

ARRA Equipment Grant Questions April 22, 2009

1. In the RFP, pg 2 Allowable Expenses - funds must be obligated by August 31, 2009 and expended by September 30, 2009 and pg 7 Fiscal Requirements same time frame. The examples on page 7 for supporting documentation for expenditures includes purchase orders. Does this mean that we would meet the “expended by September 30, 2009 date” if we have a valid purchase order issued prior to September 30th (equipment may be delivered after September 30th)?

No, funds are considered expended when the goods have been received, the vendor has provided an accurate invoice, and the subgrant recipient has paid for the goods received. A purchase order documents the existence of an obligation. Evidence that payment of the total amount due to the vendor documents that the funds have been expended.

We recognize as does the Department of Agriculture that these are very aggressive timelines; however, the funds are intended to be expended as quickly as possible. If it appears impossible to meet the deadline for the expenditure of the funds, the Department of Education will consult with the Department of Agriculture with regard to a modification/extension.

2. Who is on the peer review committee?

Applications will be scored by staff of the Florida State University’s Dedman’s School of Hospitality.

3. How was the approximate number of awards determined (198)? Is there a maximum dollar amount per site or district?

One hundred ninety-eight (198) is the total number of sponsors that have been on the NSLP for at least two years or more. No, there is no maximum dollar amount per sponsor or school/site.

4. What capitalization policy will be applied to an RCCI such as Florida United Methodist Children’s Home, since we are not part of the school district? Our company policy is \$1,000 and a useful life of three years or more, which is far below the numbers being mentioned.

The sponsor’s capitalization policy will be used as a purchase threshold.

5. Can a SFA use ARRA funds to replace outdated computers in the schools that qualify?

POS equipment is allowable as long as it corresponds to one of the four focus areas for equipment (see question 16 in the SNP-20-2009 memo). The memo also addresses concerns about the length of time to procure POS equipment.

So this could be an allowable use of the funds under certain circumstances?
Think the answer here needs to be a bit more specific.

6. What is the best way to estimate labor involved for equipment installation?

It is the responsibility of the sponsor to determine and evaluate reasonable labor costs. It may be possible to procure an estimate for installation of the equipment.

7. Is there an "Equipment Needs Assessment" tool available?

The National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI) has recently developed a resource for SFAs entitled "Equipment Purchasing and Facility Design for School Nutrition Programs," which includes information on decision making for purchase of school foodservice equipment. This resource is available on NFSMI's website at <http://nfsmi.org/>.

8. Can POS software & hardware be purchased with this money?

Please see the answer to question 5.

9. Which free and reduce % month should our district use- October, February, or most recent month?

Please use data from reimbursement claims for February 2009.

10. How do we know how much money will be assigned to our district?

The grant does not establish a specific money award for each district/sponsor. The determination of the amount of funding will be based on the information submitted as part of the proposal. The sponsor will know the amount of the grant when the award is received.

11. Is there any \$ cap recommended for us to work with?- Ex. If our total amount of \$ for equipment needed is 1 million, should we stop there, or should we add more to the list?

Although there is not a specific cap, please keep in mind that the total grant for the State of Florida is \$5.4 million.

12. Which threshold should we follow? The grant states a threshold for capital items of at least \$5,000, or should we follow ours that is \$1,000?

Please see the answer to question 4.

13. Under the Funding Request Summary Chart, can we list more than one criteria under the focus column?

Yes

14. Can the district submit more than one application?

Each sponsor may submit one application that includes a prioritized list of equipment needs as outlined in the Request for Proposals.

15. What fund do we use for this as the function is dependent on the Fund? (DOE 101)

Please refer to the instruction sheet for the completion of DOE 101.

16. Can we not use our regular function and give it a project number?

Please see the answer to question 15. If talking about a function code for budget, use what is assigned to F&N. for the project number, use the same logic used for T IA and IDEA that uses 3040S as the fund source so the project number would be xxx3040S 0CY01.

17. If we are buying the same piece of equipment for all schools that qualify and our rationale is basically the same for all schools that qualify, do we have to provide a brief narrative for each site?

Each piece of equipment must be supported by a separate narrative.

18. Is it possible to see an example for a narrative?

Narrative content, support information and length (not to exceed 250 words) are sponsor decisions.

