

AP3 Question & Answer Audio

April 24, 2009 at 2:30pm

April 27, 2009 at 10:00am

April 29, 2009 at 2:00pm

May 1, 2009 at 9:00am

Districts that have attended the AP3 Question & Answer Audios

- **Alaska Gateway School District (TOK)**
- **Anchorage School District**
- **Annette Island School District**
- **Bering Strait School District**
- **Chatham School District**
- **Chugach School District**
- **Cordova School District**
- **Denali Borough School District**
- **Fairbanks North star borough School District**
- **Galena School District**
- **Kodiak School District**
- **Lower Kuskokwim School District**
- **Nome School District**
- **North Slope Borough School District**
- **Northwest Arctic Borough School District**
- **Pribilof Island School District**
- **Southeast Island School District**
- **Valdez School District**
- **Wrangell School District**

Other Programs that have participated in the AP3 Question & Answer Audios

- **Special Education Service Agency (SESA)**
- **Tlingit & Haida Head Start**
- **Kawerak Head Start**
- **RurAL CAP**

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AP3 Audio Questions & Answers

Q: If you have multiple sites do you need to submit multiple proposals?

A: No. One proposal can include information on programs in multiple sites. Please note Appendix C: Schedule of Operations. If the requested scheduling information varies from site to site you will need to complete separate pages as appropriate.

Q: Is the application published?

A: Yes. The application is posted on the EED Web site at www.eed.state.ak.us. Look under Department Links / Forms & Grants. Once there, you may either look it up by form #: 05-09-028, due date: May 26, 2009 or a key word from the Title: Alaska Pilot Pre-Kindergarten Project (AP3). You may also scroll down to find it under *Competitive Grants or Pre-Elementary Education*.

Q: Does the Pre-Kindergarten program have to be housed in a district building?

A: No. The program can be housed wherever the district and local partners determine is the most suitable location. You may need to consider insurance agreements and any relevant zoning or safety regulations that apply to your local area.

Q: If the hiring of addition personnel is part of the AP3 proposal, would they be considered employees of the district or of Head Start?

A: This depends on the type of collaboration you develop. If you are intending to blend Head Start funds, or funds from other outside agencies to hire new personnel, they would be tied to those funding dollars and any requirements that come with them. For example, AP3 can fund a district teacher to work in a Head Start or other early childhood setting. If only AP3 funds are used, the new personnel would be considered employees of the school district that is receiving these funds.

Q: Do Pre-Kindergarten teachers have to be certified?

A: No. Priority points are awarded to proposals that meet Standard 1 requirements and use the recommended SEED framework in Appendix A, (page 29) as a guide for staffing their programs. However, if a district is unable to meet this standard, the district can provide specific information of reasons why and submit a plan demonstrating quality improvement that is sufficient to receive a waiver. Please see page 6, the paragraph directly above Standard 1.

Q: How long will the funding be available?

A: AP3 is currently a two year pilot project. While there are no guarantees of future funding, the current plan is to continue building on the expected success of these funded projects.

Q: Are budgets for one or two years?

A: Please see page 12. The first year budget must be completed however a narrative for both the first and the second year is requested to explain any anticipated changes over the course of the 2 year program.

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Q: Is the Head Start Expansion grant two year as well?

A: No. The Head Start Expansion grant is funded with state money that must be expended fully by June 30th annually. There is no carryover. Once awarded to a grantee, the additional funds become part of the base grant to support continued growth of the program. The Head Start Expansion grant is not a pilot program

Q: Are there required assessments?

A: Yes. Please see page 6-7, Standard 3 Child Outcome Measurement, and Standard 4, Program Evaluations. Child Outcome measurements must focus on all domain areas of development as expressed in Alaska's Early Learning Guidelines. Evaluation tools used in a pre/post format must include the Dial 3 and the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test. The Revised Alaska Developmental Profile will also be used as a year- end observational snapshot of the child's growth across domains.

Q: What is SEED?

A: SEED is the Alaska System for Early Education Development (SEED). It was developed by a large number of state stakeholders over the course of six years. The federal funding no longer exists but the work continues as part of a state system to ensure a set standard of qualified Early Childhood practitioners across the state of Alaska. Please see Appendix A; pages 29-31.

Q: On what Web site will the Q/A be posted?

A: You will find the Q/A in the same location as the AP3 grant application at <http://www.eed.state.ak.us/forms/home.cfm>.

Q: Do districts have to use the DIAL3 and the PPVT if we have been using other assessment tools?

