



Arkansas Recovery Hotline: 1-877-682-1515

Attention: **Superintendents**
Co-op Directors
other: Child Nutrition Directors

Type of Memo: **Regulatory**

Response Required: **Optional**

Section: Fiscal and Administrative Services – William J. Goff, Assistant Commissioner

Subject: ARRA 2009 Equipment Assistance Competitive Grants for Local Education Agencies

Regulatory Authority: Public Law 111-5, 7CFR 3016, 3017, 3018, 3019, 7CFR 210, 216, OMB A-87, OMB A-122

Contact Person: Patricia Winders

Phone Number: 501-324-9502

E-mail: Patricia.Winders@arkansas.gov

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) provides a one time appropriation of \$100,000,000 for equipment assistance to Local Education Agencies (LEAs) participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). Arkansas will receive \$1,249,361 in ARRA Equipment Assistance Funds for LEA grants to fund school kitchen equipment needs for 1095 schools and 259 Local Education Agencies, currently participating in the federal school nutrition programs.

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION SUBMISSION:

NO LATER THAN WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3, 2009, 4:30pm

(See Part I, Section I, Page 4 for complete list of important dates and deadlines)

- Complete Part II, Section I, for EACH District/LEA.
- Complete Part II, Section II, Kitchen/Serving Site Application for EACH SCHOOL

MAIL one (1) original plus two (2) copies of complete application (Part II, Sections I and II) to:

Attn: ARRA Equipment Assistance Grant
Arkansas Department of Education
Child Nutrition Unit
2020 W. 3rd Street, Suite 404
Little Rock, AR 72205

NO FAXED COPIES WILL BE ACCEPTED

PURPOSE OF THE ARRA EQUIPMENT ASSISTANCE COMPETITIVE GRANTS:

The primary effect of these competitive grants will be to improve the infrastructure in the NSLP.

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Focus Areas for ARRA Equipment Assistance Competitive Grants:

- **Healthy Meals:** Equipment that lends itself to improving the quality of school foodservice meals that meet the dietary guidelines, e.g. purchasing an equipment alternative to a deep fryer.

- Food Safety: Equipment that improves the safety of food served in the school meal programs, e.g. cold/hot holding equipment, dishwashing equipment, refrigeration, milk coolers, freezers, blast chiller, etc.
- Energy Efficiency: Equipment that improves the overall energy efficiency of the school foodservice operations, e.g. purchase of an energy-efficient walk-in freezer that replaces and outdated, energy-demanding freezer.
- Expanded Participation: Equipment that allows LEAs to support expanded participation in a school meal program, e.g. equipment for serving meals in a non-traditional setting or to better utilize cafeteria space.

COMPETITIVE GRANT CRITERIA:

Criteria established by USDA to award this funding and allocation are as follows:

- Funding to be awarded to LEAs based on a competitive grant process that is fair and equitable
- Competitive grants will be awarded based on the need for equipment assistance in participating schools with priority given to schools in which not less than 50 percent of the students are eligible for free or reduced price meals
- Equipment purchase MUST comply with Federal and State procurement regulations
- Funds must be tracked separately from other Child Nutrition funds.
- No administrative funds are available from these grants.

Although one USDA criterion for award of the competitive equipment grants will be the percentage of free and reduced eligible students by school as of October 1, 2008, USDA has confirmed that schools with less than 50% of free and reduced-priced students may apply for these equipment funds.

MINIMUM LEVEL OF EQUIPMENT ACQUISITION COST:

The Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) defines equipment for the purpose of the ARRA equipment assistance grant as “articles of nonexpendable, tangible property with a useful life of more than one year and a per unit acquisition cost of \$1000 or more”. This definition correlates with the current LEA definition for a capital expenditure.

DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS:

When the LEA applies for and receives a grant award for the estimated cost of a piece of equipment, the LEA will first need to pay the full cost of the equipment and installation at each kitchen/serving site receiving the award. After installation and equipment is deemed operational, the District/LEA will submit an equipment invoice for reimbursement. **ONLY ACTUAL COSTS OF APPROVED EQUIPMENT WILL BE REIMBURSED, NOT TO EXCEED THE ARRA EQUIPMENT ASSISTANCE COMPETITIVE GRANTS AWARD.** If the invoice total is more than the original grant award for that piece of equipment, the LEA will have to pay the difference.

PROCUREMENT:

It is suggested that LEAs considering applying for equipment funding, identify the each school's kitchen/serving site equipment needs focusing on the areas identified by USDA Focus Areas for Equipment listed above. **DO NOT** solicit or purchase any equipment prior to written notification of award by the Arkansas Department of Education, Child Nutrition Unit (ADE CNU) that the district has received an ARRA equipment competitive grant award. All federal, state and local procurement regulations **MUST BE FOLLOWED** with regard to open and free competitive procurements for the expenditure of federal grant funds.

BID PRODUCT OR CONTRACT SPECIFICATION DEVELOPMENT:

Vendor, broker, manufacturer, contractor, distributor, etc. of a product cannot have input into the development of product specifications or procurement specifications and/or advance review of the completed procurement documents, Requests for Proposal (RFP)/Contracts. Such activities would compromise open and free competition [7 CFR 3016.60(b)].

For further information regarding the ARRA equipment assistance competitive grant application, contact the district's Area Specialist, Patricia Winders, ARRA Grant Specialist, Suzanne Davidson or Wanda Shockey at (501) 324-9502.

Attachments:

Part I, Section I Grant Description

Part II, Section I LEA (District) Application and Cover Page

Part II, Section II LEA Kitchen/School Serving Site Application