

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) - Action Plan

County: Blount County Schools

Program Title: Basic Education Program (BEP) Grant

CFDA Number: #84.394

1. A plan detailing how the funds will be spent and how the agency will address the absence of federal funding after the ARRA grant is discontinued.

The Basic Education Program (BEP) was established in the early 1990s through legislative enactment of the Education Improvement Act. During the 09–10 and 10–11 fiscal years, the Board will budget and expend these funds for teacher salaries. For the 2011 – 2012 fiscal year and thereafter, the State of Tennessee will be required, by law, to fully fund the Basic Education Program; therefore, when the ARRA grant is discontinued, it is expected that the State will budget sufficient funds to replace the absence of Federal ARRA revenue.

2. A summary description of the program and the objectives of the program. The goals and objectives should demonstrate cost-effectiveness. Goals and objectives are usually easy to understand, quantifiable, and as a result, measureable. The description will usually include (a) how performance will be measured (i.e. the methodology); (b) who is responsible for measuring performance; and (c) how often the results/progress will be tracked and reported. The description must be written in plain language that is concise and easily understood by a person who has no in-depth knowledge of the program. (Suggestion – you may want to answer questions 3 through 8 prior to completing this procedure.)

The Basic Education Program is the funding formula for the calculation of K-12 education funding necessary for our schools to succeed. In conjunction with local funding through tax assessments, the funds are used to educate students to a proficient level in math, reading, science, and social studies. Annually, the State measures performance of students and teachers through statistical calculations generated from results of student performance on standardized, mandated tests. Throughout the school year, the System measures performance of students through testing, daily work, and other assignments. Throughout the school year, the System evaluates teacher performance through evaluations and walk-in observations.

3. A description of the source (Name of the Federal/State/Other Agency) and amount of the ARRA grant the County expects to receive.

The Blount County Board of Education expects to receive \$2,112,100 in BEP funding through State Fiscal Stabilization Funds from the Tennessee Department of Education during the 09–10 fiscal year. The Blount County Board of Education expects to receive approximately \$2,109,700 in BEP funding through State Fiscal Stabilization Funds from the Tennessee Department of Education during the 10–11 fiscal year.

4. What are the Federal/State/Other Agency reporting requirements for the ARRA grant?

State of Tennessee, Department of Education; FY 2009-2010:

Blount County Schools will be required to report expenditures through the State's Federal Application Consolidated Tracking System (FACTS) and/or eReporting prior to the State

releasing the ARRA grant funds to the Board. The reporting will occur after the close of the second (2nd) quarter of each fiscal year.

5. What are the ARRA grant expenditure and performance measure requirements? (e.g. grant can/cannot be expended for, matching, time frames for obligation/expenditure, capturing the number of jobs created and retained, etc.)

There are no performance measure requirements to receive these funds. The System is required to report expenditure of the funds in accordance with State guidelines (See #4 above).

6. What procedures will be placed in operation to ensure that ARRA grant awards and expenditures are separately captured?

In accordance with TRAM Directive 2, Blount County Schools as recipients of ARRA funds has the requirement to ensure that all ARRA funds are accounted for separately from non-ARRA funds in financial and reporting systems to include sub-systems. The Board of Education will post ARRA grant revenues for the BEP funds in revenue account number 46512 – Basic Education Program – ARRA. The Board of Education will capture the expenditures in account number 141-71100-116 – Regular Instruction Program, Teachers – with a specific sub fund for the ARRA grant.

7. What procedures will be utilized to capture performance measure data specifically related to jobs created and retained?

Jobs retained can be accurately estimated by dividing the average teacher's salary for Obion County into the ARRA grant revenue. For the 09–10 fiscal year, the approximate classroom teacher salary is \$42,000; therefore, there are approximately 50 classroom teaching positions retained due to the State's use of BEP State Stabilization Funds. There were no jobs created with ARRA BEP grant revenues.

8. Establish written criteria for sub-granting ARRA funds to other governments or nonprofits and awarding contracts if applicable.

