Governor's Office for Children
Promoting the well-being of Maryland's children

State of Maryland Executive Department

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To: Local Management Board Chairs and Points of Contact

From: Kim Malat, Deputy Director

Date: February 23, 2016

Re: FY17 NOFA Pre-Application Meeting Recap

This memo provides a recap from the FY17 Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) Pre-Application Meeting held on February 12, 2016. The meeting included a presentation by Arlene Lee, executive Director of the Governor's Office for Children, followed by budget and general questions. Materials distributed at the meeting are included with this memo.

Key Points

- Since the FY17 NOFA was issued before the Appropriation, the funding is subject to the availability although the Office does not anticipate any changes resulting from the budget process.

- The FY17 grant is a 12-month award, with multi-year funding anticipated in FY19.

- Implementation of programs funded in FY17 by the Children's Cabinet Fund should begin on July 1, 2017, following the receipt of the Notice of Award for FY17.

- The applications will be reviewed by an interagency team. For a Board to receive its base funding, a minimum score of 61 is required.

- A score of 81 or above is required to receive competitive funding. Geographic diversity will be a factor in determining the grant awards for competitive funding along with demonstrated ability to align performance measures with prioritized indicators for meaningful impact.

- In addition to requests to fund a program, Boards may also request for funding for planning from either the base or competitive funding.

Comprehensive Planning

- The planning process is not just about the Board, but the entire jurisdiction. The reviewers will be looking to answer questions such as: How did the Board conduct the planning process? How were stakeholders engaged in the design of strategies and program implementation?

- Arlene Lee recently presented at the Maryland Coalition of Families for Children's Mental Health's Family Leadership Institute. She emphasized that the Boards are engaging in a planning process that should include parents and Local Management Board contact information was shared with the group.

- It's important to reassess the community plan regularly. Doing so will bring new partners to the Boards who can work collectively to address the issues in the jurisdiction. It is also important to remember the plan is for more than just the Children's Cabinet funding, a good plan can become the basis for other funding and resources.

- What kind of data to use? Boards should use the best available data (population level, county, neighborhood, etc.) to examine the problem(s) in the jurisdiction. Depending on the geographic focus of the Board, the data could be county-level, neighborhood-level or even smaller units.

- How to demonstrate effectiveness? For current programs 3-5 years of performance measures would show a useful trend, but a Board should use no less than 3 years of performance data for an existing program. This is important to show how the program will continue to help improve the targeted indicator. For new programs, Boards should use research and program evaluations that demonstrate that the program will improve the targeted indicator. Boards are expected to provide citations to the research they are relying upon in their application.

- Boards are encouraged to expand or enhance existing services. An example is providing stipends for an existing workforce program to allow youth to receive a small payment for participating in training and apprenticeships. This is included in the Q& A document distributed at the pre-application meeting.

Grant Review Team

- Remember that representatives of the grant review team are potential funders. They will become familiar with local programs; which will be helpful with future applications to those agencies or organizations.

Results Based Leadership

- If you are interested in the Results Based Leadership Program with the Annie E. Casey Foundation, please check the box on the cover sheet of the application. The Foundation will select the Boards for participation. Each selected Board will create a team to participate in the six month program. There is no cost to participate.

Submission Requirements

- New this year, the signature of the Chief Executive Officer of the jurisdiction is required on the application. Please let the appropriate signatories know in advance in order to avoid delays in obtaining the required signatures. Nonprofits who have specific issues with this requirement may contact Kim Malat.

Budget Worksheets:

- If a page of the worksheet packet, or a line on a worksheet page, is not applicable, please mark the page or line with "N/A".
- The budget is only an estimate. Please provide the best estimate.
- A Board can submit a budget modification during the year if needed.
- The cash match can come from any source for either type of funding (base or competitive). The only funding sources that may not be used as a match is the Children's Cabinet Interagency Fund or "in-kind" support.

General Questions

1. **How will a potential conflict of interest be handled for the grant review team? For example, if an agency that is on the grant review team also funds a Local Management Board, is that a conflict of interest?**

The Office has asked the foundation and agency staff to be aware of any potential conflict of interest prior to participating.

2. **Can we use data and research from past focus groups and planning processes?**

Yes.

3. **Does the proposal need to be received at the Office by 5 p.m. on May 20th or can it be postmarked by this date?**

Yes, the proposal needs to be physically received at the Office by 5 p.m. on May 20, 2016.

4. **If the Board funds a program that has a performance measure that is no longer able to improve but desires to maintain the level of performance, could this be used in the grant application as an example?**

In the application the Board can discuss; A.) the effectiveness of the program, B.) why further improvement in performance cannot be achieved, and C.) how the program will continue to contribute to improvements in the targeted indicator.

