

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

SUBJECT: Federal grants search, development, and application revolving fund

REFERENCE: §302A-1405, Hawaii Revised Statutes

ACTION REQUESTED: The department shall prepare and submit an annual report on the status of the federal grants search, development, and application revolving fund to the legislature. The annual report shall include but not be limited to a list of the grant applications to the federal agencies and the grant awards received.

**DOE REPORT:
INTRODUCTION:**

The revolving fund revenues are derived from indirect costs reimbursements from federal discretionary grants. \$250,000 in Special funds were allocated as “T” funds to the System Planning and Improvement Section. The following fiscal table shows the breakdown of allocations and expenditures for Fiscal Year 2008-2009:

Funds	Allocation	Expenditures*
A (Personal Services)	\$134,700	\$70,617
A1 (Other Personal Services)	\$55,500	\$23,071
B (Other Current Expenses)	\$59,800	\$8,692
C (Equipment)		
TOTAL**	\$250,000	\$102,382

*Figures were rounded to the nearest dollar.

**The difference between allocation and expenditures totals was due to separate vacancies in the Grant Writer and Grant Resource Developer positions.

“A” and “A1” funds were used for three temporary positions (i.e., Grant Writer, Grant Resource Developer, Clerk Typist) to build capacity in the Department to seek, secure, monitor and report on grant funds. The positions coordinated the following grant search and development initiatives:

(1) DOE Grants website:

The purpose of the website is to increase the Department’s capacity to seek and secure grant funds by empowering teachers and administrators to secure the supplemental funding and resources needed to provide a quality education for the children of Hawaii, as outlined in the DOE’s mission

statement. The project involves the redesign of the DOE grants website to provide more user-friendly electronic access to grant and financial assistance information for the benefit of students, educators and the community. The site is being redesigned in multiple phases to provide access to detailed information on local, state, federal, corporate, and foundation grants that target K-12 education, and also provide guidance on grant searches, applications, administration and reporting, with a user-friendly and accessible format. DOE grant staff keep the site up-dated and relevant.

a) Phase I: (completed)

Basic redesign for increased functionality until Phase II can be implemented. Tasks accomplished:

- Added a “Grants” graphic link from the DOE’s main home page;
- Added a basic key word search function in grant opportunity listings;
- Reorganized and supplemented the reference webpage;
- Added the grants home/welcome page, and “hit counter to track volume of visits to the grants website;
- Added the Capacity Building Grant application page

b) Phase II:

Redesign of grants website & increased search capabilities for grants database. The web site would address six areas, each area based on a comprehensive outline of the grant seeking process that provides the user with progressively more detailed information and examples. The areas include:

- 1) Getting Started
- 2) Searching for Funders
- 3) Application Process
- 4) Project Start-up and Management
- 5) Project Close-out and Reporting
- 6) Help and FAQ’s.

(2) SPIS-Assisted Grant Writing Efforts That Have Resulted in a Discretionary Grant Award: U.S. Department of Defense Educational Activity (DoDEA), June 2009, \$2 million to Leilehua Complex

Thinking Through Science: Inquiry-Based Teaching and Learning aims to prepare all students in the Hawaii Department of Education’s Leilehua Complex for improved achievement in Science through complex-wide alignment of science curriculum; educator professional development and

coaching; and fostering increased social support systems via family-oriented activities.

FINDINGS:

The Board of Education Committee on Budget and Fiscal Accountability continues to closely monitor federal grant funds administered by the Department.

The Department has identified the need to monitor compliance to all grant provisions by recipients of grant monies. Currently, such monitoring is unfunded.

The revolving fund initiatives have effectively increased grant search and development efforts.

The Department has identified the need to strengthen communication, coordination, administration, allocation, fiscal reporting and compliance monitoring of federal grant funds.

The Department plans to utilize the revolving fund positions and resources to:

- Enhance the federal funds monitoring tools and fiscal reports.
- Develop a system to track discretionary grant applications and the subsequent grant awards received.
- Develop tools and provide technical assistance to increase the Department's capacity to seek, secure, monitor and administer grant funds.
- Develop tools and provide training for staff to enhance appropriate and timely expenditure of federal funds, maximize resources, minimize lapsed funds, and ensure programmatic and fiscal compliance.
- Increase awareness of:
 - external grant opportunities available (grants website & supplemental list)
 - DOE Grants Team, along with tools, resources, and information available
- Gather feedback and suggestions from school-level personnel on what types of information, guidance, and resources would be most helpful
- Implement a capacity building grant program to provide monetary subsidies for grant writing efforts

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Department recommends that these funds continue to be used for the intended purpose, to search for discretionary grants and develop program applications to secure

additional revenues for the department. In addition, the Department shall continue efforts to build capacity to effectively administer and report on grant funds. The Department shall monitor the revolving fund deposits to ensure there are sufficient funds available to support these initiatives.