



Illinois State Board of Education

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State Superintendent of Education

June 2008

TO: Eligible Applicants

FROM: Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Education

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP): Reading Recovery® Training and Ongoing Professional Development

General Information

Eligible Applicants: School districts, charter schools, public university laboratory schools approved by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), regional offices of education, postsecondary institutions, and reading recovery consortia are eligible to apply for funds to establish a training site if they employ a registered Reading Recovery® teacher-leader. School districts, charter schools, and public university laboratory schools approved by ISBE may apply for assistance for their Reading Recovery® teachers to attend an accredited university training center for teacher-leader training.

Grant Award: Approximately \$600,000 will be awarded in FY09 to establish training sites and offset costs for teacher-leader training.

It is anticipated that up to 20 grants will be awarded to establish training sites statewide. The individual grant awards will vary, depending on the needs and activities addressed in the approved proposals and the total appropriation for the program.

Grants for teacher-leader training will range from \$30,000 to \$45,000 per Reading Recovery® teacher trained as a teacher-leader.

Grant Period: The grant period will begin no sooner than **July 1, 2008**, and will extend from the execution date of the grant until **June 30, 2009**. Funding may also be available for two additional years. Funding in the subsequent years will be contingent upon a sufficient appropriation for the program and satisfactory progress in the preceding grant period.

Application Deadline: Submit, by mail or in person, the original and 4 copies to the Illinois State Board of Education, Curriculum and Instruction Division, 100 North First Street, C-215, Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001, to ensure receipt no later than 4:00 p.m., **July 21, 2008**.

Proposals also may be hand-delivered to the following location:

Springfield Office
Information Center
1st Floor
100 North First Street

Chicago Office
Reception Area
Suite 14-300
100 West Randolph Street

Contact Person: For more information on this RFP, contact Sarah McCusker, Curriculum and Instruction Division, 217/557-7323, or by email at smccuske@isbe.net.

Background

Section 2-3.51(a) of the School Code [105 ILCS 5/2-3.51(a)] authorizes the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) to use up to 2 percent of the money received for the Reading Improvement Block Grant Program to provide teacher training and re-training in the teaching of reading.

The purpose of this RFP is to identify Reading Recovery® training sites throughout the state that can train Reading Recovery® teachers and provide ongoing professional development that is required of both Reading Recovery® teachers and teacher-leaders. Additionally, stipends will be available to help pay the cost of teacher-leader training at an accredited university training center.

Reading Recovery®, first implemented by New Zealand psychologist and researcher Dr. Marie Clay, is a short-term, one-to-one intervention taught by specifically trained teachers. Teachers tutor the lowest achieving first-grade students for 30 minutes daily. The tutoring typically is provided within the school day as a pull-out program and consists of a 12- to 20-week set of customized lessons that supplement the regular education program provided by classroom teachers. The goal is to accelerate progress for children in first grade who are having the greatest difficulty learning to read and write.

Each lesson is comprised of assessing a child's text level through the use of a running record and using the data to plan subsequent lessons. In addition, the teacher has the student read a new book, reread a book read on a previous day, work with letters, and write a story. The child is invited to use problem-solving strategies about his reading with guidance from the Reading Recovery® teacher. Each lesson focuses on letter and sound relationships, spelling patterns, fluency and comprehension strategies.

For more information about the Reading Recovery® program, see the Reading Recovery® Council of North America's (RRCNA) website at www.readingrecovery.org/reading_recovery/lessons/index.asp.

Program Specifications

Training Sites

Training sites will be responsible for training new Reading Recovery® teachers and providing opportunities for ongoing professional development for both teachers and teacher-leaders. To review the full scope of a training site's responsibilities, please see http://www.readingrecovery.org/pdf/implementation/Standards_Guidelines-Section-3.pdf.

An applicant who is not yet a recognized training site will be required to submit a site application to the university training center with which the applicant wishes to affiliate. National-Louis University, located in

the Chicago suburb of Lisle, is the only accredited university training center in Illinois. Out-of-state training centers located near certain regions of Illinois include the University of Wisconsin in Madison, Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau, and Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana. Further information about university training centers can be found at <http://www.readingrecovery.org/development/centers/index.asp>.

Training sites must work with the university training center to establish graduate credit for teacher training courses taught by a registered teacher-leader and provide a training facility that includes a room with one-way glass, sound system, meeting room and office space. In addition, each training site must have a plan for publicizing their services to school districts in their area.

