

**California Department of Education**

**POLICY  
MANUAL**

**FOR**

**AGRICULTURAL  
CAREER TECHNICAL  
EDUCATION  
INCENTIVE GRANT  
PROGRAM**

**Revised September 2007**

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## **PREFACE**

Agriculture is California's single most important industry. Agriculture production and agribusiness industries are dependent upon a constant source of qualified, employable individuals. The California State Legislature declared in Senate Bill 187 in 1981, that it is within the best interests of the people that a comprehensive career technical education program in agriculture be created and maintained by the state public schools system to ensure an adequate supply of trained and skilled individuals.

This legislation, SB 187, established a committee to develop standards to be presented to the legislature for review and to the State Board of Education for approval and adoption.

At its July 1983 meeting the State Board of Education accepted a report from the SB 187 committee which recommended a set of fifteen program standards and accompanying compliance criteria. Since a program, which operates within the framework of these standards, is viewed as being exemplary, progress towards meeting the standards or actual accomplishment of them will be considered as "program improvements" which is the focal point of the Incentive Grant Program.

The Agricultural Career Technical Education Incentive Grant Program originated with provisions in SB 813 in 1983. The program was developed in response to a need noted by the legislature to assist local educational agencies in their attempts to implement the reforms in Agricultural Career Technical Education which were embodied in SB 187 and the recommendations of the State Advisory Council for Agricultural Education which was provided for in that Act. The State Agricultural Education Unit developed the process by which the Agricultural Career Technical Education Incentive Grant funds are distributed and administered.

Every secondary agriculture education department participating in the Agricultural Career Technical Education Incentive Grant Program shall be evaluated each year with a CDE Agriculture Education Program Review instrument. This review instrument is based on the 15 quality standards outlined in the CDE Blueprint for Excellence.

This Policy Manual is to be used by administrators, career technical education directors, agriculture teachers, and state staff to answer questions pertaining to the Agricultural Career Technical Education Incentive Grant Program.

The Policy Manual, Blueprint for Excellence Handbook, Senate Bill 187 Standards, and the evaluation process will aid in the development and maintenance of strong effective programs in agriculture education.

# **AGRICULTURAL CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION INCENTIVE GRANT PROGRAM POLICY**

## **THE PURPOSE OF THE AGRICULTURAL CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION INCENTIVE GRANT PROGRAM IS:**

- \* To provide local education agencies with funds to be used to improve the quality of the Agricultural Career Technical Education Program.

## **TO QUALIFY FOR FUNDS A HIGH SCHOOL MUST:**

- \* Be operating an approved Agricultural Career Technical Education Program in their school(s). (*ROC/P's are not eligible for Incentive Grant funds. ROC/P classes, which are an integral part of the school site's total agriculture program, may be counted towards funding.*)
- \* Submit an application for each school site requesting funds. (*One copy of the application, including original signatures, must be submitted annually to the CDE Regional Supervisor of Agricultural Education.*)
- \* Have qualified Career Technical Agriculture Education teachers.
- \* Be offering all three instructional components of a Career Technical Agriculture Program (*Instruction, Supervised Agricultural Experience Program, and Leadership Development*).
- \* Be affiliated with the Agricultural Career Technical student organization.
- \* Submit a completed Program Data Enrollment Report (R-2) and Agricultural Incentive Grant Expenditure Report to the CDE Regional Supervisor of Agricultural Education.
- \* Participate in the Program Improvement process.

- \* Provide matching funds to their agriculture programs. (*Matching funds must be from the non-salaried budget categories of: 4000, 5000, & 6000.*)
- \* Certify that the Incentive Grant funds will be used to supplement, not supplant, the District's regular on-going expenditures for the Agricultural Career Technical Education Program.

**TO APPLY FOR FUNDS A HIGH SCHOOL MUST:**

- \* Complete the application. Letters of notification of the availability of the grant application are mailed to the District Superintendent, site Principal, Career Technical Education Director, and Agriculture Teacher. Applications are available online.
- \* Agree to participate in the Agricultural Career Technical Education Incentive Grant Program process. (*As part of the process, the Regional Supervisor will make appointments with the Superintendent, Principal, Career Technical Education Director, and Agriculture Teacher to provide technical assistance and conduct on-site reviews. The on-site reviews will be conducted between October 1 and December 15.*)

**DISTRIBUTION AND WITHHOLDING OF FUNDS:**

- \* A grant application system is used to determine who is eligible and the degree of funding available.
- \* The degree of funding to eligible schools is based upon the size of the agriculture staff, students enrolled in the program as reported on the Program Data Enrollment Report (R-2), and the compliance of the school site in meeting the Quality Criteria as verified and approved by the CDE Regional Supervisor of Agricultural Education.
- \* The allocation of funds is based on the approved amount requested by the high school and the amount of funds available.
- \* Seventy-five percent of the allocation is processed and released to the County Schools Office of Education. Normally the release of the first apportionment is accomplished prior to October 15.