19. Can training cost for employees be put into the monies for a new POS system?

No. This grant is designed for the purchase of equipment as a stimulus to the economy.

20. Does the grant information need to be postmarked by May 8 or be in to DOE by May 8?

The application must be received in the Department of Education by 5 pm on May 8, 2009. Please see page 9 of the grant RFP.

21. In reference to the EN%, in the initial round of emailed questions, a District asked if rounding was permitted and the reply was, the answer would have to come from USDA. Has USDA responded to this question yet?

In order to calculate the EN% add the free and reduced price eligibles at the school from the February 2009 claim and divide by the enrollment on the February 2009 claim. This percentage should be rounded to one tenth (.1) percent. Please note that preference for awarding of grant monies goes to schools with 50% EN or higher.

22. We see that Florida is using the month of February for their EN%. Is there a specific date in February to use?

Please use data from reimbursement claims for February 2009

23. Due to the fact that there is a \$5000.00 equipment per unit acquisition cost, can Point of Service Equipment and Software costs be added in together?

Please see the answers to questions 4 and 5.

24. When we write a justification paragraph up to 250 words for equipment, can we use the same justification for multiple pieces (items) of like equipment, such as for replacement ovens that may be needed in schools.

Please see the answer to question 17.

25. Prior to the grant information being posted, it was said that monies could be requested once the purchase order was submitted. Is this still the case? If we are able to place purchase order before July 1st, 2009, can we receive the money in this fiscal year?

Funds will not be released based on a purchase order. The funding method depends on whether the applicant is a public entity or a non-public entity. Public agencies will draw funds for the cash advance system and non-public agencies must submit a vendor's invoice to DOE. Please see page 7 of the RFP.

26. Are equipment specifications necessary for submittal?

No

27. If we are including equipment installation in the cost of the equipment which would also include new gas lines, electrical work, if applicable, it will increase the

actual cost. Will our costs be questioned if we can provide the documentation that it did indeed cost the amount of money listed? For example, our maintenance dept. is not skilled enough to do the work required to install a combi oven where there may have been a convection oven prior to that. This means that our costs may be higher than another district where they have "inside" people to do the work.

Costs will not be questioned, but the sponsor is expected to determine reasonable costs for installation and labor.

28. In earlier information it said October Free and Reduced information should be used in the ARRA application. Later the information said it can be another month if consistent in the state (April 8th memo).

Please use data from reimbursement claims for February 2009

29. Is it possible to use survey 3 results since it is the most current reflection of our free and reduced?

No. Please use data from reimbursement claims for February 2009

30. From the review of the RFP it indicated a Budget Narrative should be included for each listing on the summary chart. Will examples of a budget narrative be provided to assist us with our descriptions?

Please see the answer to question 8.

31. I'm seeing that the applications need to be submitted from school districts for signature from the Superintendent however, most school districts require 2 weeks at minimum to have grants routed for signature before returning the grant to the applicant to mail out to the State. Questions will not be answered until April 27th which does not give applicants the time necessary to respond appropriately to the RFP before having to submit to the appropriate school district to have it in to the State by May 8th. Please let us know how to proceed.

Questions are answered daily and posted. There have been many repeat questions. If there is a significant question that does not meet your time frame, please contact Food and Nutrition Management.

32. Several charter schools that my organization works with are interested in applying for the above mentioned grant. The majority of the schools are their our NSLP sponsor and do not go through the local school district for food service. Therefore, where "superintendent" signature is require can they substitute their "Board Chair's" signature?

Yes

33. for example, if I am going to ask for 3 convection ovens for 3 different locations to replace units that are all 20 years old, should I these all in one justification or 3 separate ones?

Please see the answer to question 17.

34. Is the price submitted as a budgeted amount be my “best guess” – based on looking at bids of other districts and piggybacking? Otherwise, if I do not piggyback, I am not sure there will be time to do a separate bid for items if my request were approved/selected. Correct?

It is the responsibility of the sponsor to estimate the cost of each piece of equipment as accurately as possible through a price quote or method listed in the question.

35. On the actual budget narrative form with budget coding, can we group like items with the same Object Coding together or does each piece of equipment need to be listed separately? For example, I am including a POS system and adding all computer components together for the summary chart, but do I list each component separately on the budget narrative form and list it by appropriate Object Number?

Normally, we group component items together.