Guidelines for Submitting Safe, Disciplined, and Drug-Free Schools Programs for Designation as Promising or Exemplary

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I. History and Mandate of the Expert Panels

The Educational Research, Development, Dissemination and Improvement Act of 1994 directed the Assistant Secretary of Educational Research and Improvement to establish "panels of appropriate qualified experts and practitioners" to evaluate programs and recommend to the Secretary of Education those programs that should be designated as *promising* or *exemplary*. Expert Panels were established for *1) Educational Technology, 2) Gender Equity, 3) Mathematics and Science Education*, and *4) Safe, Disciplined, and Drug-Free Schools*. The four panels of experts are part of an ongoing process by the U.S. Department of Education to identify programs which have shown to be effective. It is the goal of the Department of Education to continually update what constitutes effective programs in an effort to improve the quality of education for students K-12 as well as those in higher education.

The Department of Education established the Joint Dissemination Review Panel (JDRP) in 1972 as "part of an effort to identify and make available programs which have been proven effective in local schools." The JDRP reviewed programs that received federal funds including Title III-IV, special education, bilingual education, career education, and Title I. The JDRP was operated by Department of Education staff until 1987. In 1987 the Program Effectiveness Panel (PEP) was established in the Final Regulations published in the Federal Register notification 34 CFR 786. This broadened the scope of the review panel process which allowed the review of non-federally funded programs. The Expert Panel System builds on this history. As the knowledge base of what constitutes effective programs expands, so too does the need to disseminate this valuable information.

The objectives of the Safe, Disciplined, and Drug-Free Schools Expert Panel are to *1) define what constitutes an appropriate program for the purposes of this application process, 2) establish criteria for designating exemplary and promising programs, 3) establish the application and review process, 4) review applications submitted, and 5) make recommendations to the Secretary of Education.* **The Safe, Disciplined, and Drug-Free Schools Expert Panel will review programs designed to address substance use and violence prevention in the Spring of 1999 and make its recommendations to the Secretary in the Summer of 1999.**

II. Overview of the Review Process

All applications will be initially screened by the Department of Education's contractor, RMC Research Corporation, to determine that the applicant meets the basic requirements for submission (for example, a completed application, a narrative section that does not exceed 15 pages in length, submission by May 28, 1999, and consistency with program goals of substance use/violence prevention for students in grades K-12). Those meeting the preliminary criteria will then be screened by Field Reviewers to see if the application meets Criteria *Category A) Evidence of Efficacy*. Only those applications passing this screen will be considered for the promising and exemplary categories. All applicants, however, will be further evaluated by Field Reviewers on the other three Criteria Categories: *B) Quality of Program, C) Educational Significance*, and D) *Usefulness to Others*. All applicants that satisfy criteria ratings for exemplary status will also be reviewed by national experts in evaluation design and analysis. Applicants will receive comments resulting from these reviews.

The Safe, Disciplined, and Drug-Free Schools Expert Panel will make its recommendations to the Secretary of Education who will announce the programs that have been designated as exemplary or promising. Programs given such designation will be presented in a final document that will be available for dissemination to schools, funding agencies, and the general public upon request. It is anticipated that the final designations will be made by August 31, 1999.

III. Purpose of Identifying Exemplary and Promising Programs

The purpose of the current effort is twofold. The first is to expand the current knowledge base on what works and what does not work in the field of prevention of substance use, violent behavior, or other conduct problems. Information about programs identified in this process will be disseminated. Of particular importance will be an increased understanding of what constitutes effective programs for diverse populations. While much has been learned about what is required for effective programming, there is still a great deal of information that can be added to the current body of knowledge. It is anticipated that the current effort will not only recognize programs that have been shown to be effective, but that the Department of Education will also move the field along in terms of what still needs to be done to further the efforts of combating substance use and violence among youth.

The second purpose is to recognize and give prominence to those programs which have been shown to be effective in preventing and/or reducing substance use, violent behavior, or other conduct problems. Programs designated as promising or

exemplary by the Secretary of Education can use this designation in furthering their professional networking capabilities, drawing public attention to their programs and citing this national distinction for funding and/or publishing purposes.

IV. Definition of Program and Who is Eligible to Apply

There are two categories of Programs for the purposes of this application.

