

817—14.16(15H) Information specific to the Iowa reading corps program.

14.16(1) *Program eligibility criteria.* The commission and department of education will establish criteria consistent with federal regulations to ensure the alignment of the program with the goals outlined in Iowa Code section 256.9(49)“c” and 281—Chapter 62. Any program determined eligible for inclusion as an Iowa reading corps program must ensure that it meets standards outlined by the department of education in 281—Chapter 62. All applicants must be preapproved by the department of education as eligible to compete for Iowa reading corps grants.

14.16(2) *Grant criteria.* The commission will establish criteria and funding priorities consistent with federal regulations and the goals of the department of education and the commission. Preapproval of applicant eligibility shall be sought as outlined in subrule 14.16(1). Applicants will be considered either in conjunction with the regular AmeriCorps grant process or, in certain cases, through special competitions outlined and announced by the commission.

14.16(3) *Designated funds.* A percentage of grant funding may be designated by the commission to address specific underserved or high-need geographic areas or schools. In advance of the competition, the commission may also set a minimum amount available for Iowa reading corps grants financed with state, federal and private funds, as well as any minimum or maximum funding amounts for individual applicants based on program need and the service territory of the communities described and, if applicable, past performance of use of funds. The commission may also give priority to programs that serve underserved or high-need areas or schools.

14.16(4) *Application process for new grants.*

a. Request for application. The commission shall issue a request for applications, which shall include program criteria and application forms for the applicable fiscal year.

b. Application time frame. The applicant shall submit the completed application to the commission according to the timeline identified in the request for application.

c. Application review process. Applications will be reviewed by a grant review committee, which is composed of members of the commission grant review committee, individuals with expertise in youth programming, and citizens of Iowa. The committee will review the applications based on the appropriateness and merit of the projects.

d. Notification. Applicants whose projects have been selected for funding shall be notified by the commission.

14.16(5) *Administration of grants—contracts.* The commission will prepare contractual agreements for the grants.

a. Reporting. All grant recipients shall submit progress and financial reports to the commission.

b. Availability of funds. A separate request for applications will be issued only when there are available funds for this program. To the extent allowable by federal regulations, Iowa reading corps will always be an acceptable program model for annual AmeriCorps grants and will be listed in the annual AmeriCorps program request for applications.

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