

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK
 THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
SERVICE INTERVENTION TO REDUCE SUSPENSIONS AND EXPULSIONS PROGRAM
 PROPOSAL COVER PAGE
 2003-2004

Name, address, and telephone of school applying for funding and e-mail address of contact person:

Projected number of students in program:

Name, address, telephone and e-mail address of Learn and Serve Project director:

Partnering organization has demonstrated expertise in addressing unmet needs in one of the following area(s):

- Educational Public Safety
 Human Environmental

Check all years in which LSA funding was received:

none 97-98 98-99 99-00 00-01 01-02 02-03

In-kind funds are not required but please list any that are provided to support this program.

Funds provided by applicant \$ _____

Funds provided by other sources \$ _____

Amount of SIRSE funds requested \$ _____

Total projected program budget \$ _____

Superintendent Name _____

Title _____

Telephone E-Mail _____

Signature _____ Date:

The signature of the superintendent or authorized contracting officer serves as certification that the school agrees, if funded, to operate a SIRSE project within the letter and spirit of all pertinent legislation and rules (including the appropriate guidelines); that the funds requested will be used for a new or expanded program for students; that the students benefiting from the funds are New York State residents; and that the grant monies will not be used to supplant or duplicate funds allocated by the school or an outside source for the support of this program.

The University of the State of New York
THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Pre-Collegiate Preparation Programs Unit
Education Building Addition
Room 965
Albany, New York 12234

2003-2004 Guidelines for the

Submission of Proposals

For

The Service Intervention to Reduce Suspensions and Expulsions (SIRSE) Program

For

New York State Learn and Serve America (LSA): K-12 School-Based Grant Recipients

Funded by the

New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services – Juvenile Justice Unit

DEADLINE - SEPTEMBER 12, 2003

I. Program Overview

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) has received a \$100,000 grant from the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services to conduct service-learning activities for at-risk students.

Five schools or school districts in New York State will reduce the suspension and expulsion rates of 400 new at-risk students while helping these students improve their academic performance, social and school attitudes, and attendance through their participation in the “Service Intervention to Reduce Suspensions and Expulsions” program (SIRSE). **At-risk students (ages 7-15 except for Persons In Need of Supervision (PINS) students, who can be served to age 17)** who have exhibited inappropriate behavior and have been targeted for in-school or out-of-school suspensions will have the option of choosing alternative volunteer service as a way to reduce the time they would have served in such disciplinary programs.

Suspended students who have not been involved in service programs will be able to participate in established school and curriculum-based service learning programs. Programs might include: Service Learning Clubs, Habitat for Humanity, peer tutoring and mentoring, peer mediation and cultural diversity training, homebound senior citizen key calls, community garden projects, food and clothing drives, environmental cleanups and water testing, junior fire fighting and EMT volunteer programs and/or other organized service learning activities. We will implement the SIRSE program into existing service learning programs so that 400 new at-risk students will have an alternative to suspension. While service learning is already being used in school districts across the state, we do not see the SIRSE program as an extension of Learn and Serve America programs but rather as a new program that targets a new, specific population while utilizing service learning components. Students will work side by side with other students who will serve as role models to design and implement service learning projects that will help identify and resolve local education, human needs, environmental and public safety issues.

At-risk students will improve their sense of independence, self-esteem and confidence, ability to make positive life choices, respect for others, citizenship and leadership skills, honesty and caring for others. As a result of civic engagement through service learning, at-risk students will be able to apply what they have learned in the classroom to real life situations, develop problem solving skills

that will improve the quality of their individual lives and the community they live in and acquire pre-employment and job awareness skills. Instead of becoming the “cause” of further delinquent behavior, alienation or youth violence, they will become the “solution” of these and other community problems through service learning intervention experiences. These at-risk students (**ages 7-15 except for PINS students, who can be served to age 17**) will also improve their academic performance, attitudes towards school and school attendance resulting in a reduction of student behavioral referrals, suspensions and expulsions.

II. Program Implementation

SIRSE will be an inexpensive alternative to suspension or expulsion that significantly reduces the risk factors for at-risk students while increasing the protective factors for these students. Most of the delinquency prevention programs in New York State focus on changing the targeted youth – their attitudes, actions, and behavior toward themselves, their school and the community. The primary issue of at-risk student alienation still remains. These students are still labeled. Everyone knows these students get special help, counseling or attend special in-school, out-of-school or after school, educational, behavior modification, drug prevention or recreational programs. Then they return to the classroom. Their attitudes might change, but do their attitudes stay changed in the old environment? Do the attitudes of other students, teachers, administration or community member’s towards them change? We believe that providing service learning opportunities for these at-risk students is an inexpensive way to change their attitude while at the same time having them be seen by others as contributing members of the community. Student involvement in service learning programs will produce short-term and long-term positive attitudinal changes within these at-risk students, their schools, and communities.