Program Type I. Type I programs are those that focus on instructional and support activities aimed at (a) reducing substance use, violent behavior, or other conduct problems or (b) addressing risk and protective factors related to these problems. Examples of the types of activities that might be considered under this category include:

- Prevention curricula – alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs (ATOD) instruction, violence prevention, conflict resolution, job skills, social competency instruction, leadership skills, decision making skills
- Behavioral or behavior modification interventions for students (for example, use of reinforcements for meeting behavioral/educational goals)
- Counseling/therapeutic interventions -- individual/group counseling, case management
- Educational enhancement activities -- tutoring, study skills
- Mentoring
- Recreational, enrichment, and leisure activities
- Family-focused interventions -- family/parenting skills training, services to improve family management practices, family involvement in school activities

Program Type II. Type II programs are policies or practices that maintain safe, disciplined, and drug-free environments for students, staff, and management. This category is intended to include policies and practices that directly target environmental factors rather than indirectly targeting them through changes to individuals inhabiting the environments. These interventions are applied to entire classes or schools to create respectful and orderly environments conducive to learning. They include adoption, expansion, training, supervision, or technical assistance to promote such instructional practices as:

- Interventions that change instructional or classroom management methods or practices
- Interventions that communicate norms or expectations for behaviors
- Interventions that arrange for interaction between the school and community or groups within the school
- Rules, policies, regulations, or laws about behavior or discipline or enforcement
- Inclusion of youth in addressing students' conduct
- Interventions that change a school's management, structure, or processes
- Reorganization of grades, classes, or schedules

Who Is Eligible to Apply:

All for-profit and non-profit organizations, including schools, districts, commercial, community, research organizations and individuals, are invited to submit programs with evidence of success to the Expert Panel. Submissions may come from a range of national, state, or local developers.

V. Definition of Exemplary and Promising Programs and Criteria for Evaluation

Exemplary Programs must:

a. have at least one evaluation that has demonstrated an effect on substance use, violent behavior, or other conduct problems one year or longer beyond baseline, AND

b. receive a rating of "3" on Criterion 1, AND

c. receive a rating of "2" or higher on Criteria 2-7, AND

d. receive a rating of "3" on at least 3 of the Criteria 2-7.

Promising Programs must:

a. have findings from at least one evaluation demonstrating an effect on substance use, violent behavior, conduct problems OR one or more risk and protective factors that research has established as major predictors of these behaviors (see page 7 for list of factors), AND

b. receive a rating of "2" or higher on Criteria 1-5, AND

c. receive a rating of "1" or higher on Criteria 6 and 7.

RATING SCALE

Response to criterion is:
0 = absent
1 = minimally acceptable
2 = adequate
3 = strong

A rating of 1 is given to a criterion if the material presented is weak and significant work is needed to supplement or correct it.

A rating of 2 is given to a criterion if there is evidence that the conditions are met.

A rating of 3 is given to a criterion if, overall, there is strong evidence that the conditions are met.

Risk and Protective Factors

COMMUNITY

- Norms regarding drugs
- Norms regarding violence
- Availability of drugs
- Availability of firearms
- Social organization (linkages among community members/capacity to solve community problems/ attachment to community)
- Laws and consistency of enforcement of laws limiting ATOD
- Laws and consistency of enforcement of laws regarding violent behavior
- Residential mobility
- Exposure to violence in media
- (Extreme) poverty

SCHOOLS

- Availability of drugs
- Availability of firearms
- Clarity of norms/rules about behavior
- Consistent enforcement of rules regarding behavior

FAMILY

- Parental and/or sibling attitudes toward drug use
- Family history of criminality/ alcoholism/drug use
- Family management practices (Infrequent monitoring & supervision/ inconsistent discipline practices)
- Attachment/bonding to family
- Family conflict

PEER

- Peer rejection in elementary grades
- Attachment to prosocial others
- Exposure to/association with:
  - delinquent peers
  - drug-using peers

INDIVIDUAL

- Social & emotional competency
- Resilient temperament
- Rebelliousness
- Early and persistent antisocial or aggressive behavior
- Early initiation of delinquency
- Early initiation of drug use
- Impulsiveness/low self-control/sensation-seeking
- Belief in societal rules
- Religiosity
- Attitudes toward delinquency
- Attitudes toward drug use
- Academic performance
- Attachment & commitment to school
- Expectations of drug effects
- Intentions regarding drug use
- Perceived norms regarding drug use and violence
- Affective disorders (for example, depression and anxiety)
- Physical/sexual abuse

Note: This list contains factors whose predictive association with actual substance use, violence, or conduct disorders have been established in at least one empirical study. Other risk and protective factors, of course, may not yet have been established through research. As new research uncovers additional factors, they will be added to the list. Applicants are encouraged to submit such research with a request that the risk or protective factor of interest be added to the list.