The remaining twenty-five percent of the Incentive Grant funds will be processed in February-March. The apportionment of these funds will be contingent upon the District meeting the following criteria:

1. A copy of the high school's updated Comprehensive Agricultural Career Technical Education Plan, as described in Criteria 9 of the AgEd Program Certification Self Review Instrument shall be on file in the Regional Supervisor's office prior to December 15.
  2. Appropriate revisions or updates to the Program Plan are submitted to the Regional Supervisor prior to December 15.
  3. Annual Program Student Data Enrollment Report (R-2) submitted to the Regional Supervisor prior to October 15.
  4. Annual Agricultural Career Technical Education Incentive Grant Report of Expenditures submitted to the Regional Supervisor prior to October 15.
  5. Self-Review Document or Program Improvement Plan submitted to the Regional Supervisor prior to December 15.
  6. Affiliation with agricultural career technical student organization (FFA) completed prior to October 15.
- \* Failure to comply with any Quality Criteria may result in the school's forfeiture of funds.

### **USE OF FUNDS:**

- \* Funds received as part of the Agricultural Career Technical Education Incentive Grant may only be expended to improve the Agriculture Education Program at that site.
- \* Use of equipment purchased with Agricultural Career Technical Education Incentive Grant funds for a non-agriculture department activity, which interferes with the availability of that equipment by the Agriculture Department is not appropriate.
- \* Budget revisions of 20% or more between budget categories must be submitted in writing to the Regional Supervisor for approval before April 1.

- \* Funds can only be used for equipment. Equipment is defined as any non-salaried item of expenditure in budget classifications 4000 (Books and Supplies), 5000 (Services and Other Operating Expenses), and 6000 (Capital Outlay).

### **MATCHING FUNDS:**

- \* Applicants are required to provide matching funds from non-salaried Agricultural Career Technical Education Program expenditures.
- \* The cost of each Incentive Grant item or service in budget classifications 5000 and 6000 must be matched by non-incentive grant funds.
- \* Item-by-item matching is not required for Incentive Grant fund expenditures in budget classification 4000; however, the total cost for items purchased in this category must be matched by non-incentive grant funds.
- \* The Superintendent of Public Instruction may waive the matching requirement if it is found that the cost associated with complying with the Quality Criteria would create a financial hardship for the school district. The amount to be waived may not exceed the amount expended in meeting Quality Criteria 11, Full Year Employment.
- \* Requests for waivers must be made by the District Superintendent, by letter, to the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The request must be submitted at the same time the Incentive Grant application(s) are due to the Regional Supervisor. The waiver request should be attached to the Incentive Grant application.

# **AGRICULTURAL CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION INCENTIVE GRANT PROGRAM QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

## **COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS:**

1. *Who is eligible to receive Incentive Grant funds?*

Schools operating approved Agricultural Career Technical Education Programs may apply. An application is required from each school site requesting funds. (See Education Code: Article 7.5, Section 52460.)

2. *When are applications available?*

Agricultural Career Technical Education Incentive Grant applications and instructions are made available online by the California Department of Education (CDE) to all eligible Districts, usually during the month of May.

3. *When are applications due?*

Completed Incentive Grant applications are due to the Regional Supervisor no later than June 30.

4. *When and how does the Local Education Agency receive notification of its allocations of Agricultural Career Technical Education Incentive grant funds?*

Each September the California Department of Education (CDE) notifies the LEA of its allocated funds for the year. The LEA is sent a grant award letter listing the amount of funds that have been allocated to the LEA for support of its Agricultural Education Program.

5. *What is the method and timing of the payment of the LEA's allocation of Incentive Grant funds?*

Upon the CDE's approval of the LEA's application, 75% of the allocated funds will be sent to the County Office of Education to be credited to the applicant, via a

warrant, within approximately 120 days. The final 25% of the allocated funds will be sent to the County Office of Education; usually in April.

