DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Training of Interpreters for Individuals Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing and Individuals Who Are Deaf-Blind

AGENCY: Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice of final priorities for fiscal year (FY) 2000 and subsequent fiscal years.

SUMMARY: The Secretary announces final funding priorities for fiscal year (FY) 2000 and subsequent fiscal years under the Training of Interpreters for Individuals Who Are Deaf and Individuals Who Are Deaf-Blind program. The Secretary takes this action to assist with the establishment of interpreter training programs or to assist ongoing programs to train a sufficient number of skilled interpreters throughout the country to meet the communication needs of individuals who are deaf and individuals who are deaf-blind by—(a) Training manual, tactile, oral, and cued speech interpreters; (b) ensuring the maintenance of the skills of interpreters; and (c) providing opportunities for interpreters to raise their level of competence.

EFFECTIVE DATE: These priorities are effective October 1, 1999.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mary Lovley, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 3217 Mary E. Switzer Building, Room 3217, Washington, DC 20202–2736. Telephone: (202) 205–9393. If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), you may call the TDD number at (202) 401–3664. Internet address: Mary__Lovley@ed.gov.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain this document in an alternate format (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) on request to the contact person listed in the preceding paragraph.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Training of Interpreters for Individuals Who Are Deaf and Individuals Who Are Deaf-Blind program is authorized under section 302(f) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

On May 10, 1999 the Secretary published a notice of proposed priorities for this program in the **Federal Register** (64 FR 25140). This notice of final priorities contains three changes from the notice of proposed priorities. All three changes are to Priority 1—National Project with Major Emphasis on Distance Education as a Medium for Interpreter Training. The first change added Hawaii to the list of States that have no degree-granting interpreter training program. The second change added a requirement that a project must ensure that curricula are developed or modified with input from a culturally diverse, consumer-based consortium. The third change added a requirement that the project must evaluate the effectiveness of training interpreters using the distance education curricula. The changes are fully explained in the Analysis of Comments and Changes located elsewhere in this notice.

Note: This notice of final priorities does *not* solicit applications. In any year in which the Secretary chooses to use these priorities, the Secretary invites applications through a notice in the **Federal Register**. A notice inviting applications under these competitions is published in a separate notice elsewhere in this issue of the **Federal Register**.

Analysis of Comments and Changes

In response to the Secretary's invitation in the notice of proposed priorities, 27 parties submitted comments on or before the June 9, 1999 deadline. An analysis of the comments and of the changes in the priorities since publication of the notice of proposed priorities follows. Please note that we address only those issues on which substantive comments were received. Generally, we do not address technical and other minor changes—and suggested changes the law does not authorize the Secretary to make.

General Comments

Comments: Two commenters suggested that a priority to train educational interpreters be added.

Discussion: We recognize the importance of training interpreters to work in the educational environment. We support projects to train educational interpreters through the Personnel Preparation to Improve Services and Results for Children with Disabilities, Preparation of Special Education, Related Services, and Early Intervention Personnel to Serve Infants, Toddlers, and Children with Low-Incidence Disabilities competition (CFDA 84.029A) in the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). In addition, in fiscal year (FY) 1990 we supported a national project under the Training of Interpreters for Individuals Who Are Deaf and Individuals Who Are Deaf-Blind program in the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) to focus on the development of a curriculum on interpreting in the educational environment. This curriculum is currently being used by OSEP educational interpreter training grantees and continues to be distributed by Northwestern Connecticut Community-Technical College and the National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials. Feedback received from the field is that this curriculum is still current and appropriate. Further, Priority 2 requires the use of model curricula developed by recent and current RSA-funded national interpreter training projects, including the curriculum that emphasizes interpreting in educational settings. Finally, the training conducted by the regional programs may have an impact on educational settings in addition to other settings.

Changes: None.

Comments: Two commenters supported the two proposed funding priorities, but also recommended that the Department support research on the value of educational interpreting for students who are deaf and hard of hearing at all educational levels. One commenter recommended that research be conducted to investigate the problem of how best to remedy the need for interpreters. Another commenter recommended numerous research questions regarding interpreter training and interpreter ethics and suggested that this research would best be done by a national center committed to research.

