
Office of Legislative Auditor

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Informational Report: Potential Duplication With Youth Drug Abuse Prevention Programs

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About This Informational Report

Louisiana Revised Statute 24:522(C) requires the Louisiana Legislative Auditor (LLA) to evaluate programs and services of state government agencies and identify areas needing improvement. In the last regular session, the legislature formed the Commission on Streamlining Government (Commission), and LLA has been assigned to assist the Commission. One of the topics the Commission is focusing on is duplication of services provided by two or more programs.

To assist the Commission, we will report on areas of potential duplication by two or more agencies in delivering services. We defined duplication as identical or similar activities performed by more than one agency leading to accomplishment of the same or similar goal. We will issue individual reports addressing different areas of duplication.

To be responsive in a timely manner, we obtained information from state law, budget documents, agency interviews, and other sources. We did not conduct an audit in accordance with all government auditing standards. Though we performed procedures adequate to identify potential duplication, we did not perform sufficient procedures to make definitive conclusions or estimate potential savings, if any, that may result as a result of any action taken by these entities to eliminate such potential duplication.

We identified four agencies that provide funding for youth drug abuse prevention programs. These agencies are the Department of Education (DOE), Office of School and Community Support; Governor's Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities (Governor's Office); Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration (LCLE); and the Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH), Office for Addictive Disorders. All administer funding to grantees that provide youth drug prevention services.

Potential Duplication Between DOE and the Governor's Office

DOE and the Governor's Office fund their respective youth drug abuse prevention programs from the same federal Title IV grant. The two agencies provide funds to grantees that serve youth in different settings, but there may be duplicative effort in administration of these funds. Grantees of both agencies conduct evidence-based programs.

POTENTIAL DUPLICATION - YOUTH DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAMS _____

DOE has approximately six staff (three program administrators and three in finance/accounting) who work varying amounts of time to administer the grant dollars. The Governor's Office has two full-time staff and one who works varying amounts of time to administer grant dollars.

DOE and the Governor's Office coordinate with each other on a monthly basis. Agency officials think this coordination reduces the possibility of duplication and enhances the effectiveness of the youth substance abuse prevention programs.

DOE

DOE receives and distributes Louisiana's allotment of federal Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities grant funds (20 USCA 7113). According to a DOE official, DOE received \$5,591,692 in Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities grant funds for fiscal year 2009. DOE's share (80 percent) was \$4,473,354 for fiscal year 2009. The remaining 20 percent (\$1,118,338) of the grant funds was disbursed to the Governor's Office.

Of the total grant amount, DOE is allowed to retain 3 percent for administrative costs and retain an additional 4 percent for state level activities, according to a DOE official. The total withheld for fiscal year 2009 was \$391,417. Local school districts or local education authorities receive the remaining 93 percent of DOE's share of grant funds, which totaled \$4,081,937 for fiscal year 2009. These funds are used by local education authorities in school-based settings to implement youth drug abuse prevention programs. The programs must be evidence-based, according to a DOE official. An evidence-based program is defined as a program that has been proven over time to be successful.

Governor's Office

The Governor's Office is responsible for administering Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities sub-grants to community-based youth drug abuse prevention programs [20 USCA 7102(2), 7112(a)(1)]. The Governor's Office takes grant applications and awards funding to community-based organizations on a cost reimbursement basis. In fiscal year 2009, the Governor's Office funded 46 organizations that conducted evidence-based programs.

The Governor's Office received \$1,118,338 in grant funds for fiscal year 2009 and retains 3 percent (\$49,791 for fiscal year 2009) of the grant to pay for administration expenses, according to a Governor's Office official. According to this official, state general funds are used to pay for administrative expenses in excess of the 3 percent withholding from the grant.

Potential Duplication Between DHH and the Governor's Office

Using different federal grants, both the Governor's Office and DHH fund grantees that conduct community-based youth drug abuse prevention programs that are evidence-based. This

is potentially duplicative because there may be duplicative effort in the administration of these grants.

Twenty-three staff administer funding from DHH. Two full-time staff and one person who works varying amounts of time administer funding from the Governor's Office. DHH has a high level of coordination with the Governor's Office, working with them on almost a weekly basis, according to an agency official.

DHH

DHH is responsible for administering the distribution of federal Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (SAPT) block grants. DHH distributes federal block grants to community-based organizations that implement evidence-based substance abuse prevention programs around the state. An evidence-based program is defined as a program that has been proven over time to be successful.

DHH used approximately \$5.97 million of federal block grants to fund substance abuse prevention programs during fiscal year 2008. DHH is allowed to retain 5 percent (approximately \$298,500 for fiscal year 2008) of distributed grants for administrative expenses. This \$298,500 (based on 5 percent of \$5.97 million) is an estimate because DHH does not track the specific allocation of administrative expenses for substance abuse prevention services. Approximately 85 percent of the recipients of these grants implemented substance abuse prevention programs that target individuals who are 18 years of age or younger.

Governor's Office

As stated on page 2, the Governor's Office is responsible for administering Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities sub-grants to community-based youth drug abuse prevention programs [20 USCA 7102(2), 7112(a)(1)]. The Governor's Office takes grant applications and processes them for disbursement to local community-based programs. In fiscal year 2009, the Governor's Office disbursed grants to 46 organizations. Programs that grant recipients implement are evidence-based.

Potential Duplication Between LCLE and DOE

Both LCLE and DOE provide funds to sub-grantees to implement drug abuse prevention programs in schools. Although the two agencies are funded from different sources and program content may differ, there may be duplicative effort in administration of these funds.

LCLE

LCLE is responsible for the administration of the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) program. LCLE reviews applications for grants, provides training, and monitors grant recipients (all of which are law enforcement agencies). The D.A.R.E. program involves

activities such as law enforcement officers presenting information on substance abuse prevention to youth in classrooms.

The grant funding for the D.A.R.E. program originates from the Tobacco Tax Health Care Fund. LCLE awarded \$3,174,727 through 84 sub-grants for fiscal year 2009, according to an agency official. The administrative expense was \$91,836, which is approximately 2.9 percent of the total grant amounts awarded. LCLE has a program manager who works full-time on D.A.R.E., and seven other staff working varying amounts of time to administer the program, according to an LCLE official. The seven other staff equate to one full-time equivalent position, according to the LCLE official.

DOE

As stated on page 2, DOE receives and distributes Louisiana's allotment of federal Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities grant funds (20 USCA 7113). DOE distributes grants to local school districts or local education authorities. These funds are used by local education authorities in school-based programs to implement youth drug abuse prevention programs.

FOR QUESTIONS RELATED TO THIS INFORMATIONAL REPORT, CONTACT
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A copy of this report is available at our Web site www.la.la.gov.

Under the provisions of state law, this report is a public document. A copy of this report has been submitted to the Governor, to the Attorney General, and to other public officials as required by state law. A copy of this report has been made available for public inspection at the Baton Rouge office of the Legislative Auditor.

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