The New York State Education Department has collected data over a seven-year period on the number of students who have been suspended for one or more days. Students were suspended

because of serious or repeated infractions of school rules, misconduct, or school violence. In 1998-99 4.4 percent of NY State students were suspended one or more times. The majority of suspensions occurred at the middle and secondary levels; 7.1 percent of middle grade students and 7.8 percent of secondary students were suspended. Suspensions result in missed classes and possibly alienation from school. If these students become alienated from school, they may be less likely than other students to conform to school rules and thus be subjected to disciplinary measures more frequently.

“Suspension rates averaged over 11.5% in the Large City School Districts. The suspension rate in New York City was among the lowest (3.2 percent). This finding is consistent with district policy discouraging suspensions for non-violent acts; in New York City most students were suspended for interpersonal violent acts or possession of a weapon. Outside of New York City most suspensions were for non-violent acts. Black students were consistently suspended at higher rates than students belonging to other racial/ethnic groups. In districts outside of NYC on average, Black suspensions were extraordinarily high: 14.9 percent in the Large City Districts and 12.6 percent in districts outside the Big 5, compared with 4.9 percent in New York City.” (New York: The State of Learning – June 2001)

“During the 1980’s, 426,000 young people left New York State public school without completing requirements for high school graduation. In 1998-99, the most recent year for which statistics are available, 32,616 students dropped out of school. Over two-thirds (68.6 percent) of these students attended school in the Big 5 districts. A disproportionate percentage of these young people were minority students. New York City and the Large City Districts had the lowest attendance rates overall (88.4 and 90.7 percent respectively.)” (New York – The State of Learning, June 2001)

“Suspension, dropout and attendance rates are important indicators of student achievement and behavior. Previous analysis has demonstrated the relationship between school attendance rates and the percentage of students scoring above the minimum standard on the elementary-level reading test. Suspensions and dropout rates are the indicators of the schools’ ability to engage students in learning and retain students in school until completion.” (New York: The State of Learning - June 2001)

Nationally, students who are most likely to drop out of school generally:

- have a poor attitude about school
- have high absence and tardiness rates
- exhibit behavior and discipline problems
- experience poor relationships with both peers and adults
- may abuse drugs
- have low self-esteem
- have friends who have dropped out
- do not participate in school activities

In addition, they generally come from a financially disadvantaged home, with little or no parental involvement and low parental expectations. Schools are found to contribute to the dropout rate through lack of relevant curriculum, a negative climate, lack of adequate counseling, passive instructional strategies, disregard of student learning styles, and low expectations.

The dropout problem has long-term effects. It not only affects the lives of individual young people and their families, it also impacts our society. There are many difficult social and economic

issues today – crime, drug abuse, teenage pregnancy and health care for uninsured families – that are directly related to the educational failure that dropouts represent. (Students Serving Students: National Dropout Prevention Center – 1999)

All factors that contribute to student alienation, suspension, and dropping out of school, exist because of the educational system that has placed young people in a position of being recipients of society's offerings, rather than being contributors. Service learning activities can help at-risk students and all young people become contributors and resources in solving society's problems.

Service learning provides organized experiences that integrate students' academic classroom learning with service that meets actual community needs. Students use their academic skills to make a positive difference in their schools and communities. Students research the needs that they see around them and then plan, organize and carry out curriculum-based activities that will address these needs. Cooperative team members solve real problems and keep real commitments. Some students work with community-based agencies that serve the needs of the handicapped, elderly and poor. Others volunteer in projects that address the need for environmental well-being, physical safety, and adequate education of all community members.

“Service-learning” is defined as a deliberate integration of service into academic curriculum, linking service activities to learning outcomes. Service learning includes ongoing, creatively structured opportunities for students to think, talk, write, and reflect on their observations, and on the implications of their service experience in order to critically assess and understand the meaning and impact of their efforts.