A. Evidence of Efficacy*

Criterion 1. ***The program reports relevant evidence of efficacy/effectiveness based on a methodologically sound evaluation.***

Condition a. The program evaluation indicates a measurable difference in outcomes that is based on statistical significance testing or a credible indicator of magnitude of effect. Relevant outcomes are factors related to making schools safe, disciplined, and drug-free: reducing substance use, violence, and other conduct problems and positive changes in scientifically-established risk and protective factors for these problems.

Condition b. The program evaluation used a design and analysis that adequately controls for threats to internal validity, including attrition.

*NOTE: Some evaluation designs do not meet the criteria for Exemplary or Promising status. Such designs include the following: 1) pre-post designs without comparison groups; 2) one-time, post-test only, comparison studies without randomization or other efforts to control threats to internal validity; and 3) case studies without comparisons.

Condition c. The program evaluation used reliable and valid outcome measures.

*NOTE: Some evaluation measures do not meet the criteria for Exemplary or Promising status. Such measures of program effects include the following: 1) judgments based on clinical experience; and 2) authoritative evidence such as reports by expert committees and testimonials.

Condition d. The program evaluation used analyses appropriate to the data.

B. Quality of Program

Criterion 2 (Goals). ***The program's goals with respect to changing behavior and/or risk and protective factors are clear and appropriate for the intended population and setting.***

Condition a. The program's goals are explicit and clearly stated.

Condition b. The program's goals are appropriate to the intended population and setting.

Criterion 3 (Rationale). The rationale underlying the program is clearly stated, and the program's content and processes are aligned with its goals.

Condition a. The rationale (for example, logic model, theory) underlying the program is clearly stated and includes appropriate documentation (for example, literature reviews and previous research).

Condition b. The program's content and processes are aligned with its goals.

Criterion 4 (Content Appropriateness).* The program's content takes into consideration the characteristics of the intended population and setting (for example, developmental stage, motivational readiness, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, language, disabilities, culture) and the needs implied by these characteristics.

*NOTE: Content appropriateness will be determined on the basis of the application narrative and the program materials submitted.

Criterion 5 (Implementation Methods). The program implementation process effectively engages the intended population.

Condition a. The program provides a relevant rationale to participants for its implementation.

Condition b. The program actively engages the intended population.

Condition c. The program attends to participants' prior knowledge, attitudes, and commonly held conceptions.

Condition d. The program implementation methods promote participants' collaboration, discourse, and reflection.

Where applicable:

Condition e. The methods foster the use and application of skills.

Condition f. The program promotes multiple approaches to learning.

C. Educational Significance

Criterion 6. ***The application describes how the program is integrated into schools' educational missions.***

D. Usefulness to Others

Criterion 7 (Replicability). ***The program provides necessary information and guidance for replication in other appropriate settings.***

Condition a. The program clearly outlines the essential conditions required to replicate it with fidelity in other settings (for example, strategies, resources, implementation plans, materials, etc.).

Condition b. The program includes guidelines and materials for training and supporting those who are to replicate it.

VI. Instructions for Completing the Application

To be reviewed in Spring 1999, programs must be **received by: Friday, May 28, 1999.**

For answers to questions please call the U.S. Department of Education's Safe and Drug-Free Schools program office at 202-260-3954

Send **four (4)** completed copies of the application along with **four (4)** sets of any accompanying materials to:

Safe, Disciplined, and Drug-Free Schools Expert Panel
c/o RMC Research Corporation
1000 Market Street, Building 2
Portsmouth, New Hampshire 03801
Phone: (800) 258-0802
Fax: (603) 436-9166
e-mail: rmc@rmcres.com