Discussion: We appreciate this support and note that the regulations in 34 CFR 396.1 define the Training of Interpreters for Individuals Who Are Deaf and Individuals Who Are Deaf-Blind program as a training program. Research is beyond the scope of this program. We will share these comments with the appropriate individuals in OSEP and the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR).

Changes: None.

Comments: One commenter supported the two proposed funding priorities, and two commenters recommended that the Department establish an additional priority to support the cost of establishing additional distance education sites and enhance existing technologies to allow for quality skill-based training via video technologies.

Discussion: As previously stated, the regulations for this program define it as a training program. Developing and enhancing the technological infrastructure is beyond the scope of this program.

Changes: None.

Comments: Three commenters recommended that the priorities include the provision of stipends to students.

Discussion: Training stipends are not authorized under the Training of Interpreters for Individuals Who Are

Deaf and Individuals Who Are Deaf-Blind program.

Changes: None.

Comment: One commenter indicated that there is a need for small, centrally located programs that are nationally funded to help train new interpreters and upgrade the skills of the persons working in the field.

Discussion: We recognize the need for centrally located interpreter training programs and plan to continue to support 10 regional interpreter training programs.

Changes: None.

Comment: One commenter recommended that funding needs to go to an organization or company to ensure that interpreters are current with their training and are receiving training in all aspects of interpreting and that more stringent renewal of interpreters' certification is needed.

Discussion: We believe that it is the role of the professional interpreter certifying organizations to monitor the training activities and certification requirements of the professionals in the field and not the role of the Federal Government.

Changes: None.

Priority 1—National Project with Major Emphasis on Distance Education as a Medium for Interpreter Training

Comments: Two commenters indicated that Hawaii has no degree-granting interpreter training program.

Discussion: The interpreter training program currently offered through the Office of Continuing Education and Training at Kapiolani Community College on the island of Oahu is a 2-year, non-credit, non-degree-granting program. Therefore, Hawaii should be listed among those States that do not have a degree-granting interpreter training program.

Changes: Language in the priority has been changed to include Hawaii.

Comment: One commenter stated that the proposed priority lacked formal recognition of the need for various stakeholders to collaborate and work together effectively to make needs known and devise methods or provide feedback about the appropriate technology to meet the needs in any given locality.

Discussion: We note that Priority 2—National Project with Major Emphasis on Training Interpreter Educators requires that the curricula be developed with input from a culturally diverse, consumer-based consortium. Priority 1—National Project with Major Emphasis on Distance Education as a Medium for Interpreter Training does not have such a statement, and we recognize the value of stakeholders' participation in funded activities.

Changes: We have added a statement to Priority 1 requiring that curricula be developed or modified with input from a culturally diverse, consumer-based consortium.

Comment: One commenter supported Priority 1 and recommended placing an emphasis on a specific brand of video conferencing equipment and providing general information on the most advanced and appropriate equipment.

Discussion: We refrain from making reference to specific technology or from providing descriptions of the most advanced equipment in this priority because the rate of technology advancement may render those statements obsolete prior to the start of the project.

Changes: None.

Comment: One commenter supported Priority 1 and recommended the inclusion of a statement requiring the development and implementation of strategic planning approaches focusing on collaborative working relationships between two or more higher education institutions.

Discussion: One of the requirements of the priority is to provide technical assistance, and the commenter's recommendation is one action that could fall under the required technical assistance. We do not wish to dictate any specific technical assistance activities.

Changes: None.

Comment: One commenter supported both funding priorities, but questioned the necessity of requiring the National Project with Major Emphasis on Distance Education as a Medium for Interpreter Training to be national in scope. The commenter stated that having the training project regionally or locally based may be a more effective way of recruiting, developing, and maintaining interpreters in underserved areas.

Discussion: We recognize the need for regionally based interpreter training programs and plan to continue to support 10 regional interpreter training programs.

Changes: None.

Comments: Two commenters supported both priorities, but questioned whether the technology of video conferencing is an adequate tool for teaching the signing skills necessary for quality interpreting and cautioned against replacing the mentor-student interaction needed to provide comprehensive interpreter training through practicum and fieldwork experiences.

