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March 14, 2000

TO: Gene Sperling
Assistant to the President for Economic Policy

Bruce Reed
Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy

FR: Carol H. Rasco *CJR*
Director, America Reads Challenge

RE: America Reads Challenge and Federal Work-Study Program

The Federal Work-Study (FWS) component of the America Reads Challenge is preparing to undergo a significant change. The Higher Education Act Reauthorization calls for every institution of higher education receiving Federal Work-Study dollars to have at least one tutor in a children's literacy program and/or a family literacy program starting with the July 1, 2000 award year. We are, therefore, transitioning our work from recruiting of colleges to providing technical assistance in a pro-active way to all institutions not yet participating in a tutoring program.

The enclosed letter to the College Presidents' FWS Steering Committee for America Reads*America Counts explains the current status of our activity in this area. Also enclosed for you as described in the letter are three handouts we are using as we actively work not only with the institutions of higher education but also community, regional and national groups serving children who wish to utilize the tutors' services.

Please contact me if there are questions we can answer on this issue for you.

Thank you.

Cc: Ann O'Leary, DPC
Julie Anderson, OPL

March 13, 2000

Dr. Robert A. Corrigan, President
Steering Committee Chair
San Francisco State University
1600 Holloway Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94132

Dear Bob:

I am writing to thank you for your ongoing commitment and support to the America Reads Challenge. It has been my pleasure to work with you in moving the Challenge ahead.

As you may know, the new Federal Work-Study regulations will go into effect on July 1, 2000. The requirements, passed by Congress, stipulate that all higher education institutions receiving Federal Work-Study (FWS) funds will be required to use at least seven-percent of their total FWS allocation to employ students in community service jobs, this is an increase from the current five-percent requirement. Additionally, institutions must employ at least one work-study student as a reading tutor for preschool or elementary school children, or in a family literacy project. Work-study students who serve as reading tutors or in family literacy projects support the university in fulfilling the seven-percent community service requirement.

In November, a recruitment video was sent from the America Reads Challenge to presidents of colleges/universities who were not participating in America Reads. The ***We Want You*** video generated much interest among colleges and universities and as a result, 160 new institutions signed-on. Presently, 1,430 colleges/universities participate in the America Reads Challenge and 480 institutions have signed-on to America Counts.

The America Reads Challenge has begun to shift its emphasis from recruitment to providing technical assistance to the nearly 2000 higher education institutions that receive Federal Work-Study funds and have not signed-on to the America Reads Challenge.

We have met with a number of community and organizational leaders, that could effectively utilize tutors in their programs, to inform them about how they can become proactive in contacting colleges and universities for work-study tutors and how they might contribute to the training and transportation of tutors. On March 16, we are co-

sponsoring a conference with the Rutgers Graduate School entitled, "Tutoring Programs for Struggling Readers: The America Reads Challenge." One-month prior to the conference, enrollment had reached its full capacity. Participants include teachers, librarians, school administrators, higher education administrators and financial aid officers.

By the end of March, we will be sending a letter to financial aid administrators of the 2000 non-participating colleges. Included with the letter will be information and materials that will assist them in beginning a reading and/or family literacy tutoring program utilizing work-study students. During the summer, we will follow-up our correspondence to the financial aid officers with a phone call to inquire if they need additional assistance that we can provide.

Several colleges and organizations, such as Campus Compact, have notified us that they are planning to host one-day regional meetings to assist institutions that will be incorporating literacy tutoring into their Federal Work-Study program. If you would like to host a meeting in your region, please feel free to call on us for assistance.

Since all colleges/universities will be required to participate in a reading or family literacy project, after July 1, we will no longer add the names of colleges/universities participating in the America Reads Challenge to our website listing. We will, however, continue to list the institutions that sign-on prior to July 1 as a way of recognizing their voluntary participation.

The America Reads Challenge will offer the following services to all colleges receiving federal work-study funds: access to an updated website, recruitment materials, including posters and brochures, tutor training materials, an on-line directory, an interactive listserv, and electronic ***Federal Work-Study Updates***. We are enclosing, for your information, three fact sheets that we have distributed to colleges, schools, and community organizations.

Again, we thank you for your commitment and support of the America Reads Challenge. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you would like additional information.

Sincerely,

Carol H. Rasco
Senior Advisor to the Secretary
Director, America Reads Challenge

Enclosures



FEDERAL WORK-STUDY AND COMMUNITY SERVICE
Award Year 2000-2001
THE AMERICA READS CHALLENGE

HISTORY OF THE AMERICA READS CHALLENGE

- In an effort to increase the reading proficiency among America's youth, the Administration in 1996 launched the America Reads Challenge with one major objective: to have all children reading well and independently by the end of the third grade.
- During the first full year of the program, in award year 1997-98, 790 postsecondary institutions participated in the America Reads Challenge. As of January 2000, nearly 1,300 postsecondary institutions are participating in the America Reads Challenge.

