

SC Parents Involved in Education

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DSS TEEN PREGNANCY PREVENTION PROVISO 26.22

Department of Social Services Teen Pregnancy Prevention Proviso 26.22 does not allow for fair and open competition. There are two primary concerns that need to be addressed in order to ensure a fair and open competitive process in the allocation of these funds.

Concern #1

The DSS Teen Pregnancy Prevention Proviso awards money each year, equally, to two types of programs:

- One program that is described as using an “abstinence first, comprehensive approach” and,
- One program described as using an “abstinence only approach”.

From the inception of said proviso, programs that apply for funds under the “abstinence only” approach have been held to a higher standard. While very strict qualifying criteria continues to intensify for the “abstinence only” approach, little or no qualifiers are required for the “abstinence first, comprehensive approach.” This should not be the case. The concern has only been compounded by the 2011 amendments made on the Senate floor.

Proposed Solution:

Amend proviso so that eligibility requirements are at least similar, regardless of the program’s teen pregnancy prevention approach.

Concern #2

- One vendor, Heritage Community Services had been the unchallenged recipient of the Teen Pregnancy Prevention “abstinence only” funds for many years due to rigid eligibility requirements.
- In 2010, this changed when SC Parents Involved in Education (SCPIE) competed and won the award. The award was held up in protest for several months by Heritage and shortly thereafter, after the award to SCPIE was final, the Senate floor amendments were introduced.
- The amendments introduced and passed on the floor of the Senate has further compounded the inequity of the competitive process between the two approaches and added an obvious advantage for a particular vendor.
- The 2011 amendment set the eligibility bar even higher for “abstinence only” providers with a long list of nearly insurmountable qualifiers. However, SCPIE was determined to qualify and spent time and money attempting to jump through the hoops put in place by this amendment. While SCPIE managed eligibility in its 2011 application, it was very difficult to measure up to the new requirements that embodied accomplishments and practices the winning vendor had in place for several years.

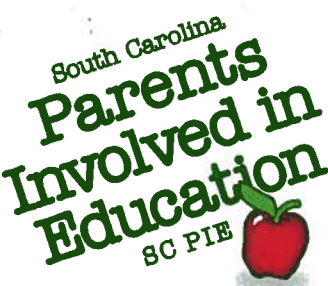
Proposed Solution:

Proposed solution to Concern #2 is to return to the 2010 Proviso version.

(DSS: Teen Pregnancy Prevention – suggested revision)

Return to 2010 version: In order to foster greater equity in the contract bidding process for this particular funding, we urge the committee to consider returning to the 2010 version of this Proviso which is shown below.

26.22. (DSS: Teen Pregnancy Prevention) From the monies appropriated for the Continuation of Teen Pregnancy Prevention, the department must award two contracts to separate private entities to provide teen pregnancy prevention programs and services within the State. The monies appropriated must be divided equally between the contracts. Entities that have a proven and public history of having effectively implemented abstinence programs in this State may be given a preference during the contract evaluation and awarding process. One contract must be awarded to an entity that utilizes an abstinence first, age appropriate comprehensive approach to health and sexuality education with a goal of preventing adolescent pregnancy throughout South Carolina. One contract must be awarded to an entity that uses a National Abstinence Clearinghouse (NAC) approved curricula for a minimum of one year prior to their application. NAC is the agency the federal Department of Health and Human Services has chosen to provide a comprehensive, national list of approved abstinence-only education curricula that is consistent with the A through H legislative requirements defined in Title V, Section 510(b)(2). Any entity that is awarded one of the above contracts must agree to provide data to verify the program effectiveness. A five-member committee shall oversee the contract award process. The committee's first meeting shall be on or before August 1, 2009. The five member committee shall be composed as follows: the President Pro Tempore of the Senate shall appoint two members of the committee, the Speaker of the House shall appoint two members of the committee and the Governor shall appoint one member of the committee. Members of the committee shall serve without compensation.



South Carolina
**Parents
Involved in
Education**
SC PIE

When it comes to education, parents are
the most important piece of the PIE!

Deb Marks
Program Director

SCPIE Satellite Office
P.O. Box 197
Irmo, SC 29063

o: 803.772.2468
c: 803.920.4933
deb@scpie.org
www.scpie.org