Discussion: We recognize that video conferencing, if it were used alone, may not be an adequate tool for teaching sign language and interpreting. However, as with any distance education instruction, distance interpreter education is not limited to video conferencing technology. While the priority requires technical assistance on the proper use of the most current and available technologies, such as video conferencing, videotaping, Internet web classes and chat rooms, e-mail, and voice mail, this does not preclude the simultaneous use of non-technical approaches to distance education such as on-site mentoring, use of printed or videotaped material, association with deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf-blind individuals or groups, and practicum experiences.

Changes: None.

Comment: One commenter expressed concern about the computer and technology literacy of individuals who would be engaged in distance learning and recommended providing funds to employ geographically proximate ''circuit riders'' to address this concern.

Discussion: We recognize that the use of ''circuit riders'' is one possible approach to improving or ensuring the computer and technology literacy of individuals interested in participating in distance interpreter education opportunities. We expect that proposals will address this, among other concerns, and do not wish to prescribe any one method or approach.

Changes: None.

Comment: One commenter stated that there is no discussion of any type of evaluation or methods of measuring the effectiveness of training interpreters using the distance education curricula prior to its dissemination.

Discussion: There is a requirement to provide technical assistance to interpreter training programs on the feasibility and effectiveness of distance interpreter education. We agree with the importance of evaluating the effectiveness of training interpreters using the distance education curricula.

Changes: We have added an evaluation requirement to the priority.

Comment: One commenter stated that dissemination is a critical issue and that having the information in several different formats or ways would be beneficial.

Discussion: There is a requirement that the packaged distance education curricula be disseminated to interpreter educators nationwide. The proposals would identify how the potential projects plan to carry out this requirement.

Changes: None.

Priority 2—National Project with Major Emphasis on Training Interpreter Educators

Comments: Two commenters supported Priority 2, with one commenter requesting that this priority be weighted more heavily than Priority 1 and the other commenter requesting that the mentoring portion of this priority be given sufficient weight and earmarked funding to ensure that it is addressed.

Discussion: We appreciate this support, but note that these priorities are not assigned weights.

Changes: None.

Comment: One commenter supported both priorities including the focus on identifying and updating or developing a model mentor training curriculum and training experienced interpreters or interpreter educators to serve as mentors, but only if the rural and island areas of Hawaii will have effective use of them.

Discussion: The priority requires that the mentor training program train mentors to serve in a variety of situations or environments, including various regions and culturally diverse environments. We believe that this requirement will allow Hawaii, and other States with unique needs, to make effective use of the curriculum and the trained mentors.

Changes: None.

Comments: Two commenters supported both priorities, but suggested that Priority 2 also include curriculum for training interpreters in mental health, educational, medical, legal, and other environments requiring specialized training.

Discussion: We recognize the need for training interpreters to work in environments requiring specialized training and believe that the priority is broad enough to permit the development of curriculum, or training of interpreters, in specialized settings. However, there is no basis to require the grantee to include the settings requested by the commenter.

Changes: None.

Comment: One commenter supported both priorities, but asked that steps be taken to ensure that members of the deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind communities are afforded the opportunity to participate in the training programs and, for those who are qualified, to become part of the interpreter educator staff. This commenter also requested that the material adaptation and interpreter educator training not overlook the regional and often local diversity in sign language and cultural backgrounds.

Discussion: We agree that consumer involvement is crucial to a successful program and note that the priority specifically requires that the curricula be developed with input from a culturally diverse, consumer-based consortium. We also note that the priority requires that training be available to culturally diverse audiences and be sensitive to the needs of all audiences. These culturally diverse audiences would include, among the many other forms of diversity, training available to individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf-blind.

Changes: None.