1. Training Reading Recovery® Teachers. According to the RRCNA website, training classes are “based on the principles of collaborative discussion of in-progress lessons”. Teacher candidates receive graduate credit, work with four children on a daily basis, and attend one class each week. The teacher-leader observes each teacher candidate at least four times during the training year.

RRCNA standards provide that training classes must consist of at least eight and no more than 12 teachers. The university training center with which the site is affiliated will determine the contact-hour requirements for the training. At least 80 percent of the class sessions, or a minimum of 18 sessions (whichever is greater), in an academic year must include two sessions using “behind-the-glass” lessons. In a behind-the-glass session, the teacher-leader leads the discussion among the Reading Recovery Teachers who are observing. Collectively, they analyze the teacher’s and the student’s behaviors to determine strengths and suggestions for improvement.

RRCNA advises that candidates for training, who must be certified teachers, be carefully selected and recommends that the site use an interview and selection committee that includes the site coordinator and teacher-leader(s) to “assure selection of the strongest candidates.” Further information about the training requirements are found at http://www.readingrecovery.org/pdf/implementation/Standards_Guidelines-Section-4.pdf.

2. Professional Development. Ongoing professional development is an important component of the Reading Recovery® program. According to RRCNA, professional development must integrate theory and practice.

In order to maintain “registered” status, teacher-leaders must participate in professional development opportunities sponsored by the university training center, attend the annual Teacher Leader Institute, and attend an approved Reading Recovery® Council of North America (RRCNA) conference each year.

The ongoing professional development (i.e., continuing contact) for Reading Recovery® teachers consists of at least six sessions each year led by their teacher-leader(s). At least four of these sessions include observing at least two lessons each session through a one-way mirror while talking about child behaviors and teaching strategies. Other activities that satisfy the requirement for continuing contact include teaching a child behind the one-way mirror for colleagues to observe, and arranging for and participating in annual school visits by the teacher-leader.

Teacher-Leader Training

According to RRCNA, a teacher-leader works with students, trains teachers, provides continuing professional development and support for teachers, monitors the progress of children, supports the development of school teams, disseminates information, and participates in the Reading Recovery® network to maintain their own professional development. A teacher-leader also works closely with administrators in his or her district to ensure that the Reading Recovery® program is effectively implemented and operated and that program evaluations are conducted.

Teacher-leader candidates participate full time in a one-year residential program at an accredited Reading Recovery® university training center. RRNCA identifies the major components of the teacher-leader training as academic coursework; teaching children; and leadership and program implementation, including leading Reading Recovery® teacher candidates. If teacher-leader candidates teach children in their home districts and commute to the training site, then their districts must release them from duties other than the teaching of four Reading Recovery® children during their training year. To review the RRCNA-established standards and guidelines for choosing teacher-leader candidates, as well as other training requirements, see http://www.readingrecovery.org/pdf/implementation/Standards_Guidelines-Section-5.pdf.

Generally, a teacher-leader candidate during his or her training will:

- teach four Reading Recovery students daily;
- actively participate in graduate-level classes;
- participate in clinical and leadership practicum, and seminars in reading, writing, and adult learning theory;
- participate in teacher professional development classes and fieldwork at established sites; and
- prepare his or her home districts for Reading Recovery® implementation.

Please note that an applicant requesting funds for teacher-leader training must commit to employing the teacher-leader for three years.

Fiscal Information

It is anticipated that \$600,000 will be available to fund Reading Recovery® Training and Ongoing Professional Development grants in FY09. Grant funds will be distributed as follows.

Training Sites

1. Training Reading Recovery® Teachers

A maximum grant of \$9,000 can be requested to offset the salary of the teacher-leader who will be training new Reading Recovery® teachers. Funds must be used toward the salary of the teacher-leader when he or she is:

- a. training new Reading Recovery® teachers; and
- b. providing information, materials, and workshops to help relate the Reading Recovery® program to existing programs and activities in schools and districts where the Reading Recovery® program is currently operating.

2. Ongoing Professional Development

Teacher-Leaders. Training sites will receive a maximum grant of \$1,000 for each Reading Recovery® teacher-leader participating in professional development. All training provided under this component must assist the teacher-leader in meeting the RRCNA’s standards and guidelines for ongoing professional development required to maintain registered status. Funds must be used for:

- a. training activities sponsored by the applicant or another RRNCA-approved professional development site (individual tuition costs are not allowable expenses), and
- b. travel and expenses directly attributable to Reading Recovery®-related conferences and institutes.