FEDERAL WORK-STUDY WAIVER

- Currently, there are 3,300 institutions receiving Federal Work-Study (FWS) Program funds. The FWS Program funds provide part-time employment to approximately 942,000 students, as part of their financial aid package, to help pay for their education.
- In 1997, as one response by the federal government to the Challenge, the Secretary of Education initiated the America Reads Federal Work-Study Waiver. FWS Program funds could be used to pay 100 percent of the wages for any FWS student who was tutoring preschool age or elementary school children in reading. Higher education institutions do not have to make a request to the U.S. Department of Education to use this waiver.
- Beginning with the 1998-99 award year, the FWS waiver of the institutional matching requirement was extended to tutoring in Family Literacy Programs. Family Literacy Programs offer opportunities for FWS students to tutor preschool age and elementary school children, as well as their parents and caregivers.
- Effective October 28, 1999 (the date of publication of the FWS regulations) Family Literacy services were expanded to activities beyond tutoring. Institutions may pay a Federal share of up to 100 percent for a FWS student employed in a Family Literacy Project that provides services to families with preschool age or elementary school children. In addition to tutoring, family literacy activities may include training tutors, performing administrative tasks such as coordinating tutors' schedules, working as an instructional aide or preparing family literacy materials.

- Beginning with the 1999-2000 award year, the waiver of the institutional matching requirement was extended to FWS students employed under America Counts. America Counts provides mathematics tutors for students in elementary through ninth grade.

COMMUNITY SERVICE REQUIREMENT

- Institutions receiving FWS funds for award year 1994-95 through 1999-2000 were required to use at least five percent of their total annual Federal allocation (initial and supplemental) to pay the wages of FWS students employed in community service jobs.
- Beginning with the fiscal year 2000-2001 award year, an institution will be required to use seven percent of the total amount of the FWS funds to compensate students employed in community service activities.
- Beginning with the 2000-2001 award year, in meeting the seven percent community service requirement, an institution must ensure that one or more of its FWS students is employed as a:
 - ★ Reading tutor for preschool or elementary school children, or
 - ★ In a Family Literacy Project

TRAINING FOR TUTORS

- It is recommended that FWS students employed as reading or mathematics tutors be given high quality training prior to and during their service. Training may be provided by the school district, by the university, by a literacy organization or coalition of organizations or agencies receiving tutors. The FWS student may be paid for a reasonable amount of time spent in training.

SUPPORT FROM THE AMERICA READS CHALLENGE IN THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

- The America Reads Challenge in the U.S. Department of Education will continue to assist universities by providing the following services: an updated website, recruitment materials including posters and brochures, tutor training materials, an on-line directory, an interactive listserv, and electronic *Federal Work-Study Updates*.
- Access to the America Reads Challenge may be made through the website at www.ed.gov/americanreads or phone (202) 401-8888 or 1-800 -USA -LEARN, or fax (202) 260-8114 or e-mail americanreads@ed.gov



How to Implement an America Reads Tutoring Program and a Family Literacy Project at Your College

- **First visit the America Reads website at www.ed.gov/americanreads**
 - Link to "Resources and Research"
 - Helpful resources on this page include:
 - ◆ **The America Reads Challenge Resource Kit**
 - ◆ **Reading Helpers: A Guide for Training Tutors**
 - ◆ **Read*Write*Now! Tutoring Manual**
 - ◆ **So That Every Child Can Read**
- **Contact a colleague at one of the participating universities to talk with them about their America Reads program.**
 - For an updated list of participating colleges and universities, link to http://www.ed.gov/americanreads/couniv_fws.html
- **Identify and contact potential partners where America Reads and Family Literacy work-study tutors can be placed.**
 - Talk with someone from the local school district, the state department of education, or the school of education at your university to inquire about the preschools or elementary schools in your area where partnerships may already exist.
 - Call the toll-free family literacy hotline at (877)-FAMLIT-1 for locating family literacy programs in your community or for general information about family literacy.
 - Contact community organizations that have an interest in children's literacy also look into working with youth groups, boys and girls clubs, bookstores, PTAs, childcare centers, religious organizations, or libraries to find potential sites for tutors.



How to Find Federal Work-Study Tutors

**AMERICA
COUNTS**

This financial aid program can provide up to 100 percent of the wages for college and university work-study students who tutor in reading and math. Students may tutor at your preschool, elementary school, community center, family literacy or after-school program.

FIRST find out if a college or university in your area is signed on to the America Reads*America Counts Challenge by visiting our Web site at http://www.ed.gov/americanreads/couniv_fws.html or contact an institution's financial aid office.

If the higher education institution IS signed on to the Challenge:

- ① **Phone** the financial aid office to find the contact person for the program.
- ② **Inform** the person about your need for reading and/or math tutors.
- ③ **Establish** a partnership with the institution.
- ④ **Assist** in training for the tutors.

If the institution IS NOT signed on to the Challenge:

- ① **Make** contact with the appropriate person at the institution. For example:
 - Financial Aid Officer
 - Service Learning Officer
 - Dean of the School of Education
 - Provost
 - Community Service Officer
 - A friend who is an administrator
- ② **Discuss** with this person the benefits of participating in the America Reads*America Counts Federal Work-Study opportunity. America Reads helps children learn to read and America Counts helps children master the fundamentals of mathematics. (Learn more about the benefits by visiting the above Web address or by calling 1-800-USA-LEARN.)
- ③ **Share** the following information with the contact person:
 - ★ America Reads*America Counts is an excellent way for a higher education institution to serve community needs.
 - ★ All institutions that receive Federal Work-Study funding must spend 5 percent of the funding on community service. Tutoring is included in this 5 percent.
 - ★ As of July 2000, all institutions that receive Federal Work-Study funding will be required to spend 7 percent of their funding on community service.
 - ★ As of July 2000, every institution that receives Federal Work-Study funding will be required to have a literacy tutoring program.
- ④ **Establish** a partnership with the institution.
- ⑤ **Assist** in training for the tutors.

More answers and information at:

**americanreads@ed.gov
1-800-USA-LEARN**