6. *What happens if an LEA receives a 75% advance and then fails to comply with the Quality Criteria?*

Failure to comply with a given criteria may be cause for allocations paid to the District to be refunded to the State. The CDE will bill the LEA for the amount due.

7. *What is the LEA's deadline date for submitting a budget revision?*

Budget revision requests of 20% or more of any budget category (4,000, 5000, or 6000) are to be received by the Regional Supervisor prior to April 1. Revisions are not authorized until approved by the Regional Supervisor.

8. *What is the LEA's deadline for submitting Final Expenditure Reports?*

Final Expenditure Reports are due to the Regional Supervisor's office prior to October 15.

9. *What sources of funds can be used to meet the matching requirement for Incentive Grant funds?*

Examples of sources that can be used to meet the matching requirement include, but are not limited to: Perkins, District, ROC/P, SB1882, and Lottery funds.

10. *Can an LEA request a waiver in meeting the matching requirement of the grant?*

The Superintendent of Public Instruction may waive the matching requirement if it is found that the cost of meeting the Quality Criteria would create a financial hardship for the school district. The amount waived may not exceed the amount expended in meeting Quality Criteria 11, Full Year Employment. The District Superintendent requesting the waiver must make the request by letter to the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The request must be submitted with the Incentive Grant application. (See Education Code: Article 7.5, Section 52461.5.)

11. *May a waiver be granted for the line item match requirement for 5000 and/or 6000 budget categories?*

No. A waiver cannot be granted releasing the district's commitment to meet the line item match requirement for budget classifications 5000 and 6000.

12. *May the LEA expend Incentive Grant funds to support the administration of its grant?*

No. Incentive Grant funds may not be used for direct administration.

13. *Is there an applicable indirect cost rate?*

No. Indirect costs are not allowed as expenditures using Incentive Grant funds.

14. *Is carryover of funds allowed?*

No. Incentive Grant funds must be expended or encumbered by June 30. Under special circumstances, with the approval of the State Supervisor of Agricultural Education, an extension may be granted. Under no circumstances will funding extend beyond September 30.

15. *May Incentive Grant funds be used to pay FFA stipends or summer salaries?*

No. Incentive Grant funds may only be used for non-salaried items or services. (See Education Code: Article 7.5, Sections 52460, 52461, and 52461.5.)

16. *Must the LEA maintain audit trails for Incentive Grant funds and Matching funds?*

Yes. The LEA must provide an audit trail for all funds reported on the expenditure report.

17. *Must the LEA report all of its matching funds on its annual expenditure report?*

No. The LEA must report only that amount of matching funds that is required to meet the matching requirement. The LEA is encouraged to report all of its expenditures.

18. *What are the reporting requirements that an LEA must comply with on an annual basis?*

Three documents must be submitted annually to the Regional Supervisor of Agricultural Education: (1) Application for Agricultural Career Technical Education Incentive Grant Funds; (2) Agricultural Career Technical Education Incentive Grant Report of Expenditures; and (3) Program Data Enrollment Report (R-2).

19. *Must the LEA match each item purchased with Incentive Grant funds?*

Funds purchased in the 4000 classification need not be matched item by item. However, the total Incentive Grant funds expended in the 4000 budget classification must be matched by other sources. Items purchased in budget classifications 5000 and 6000 must be matched on an item by item basis.

Example:

	<u>AG INCENTIVE GRANT</u>	<u>OTHER FUNDS</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
<b>4000 Account:</b>			
Instructional Supplies	<u>8836</u>	<u>8836</u>	<u>17672</u>
Total	8836	8836	17672
<b>5000 Account:</b>			
State FFA Conference	500	800	1300
State CATA Conference	150	150	300
Tractor Lease	<u>2500</u>	<u>2500</u>	<u>5000</u>
Total	3150	3450	6600
<b>6000 Account:</b>			
Greenhouse	<u>10000</u>	<u>10000</u>	<u>20000</u>
Total	10000	10000	20000
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b><u>21986</u></b>	<b><u>22286</u></b>	

20. *Must the LEA's expenditures of matching funds meet the same conditions/ Requirements as the Incentive Grant expenditures?*

Yes. (See Education Code: Article 7.5, Section 52461.)