Service learning integrates ages, races, cultures, ability levels and subject areas. Participating students learn first hand that their academic curriculum has real life application. They move beyond their classrooms to an awareness of their own potential in the outside world. Students gain self-respect, appreciation for diversity and a sense of civic responsibility. They connect their academic learning to an expanding awareness of an outside world and make real, meaningful decisions. The at-risk students we prepare to serve will reap all of these benefits through their involvement in service learning activities.

Research has demonstrated the impact of service learning on students, their schools, and communities. The 2000 South Dakota Survey of the Character Counts Program, one of the most comprehensive assessments of character education, found a dramatic reduction in crime, drug use, suspension rates and misbehavior among middle and high school students who participated in the Character Counts Program, which has a strong service learning component. Berman (1997) showed that service learning helps students develop skills and dispositions related to resilience and responsibility. Billig (2000), in her summary of K-12 service learning impacts demonstrated that service learning helps students develop a sense of caring and responsibility. Students were viewed by adults as being more trustworthy. Melchior (1998) showed that students who engaged in service learning were less likely to engage in a variety of risky behaviors. Service learning programs are low cost, have positive impact on the community, and help students gain an increased understanding of their community, academic work, and themselves. The Students Serving Demonstration project (Wright, Smirk and Duchonfield) showed that the service learning projects helped students, recipients, and providers show positive gains in the areas of attendance, class work, behavior and attitude towards school. Students, both recipients and providers, and adults all agreed that participation in the projects made school more enjoyable. Service learning projects became bridges to help join schools and communities together.

The New York State Learn and Serve America K-12 (LSA) school based program, administered by NYSED has also found that student participation in service learning projects has had a positive impact on students' academic achievements, school attendance rates, social attitude, civic participation and involvement, and school and community environments.

Project SIRSE will provide for maximum sub-grants in the range of five to fifty thousand dollars to school districts that have successful service learning programs. Targeted applicants will be from high need rural or urban school districts that have at least 25 or 100 students per year respectively, who are at risk of suspension or expulsion. These students will be offered the option of participating in extracurricular service learning activities in lieu of suspension. Individual service contracts will be developed and signed by at-risk students, their parents, and local school administrative officials. We expect to involve over 400 at-risk students. We believe this program will reduce their at-risk behaviors while demonstrating a positive impact on their academic performance, self and social attitudes, and their school attendance. We also hope that engagement in service projects will help these students improve their image in the eyes of others and help them overcome being labeled as difficult. We will use self-evaluation reports, teacher and community response questionnaires and attitudinal surveys, and academic and attendance records to document program accomplishments.

Our LSA Program currently provides service-learning opportunities each year for over 40,000 K-12 students from over 75 school districts throughout New York State. This \$1.5 million program has been funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service for eight successful years. It provides support for school-age New Yorkers to volunteer for the benefit of others, affords students the opportunity to engage in service as a means to rekindle interest in learning, and increases the number of adults who volunteer to participate in school based service learning programs. The

program integrates service learning into the schools and classroom curriculum. Since the program began approximately 210,000 students have provided over 2.75 million hours of service to address the unmet educational, public safety and human and environmental needs of NYS urban, suburban and rural communities.

We estimate that 40% of NYS school districts now conduct service-learning activities. These programs have helped students improve their academic success, increase their ability to reason, solve problems, apply knowledge, write and communicate effectively, improve their self esteem, confidence, social and interpersonal skills, improve their tolerance, respect for others, appreciation for ethnic diversity, and improve their perception of classroom learning as applied to the real world. In addition, schools report reduced student absences, discipline referrals, and suspensions. These LSA programs have also helped NYS schools and communities develop more positive relationships with each other.

The delivery system for service learning in New York State is three tiered. Sub-grants to K-12 school based programs are designed to expand existing service learning programs or transform community service programs into service learning programs within schools, a particular school district, or neighboring school districts. Regional network funds given to ten statewide LSA regional networks provide professional development, inservice training, peer mentoring and mini-grant opportunities for new schools, classroom teachers or students who wish to start service learning projects and activities. Finally, four NYS Service Learning Institutes (Capital District, Finger Lakes, Mid-Hudson and Metropolitan [Long Island]) provide intensive service learning training for K-12 student service learning consultants. These students are trained in the pedagogy of service learning. They are students who have started their own training programs and have developed a high level of expertise. They are empowered to work with pre-service and in-service graduate teachers, classroom

teachers and other students to start new service learning projects, help develop curriculum related projects, obtain resources needed to sustain the projects, serve as role models for other service oriented students and assist in the presentation of professional development service learning workshops. The Institutes also promote collaborative service learning project development and training between K-12 schools, community-based organizations and higher education institutions, assist in the implementation of after school service learning programs in local CBO's, and help establish service learning centers on college campuses and service opportunities for college students. The Institutes are funded through a \$500,000 Community Higher Education Partnerships (CHES) grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service. We are currently in the final year of a three-year funding cycle.