The application should be single spaced and use a font no smaller than 12-point. The Narrative must not exceed 15 pages. Please be sure to address each of the Criteria for Evaluation found on pages 8-10 and insert a Table of Contents to identify the page numbers of each component. The completed application should be written using the following format:

A. Cover Sheet

B. Abstract

C. Narrative:

1. Intended Population
2. Program Goals and Rationale
3. Program Description
4. Evaluation Outcomes
5. Program Features Lending to Ease of Replication

D. Appendices

1. Copies of All Evaluation Studies
2. Copies of Program Materials

A. Cover Sheet.

(see format on page 14)

B. Abstract.

Give a brief summary of the program design, intended population and outcomes. The Abstract should not exceed 300 words.

C. Narrative.

The Narrative must not exceed 15 pages in length. This constitutes the major portion of the application which will be used in determining whether a program qualifies for the designation of exemplary or promising. It is therefore critical that all elements are

answered completely, clearly and concisely. The narrative should address each of the seven criteria outlined on pages 8-10. Please use the following format:

1. *Intended Population* -- Identify the intended population using relevant characteristics which may include, but are not limited to age, ethnicity, gender, urban/rural, socio-economic status. Is the intended population in school or out of school, children of substance abusing parents, etc.? Include a summary of needs assessment, if conducted. If applicable, describe the selection criteria for participation in the program.

2. *Program Goals and Rationale* -- Goals should be relevant to the intended population and consistent with the evaluation outcomes. Please state the rationale underlying the program and describe how the program's content and processes are aligned with its goals. Provide appropriate documentation (for example, literature reviews and previous research) that indicates that the factors utilized are relevant to substance use and violence prevention.

3. *Program Description* -- Include the appropriateness of the content for the intended population and describe the essential elements of the program which should include but are not limited to types of activities, frequency (for example, once per week), length of each activity (for example, two hours per session), setting (for example, school, recreation center), time of day, involvement of parents, training activities, etc. Also, describe duration of one completed cycle, for example, 15 weeks, 6 months, 1 year, etc., and how the program is integrated into the school's educational mission. Please include a summary of any creative or unique features of the program which you found to be particularly effective.

4. *Evaluation Outcomes* -- The evaluation section should include a description of the evaluation study design and outcome data. Also include number of cases in the participant and comparison groups, characteristics of the participants, attrition rate, instruments used, reliability and validity of measures, how they were administered and by whom, and a description of the analyses used. Provide data disaggregated by as many of the following categories as possible: race, ethnicity, gender, and disability status. Provide a summary of evaluation by completing Attachment A: Claims of Program Efficacy found on pages 17-19.

5. *Program Features Lending to Ease of Replication* -- Describe the essential conditions required to replicate the program with fidelity in other settings (for example, strategies, resources, implementation plans, materials, etc.). Describe and provide the guidelines and materials for training and supporting those who are to replicate the program. Describe the features of the implementation or evaluation of this program that are particularly important for encouraging replication. This may include effective ways to recruit program participants, overcome transportation challenges, find appropriate

sites, translate information into different languages, assure the availability of evaluation instruments that are appropriate for the intended population, reduce the impact of attrition, address local political roadblocks to assure implementation consistency, etc. How was the curriculum chosen and how effective was it for your intended population? Were any modifications made to the content or format? Describe staffing patterns, training and technical assistance issues which are relevant. Also describe challenges you met and how successful you were in making the necessary changes. Describe any difficulties you envision other sites might have and which populations may be appropriate for replicating your program. While it may not be possible to determine the cost per student, please give a brief overview of costs associated with replication.

D. Appendices.

1. *Copies of All Evaluation Studies* -- In addition to the evaluation outcomes discussed in the narrative section of this application, all applicants must include a copy of each evaluation study, including any instruments used.

2. *Copies of Program Materials* -- Include copies of the curriculum, description of activities, samples of materials such as posters, text books, etc. or any other information that would help in assessing the program. Please be selective in what materials are sent as it is not necessary to send a copy of every lesson plan, every textbook, etc. used. Include enough information to give an accurate picture of what the program looks like but not so much that it becomes an impossible task to review. Please remember that volume alone is not a criterion which will determine whether a program is given the designation of exemplary or promising.