Priorities

Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3) the Secretary gives an absolute preference to applications that meet one of the following priorities. The Secretary funds under these competitions only applications that meet one of these absolute priorities:

Priority 1—National Project with Major Emphasis on Distance Education as a Medium for Interpreter Training (84.160B)

Background: Historically interpreter training programs have been located in colleges and universities in metropolitan areas or in areas of high population. While demand for interpreter services exceeds the supply of interpreters even in metropolitan areas, the dearth of interpreters in rural areas is marked. *A Study of Interpreter Services for Persons Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing,* published in 1993, concluded that ''there is sufficient work/need for additional professional interpreters in every state and many major communities.'' Organizations such as the National Association of the Deaf (NAD) and the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) have also identified the shortage of qualified interpreters. Some States, such as Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, Rhode Island, Vermont, and West Virginia, as well as Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Trust Territories of the Pacific other than Guam, have no degree-granting interpreter training program. Due to the relatively sparse population in large geographical areas, student enrollment may not be sufficient to support interpreter training programs should they be established in these areas. As a result, individuals living in these States or areas who are interested in obtaining interpreter training must seek that training at a great distance from their homes. Further, the few working interpreters living in these States or areas who wish to maintain or upgrade their skills often find it difficult to locate nearby sources for continuing education. Distance education can help fill this void. The challenge, however, is to effectively deliver the interpreter training curricula, which is a skill-based, visual-based curricula rather than a knowledge-based or text-based curricula. Therefore, it is of critical importance that interpreter-training curricula be modified to make the best use of a blend of all of the available technologies, such as video conferencing, Internet web classes and chat rooms, e-mail, and voice mail. With proper curricular modifications, interpreter training can be provided via distance education to rural areas, remote locations, and areas with low populations in a cost-effective manner.

RSA has determined that a national project is needed that will focus on adapting existing model interpreter training curricula used by 2-year and 4-year interpreter training programs for delivery via distance education. In addition, there is a need for technical assistance to, and coordination and cooperation with, interpreter training programs across the Nation on matters related to the use of distance education as a medium for interpreter training.

Priority: A project must—

- Be national in scope;
- Adapt or modify existing model interpreter training curricula or develop new appropriate interpreter training curricula for delivery via distance education and package it for easy use by the RSA-funded regional interpreter training projects and other trainers and interpreter training programs;
- Ensure that the curricula are developed or modified with input from a culturally diverse, consumer-based consortium;
- Evaluate the effectiveness of training interpreters using the distance education curricula;
- Develop detailed instruction manuals to accompany each packaged curriculum;
- Provide technical assistance to interpreter training programs on the feasibility and effectiveness of distance interpreter education;
- Establish cooperative working relationships with the RSA-funded regional interpreter training projects;
- Furnish technical assistance to the RSA-funded regional interpreter training projects in developing and using distance education as a mechanism for training interpreters to meet the communication needs of

individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf-blind in their regions;

• Provide technical assistance and professional development opportunities for interpreter trainers across the Nation on the development and use of distance education as a mechanism for training interpreters to meet the communication needs of individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf-blind. The technical assistance must address matters such as the proper use of the distance interpreter education curriculum; the proper use of the most current and available technologies, such as video conferencing, videotaping, Internet web classes and chat rooms, e-mail, and voice mail; the technical infrastructure needed to successfully conduct distance interpreter education; and the policy implications and barriers that exist in providing distance interpreter education across a State or across State lines (e.g., classification of distance education students as in-State or out-of-State, the geographic area the institution is designed to serve, etc.); and

• Disseminate the packaged distance education curricula to interpreter educators nationwide.

Priority 2—National Project with Major Emphasis on Training Interpreter Educators (84.160C)

Background: In order to train qualified interpreters, interpreter educators must be both sufficient in number and current in knowledge and best practices. There are, however, very few programs that prepare interpreter educators to teach the interpreting process and the skill of interpreting. As a result, many faculty teaching at the 100-plus interpreter training programs have had little or no opportunity to study how to teach interpretation. Further, over the last 10 years RSA has funded the development of model curricula emphasizing the interpreting needs of culturally diverse communities, deaf-blind interpreting, and interpreting in educational and rehabilitation environments. Due to the low number of programs to train interpreter educators, this curriculum is not being shared widely and, as a result, is not being used extensively.

The model curricula on interpreting in educational environments and interpreting in rehabilitation environments is available at the National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials at Oklahoma State University, 5202 Richmond Hill Drive, Stillwater, OK 74078–4080. The model curricula on the interpreting needs of culturally diverse communities and interpreting for individuals who are deaf-blind are being developed under currently funded projects. These curricula will be available at the National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials once these projects have completed their activities. The project developing the model curriculum on the interpreting needs of culturally diverse communities ends on December 31, 2000, and the project developing the model curriculum on interpreting for individuals who are deaf-blind ends on September 30, 2000.