We will use all of the above resources to support the implementation of the SIRSE program. Within the SIRSE program suspended students who have not been involved in service programs will be able to participate in established school and curriculum based service learning programs. Programs might include: extracurricular service learning clubs, Habitat for Humanity, peer tutoring and mentoring, peer mediation and cultural diversity training, homebound senior citizen key calls, community garden projects, food and clothing drives, environmental cleanups and water testing, and junior fire fighting and EMT volunteer programs.

Students will work side by side with other students who will serve as role models to design and implement service learning projects that address local, community needs. Additionally, these students will be working with community agency staff and teachers who will serve as mentors. At-risk students will improve their sense of independence, self-esteem, confidence, and ability to make positive life choices. Respect and caring for others will be fostered and citizenship and leadership skills will be improved. Choosing SIRSE over out-of-school suspension also allows the student to

attend class so that academic progress is not impeded. As a result of civic engagement through service-learning, at-risk students will be able to apply what they have learned in the classroom to real life situations. They will develop problem-solving abilities and acquire pre-employment and job awareness skills. The quality of their lives and that of their community will improve. Instead of being the “cause” of further delinquent behavior, alienation, or youth violence, they will become the “solution” to community problems through service learning intervention.

Matching at-risk students with the appropriate service learning activity is extremely important to ensure that it will be a positive experience for at-risk students providing the service, the recipients of the service, role model students who will be working side by side with at-risk students and teachers who supervise the service project. Building on existing service learning programs will ensure that implementation of the SIRSE component will succeed.

III. Program Goals, Objectives and Performance Measures

Sub grantees are expected to develop program goals, objectives and performance measures that follow statewide SIRSE program goals, objectives and performance measures that were included in the NYSED SIRSE proposal that was funded by the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services through the Juvenile Justice Formula Grant Program:

Goal(s) Description:

Through the implementation of an alternative service-learning program (SIRSE – Service Intervention to Reduce Suspensions and Expulsions) five New York Schools will work with 400 newly identified at-risk students to:

- reduce their disciplinary referrals, suspension and expulsion rates by 50%

- improve their personal academic performance by 10%
- improve their school attendance by 50%

These at-risk students will demonstrate improved self-esteem and attitudes towards their school and community. We also hope there will be improved attitudes towards these students from others as they begin to be seen as contributors to their community rather than a “problem.” There will also be a reduction in the alienation of these at-risk students resulting in an improved school and community environment. Program outcomes will be measured using pre- and post project participant school records for disciplinary referrals, suspensions, and expulsions. Pre- and post attitudinal surveys of at-risk student participants, school and community populations will measure individual, school, and community changes.

Objective 1: To identify and fund five SIRSE sub-grantee projects that will provide service learning alternatives for 400 newly identified at-risk students facing suspension or expulsion.

Tasks for Objective 1:

Task 1: Project Coordinator will develop the SIRSE request for proposals (RFP) to be sent to the field within 30 days of funding of grant.

Performance Measures for Task 1: The SIRSE RFP will reflect the goals and objectives of the SIRSE grant application, request a plan of action and activities, require an evaluation plan, have a 30-day turn around time frame and include criteria for review and funding.

Task 2: SIRSE grant applications will be reviewed by three reviewers, scored on a basis of 1-100 points, and ranked for funding purposes.

Performance Measures for Task 2: Up to five proposals ranging from \$5,000 to \$50,000 serving a minimum of 25 at-risk students (**ages 7-15 except for PINS students who can be served to age 17**) per project and a total of 400 at-risk students will be funded. Grant award notices will be sent to successful applicants and sub-grantee budgets will be processed through NYSED.

Objective 2: To implement the SIRSE program, an optional, alternative service-learning program for 400 students in five school districts who are at risk of suspension or expulsion.

Tasks for Objective 2:

Task 1: Sub-grantee SIRSE project coordinators will collaborate with school administrators, guidance counselors, classroom teachers, DARE officers, special education teachers, parents and/or community members, to identify 400 at-risk students who are in danger of being suspended or expelled, who have been suspended or expelled in the past, who are displaying disruptive or delinquent behavior, who are experiencing academic failure and/or who display other at-risk behaviors.

