8 is for places within CSMA or MSA designated as rural. So, in order to determine the Locale Code of an LEA, it is necessary to assign codes based on the addresses of the individual schools. You then determine the sums of enrollment for the various Locale Codes within the LEA, and assign the LEA the Locale Code of the plurality of students.

FEDERAL RENOVATION PROGRAM

Frequently Asked Questions

Q We are a non-profit, private school and we are interested in applying for a federal grant. Where can I get an application form?

A Non-profit private schools must apply through the LEA where they are physically located serving the same grade level(s). Non-profit private schools may not apply directly to the OPSC. For example, if your school is a K-6 school and you are in the boundaries of XYZ Elementary School District and TUV High School District, then your school must apply through XYZ Elementary School District.

Q As a non-profit private school, how do I determine whether or not 40% of our pupils (enrollment) live in families with incomes below the poverty line?

A The non-profit private school must first determine, out of its enrollment, the number of children ages 5 to 17 that live in families with incomes below the poverty line as defined by the Office of Management and Budget ("Poor Children"). The following website provides the income thresholds depending on the size of the household and definition of income: <http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/02fedreg.htm>. Divide the number of "Poor Children" by the school's total enrollment. The result will be your poverty rate. Non-profit private schools must certify to the LEA in which they are applying whether or not they meet this requirement.

Q I am a non-profit private preschool only. Can I apply for a federal grant?

A No. Only non-profit private elementary and/or secondary schools may apply. If your school is a non-profit private preschool through, say, sixth grade school, you may apply for a federal grant. However, you may not include the enrollment of the preschool students.

Q We are interested in applying for the Federal Renovation Program. Could you please direct me to where I can obtain the forms necessary to apply?

A The application window period has been established. At the February 27, 2002 State Allocation Board (SAB) meeting, the SAB approved a window period from March 1, 2002 through April 15, 2002. The Application for Federal Grant (Form SAB 60-01) is available online on our website www.opsc.dgs.ca.gov. The application should be filled out online and submitted online with a hardcopy with wet signature to follow in the mail. You will need the password that is used on the Project Tracking Number Generator to fill out an application online.

FEDERAL RENOVATION PROGRAM

Frequently Asked Questions

Q On the application form, Part II, Number 1, does the LEA report the total enrollment of the LEA, charters, and non-profit private schools regardless of which schools will benefit from the grant award?

A In reporting the LEA's enrollment, report the total LEA enrollment. If, for example, in an LEA of ten schools with projects being considered at only six of those ten schools, you will still report the enrollment of the ten schools in your LEA. However, only include the enrollment of the participating charter and non-profit private schools that are requesting funds. For example, if there are five non-profit private schools that have a poverty percentage of 40%, but only one of the schools requests funds, the LEA may only include the enrollment of the one school.

Q Am I required to do a school board resolution to designate a LEA representative or to file an application to the OPSC?

A The FRP only requires that the governing school board "designate" a LEA Representative. The means by which this happens is for the LEA to decide. The OPSC does not require the LEA to take a resolution to its school board to file an application to the OPSC, although its own school board may.

Q Are there any requirements regarding contracts for school repairs and renovations?

A Any laborers and mechanics employed by contractors or subcontractors on repair and renovation projects assisted with these FRP funds must be paid in accordance with prevailing wage requirements in the Davis-Bacon Act. In addition, all LEAs receiving funds under this section and using a contracting process for school repair and renovation, must maximize the number of qualified bidders, and include small, minority and women-owned businesses through a full and open competition.

Q As the LEA, must we give participating charter or non-profit private schools a portion of the base grant of \$75,000?

A The LEA must certify to the OPSC that the award is "distributed appropriately". The federal law does require that there be an equal per pupil expenditure, so the base grant should basically be prorated. For example, if the LEA has an enrollment of 9,000 pupils and one qualifying non-profit private school requests funds and it has 1,000 pupils, then the maximum grant award would be \$275,000 for the LEA's application. Since the non-profit private school represents 10% of the reported enrollment for that application, then the non-profit private school should receive 10% of the \$275,000, or \$27,500.

FEDERAL RENOVATION PROGRAM

Frequently Asked Questions

Questions and Answers for problems with online application or documents:

1. Problems printing Adobe (PDF) form or application?

Make sure to install Adobe Acrobat Reader 5.0. A direct link is available to download the reader on the "Entry Successful" page.

2. "Invalid District" message?

Make sure to have cookies and medium security enable on your browser.

4. What is SQL Error?

There may have been a problem submitting the application to the database.

Use the back button on your browser and try again.

If the error persists, then print the screen with the information you are trying to enter.

3. Other Errors?

Make sure to use a recent browser such as Netscape 4.6 or greater or Internet Explorer 5.0 or greater.

Make sure to use the web application on a computer with PC architecture.

Try a different computer.

Next please contact your OSPC Federal Program representative to review the information you are trying to enter or change.