Another aspect of training a sufficient number of qualified interpreters is the practice of mentoring. Mentors are experienced interpreters and interpreter educators who provide one-on-one technical assistance to novice interpreters or to working interpreters who wish to improve or expand their skills or work toward certification. While ''mentoring is not a substitute for comprehensive interpreter education or for the internships and practicums associated with such formal training'' (RID Standard Practice Paper on ''Mentoring''), it supports and augments the training received in those settings. While the field of interpreting embraces the use of mentoring, there is no established uniform mechanism for training individuals to serve as mentors.

In order to train a sufficient number of qualified interpreters throughout the country, there is a need to increase the number of highly trained interpreter educators and mentors. A national project is needed to address these issues.

Priority: A project must—

• Be national in scope;

• Develop a new curriculum, or update a former or existing curriculum, to prepare interpreter educators and, once this is developed, use it to train both working interpreter educators who need to obtain, enhance, or update their training and new interpreter educators. This newly developed or updated curriculum must include all issues pertinent to the training of interpreters and the use of the model curricula developed by recent and current RSA-funded national interpreter training projects that emphasize the interpreting needs of culturally diverse communities, interpreting for deaf-blind individuals, and interpreting in educational and rehabilitation environments;

• Identify and update or develop a model mentor training curriculum that includes elements such as diagnostic assessment, goal setting, discourse analysis, and effective feedback provision and, once this is developed, train experienced interpreters or interpreter educators to serve as mentors. This mentor training program must train mentors to serve in a variety of situations or environments (i.e., in urban and rural settings; in various regions; in culturally diverse environments; in situations in which various modes of communication (deaf-blind, oral, cued speech, etc.) are present; in specialized settings (legal, medical, educational, etc.); and with interns at varying skill levels, etc.);

• Provide technical assistance to organizations or bodies establishing mentorship programs and to existing mentorship programs on all aspects of mentoring, including the identification of trained mentors;

• Ensure that the curricula are developed with input from a culturally diverse, consumer-based consortium;

• Ensure that training is available to culturally diverse audiences and is sensitive to the needs of all audiences;

• Use innovative as well as traditional approaches to the provision of training (i.e., distance education, short-term intensive training sessions or seminars, delivering training to communities in need, etc.); and

• Establish cooperative relationships with the regional interpreter training projects the Secretary plans to propose in fiscal year 2000.

Goals 2000: Educate America Act

The Goals 2000: Educate America Act (Goals 2000) focuses the Nation's education reform efforts on the eight National Education Goals and provides a framework for meeting them. Goals 2000 promotes new partnerships to strengthen schools and expands the Department's capacities for helping communities to exchange ideas and obtain information needed to achieve the goals.

These priorities support the National Education Goal that, by the year 2000, every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. The priorities further the objectives of this Goal by focusing available funds on projects that train a sufficient number of qualified interpreters throughout the country to meet the communication needs of individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing and individuals who are deaf-blind. Training and improving the manual, tactile, oral, and cued speech interpreting skills of interpreters working in vocational rehabilitation environments will improve the ability of individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing and individuals who are deaf-blind to function successfully in their vocational pursuits.

Intergovernmental Review

This program is subject to the requirements of Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. The objective of the Executive order is to foster an intergovernmental partnership and a strengthened federalism by relying on processes developed by State and local governments for coordination and review of proposed Federal financial assistance.

In accordance with the order, this document is intended to provide early notification of the Department's specific plans and actions for this program.

Electronic Access to This Document

You may view this document, as well as all other Department of Education documents published in the **Federal Register**, in text or Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) on the Internet at either of the following sites:

http://ocfo.ed.gov/fedreg.htm
http://www.ed.gov/news.html

To use the PDF you must have the Adobe Acrobat Reader Program with Search, which is available free at either of the previous sites. If you have questions about using the PDF, call the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO), toll free, at 1–888–293–6498; or in the Washington, DC, area at (202) 512–1530.