21. *How long must records be retained by the LEA?*

Incentive Grant records must be retained for five years or longer if any litigation, claim, negotiation audit, or other action has been started before the expiration of the 5-year period.

22. *How many periods must a Career Technical Agriculture Instructor teach to have the preparation period count as part of the formula in determining Full-Time-Equivalent (FTE) status?*

An Agricultural Education Teacher must be teaching career technical agriculture a minimum of half-time before the preparation period can be used in the formula to determine FTE. (Example: On a six-period day, the credentialed agriculture teacher must be teaching a minimum of 3 periods of career technical agriculture. If this criteria is being met, then the assigned preparation period may be counted, bringing the teacher to 4/6 FTE.)

23. *What are the minimum credential and professional requirements for a Career Technical Agriculture Teacher?*

The teacher must hold a valid California teaching credential authorizing the teaching of Career Technical Agriculture. (See Education Code: Article 4, Sections 44258.5 and 44260.)

24. *What credentials are needed for an individual to teach career technical agriculture courses?*

In California a teacher must possess either a Single Subject and an Agriculture Specialist Credential, a Standard Secondary Credential, or have a Designated Subject Credential in one or more of the subject areas in Agriculture.

25. *Must the LEA meet selected property management standards when it purchases equipment with Incentive Grant or matching funds?*

Yes. The LEA is required to establish property management policies and procedures and to maintain equipment inventory control records on all equipment purchased which has an acquisition cost of \$500 or more. Copies of the inventory should be kept at the district office and school site. The following minimum equipment inventory record requirements must be included:

- \* A description of the equipment, including the manufacturer's name and/or model number, if any.
  - \* An identification number, such as the LEA's inventory control number or a manufacturer's serial number. This identification number, when included on the inventory and invoice, provides a clear and traceable audit trail. The identification number also helps to ensure effective property control to prevent loss or misuse of equipment items, especially those items purchased with Incentive Grant funds and non-incentive matching funds for Career Technical Agriculture Education.
  - \* Acquisition date of the equipment purchased.
  - \* Acquisition cost and the amount of Incentive Grant funds used to purchase the equipment item.
  - \* Equipment location, including name of the school site, room, other area, and date the above information was verified.
  - \* Equipment use, including a current "use" justification statement if the equipment is used for a purpose(s) other than that for which it was originally purchased and date the justification statement was prepared.
  - \* Current equipment condition and date when equipment was inspected.
26. *What equipment inventory, maintenance, and control activities must the LEA conduct?*

The LEA must conduct the follow activities:

- \* Conduct a physical inventory of equipment and the results reconciled with equipment inventory at least once every two years to verify the existence of current utilization and continued need for the equipment. Any differences between quantities determined by the physical inspection and those shown

on the inventory must be investigated to determine causes of the differences and reconciled. A statistical sampling of equipment is acceptable in conducting the inventory.

- \* Implement adequate maintenance procedures to ensure that all equipment is kept in safe and operating condition.
- \* Maintain a control system to ensure adequate safeguards to prevent loss, damage, or theft of equipment. Any loss, damage, or theft of equipment must be investigated and fully documented.

27. *What procedures must the LEA follow to remove equipment which has been lost, damaged, or deemed to be obsolete from its equipment inventory control records?*

The LEA must submit a list of such equipment to the local LEA governing board. Upon approval of the governing board, verified in the board minutes, the LEA may remove the equipment from its inventory control records. (See Education Code: Article 14, Section 39521.)

28 *Must the LEA's governing board appoint an advisory committee to develop recommendations for the expansion and improvement of Agriculture Education and provide liaison between the LEA and potential employers?*

Yes. The advisory committee shall consist of individuals that represent segments of the agriculture industry in the community and servicing area. (See Education Code: Article 3, Section 8070.)

29. *Who is the contact person regarding the Incentive Grant program?*

The first line of technical assistance is the Regional Supervisor. Additional assistance may be obtained by calling the State Staff person responsible for the Incentive Grant program or the State Supervisor of Agricultural education.

30. *What is the appeal process that the LEA must use when it disagrees with CDE's staff decisions regarding the approval of the LEA's Incentive Grant application or report of expenditures?*

First, the LEA may file an appeal with the Program Manager of Agricultural Education. Second, the decision of the Program Manager may also be appealed by using the CDE's formal complaint process.