N/A – Blount County Schools will not be sub-granting USDA Equipment Grant funds.

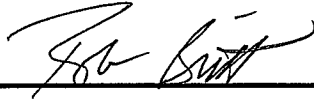
9. A written description of the risk assessment plan required by TRAM Directive number eight. TRAM Directive number eight states, All recipients and subrecipients of ARRA funds are required to adopt a risk assessment process for all ARRA programs to include:

- Risk identification,
- Risk evaluation, and
- Risk mitigation plans.

The risk assessment must also include items that address meeting program requirements and objectives. (Instructions for preparing a risk assessment are presented at www.tn.gov/comptroller by following the ARRA link to the Division of County Audit.)

SEE RISK ASSESSMENT ATTACHED.

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1. Rob Britt, Director of Schools
Senior Accountable Official for Recovery Act Activities

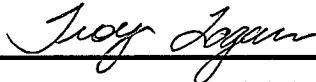


9-29-09

Signature

Date

2. Signature(s) – Name and Title of Individuals Responsible for
Preparing the Action Plan



9-29-09

Troy Logan, Fiscal Administrator

Date

Blount County School System

Risk Assessment Compliance Documentation

ARRA BEP, CFDA#84.394

Step 1

Internal control policies and procedures have been developed by the office(s) of Blount County's Accounting & Budgeting Office and Blount County Schools (BCS). These offices will follow their respective internal control procedures to administer funds under their control. These internal policies and procedures will serve to provide reasonable assurances that the grant administrative offices of BCS will be able to administer the AARA BEP Grant insuring:

1. Effectiveness and efficiency of financial operations of the BCS.
2. Reliability of financial reporting for the program by BCS' management.
3. Compliance with applicable laws and regulations set forth by the State and Federal Government.

The BCS Internal Control Policies and Procedures serve to:

1. Maintain an appropriate internal control environment;
2. Employs a risk assessment procedure;
3. Establish formal procedures for all control activities;
4. Provides a forum for sharing of information and communication; and
5. Provide a monitoring of this process to accommodate changes in internal control needs and to improve where necessary, those in effect.

We have reviewed the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the Year Ended June 30, 2008, and noted the report did not disclose any deficiencies in internal controls over financial reporting that auditors considered to be material weaknesses; disclosed no instances of noncompliance or other matters that are required to be reported under GAS; did not disclose any deficiencies in internal controls over compliance with requirements applicable to major programs and OMB A133 that auditors considered to be material weaknesses. And the audit did not reveal any segregation of duties internal control findings.

The audit did reveal one finding of questioned costs under OMB A133. The corrective action was completed by November 2008.

BCS' internal control policies and procedures are maintained in the respective offices of the Blount County's Accounting & Budgeting Office and BCS and will serve to guide the internal controls necessary to implement the ARRA grants received by BCS.

Therefore, based on our understanding of the Office of the Tennessee Recovery Act Management's (TRAM) directives and guidance from the State of Tennessee, Division of County Audit, we are in compliance with the TRAM Directives No. 5 and 6. We have reviewed the BCS internal control policies and procedures; are familiar with these controls; and have reasonable assurance these internal controls are in place and functioning properly. The BCS internal control environment includes approvals, adjustments, recordkeeping, reporting reconciliation, segregation of duties, and supervision. The control environment also facilitates external monitoring and post-audit activities.

Step 2

BCS has reviewed and defined the program objectives of the AARA BEP Funds that were received on July 1, 2009. This grant provided funds to purchase a new cafeteria dishwasher for Eagleton Middle School.

A meeting of associated officials and staff was held on September 29, 2009, whereby the expectations and objectives of this grant was identified as it pertains to the ARRA BEP project. BCS has a clear understanding of these program expectations and objectives.

Step 3

A formal meeting was held by BCS Officials on September 29, 2009. All employees and officials associated with the administration of the ARRA grant for the BEP project were present.

The following employees of BCS were in attendance:

Rob Britt, Troy Logan

Each in attendance was briefed on the program requirements and goals of BCS with respect to implementing the BEP Project. Each one was instructed as to the need for strict transparency and accountability guidelines associated with this project.