Note: The official version of this document is the document published in the **Federal Register**. Free Internet access to the official edition of the **Federal Register** and the Code of Federal Regulations is available on GPO Access at: http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/index.html

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number 84.160, Training of Interpreters for Individuals Who Are Deaf and Individuals Who Are Deaf-Blind)

Program Authority: 29 U.S.C. 772(f).

Dated: August 27, 1999.

Judith E. Heumann,

Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.

[FR Doc. 99–22775 Filed 8–31–99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

[CFDA Nos.: 84.160A, 84.160B, and 84.160C]

Training of Interpreters for Individuals Who Are Deaf and Individuals Who Are Deaf-Blind; Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year (FY) 2000

Purpose of Program: The purpose of this program is to assist with the establishment of interpreter training programs or to assist ongoing programs to train a sufficient number of skilled interpreters throughout the country to meet the communication needs of individuals who are deaf and individuals who are deaf-blind by—(a) Training manual, tactile, oral, and cued speech interpreters; (b) Ensuring the maintenance of the skills of interpreters; and (c) Providing opportunities for interpreters to raise their level of competence.

Eligible Applicants: Public and private nonprofit agencies and organizations, including institutions of higher education, are eligible for assistance under this program.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: November 8, 1999.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: January 7, 2000.

Applications Available: September 7, 1999.

Estimated Available Funds: $2,100,000.

Estimated Range of Awards: Regional projects: $120,000 to $160,000; National Projects: $250,000 to $300,000.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: Regional projects: $140,000; National Projects: $270,800.

Estimated Number of Awards: Regional projects: 10. One project will be awarded in each of the 10 RSA regions; National projects: 2.

Note: The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

Maximum Award: Regional Projects: In no case does the Secretary make an award greater than $160,000 for a single budget period of 12 months. The Secretary rejects and does not consider an application that proposes a budget exceeding this maximum amount. *National Projects:* In no case does the Secretary make an award greater than $300,000 for a single budget period of 12 months. The Secretary rejects and does not consider an application that proposes a budget exceeding this maximum amount.

Project Period: Up to 60 months.

Page Limit: Part III of the application, the application narrative, is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria used by reviewers in evaluating the application. You must limit Part III to the equivalent of no more than 35 pages for regional projects and no more than 50 pages for national projects, using the following standards:

(1) A ''page'' is 8.5″×11″, on one side only with 1″ margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.

(2) You must double space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative, including titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs.

If you use a proportional computer font, you may not use a font smaller than a 12-point font or an average character density greater than 18 characters per inch. If you use a nonproportional font or a typewriter, you may not use more than 12 characters per inch.

The page limit does not apply to Part I, the cover sheet; Part II, the budget section, including the narrative budget justification; Part IV, the assurances and certifications; or the one-page abstract, the resumes, the bibliography, or the letters of support. However, you must include all of the application narrative in Part III.

If, in order to meet the page limit, you use print size, spacing, or margins smaller than the standards specified in this notice, we will not consider your application for funding.

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 74, 75, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 85, and 86; and (b) The regulations for this program in 34 CFR parts 385 and 396.

Priorities

National Projects (CFDA Nos. 84.160B and 84.160C): The competitions focus on projects designed to meet one or more of the priorities in the notice of final priorities for this program published elsewhere in this issue of the **Federal Register**. These priorities are as follows:

Priority 1 (CFDA No. 84.160B)—National Project with Major Emphasis on Distance Education as a Medium for Interpreter Training

Priority 2 (CFDA No. 84.160C)—National Project with Major Emphasis on Training Interpreter Educators

For FY 2000 each of the priorities is an absolute priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3) we consider only applications that meet one of the priorities.

Regional Projects (CFDA No. 84.160A): For FY 2000, the competition for new awards focuses on projects designed to meet the priority in the regulations for this program (34 CFR 396.5), as follows:

Projects that provide training in interpreting skills for persons preparing to serve, and persons who are already serving, as interpreters for individuals who are deaf and as interpreters for individuals who are deaf-blind in public and private agencies, schools, and other service-providing institutions.

For FY 2000 this priority is an absolute priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3) we consider only applications that meet the priority.