A: Yes. The intent was to build a common system of assessment for the Pre-K programs so the department could verify the effectiveness of each program and compare program results across the state. A district may use additional assessments tools but must include the Dial 3, the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, and the Revised Alaska Developmental Profile.

Q: Why are priority points given for a district commitment to team participation in the Mediated Learning Experiences (MLE) and training?

A: The Mediated Learning Experiences in one of the most heavily researched educational programs in the world yet is not well known in the United States. Alaska was the first to implement the Early Childhood MLE program in North America. It was used in the department's previous pre-school pilot and showed positive growth across multiple districts and communities, especially in concepts and language development. The department has decided to offer MLE training to build on this previous success. Participation is not mandatory; however five priority points will be awarded to districts that will commit to team participation. More information about this program can be found at: <http://www.icelp.org>

Q: Is this program going to pay indirect costs?

A: Yes. Districts will use the FY2010 Federal Indirect rate schedule (Restricted Rates Only).

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Q: If a school district partners with another separate agency does the school district need to submit the proposal?

A: Yes. Application must be approved and submitted by the school district as the primary partner. If awarded, grant funds will flow through the school district to ensure all fiscal requirements are met.

Q: If we have additional outside funding available can we blend funds?

A: Yes. Ten priority points will be given to applicants that leverage additional federal, state and or local funding in addition to in-kind supports. Please see page 5, part C.

Q: What defines "School Year"?

A: The "School Year" is based on the school district's calendar year.

Q: If the school year is an extended year will this grant cover that?

A: Yes. Extended year programs can be included. You will need to show how the grant will impact services during both the typical school year and extended year.

Q: If we have several sites that currently have Pre-K programs, should we choose one or two sites to expand or can we submit for all sites?

A: This is a local decision. Keep in mind this is a pilot, and thus large scale implementation in one district may not meet the need for multiple models and diverse geographic representation. If you submit for multiple sites the department may ask you to modify the request dependent on available funds. It is possible to submit a proposal for existing programs, just be clear in your proposal of what is currently in place and how these additional funds will supplement efforts to either expand services to more children and their families or to improve program quality. The district will have flexibility to decide the best use of these funds for each site.

Q: If we have several School districts partnering can we write one proposal or do we each have to submit our own?

A: If a multi school district consortium provides the needed local partnerships there should be no problem. You will need to determine which district is the lead through which the funding will flow.

Q: Does this program preclude working with other preschool programs in our area?

A: No. Districts are encouraged to collaborate with all existing programs to ensure that resources and services to the community are coordinated to ensure the highest quality program. Please be aware that there are additional state and federal expansion funds specifically for Head Start that also encourage collaboration with school districts. In order to avoid duplication of services that could result in competition for enrollment, it is very important that school districts and Head Starts work together in this planning period to ensure that the proposals for the various grant applications will improve program quality and serve additional children and their families. Ten priority points are given to proposals that leverage federal, state and or local funding in addition to in-kind supports.

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Q: Is the primary target only four and young five year olds, or can the funds be used to expand programs that currently serve three, four, and young five year olds?

A: Yes. The AP3 grant is primarily targeting four and young five year olds and their families. If funds are used to expand existing programs that currently includes younger children, the proposal must clearly state how these additional dollars are targeted to only four and young five year olds and their families.

Q: Would there be an option for split funding in a program designed for three and four year olds, and four and young five year olds?

A: Yes. The application must clearly indicate that AP3 funds serve only four year olds and young five year olds. If blending funds for staffing or materials the district may consider using funds based on the percentage of eligible children and families served.

Q: When do you plan on notifying the School Districts of Grant Awards?

A: Notice of the Intent to Award will be sent out by June 15th. Grant awards will be issued after the 30 day appeal period if there are no appeals filed. Awarded funds will be retro-active to July 1, 2009.

Q: Are Pre-K classrooms limited to 20 children or less?

A: No. Standard 2 requires a maximum class size of 20, with a staff ratio of 1:10 or better. However, if the district provides a reasonable explanation of why this is not possible, along with a plan to comply, a waiver may be granted.

Q: Can funds be used to contract with a Psychologist to administer the DIAL 3 assessments?

A: Yes. This is allowable as long as the contracted services target only the eligible children as outlined in the application. Please see section F on page 8.

Q: Will the state provide Program Evaluators?

A: Yes. As outlined on page 7, Standard 4, the state will assess each program of this statewide project through the use of the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS). The state will select and support the costs of the evaluator.

