

## Involvement of Principals in ITQ Grants

Query – 08.24.2007

**Query:**

Concerning principals - There is confusion about how principals are involved in the projects. My understanding is that it is designed to help principals help teachers and students with content knowledge NOT to help teachers become principals. Is my understanding correct on this? We have a PI that wants to "grow your own" principals in some of our high needs LEAs and I need some guidance on this. Can funds for this project be used to train teachers to become principals, i.e. can universities just offer a graduate program off campus in Educational Leadership for teachers in the high-need LEAs?

**From:** South Carolina

**Responses:**

Washington

My sense is that the answer to your question is no. It seems to me that because of the way Section 2134(a)(1)(B) is worded, it applies to participants who are already principals, not those who are aspiring to become principals. I think you could just say that what they propose is not an allowable use of grant money under NCLB section 2134. That's what I'd tell them at first. If they press you for more details, you could say something like:

“Pursuant to NCLB section 2134(a)(1)(B), subgrant funds shall be used for professional development activities in core academic subjects to ensure that principals have the instructional leadership skills that will help such principals work most effectively with teachers to help students master core academic subjects.”

The statute is written in terms of "professional development" and "principals" rather than "principal prep" and "principals-in-training". The term "professional development" applies to those who are already in a profession rather than those who are trying to enter it. Before you deny the university's request, you may want to take a look at the definition of Professional Development in the non-regulatory guidance to see if what they're proposing might fit. That definition is a restatement of NCLB section 9101(34).

Also, your university may be able to design a program that meets 2134(a)(2)(B), but as I understand it, the project would have to simultaneously meet 2134(a)(2)(A), and that doesn't sound like what your university has in mind.

Texas

I concur with Mark Bergeson, based on conversations we had last year with Miriam and Libby. In Texas, we had questions about what types of activities for principals would be acceptable uses of Title II Part A SAHE funds. We discussed this with Miriam and Libby in a phone conference in June, 2006. They suggested we use section 2134 as a guiding principle, and indicated that the types of activities for principals would have to be related to instruction. I took careful notes, and it seems that the bottom line is to monitor carefully to ensure that any professional development for principals is content related. They indicated that several states had tried to incorporate components for principals with limited success— educational leadership is often separated from content. They were also very clear about the individuals who were eligible to participate, pointing as Mark did to

	<p>2134(a)(1)(B).</p> <p>I think given their emphasis in what is acceptable use of funds for principals, it would be hard to argue that generalized training for teachers who want to become principals would be an acceptable use of funds since the training for teachers is supposed to be in the academic subject they teach 2134.a.1.A.</p> <p>I hope this information is helpful. We continue to try and clarify for our project directors what is acceptable use of funds for principal training. We have been working on this over the past year and have used the literature on “effective instructional leadership” as our guide. This literature focuses more on how the principal serves as an instructional leader and what they need to know to support teachers to become more effective, with a end goal of improving student achievement. If you are interested in what we’ve collected, we’ll be glad to share those resources.</p>
Puerto Rico	I understand the same as Washington.
Alabama	Our understanding is that these funds are not intended to support teacher/principal preparation....only professional development. Participants enrolled should have certification.
USDOE	<p>The responses you are getting from your SAHE colleagues on the list serve correctly cover the bases. There are two basic difficulties with the project you describe:</p> <p>“A project was approved for funding prior to my arrival and immediately following my arrival that gave funds to an institution to offer a graduate program in Educational Leadership to teachers in a poverty area that wanted to become principals. After reviewing the non-regulatory guidance, meeting with the SHEEO Collaborative group, reviewing the interim and final reports and conducting site visits, it appears that this project should not have been funded. I have been in communication with the project director and have advised her to revise the project to work with “current principals” to assist them in helping teachers with content knowledge in the academic subjects they teach or she will be ineligible to receive continued funding.”</p> <p>First is the eligibility of the participants. Principals are eligible to participate-- principals-in-training are not. The second concern is that the focus of these grants, even when active principals participate, is supposed to be on core academic content. It's difficult to see how the program you describe, which focuses on more general leadership issues than on core content, fits under the allowable use of funds for the SAHE program.</p> <p>Your plan to work with the project coordinator to re-focus the project while it runs its course sounds appropriate--if the project director feels that such a re-focusing effort is not do-able, you should consider discontinuing the funding.</p>
South Carolina	I have been in communication with Libby Witt concerning one of our ITQ projects that has been funded. After some detailed monitoring of the project this past year, it appears the project is totally dedicated to training teachers to become principals and the funds have been used to let the teachers get a Master’s Degree in Educational Leadership over a two-year period. Libby stated that she had consulted

	<p>with you and you concurred with our understanding that this project should not continue to receive funds under the ITQ program (this was a multi-year project) under its current activities.</p> <p>Libby has communicated two different problems with this project:</p> <p>The activities of training teachers to become principals (even if there was a “little” connection to analyzing test data for content purposes) would not be in compliance with the regulations and should not continue to receive funds, and</p> <p>Under the SAHE portion of Title II, Part A, these funds cannot be used to work toward and received a graduate degree, which is exactly what this project has allowed.</p> <p>When this came to our attention, we discussed the issue with the project director and allowed the current cohort to complete their degree program, since they were half-way into the program that we had awarded. She was informed that there would need to be major adjustments to the project for continuation of funds.</p> <p>Would you please provide clarification of the above items?</p>
USDOE	<p>I agree with Libby's response to you. The projects that a State agency of higher education (SAHE) sponsors under Title II, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended (ESEA), must comport with the set of authorized activities contained in section 2134 of the ESEA. This provision does not authorize a SAHE to use Title II, Part A funds to provide professional development for school principals. Nor does it authorize a SAHE to pay for graduate degrees; projects, of course, may pay for the costs of graduate-level courses that are reasonable and necessary to help participating teachers gain the subject matter knowledge and principals the instructional leadership skills they need to do their jobs. But the law does not authorize program funds to be used to pay for the costs of other degree requirements or the degrees themselves.</p> <p>In offering you this opinion, please understand that I am not suggesting any problem with either the quality of or need for your agency's project to train principals. I am responding only to whether the ESEA permits Title II, Part A funds to support it.</p>