Performance Measures for Task 1: Four hundred at-risk students will be identified within the first project year and provided with the option of completing service learning project activities in lieu of being suspended or expelled.

Task 2: SIRSE projects in collaboration with school-based service clubs, Key Clubs, Leo Clubs, SADD, Interact, Habitat for Humanity, LSA regional networks and Institutes,

community-based organizations such as Boys and Girls Clubs, 4H clubs, YMCA, YWCA, Kiwanis, Rotary, Lions Clubs, local DARE programs, juvenile courts, and police officials will develop alternative service programs for SIRSE at-risk students. Programs might include building Habitat houses, key calls of home bound senior citizens, community garden projects, food and clothing drives, environmental cleanups and water testing, and junior fire fighting and EMT volunteer programs. Contractual agreements between the principal, parents, and students will define the student's commitment to complete the service activity for the agreed upon time period. Service will be completed before school, after school, during lunch or free periods, or on weekends. At-risk students will serve side by side with other students who have also volunteered and who will be positive role models and peer mentors. All students doing service will participate in reflection activities that help them realize the importance and impact of their volunteer service on themselves, their schools, and communities. Appropriate service celebration activities will also be conducted.

Performance Measures for Task 2: Eighty percent of the four hundred SIRSE students will have completed their contractual agreements resulting in positive improvements in the students' academic performance, social and school attitudes, school attendance and school and community environments.

Objective 3: To evaluate the individual student, school, and community impacts as a result of SIRSE at-risk students participating in service learning programs and projects.

Tasks for Objective 3:

Task 1: The SIRSE statewide project coordinator, in collaboration with an external evaluation consultant and sub-grantee SIRSE project directors, will develop and administer an

evaluation plan for the SIRSE project. Evaluation instruments will be identified, created and implemented. Statistical school data regarding at-risk students' pre- and post-school performance, attendance, discipline referrals, suspensions and expulsions will be collected and analyzed. Pre- and post-attitudinal surveys of SIRSE student, school, and community participants will be administered to measure individual, school, and community changes and impacts. Interim and final reports for NYSED and the NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services will be developed and submitted.

Performance Measures for Task 1: Evaluation results from the first year of the SIRSE project will demonstrate that student participants have:

- reduced their disciplinary referrals, suspension, expulsion and attendance rates by 50%
- improved their personal academic performance by 10%
- demonstrated improved self-esteem and attitudes towards their school and community.

In addition, there will be a reduction in the alienation of these at-risk students resulting in improved school and community environments.

IV. ELIGIBILITY

a. Local Education Agencies (LEAs)

Public school districts, who have been previously funded through the Learn and Serve America Program and who can demonstrate a history of conducting service-learning programs at the secondary level, in partnership with at least one public or private nonprofit organization with demonstrated expertise in the provision of service to address unmet educational, individual and public safety, human, environmental and/or

homeland security needs may submit proposals for funding. Only one proposal can be submitted by an LEA.

b. Participants

Eligible students are at-risk students (**ages 7-15 except for Persons In Need of Supervision (PINS) Students who can be served to age 17**) enrolled in public school districts.

V. Projects To Be Supported

1. Funding Priorities

In determining SIRSE grant awards, priority will be given to eligible applicants who meet the following criteria:

- a. Quality: The project identifies service-learning activities that will meet unmet community needs and involves a cross section of diverse individuals in the exploration of the underlying causes and the development of creative solutions to address those unmet needs. The programmatic objectives are linked to New York State's Learning Standards and are appropriate and effective vehicles for promoting school-based service learning for at-risk students. **The project design ensures productive and meaningful educational experiences, curriculum integration, service learning, and institutionalization.** The personnel who implement the program are qualified for their responsibilities.
- b. Sustainability: The project has strong, broad-based partnerships and community support, and there is evidence that financial resources will be available to continue the SIRSE effort after the expiration of the grant.
- c. Innovation and Replication: The project advances knowledge about how to deliver effective and innovative school-based **service-learning** as a teaching methodology and alternative to student suspension and expulsion, and the LEA has the capability,

experience and willingness to assist others within the school district, region, or State in replicating the program concept.

- d. Expertise: The project applicant is able to provide documentation of previous expertise, experience and success in the design and implementation of **service - learning** programs that can be modified to provide at-risk students with service learning opportunities and experiences in lieu of suspension or expulsion.