Q: Do sub-contracts have to be expressed in the yearly budget (i.e.: Psychologists, preparers, etc.)?

A: Yes. You will need to mention what services you will be contracting for. If you already know who you will be contracting with, a Head Start or other provider for example, please include that information.

Q: What is the limit to the number of pages in our response to this application?

A: No more than 12 double-spaced pages. Pages must have a 1-inch margin on all sides and utilize a type size of 12 points or greater, preferably using Times New Roman font.

Q: Is there additional information about the MLE training?

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A: Training will be held in Anchorage sometime in August. This will be a one week training, with a possible two credits for attending. There is no registration fee. Districts need to submit budget travel costs for their team including lodging, per diem, and substitutes. Teams should include teachers and aides who will implement the Mediated Learning Instruments and an administrator if possible. This information will provide guidance to the department concerning total costs of the training. Funding for this training will come from other department funding, not the AP3 funds.

Q: If the Head Start program in our community is no longer operating can we still partner with Head Start?

A: Yes. The Head Start may be able to reopen their program with your assistance through this grant. You may also partner with the Head Start to operate or assist your local non-Head Start program.

Q: What is the funding amount available?

A: The AP3 project provides approximately 2 million dollars statewide for 2 years. There is no minimum limit. The maximum limit is \$400,000 each year for two years. We expect to award 5-12 district programs to serve 25 new classrooms and approximately 500 additional children.

Q: If a child is 5 years old but does not seem ready for kindergarten and has an IEP, can that child be enrolled in this pre-K program?

A: It would be up the local IEP team to determine the most appropriate placement for the child. They would be classified and funded as a kindergarten student.

Q: What if a child is not kindergarten ready but does not have an IEP?

A: The current law is based on age, not readiness. The child would need to be enrolled in kindergarten and then go through the districts screening and intervention procedures if needed.

Q: Can the pre-K program provide additional support for a 5-year old attending kindergarten.

A: Yes. This could be one of several intervention options a district could establish for that child. They would be classified and funded as a kindergarten student.

Q: What happened to the Parents as Teacher component?

A: The AP3 will provide both a classroom option and parent support. If a parent does not wish to enroll their child, they can still request parental support decided locally. It can include the Parents as Teachers model, home visits or it could be a resource center or other parent support approach. There is not a mandatory requirement to use Parents as Teachers.

Q: For the purpose of this application, must a district have a pre-school certification or child care license in place?

A: No. Considering the extremely short turn around period of this application and limited resources to process certification and licensing requests, the department will consider waivers. The district should include a plan to meet these requirements in their application.

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Q: Will the districts be required to have harnesses and aide supervision on their busses like Head Start is required to have?

A: No. Transportation is not required, but a blending of funds to provide this service is possible at the higher standard of those collaborating. Much of this depends on the partnership agreement and local needs. In sites where Head Start is established and has the capacity to expand full services, it may be important to maintain the Head Start requirements. For example Head Start funds could be used to purchase and install harnesses and fund an aide while the district could provide and maintain a bus. All transportation issues can be determined in your local collaborations.

Q: Are you picturing anything other than a half day, in the school, with a certified teacher?

A: This is a pilot; we hope to see success and would like to keep growing from here.

Q: The certified teacher part is hard to get around, can we work around this?

A: Please see page 5, there can be accommodations made (waivers) with reasonable explanation. But the goal of the department is to move to that higher standard.

Q: In terms of per pupil allocation should we be looking at a max amount per child?

A: We can't dictate a max amount because of the different collaborations, expansions, and location situations that will vary.

Q: Appendix G- Commitment and Signature Form requires specific signatures that may not be available by due date.

A: If all signatories are not known please submit those that are available (your administration, and other school staff). It is understood that some staff hiring may take place upon receipt of the grant award, those can be submitted at a later date.

Q: Are resumes required for Appendix D?

A: No. If you would like to submit them that would be helpful, but it is not necessary. Submittal of teaching credential is also not necessary, but would be accepted in this appendix. This will not count towards your 12 page limit.

Q: On pg. 22 number 4 (MOA – appendix E) will there be flexibility if specific school sites have not been determined and therefore MOA's would not be available at the time of application?

A: Yes. If commitment and signatures are not available at the due date please provide a description of your plan and provide the signatures at a later date.

Q: How many typical peers can be served within a 619 Special Education Preschool?

A: Currently IDEA calls for 50% to be typical peers for a classroom to be viewed as the least restrictive environment. This number may increase after the public comment period ends. Please note that 619 funding can only support children with IEP's not the typical peers.