COVER SHEET

Program Title: _____

Contact Person: _____

Position: _____

Organization/Agency: _____

_____

Address: _____

_____

_____

_____

Telephone: _____ *Fax:* _____

E-mail: _____ *Web site:* _____

Program Type (*check all that apply*):

Program Type I

- ❒ Prevention curricula - ATOD instruction, violence prevention, conflict resolution, job skills, social competency instruction, leadership skills, decision making skills
- ❒ Behavioral or behavior modification interventions for students (for example, use of reinforcements for meeting behavioral/educational goals)
- ❒ Counseling/therapeutic interventions -- individual/group counseling, case management
- ❒ Educational enhancement activities -- tutoring, study skills
- ❒ Mentoring
- ❒ Recreational, enrichment, and leisure activities
- ❒ Family-focused interventions -- family/parenting skills training, services to improve family management practices, family involvement in school activities

Program Type II

- ❒ Interventions that change instructional or classroom management methods or practices
- ❒ Interventions that communicate norms or expectations for behaviors
- ❒ Interventions that arrange for interaction between the school and community or groups within the school
- ❒ Rules, policies, regulations or laws about behavior or discipline or enforcement
- ❒ Inclusion of youth in addressing students' conduct
- ❒ Interventions that change a school's management, structure, or processes
- ❒ Reorganization of grades, classes, or schedules

Type of prevention:

- ❒ Universal — Universal preventive interventions address the general public or a whole population group without distinguishing those exposed to high levels of risk from those who are not.
- ❒ Selective — Selective preventive interventions are provided to those subgroups or individuals whose risk for developing violence or substance abuse is higher than average.
- ❒ Indicated — Indicated preventive interventions are provided to those having early detectable signs or symptoms predictive of later violence or substance abuse.

Sources and levels of development funding by year (for example, 1993 -- $100,000 grant from CSAP; 1995 -- $60,000 grant from the XYZ Foundation): _____

_____

_____

Intended Population (fill in completely and check all that apply):

Age(s): _____

Male: _____ Female: _____

American Indian: _____ African American: _____ Asian/Pacific Islander: _____

Caucasian: _____ Hispanic/Latino: _____ Other (Specify): _____

Preschool: _____ Elementary: _____ Middle: _____ High School: _____

Parents: _____ Students: _____ Other Community Members _____

Implementation Site (school, mental health center, recreation facility, etc.): _____

_____

❒ Before School ❒ During School ❒ After School ❒ Weekend

Risk and Protective Factor Domains Positively Changed (check all that apply):

❒ Community ❒ School ❒ Family ❒ Peer ❒ Individual

ATTACHMENT A: CLAIMS OF PROGRAM EFFICACY CHART

The Expert Panel requires that you provide evaluation data demonstrating the efficacy of your program claims. (See Criterion 1 listed on page 8.) In the chart on page 19, please list all of your program claims and describe the corresponding evaluation methods used and evidence of success or efficacy. To assist you in completing the chart, please refer to the following explanations.

Program Claims are concise statements of your program's impact. A claim statement should make reference to the target population and the nature and direction of the change.

Examples of **acceptable** claims include the following:

- Project XYZ students in grades 6-8 demonstrated a greater reduction in violent classroom behavior than a comparison group as measured by the ABC Classroom Observational Instrument.
- As a result of participating in Project XYZ, high school students were more likely to reduce their substance use than previous student groups and when compared to students in other urban high schools.

Examples of **unacceptable** claims include the following:

- Students rated the Project XYZ teachers and activities highly on a classroom survey.
- Project XYZ students expressed positive comments about the program.

Evaluation Methods refer to your design, sample, instruments, and data analysis. Keep in mind that the evaluation design should allow reviewers to conclude that the change is attributable to the program. The following is an acceptable entry in the evaluation methods column:

- Pre-post comparison group design
  Project XYZ = 98 K-6 students from 3 school sites
  Comparison group = 87 K-6 students from the same 3 school sites
  ABC Assessment

Evidence of Efficacy refers to preliminary evidence for Promising status or convincing evidence for Exemplary status that supports each corresponding claim. To assist the reviewers in judging significance of change, respondents should provide compelling information to support each claim (for example, baseline or comparative data) and report significance levels or effect sizes. Submitters also should specify whether results were uniformly positive or mixed across sites.

Program Claims	Evaluation Methods	Evidence of Efficacy