



4000-01-U

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Applications for New Awards; Comprehensive Centers Program--National Comprehensive Center on Improving Literacy for Students with Disabilities

AGENCY: Offices of Elementary and Secondary Education and Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice.

Overview Information:

Comprehensive Centers Program--National Comprehensive Center on Improving Literacy for Students with Disabilities
Notice inviting applications for a new award for fiscal year (FY) 2016.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number:
84.283D.

Dates:

Applications Available: [INSERT DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: Section 2244 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), requires the Secretary to establish a comprehensive center on students at risk of not attaining full literacy skills due to a disability. Comprehensive Centers are typically administered by the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE). OESE is funding this Center; however, because of the Center's subject matter, it will be administered jointly by OESE and the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS).

Priority: We are establishing this priority for the FY 2016 grant competition in accordance with section 437(d)(1) of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), 20 U.S.C. 1232(d)(1).

Absolute Priority: This priority is an absolute priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), we consider only applications that meet this priority.

This priority is:

National Comprehensive Center on Improving Literacy for Students with Disabilities.

Priority:

The purpose of this priority is to fund a cooperative agreement to establish a National Comprehensive Center on

Improving Literacy for Students with Disabilities (the Center) for children in early childhood education programs through high school. The comprehensive center must:

(a) Identify or develop free or low-cost evidence-based assessment tools for identifying students at risk of not attaining full literacy skills due to a disability, including dyslexia impacting reading or writing, or developmental delay impacting reading, writing, language processing, comprehension, or executive functioning;

(b) Identify evidence-based literacy instruction, strategies, and accommodations, including assistive technology, designed to meet the specific needs of such students;

(c) Provide families of such students with information to assist such students, and as part of this activity, the Center should plan to collaborate with the parent training and information and community parent resource centers funded by the Department of Education (the Department), Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) (e.g., Center for Parent Information and Resources, and Parent Technical Assistance Centers);

(d) Identify or develop evidence-based professional development for teachers, paraprofessionals, principals,

other school leaders, and specialized instructional support personnel to--

(1) Understand early indicators of students at risk of not attaining full literacy skills due to a disability, including dyslexia impacting reading or writing, or developmental delay impacting reading, writing, language processing, comprehension, or executive functioning;

(2) Use evidence-based screening assessments for early identification of such students beginning not later than kindergarten; and

(3) Implement evidence-based instruction designed to meet the specific needs of such students; and

(d) Disseminate the products of the comprehensive center to regionally diverse State educational agencies (SEAs), local educational agencies (LEAs), regional educational agencies, and schools, including, as appropriate, through partnerships with other comprehensive centers established under section 203 of the Educational Technical Assistance Act of 2002 (20 U.S.C. 9602), regional educational laboratories established under section 174 of the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (20 U.S.C. 9564), and OSEP- and other related federally-funded technical assistance centers.

Application Requirements:

The following requirements apply to all applications submitted under this competition. Any application that does not include the required documents or information will not be considered.

(a) Demonstrate in the narrative section of the application under "Significance of the Project" how the proposed project will address current and emerging training and information needs of SEAs, LEAs, technical assistance (TA) centers, schools, and practitioners to select and implement evidence-based practices that will improve literacy outcomes for students with disabilities or students who show indicators of disabilities that may prevent them from attaining full literacy skills. To meet this requirement, the applicant must--

(1) Demonstrate knowledge of current and emerging evidence-based practices in reading and literacy-related instruction, screening, assessment, and identification of students with disabilities or students who show indicators of disabilities that may prevent them from attaining full literacy skills, including knowledge of culturally responsive evidence-based practices to respond to the needs of diverse learners with disabilities;

(2) Demonstrate knowledge of and previous experience with using creative approaches to disseminate evidence-

based practices to a variety of entities, including parents, SEAs, LEAs, schools, Head Start, and other early childhood programs;

(3) Demonstrate knowledge of and previous experience with implementing TA strategies and delivering evidence-based professional development (PD) to a variety of entities, including SEAs, LEAs, schools, Head Start, and other early childhood programs; and

(4) Demonstrate how using these TA and PD strategies has resulted in SEAs, LEAs, schools, teachers, paraprofessionals, principals, other school leaders, and specialized instructional support personnel adopting, implementing, and sustaining evidence-based practices in reading and literacy-related instruction.

