



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

FEB 21 2008

Dear Upward Bound grantee:

I would like to take this opportunity to provide some clarification surrounding recent actions by Congress that have led to reports that the Department of Education's (Department) evaluation of the Upward Bound (UB) program has been terminated.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2008 contained a prohibition regarding the expenditure of 2008 funds made available by that Act for the randomized control trial evaluation of UB under the absolute priority. However, prior to the enactment of this Act, the Department committed sufficient funding to allow the evaluation to continue for the rest of this fiscal year. Despite this, and in the context of the controversy surrounding the evaluation, we have concluded that it would be best to terminate the evaluation and to engage stakeholders, including Congress, in discussions about a new evaluation that would be responsive to our collective needs and concerns.

As a result, you may now fill any available student participant openings without the use of a lottery, keeping in mind that the requirements of the absolute priority listed in the Federal Register relating to participant selection still apply. In addition, you are still required to adhere to the project-level evaluation plan you have previously submitted and should keep all records and data related to the evaluation.

The Department firmly believes it is critical to evaluate the effectiveness of the programs it administers, including Upward Bound. Rigorous evaluations provide important information on how the Department's programs could be improved, and how to best improve educational outcomes for students. The Upward Bound evaluation was designed to help ascertain the degree to which the intensive services provided under that program significantly improve student outcomes, which students received the most benefit from these services, and which practices are most effective. These are all important questions to answer, and the Department looks forward to working with Congress to develop a new evaluation plan for Upward Bound that serves both Congressional intent and the Department's goals. If you have any questions about this, please feel free to contact your assigned program specialist.

Sincerely,


Diane Auer Jones

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Our mission is to ensure equal access to education and to promote educational excellence throughout the Nation.

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