2. Program Requirements

All funded SIRSE projects will ensure equitable access and participation in funded activities to all students regardless of color, religion, creed, disability, marital status, national origin, race, gender, genetic predisposition or carrier status, or sexual orientation. All school districts receiving SIRSE grants will be required to:

- a. Demonstrate their experience and expertise in the development and implementation of service learning programs for K-12 students. Describe their experience and expertise in addressing at-risk student suspension and expulsion issues. Describe in detail how their school district and existing service learning programs will be modified to provide at-risk students who face suspension or expulsion with the option of choosing to complete service learning projects in lieu of suspension or expulsion.
- b. Comply with the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education and demonstrate and document how their service-learning programs are related to the implementation and accomplishment of New York State's Learning Standards.
- c. Form or expand an existing project advisory committee that includes students, parents, school administrators and counselors, members of the community and representatives from Juvenile Justice Agencies and provide evidence of their participation in the development and implementation of SIRSE service learning programs and projects.

- d. Establish or expand active partnerships with local, state or national service learning or Juvenile Justice, and/or other student dropout, suspension and expulsion programs and/or mentoring programs. These might include: Vista, AmeriCorps, National Senior Service Corps, National Youth Leadership Council, Liberty Partnerships Programs, 4H Clubs, Lions, Kiwanis and Rotary Clubs, Presidential Youth Leadership Groups, Lion Quest, DARE, Youth Courts and other Juvenile Justice related agencies and programs. These partnerships will help expand service-learning options for student participants and ensure the future sustainability of the SIRSE program within the school district(s).
- e. Develop SIRSE service learning opportunities and projects to provide service to communities most in need.
- f. Strive for diversity among participants by encouraging youth who are at risk of dropping out of school or being suspended or expelled, economically disadvantaged, disabled, and students of color to participate in the SIRSE **service-learning** program and ensure that youth are the **providers** of service to others.
- g. Provide student participants with leadership opportunities in the design and implementation of service-learning activities.
- h. Involve and increase the number of adults of diverse ages and backgrounds as volunteers or mentors.
- i. Conduct a SIRSE service-learning program for a minimum of **25 at-risk students in a rural or suburban school district or 100 students in an urban school district**.
- j. Provide in-kind services, funds or resources to support local school district SIRSE service learning programs.
- k. Use a service-learning curriculum that includes an effective reflection component, which provides students at risk of suspension or expulsion with opportunities to learn

from their peers and service, and demonstrates how service learning will enhance the students' academic program, school attendance and attitudes towards themselves, school and their community. Effective SIRSE programs should strive to provide at-risk students who face suspension or expulsion with service learning opportunities that approximate 5 hours of service in lieu of 1 day of suspension or expulsion (e.g., 2 days of suspension equates to 10 hours of service).

- l. Describe local efforts to secure resources to ensure the sustainability and institutionalization of the SIRSE service-learning program after funding ends.
- m. Develop and implement an effective plan of action for recognizing service activities and service leadership through awards or ceremonies.
- n. Maintain program component data and records (i.e., administrative, financial, programmatic, and evaluative) that are specific to the project's needs and operations.
- o. Submit completed required State and Federal program reports in a timely manner.

VI. PUBLIC RELATIONS/ATTRIBUTION OF PROJECT FUNDING

In order to ensure the continued support and the commitment of resources to the SIRSE program, there must be public awareness of the program's positive impact on the lives of project participants and their families, schools, and communities. Positive publicity and community awareness also help to ensure that those who are eligible and who could benefit from participation are informed of the SIRSE Program's existence.

To facilitate public awareness, all funded SIRSE projects are required to ensure that all public relations materials and activities, such as project brochures and award ceremonies, acknowledge that the SIRSE project and its activities are supported, in whole or in part, by a Federal grant from the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services administered by the New York State Education

Department. In addition, when local, Statewide, or national media report on the project's success or on honors received by students or staff, the New York State Education Department's role in administering the program must be acknowledged.

Project directors should submit copies of all local, Statewide, or national media stories about the project and/or the project's participants and staff to the State Education Department at the following address:

New York State Education Department
Pre-Collegiate Preparation Programs Unit
Learn and Serve America/SIRSE Program
Room 965 EBA
Albany, New York 12234

VII. FUNDING

Grants will be made to sub-grantees on an annual basis for a maximum of three years during the period FY 2003-2006. Options to renew funding yearly will be based on annual evaluations of programs and progress towards achieving measurable program performance outcomes, objectives and goals. Continued sub-grantee funding is contingent upon the actual receipt of funding from the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services.