(b) Demonstrate in the narrative section of the application under "Quality of Project Design," how the Center will accomplish project goals and activities. To meet this requirement, the applicant must--

(1) Describe a five-year plan for the Center to identify current and emerging training and information needs and to address the priority requirements;

(2) Use a conceptual framework for developing project plans and activities, describing any underlying concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs, or theories, as well as

the presumed relationships or linkages among these variables, and any empirical support for this framework;

(3) Incorporate current research and evidence-based practices and strategies in the development and delivery of its products and services;

(4) Provide TA that is of high quality and sufficient intensity and duration to achieve the intended outcomes of the proposed project. The applicant must describe how it will use TA of varying levels of intensity, based on the needs of SEAs and other entities, to assess and build the capacity of SEAs, LEAs, TA centers, schools, Head Start and other early childhood programs, and practitioners to--

(i) Assess students' literacy-related skills, including the capacity to: identify students with disabilities or students who show indicators of disabilities that may prevent them from attaining full literacy skills, administer assessments including screening tools, evaluate the evidence base for an assessment (i.e., reliability, validity, sensitivity, specificity), understand the purpose of the assessment and the skills being assessed, and interpret assessment results;

(ii) Fully implement evidence-based literacy-related programs. This involves helping practitioners understand the literacy program's purpose or goal, intended

population, content, and necessary implementation supports, including PD needed to implement it with fidelity; and

(iii) Use evidence-based PD programs to improve practitioners' knowledge of reading and literacy-related instruction, ultimately leading to better literacy-related skills of students with disabilities or students who show indicators of disabilities that may prevent them from attaining full literacy skills;

(5) Partner with other federally funded comprehensive centers, regional educational laboratories, equity assistance centers, TA centers, parent training and information and community parent resource centers, and other related organizations to refine or develop products, create training modules, and hold meetings to both encourage collaborative activities among SEAs, LEAs, schools, Head Start and other early childhood programs, practitioners, and parents, and maximize efficiency. These partnerships should include--

(i) Using technology, including assistive technology, to achieve intended project outcomes;

(ii) Collaborating with national experts, institutions of higher education, and TA providers to avoid duplicating efforts; and

(iii) Collaboratively identifying measures or guidelines for detecting if, due to a disability, students are at risk of not attaining full literacy skills, not learning to read, or not reaching benchmarks.

(c) In the narrative section of the application under "Quality of the Evaluation Plan," include an evaluation plan for the project. The evaluation plan must--

(1) Describe performance goals, objectives, and outcomes for the project that are clearly specified and measurable in terms of the project activities to be accomplished and their stated outcomes;

(2) In accordance with paragraph (f)(1) of these Application Requirements, describe the logic model by which the proposed project will achieve its intended outcomes;

(3) Describe how both progress in implementation and project outcomes will be measured, including the extent to which the project's products and services will reach its target population, how intended outcomes or results are achieved, a timeline for conducting the evaluation, and data analytic strategies.

(4) Specify the measures and associated instruments or sources for data appropriate to the evaluation questions, suggest analytic strategies for those data,

provide a timeline for conducting the evaluation, and include staff assignments for completing the plan;

(5) Describe how evaluations of performance will be used to inform and improve service delivery over the course of the grant and to refine the proposed logic model and evaluation plan, including data collection; and

(6) Dedicate sufficient funds in each budget year to cover the costs of carrying out the tasks described in paragraphs (c) (1) and (2) of these Application Requirements and implementing the evaluation plan.

(d) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under "Adequacy of Project Resources," how--

(1) The proposed key project personnel, consultants, and subcontractors have the qualifications and subject-matter and technical expertise to carry out the proposed activities, achieve the project's intended outcomes, and develop ongoing partnerships with leading experts and organizations nationwide to inform project activities;

(2) The applicant and any key partners have adequate resources to carry out the proposed activities;

(3) The proposed costs are reasonable in relation to the anticipated results and benefits; and

(4) The proposed project will encourage applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that

have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability, as appropriate.

(e) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under "Quality of the Management Plan," how--

(1) The proposed management plan will ensure that the project's intended outcomes will be achieved on time and within budget. To address this requirement, the applicant must describe--

(i) Clearly defined responsibilities for key project personnel, consultants, and subcontractors, as appropriate; and

(ii) Timelines and milestones for accomplishing the project tasks.

(2) Allocation of key project personnel and any consultants and subcontractors and how these allocations are appropriate and adequate to achieve the project's intended outcomes;

(3) The proposed management plan will ensure that the products and services provided are of high quality; and

(4) The proposed project will benefit from a diversity of perspectives, including families, general and special education teachers, related services providers, TA providers, researchers, institutions of higher education,

policy makers, among others, in its development and operation.

(f) The applicant must--

(1) Include, in Appendix A, a logic model that depicts, at a minimum, the goals, activities, outputs, and intended outcomes of the proposed project. A logic model communicates how a project will achieve its intended outcomes and provides a framework for both the formative and summative evaluations of the project.