Reading Recovery® Teachers. An applicant may request a maximum of \$350 per Reading Recovery® teacher for costs associated with the provision of ongoing professional development (i.e., continuing contact). Funds should be used to support the four to six continuing contact sessions recommended by the RRCNA’s standards and guidelines. Funds must be used to:

- a. reimburse each district with participating Reading Recovery® teachers,
- b. reduce fees for continuing professional development, and
- c. purchase additional high-quality reading materials for use by Reading Recovery® teachers.

Teacher-Leader Training

An applicant wishing to have a staff member participate in teacher-leader training will be considered for a grant ranging from \$30,000 to \$45,000 per candidate. The funds may not be used to offset the cost of tuition, but may be applied toward:

- a. the teacher’s salary while he or she is in training,
- b. university training fees,
- c. reimbursement of travel expenses associated with attending the training, and
- d. books and materials purchased by the teacher-leader candidate.

Proposal Format

Each proposal must be submitted in the format outlined below. Please use the following as a checklist in assembling your completed proposal.

- ___ **1. Cover Page (Attachment 1):** Must be signed by the school district superintendent or official authorized to submit the proposal.
- ___ **2. Proposal Abstract:** Briefly describe in 250 words or less the overall need for and benefits of the Reading Recovery® training and/or ongoing professional development.
- ___ **3. Proposal Narrative:** Respond to each of the following in the order provided below.

Applicants requesting funds to establish a **training site** should complete the following information.

- a. **Need.** Indicate whether the site will train new Reading Recovery® teachers or provide ongoing professional development, or both. For each component, list the schools that will be

involved in either the new teacher training and/or the professional development. Describe the reading achievement levels of the students in the schools to be involved. For example, the averages of the beginning and exiting levels on the Observational Survey would show the reading achievement gains. Other testing data with comparable results can also be provided. If Reading Recovery® is an existing program in any of the schools, provide measurable gains in data from previous years to support continued funding. Provide other statistical district information, if applicable.

- b. **Reading Recovery® Teacher Candidates:** Describe the process used (or to be used) to select teachers for participation in the training. If participants have been identified, then provide detailed information about the teachers selected. Include in the description information about educational background, certification status, current assignment, general experience and experience specific to the teaching of reading, and other qualities relevant to successfully completing the training and becoming effective Reading Recovery® teachers. If participants have not yet been identified, then describe the criteria and qualifications to be considered to screen and select training candidates.
- c. **Teacher-Leaders (Attachment 1A):** Provide the information requested for each teacher-leader who will be conducting the training and/or ongoing professional development.
- d. **Participants (Attachment 1B):** Provide the information requested about the teachers to be trained as Reading Recovery® teachers and/or the Reading Recovery® teachers and teacher-leaders who will be participating, including any reading training the participant has previously attended or any reading credentials achieved.
- e. **Proposed Activities (Attachments 1C and 1D):** Provide the requested information about activities and costs for training new Reading Recovery® teachers (Attachment 1C) and for providing ongoing professional development for teacher-leaders and Reading Recovery® teachers (Attachment 1D). In addition, include a description of the methods to be used to publicize the training site's services to school districts in the area to be served (e.g., email, flyers).
- f. **Commitment.** In 250 words or less, provide evidence of the school administration's and staff's commitment to implementing or continuing the operation of the Reading Recovery® program upon completion of the new teacher training or ongoing professional development.
- g. **Dissemination.** In 250 words or less, describe the strategies that will be used for newly trained Reading Recovery® teachers to share their knowledge with other teachers in the school. Include a discussion about how the Reading Recovery® teachers will use the successful techniques learned with populations other than students participating in Reading Recovery® or in other teaching assignments.

Applicants requesting funds for **teacher-leader training** should complete the following information.

- a. **Need.** Describe the need for the teacher-leader in the employing district or school, to include information about students' reading achievement and the types of reading improvement programs currently being implemented. Indicate how the teacher-leader can be used to help

improve reading achievement in the district or school. Attach letters of support from the other districts that will use the services of the teacher-leader.