As a result of that meeting, ARRA grant administration duties and responsibilities were outlined and assigned as follows:

Rob Britt, Senior Accountable Official, ARRA Grants

Troy Logan, Fiscal Administrator

The following items were reviewed at the meeting:

- a.) The latest financial and compliance audit of Blount County with respect to identifying past significant deficiencies and/or material weaknesses in the office of the ARRA grant administrator. Steps have been taken to address these audit findings and the following actions were taken to ensure that these deficiencies do not arise during the administration of the ARRA grant.

We have reviewed the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the Year Ended June 30, 2008, and noted the report did not disclose any deficiencies in internal controls over financial reporting that auditors considered to be material weaknesses; disclosed no instances of noncompliance or other matters that are required to be reported under GAS; did not disclose any deficiencies in internal controls over compliance with requirements applicable to major programs and OMB A133 that auditors considered to be material weaknesses. The audit did not reveal any segregation of duties internal control findings.

The audit did reveal one finding of questioned costs under OMB A133. The corrective action was completed by November 2008.

- b.) The Grant Administrators have the following oversight responsibilities:
 - Accounting
 - Reporting

- Purchasing
- Other duties that assure accountability of the grant

In that regard the Grant Administrator assigns all responsibilities in the administration of this grant including but not limited to:

- Preparing and filing quarterly reports
 - Cash draw downs
 - Oversight of expenditures to insure appropriates within the objectives of the grant
 - Goal and project completion progress
 - Corrective Action needed relative to any of the above
 - Continuous monitoring of all persons and activities associated with the grant.
- c.) The grant administrator understands that it is his/her responsibility to make every one assisting in the administration of the ARRA grant are aware of the county's responsibility of administering the grant and to insure that the administration operates in an environment of transparency and open communication. The Blount County Schools' grant administration team has been made fully aware that Blount County Schools' failure to properly account for and/or spend ARRA funds may require Blount County taxpayers to reimburse the federal government for any or all of the misused funds.
- d.) Blount County Schools has employed the Comptroller of the Treasury new accounts for the tracking program funds (receipts and disbursements). Furthermore Blount County Schools has established appropriate accounts compliant with the Comptroller of the Treasury's Uniform Chart of Accounts. The bookkeeper/account for this project has been made aware of the requirement to file all necessary reports associated with this grant within 10 (ten) days of the end of each quarter of the grant appropriating period to comply with ARRA accounting guidelines. Any unexpended grant funds that carry over into another accounting period will be designated as ARRA Project reserves.
- e.) The Grant Administrator will conduct, assign and/or oversee each person responsible for cash draw downs, preparing any and all associated reports and submitting all reports to as appropriate to the state/federal agency overseeing this program in a timely manner.
- f.) Internal controls for administration of these grants were discussed and acknowledged at a meeting held on 9-29-09 between all associated with the administration of the grants. The purpose of the meeting was to review existing and to identify any new internal controls necessary to minimize the potential for misappropriations, waste or abuse, of grant funds. See Step 1 above for analysis of internal controls. We are confident that our internal controls are sufficient to properly administer all funds received through ARRA.
- g.) In the event that the Grant Administrator is unable to perform his duties, a new administrator will be appointed by Rob Britt, Director of Schools. In the interim period Troy Logan will serve in the former Grant Administrator's capacity until the new Grant Administrator resumes that responsibility.

Periodic meetings will be scheduled periodically during the grant administration period for all personnel associated with the BEP Project as deemed necessary by the Grant Administrators.

The purpose of these meetings will be to assess concerns that arise with regard to grant administration, complying with grant objectives, maintaining appropriate documentation, and maintaining proper and appropriate accounting and reporting procedures. Prior to these

meetings the Grant Administrator will consult with state or federal departments as appropriate to identify any issues that need to be addressed by county management.

Step 4

The fourth step in the risk assessment process involves resolving any risks identified.

As of this date, September 29, 2009, no current risks have been identified for the BEP Project.