Note: OSEP uses this definition of logic model to differentiate between logic models and conceptual frameworks. The following Web sites provide more information on logic models:

www.osepideasthatwork.org/logicModel and

www.osepideasthatwork.org/resources-grantees/program-areas/ta-ta/tad-project-logic-model-and-conceptual-framework.

(2) Include, in Appendix A, a conceptual framework for the project;

(3) Include, in Appendix A, person-loading charts and timelines, as applicable, to illustrate the management plan described in the narrative;

(4) Include in the budget 2-day trips twice per year to attend Department briefings, Department-sponsored

conferences, and other meetings, as requested by the Department; and

(5) Maintain a Web site that meets government or industry-recognized standards for accessibility.

Note: Within 30 days of receipt of the award, a post-award teleconference must be held between the project officer and the grantee's project director or other authorized representative;

Definitions: These definitions apply to the National Comprehensive Center on Improving Literacy for Students with Disabilities priority in this notice. The definition of "evidence-based" comes from section 8002 of the ESEA, as amended by the ESSA. The definitions are as follows:

Evidence-based means an activity, strategy, or intervention that (i) demonstrates a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes or other relevant outcomes based on--(I) strong evidence from at least one well-designed and well-implemented experimental study; (II) moderate evidence from at least one well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental study; or (III) promising evidence from at least one well-designed and well-implemented correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias; or (ii) (I) demonstrates a rationale based on high-quality research findings or

positive evaluation that such activity, strategy, or intervention is likely to improve student outcomes or other relevant outcomes; and (II) includes ongoing efforts to examine the effects of such activity, strategy, or intervention.

Practitioners (for the purposes of this priority) includes teachers, paraprofessionals, principals, other school leaders, and specialized instructional support personnel.

TA services are defined as a negotiated series of activities designed to reach a valued outcome. This category of TA should result in changes to policy, program, practice, or operations that support increased recipient capacity or improved outcomes at one or more systems levels.

Waiver of Proposed Rulemaking: Under the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) (5 U.S.C. 553) the Department generally offers interested parties the opportunity to comment on proposed priorities and requirements. Section 437(d)(1) of GEPA, however, allows the Secretary to exempt from rulemaking requirements regulations governing the first grant competition under a new or substantially revised program authority. This is the first grant competition for the Comprehensive Centers program under section 2244 of the

Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended, 20 U.S.C. 6674, and therefore qualifies for this exemption. In order to ensure timely grant awards, the Secretary has decided to forego public comment on the priority and requirements under section 437(d)(1) of GEPA. The priority and requirements will apply to the FY 2016 grant competition only.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 6674; Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016.

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 75, 77, 79, 81, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98, and 99. (b) The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3485. (c) The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3474.

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 79 apply to all applicants except federally recognized Indian tribes.

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 86 apply to institutions of higher education (IHEs) only.

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Cooperative agreement.

Estimated Available Funds: \$1,475,000.

Maximum Award: We will reject any application that proposes a budget exceeding \$1,475,000 for a single budget period of 12 months in year one and \$1,500,000 for a single budget period in years 2-5.

Estimated Number of Awards: 1.

Note: The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

Project Period: Up to 60 months.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants: Research organizations, institutions, agencies, institutions of higher education, or partnerships among such entities, or individuals, with the demonstrated ability or capacity to carry out the activities described in this notice.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching: This program does not require cost sharing or matching.

3. Eligible Subgrantees: (a) Under 34 CFR 75.708(b) and (c) a grantee may award subgrants--to directly carry out project activities described in its application--to the following types of entities: SEAs; LEAs, including public charter schools that operate as LEAs under State law; IHEs;

other public agencies; private nonprofit organizations; freely associated States and outlying areas; Indian tribes or tribal organizations; and for-profit organizations suitable to carry out the activities proposed in the application.

(b) The grantee may award subgrants to entities it has identified in an approved application.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package: You can obtain an application package via the Internet or from the Education Publications Center (ED Pubs). To obtain a copy via the Internet, use the following address: www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/grantapps/index.html. To obtain a copy from ED Pubs, write, fax, or call: ED Pubs, U.S. Department of Education, P.O. Box 22207, Alexandria, VA 22304. Telephone, toll free: 1-877-433-7827. FAX: (703) 605-6794. If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) or a text telephone (TTY), call, toll free: 1-877-576-7734.

You can contact ED Pubs at its Web site, also: www.EDPubs.gov or at its email address: edpubs@inet.ed.gov.

If you request an application package from ED Pubs, be sure to identify this program or competition as follows:
CFDA number 84.283D.

Individuals with disabilities can obtain a copy of the application package in an accessible format (e.g., braille, large print, audiotape, or compact disc) by contacting the person or team listed under Accessible Format in section VIII of this notice.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission:

Requirements concerning the content of an application, together with the forms you must submit, are in the application package for this competition.