- b. **Teacher-Leader Candidates.** Describe the process used (or to be used) to select teachers for participation in the training. If participants have been identified, then provide detailed information about the teachers selected. Include in the description information about educational background, certification status, current assignment, general experience and experience specific to the teaching of reading, and other qualities relevant to successfully completing the training and becoming effective Reading Recovery® teacher-leaders. If participants have not yet been identified, then describe the criteria and qualifications to be used to screen and select training candidates.
- c. **Commitment.** In 250 words or less, provide evidence of the school administration’s and staff’s commitment to implementing or continuing the operation of the Reading Recovery® program upon completion of the teacher-leader training, including fully funding the teacher-leader’s Reading Recovery® activities for at least three years.

- ___ 4. **Evaluation Design:** Describe the data to be collected and the methods to be used to determine the success of the training or ongoing professional development. Specify how that information will be used to improve the activities provided in years 2 and 3 of the grant.
- ___ 5. **Budget Summary and Payment Schedule (Attachment 2A (training sites) and 2B (teacher-leader training)):** Must be submitted on the applicable form provided and signed by the district superintendent or official authorized to submit the proposal. The payment schedule should be based on the projected date of expenditures. Salaries and fringe benefits should be requested in equal intervals on the schedule. Supplies, equipment, contracted services and professional development should be requested in the month for which the expenditure is anticipated.
- ___ 6. **Budget Breakdown (Attachment 3A (training sites) and 3B (teacher-leader training)):** Use the applicable form to include descriptions of the anticipated expenditures, correlated to the line items set forth on the Budget Summary. Must include subcontract information, if applicable.
- ___ 7. **Certifications and Assurances (Attachments 4 and 5):** Each applicant, *including each entity that is participating in a joint application*, is required to submit the certification forms attached (“Certification and Assurances, and Standard Terms of the Grant” and “Program-Specific Terms of the Grant”). These must be signed by the official legally authorized to submit the proposal and to bind the applicant to its contents.

Criteria for Review and Approval of Proposals

Proposals will be evaluated in comparison with other proposals of the same type (i.e., training sites or teacher-leader training) based upon the criteria listed below. The total points possible for each are 100. Final determination for selection will be made by the State Superintendent of Education and will be based upon recommendations resulting from the review process.

Training Sites

1. The proposal presents a convincing rationale for the professional development based upon the students' reading progress and the school's need for improvement. Testing data and/or other statistical information validates this need. (20 points)
2. The number of participants estimated to participate in the training is appropriate based on the need and will strengthen the ability of the school to improve reading achievement. Each participant's relevant prior experience and training (or the criteria to be used to select candidates) will ensure that the participant will successfully complete the training and effectively implement the Reading Recovery® program. (15 points)
3. The proposed activities of the teacher-leader and teacher training and/or continued support are conducive to the tenets of Reading Recovery® and will lead to increased teacher understanding. The activities are adequately described, with detail enumerating the sequence and duration. The sessions have sufficient content and length to have a positive effect on teachers' classroom practices. (20 points)
4. Sufficient evidence is presented of the commitment of the school's administrators and teachers to implement the Reading Recovery® Program after the conclusion of the training. Identified sources of funding for implementation are sufficient to sustain this approach to reading instruction. (10 points)
5. Effective strategies are proposed for participants to share the knowledge gained from the professional development or training with other teachers in the school and these strategies will allow for successful implementation Reading Recovery® throughout the school to improve reading instruction. (20 points)
6. The proposed budget is cost-effective based on the numbers of teacher-leaders and/or teachers to be trained and the activities proposed. The costs reflect the appropriate guidelines under fiscal information. (15 points)

Teacher-Leader Training

1. The proposal presents a convincing rationale for the need for the teacher-leader based upon the students' reading progress and the school's need for improvement. Testing data and/or other statistical information validates this need. (35 points)
2. The process and criteria used to select candidates for teacher-leader training will assist the district in focusing on the best candidates who will successfully complete the training and effectively continue or implement the Reading Recovery® program. (30 points)
3. Sufficient evidence is presented to confirm the school administration's and staff's commitment to implementing or continuing the Reading Recovery® after teacher-leader training, including fully funding the activities of the teacher-leader for at least three years. (20 points)
4. The proposed budget is cost-effective based on the numbers of teachers to be trained and the activities proposed. The costs reflect the appropriate guidelines under fiscal information. (15 points)