Grants for FY 2003-2004 SIRSE funds will be awarded for the period September 1, 2003 through December 31, 2003 with the possibility of a two-month extension. **Since these program funds are late in being distributed, time is of the essence in developing and implementing local SIRSE programs.** Geographical distribution of funds will also be taken into consideration in the funding of programs. Only one sub-grant per LEA or school district can be submitted and will be eligible for funding during each program year.

Grants of between \$5,000 and \$50,000 will be made to a maximum of five school districts to develop and implement SIRSE programs.

Use of Funds

- a. Activities funded under a SIRSE grant will be administered pursuant to a written and signed agreement between the State Education Department and the grantee.
- b. LSA funds may not be used for purposes which have not been described in the proposal. The budget may be amended only with the consent of both the State Education Department and the grantee. Amendments to the proposal, which involve changes in the way SIRSE funds are expended, must have written approval from the Pre-Collegiate Preparation Programs Unit (PCPPU). **All budget amendment requests (Form FS-10A) must be received by PCPPU/SED by December 15, 2003.** Only expenses incurred for activities included in the approved or amended budget will be reimbursed by the State.
- c. **SIRSE funds cannot be used to purchase equipment.**

SECTION II

SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS FOR SERVICE INTERVENTION TO REDUCE SUSPENSIONS AND EXPULSIONS PROGRAMS

A. Timetable for Submitting Proposals

All applicants must mail one original (with original signature) and two copies of the full proposal and related attachments for funding for the program year 2003-2004 and must be submitted by **September 12, 2003**. Proposals should be mailed to:

New York State Education Department
Pre-Collegiate Preparation Programs Unit
Learn and Serve America/SIRSE Program
Room 965 EBA
Albany, New York 12234

B. Proposal Format

The proposal should provide for a continuum of planning, development, coordination, implementation, and evaluation of all SIRSE service-learning program activities for the 2003-2004 funding cycle.

All proposals must adhere to the 2003-2004 SIRSE guidelines and follow the sequence outlined below.

- Attachment I must be the cover page of the proposal.
- A Table of Contents must be provided after the cover page.
- The proposal narrative **may not** exceed **20** double-spaced, 12-point font, single-sided pages, the first of which will be a one-page Project Abstract.
- Additional attachments, such as memoranda of agreement, letters of support, or appendices, are limited to a total of **15** pages.

Narrative Sequence

1. Project Abstract (5 points)

Provide a brief, precise statement summarizing the proposed project on **one** typed double-spaced, 12-point font, single-sided page. The abstract should include descriptions of, but is not limited to: names of participating schools(s)/school district(s), organizational partners involved, number and types of students participating (including age/grade levels), participating schools staff and community members, community needs to be served and proposed types of classroom learning projects to be completed by the SIRSE students, and an overall description of the proposed project and benefits to your school, district and/or community.

2. Institutional Expertise (15 points)

- a. Describe your school district's expertise and experience in implementing, integrating, institutionalizing and replicating service-learning programs.
- b. Describe any at-risk, suspension or expulsion prevention programs for students that your school district has implemented or is currently implementing.
- c. Demonstrate your agency's familiarity with suspension or expulsion prevention practices and willingness, ability and experience in providing programs that serve a range of at-risk students who face suspension or expulsion between the **(ages of 7 and 15 except for PINS students, who can be served to age 17)**.

3. Population Served (10 points)

- a. Define the at-risk student population that your project will serve. Indicate the number of individuals who will directly benefit from this project, their grade levels and ages.

- b. Describe the process that your program will use to recruit student participants and the selection criteria to be used in that process.
4. Program Design, Implementation and Activities (40 points)
- a. What service-learning programs will be designed or expanded to accommodate SIRSE student participation? What will be the structure of the proposed SIRSE service-learning program? How will SIRSE student participants be integrated into existing service learning programs and projects?
 - b. Define the process of how SIRSE students will be able to choose service in lieu of suspension or expulsion? Will a service performance agreement be used? How will SIRSE students, school staff and parents be involved in the development and implementation of such an agreement?
 - c. How will your SIRSE program increase the social interaction within the proposed SIRSE service learning program, school and community for SIRSE at-risk students who face suspension or expulsion? How will your SIRSE program support and improve the academic skills, student attendance, social attitudes and skills, classroom behavior, volunteerism and/or civic skills of SIRSE student participants?
 - d. Describe some of the SIRSE service learning projects in which student participants might be involved. Where, when and how often will these service-learning activities occur? What unmet community needs will be addressed by your SIRSE program? What reflection activities will be employed for this project?
 - e. What meaningful roles will SIRSE student participants, parents, local law enforcement officials, teachers, guidance counselors, community members

and/or administrative staff have in the design and implementation of SIRSE service learning projects?