5. **Why isn't a citizen or family member a part of the grant review team?**

There is a specific vetting and appointments process for members of the general public to participate on State bodies. A grant review process does not generally involve the public, just those agencies and organizations that are partners in the project.

6. **Can the Board articulate the effectiveness of a larger community strategy instead of just one program?**

When a Board would like to demonstrate how a strategy is impacting an indicator and the role of the program proposed for funding that is part of that strategy, the Board may consult *Trying Hard Isn't Good Enough* for guidance.

7. **If the Board has an existing pilot or program that it wishes to expand, can this expansion be funded with the competitive grant dollars?**

Yes. The existing program can be funded by the Board's base funding (or any other source) and the expansion could be funded by the competitive grant dollars, as long as the program or the expansion activities relate to one of the four goals.

8. **For the Results Based Leadership Program facilitated by the Anne E. Casey Foundation:**

a) **For the Results Based Leadership Program facilitated by the Anne E. Casey Foundation, does the "team of key local leaders" have to already be members of the Local Management Board?**

No. The team should include community stakeholders and local leaders as well. These may be individuals whom you've not previously interacted with but who would be able to support the Board's work in improving outcomes for disconnected youth.

b) **Where can we get more information about the program?**

More information is available at: http://www.aecf.org/work/talent-and-leadership-development/leadership-development/. You can also speak to members of your local Early Childhood Advisory Council who have previously participated in this leadership development process

c) **If we will not have a disconnected youth program for FY17, could the Board still apply to be in the Leadership Program to plan for a disconnected youth program in FY18?**

While we had not considered that possibility, it could be possible. In this case a Board will need to discuss in the narrative section that they are not specifically asking for program funds, but would be interested in the Results Based Leadership Program for planning purposes. The Board will also need to check the box on the application cover sheet.

d) What is the time commitment for the Leadership Program?

Six months.

9. How does the Board address program eligibility that requires students to receive free and reduced meals when this may mean that the program will not be able to serve all students.

The Board can look at the new Community Eligibility Provision that allows schools with high percentages of low-income children to provide free breakfast and lunch to all students. If the program is in a school that is participating in the Community Eligibility program, the Board does not have to restrict participation to students based on individual eligibility. For more information please see: http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/npwg/meeting_02042014/Community_Eligibility.pdf

10. How will a competitive funding request be demonstrated in the narrative?

Competitive programs will be identified in three places: the narrative, the budget (separate worksheets are required for base and competitive funding, with the name of the program included at the top of each worksheet page), and the overall budget summary that is included in the cover sheet (which asks for the name of each program, base or competitive, and the funding requested).

11. Is technical assistance available for the NOFA?

No, technical assistance is not available for the NOFA application, but it is available for the Board's other activities, such as board recruitment.

12. Can we use competitive dollars for regional planning?

Yes, if a regional approach is being taken then all Boards will need to include this in their narrative, but only one Board will include it in their budget.

13. If a Local Management Board will issue a Request for Proposals or other solicitation for competitive bid for a specific program, should it be issued by now?

Not necessarily - in the narrative, the Board can discuss the planning and implementation process, including the timeline for the solicitation, the steps for completing the procurement process, the timeline for implementation of the program, etc. Boards will need to comply with their local procurement processes.

14. **Will feedback be available after the grant review process?**

Yes. A Board may request feedback through their Local Management Board technical assistance staff person after the notice of awards is issued on June 20, 2016.

15. **Regarding the Cash Match:**

a) **Is there anything beyond a letter needed for the cash match requirement?**

No, a letter of commitment is all that the Board needs to provide.

b) **Does every program need to have a 25% cash match or is that an overall 25% for all programs?**

Each program does not need a 25% match; the match can be spread across programs. This will be shown on the overall budget summary that is part of the cover page to the application.

c) **Does the cash match have to be cash or can it be in-kind support?**

The cash match must be actual cash and not in-kind support.

16. **Can administrative funding be used to help programs no longer being funded?**

Each Board will decide how to use their base funding; how much will be used for administrative costs (up to 30%) and how much will be used for programs. A Board can choose to use funding for programs that was previously identified as administrative. However, all programs funded through the base funding will need to be demonstrated to be effectively addressing a critical need. Effectiveness is shown through at least three years of performance measure data and need is demonstrated in the community planning process.

17. **Can we still submit questions about the NOFA?**

Yes, please send questions to Kim Malat at kim.malat@maryland.gov.

18. **Will GOC adopt new indicators for the goal of reducing the impact of incarceration? How should we quantify the issue in the community plan?**

The Office does not have plans to adopt additional indicators for this goal. Jurisdictions should use the best available data on incarceration rates and overall incarcerated populations in their communities which may include data obtained through the local detention center.