- f. How will this SIRSE program help transition these at-risk students back into normal school activities and support their continued involvement in service learning related activities?
- g. Describe how your school district will continue, sustain and institutionalize your SIRSE program after this program funding ends.
- h. How will successful ideas and strategies that deal with prospective at-risk students who face expulsion or suspension and are derived from your SIRSE program be expanded, validated and shared (e.g. staff training, presentation, site visits by other school staff, publication, web sites)?

5. Evaluation (25 points)

- a. Describe how your agency will evaluate the effectiveness and impact of your SIRSE program activities on student participants' academic performance, school attendance, social skills, classroom behavior and student behavioral referral and/or dropout rates. Define and describe the evaluation process, assessment instruments to be used and expected outcomes.
- b. How will your agency evaluate the changes in attitudes of other students, school staff and community members towards at-risk student participants as a result of their participation in your SIRSE program?

6. Budget (5 points)

A complete budget includes the following items:

- i. Proposed Budget (FS-10 form) for the operation of the SIRSE program for the period **September 1, 2003 – December 31, 2003.**

- j. A budget narrative that elaborates on and corresponds with the figures contained in the proposed budget (FS 10) form. The narrative should be consistent with the goals of the proposed project, appropriate for the services described, demonstrate how costs were calculated and describe any in-kind funds or resources.

Allowable Expenses

Applicants may request a maximum of \$50,000 to support their program. Program activities should support the involvement of 25 – 200 at-risk students (**ages 7-15 except for PINS students, who can be served to age 17**) who are facing suspension or expulsion in service learning activities for the first year. Up to five public school districts will be selected as grant recipients and demonstration sites. Grants will be made to sub grantees on an annual basis for a maximum of three years during the period FY 2003-2006. Options to renew funding yearly will be based on annual evaluations of programs and their progress towards achieving measurable performance outcomes, objectives and goals. Continued sub grantee funding is contingent upon the actual receipt of funding from the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services. Funds may be used for the following expenses:

1. Salaries and benefits of project coordinators or directors;
2. Identification and recruitment of students for participation in the program;
3. Training of program participants and staff;
4. Activities that enable students to participate in service learning as part of their regular academic curriculum;
5. Activities that support the development and implementation of a service-learning curriculum;

6. Activities that encourage and promote the active involvement of adults in providing volunteer service with youth participants involved in service-learning;
7. Supplies and materials directly related to the service-learning activities;
8. Support for participants with disabilities (e.g., signers for the hearing impaired);
9. Reasonable transportation costs for students, faculty, and staff participating in service-learning activities;
10. Program planning and evaluation; and
11. Development and coordination of service-learning activities.

Funds may not be used for:

1. Salaries and benefits of agency administrators;
2. Capital expenditures;
3. Stipends for program participants;
4. Supplanting or replacement of existing staff;
5. Promotion of private enterprises or products, labor organizations, religious proselytizing, lobbying, or partisan political activity;
6. Indirect costs; or
7. Equipment.

C. Proposal Rating and Appeals Process

1. Proposal Rating

Proposals will be rated numerically with a maximum possible score of 100. Failure to adhere to these guidelines or to include required information will result in an unfavorable review.

2. Appeals Process

If an applicant's proposal is not recommended for funding, the applicant may appeal the recommendation. To do so, the applicant must complete the following steps:

- a. Applicants not recommended for funding will receive a summary of the reviewer's comments with the notice that they have not been recommended for funding. Within **ten** (working) days of the date of the notice, the applicant should examine the reviewers' comments and send a letter responding to the comments, identifying any areas that the applicant wishes to appeal.
- b. The appeal and any documentation should be sent to:

Johanna Duncan-Poitier, Deputy Commissioner

Office of Higher Education & Office of the Professions

New York State Education Department

Room 2M EB

Albany, New York 12234
- c. A copy of the appeal and any documentation must be sent to the Program Officer (identified in the Program Guidelines).
- d. The Deputy Commissioner will act on the appeal and make a determination **ten** days after receipt of the appeal.
- e. The Deputy Commissioner's decision is final.