Page Limit: The application narrative (Part III of the application) is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application. You must limit Part III to no more than 60 pages, using the following standards:

- A "page" is 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.
- Double-space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative, including titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, reference citations, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, graphs, and screen shots.

- Use a font that is 12 point or larger.
- Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial. An application submitted in any other font (including Times Roman or Arial Narrow) will not be accepted.

The page limit and double-spacing requirements do not apply to Part I, the cover sheet; Part II, the budget section, including the narrative budget justification; Part IV, the assurances and certifications; or the abstract (follow the guidance provided in the application package for completing the abstract), the table of contents, the list of priority requirements, the resumes, the reference list, the letters of support, or the appendices. However, the page limit and double-spacing requirements do apply to all of Part III, the application narrative, including all text in charts, tables, figures, graphs, and screen shots.

We will reject your application if you exceed the page limit in the application narrative section or if you apply standards other than those specified in this notice and the application package.

3. Submission Dates and Times:

Applications Available: [INSERT DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Applications for grants under this competition must be submitted electronically using the Grants.gov Apply site (Grants.gov). For information (including dates and times) about how to submit your application electronically, or in paper format by mail or hand delivery if you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, please refer to Other Submission Requirements in section IV of this notice.

We do not consider an application that does not comply with the deadline requirements.

Individuals with disabilities who need an accommodation or auxiliary aid in connection with the application process should contact the person listed under For Further Information Contact in section VII of this notice. If the Department provides an accommodation or auxiliary aid to an individual with a disability in connection with the application process, the individual's application remains subject to all other requirements and limitations in this notice.

4. Intergovernmental Review: This competition is subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. Information about Intergovernmental Review of

Federal Programs under Executive Order 12372 is in the application package for this competition.

5. Funding Restrictions: We reference regulations outlining funding restrictions in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice.

6. Data Universal Numbering System Number, Taxpayer Identification Number, and System for Award Management: To do business with the Department of Education, you must--

a. Have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and a Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN);

b. Register both your DUNS number and TIN with the System for Award Management (SAM) (formerly the Central Contractor Registry), the Government's primary registrant database;

c. Provide your DUNS number and TIN on your application; and

d. Maintain an active SAM registration with current information while your application is under review by the Department and, if you are awarded a grant, during the project period.

You can obtain a DUNS number from Dun and Bradstreet at the following Web site: <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>. A DUNS number can be created within one to two business days.

If you are a corporate entity, agency, institution, or organization, you can obtain a TIN from the Internal Revenue Service. If you are an individual, you can obtain a TIN from the Internal Revenue Service or the Social Security Administration. If you need a new TIN, please allow two to five weeks for your TIN to become active.

The SAM registration process can take approximately seven business days, but may take upwards of several weeks, depending on the completeness and accuracy of the data you enter into the SAM database. Thus, if you think you might want to apply for Federal financial assistance under a program administered by the Department, please allow sufficient time to obtain and register your DUNS number and TIN. We strongly recommend that you register early.

Note: Once your SAM registration is active, it may be 24 to 48 hours before you can access the information in, and submit an application through, Grants.gov.

If you are currently registered with SAM, you may not need to make any changes. However, please make certain that the TIN associated with your DUNS number is correct. Also note that you will need to update your registration annually. This may take three or more business days.

Information about SAM is available at www.SAM.gov. To further assist you with obtaining and registering your DUNS

number and TIN in SAM or updating your existing SAM account, we have prepared a SAM.gov Tip Sheet, which you can find at: <http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/sam-faqs.html>.

In addition, if you are submitting your application via Grants.gov, you must (1) be designated by your organization as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR); and (2) register yourself with Grants.gov as an AOR. Details on these steps are outlined at the following Grants.gov Web page:

www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html.

7. Other Submission Requirements: Applications for grants under this competition must be submitted electronically unless you qualify for an exception to this requirement in accordance with the instructions in this section.

a. Electronic Submission of Applications.

Applications for grants under the National Comprehensive Center on Improving Literacy for Students with Disabilities competition, CFDA number 84.283D, must be submitted electronically using the Governmentwide Grants.gov apply site at www.Grants.gov. Through this site, you will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it offline, and then upload

and submit your application. You may not email an electronic copy of a grant application to us.

We will reject your application if you submit it in paper format unless, as described elsewhere in this section, you qualify for one of the exceptions to the electronic submission requirement and submit, no later than two weeks before the application deadline date, a written statement to the Department that you qualify for one of these exceptions. Further information regarding calculation of the date that is two weeks before the application deadline date is provided later in this section under Exception to Electronic Submission Requirement.

You may access the electronic grant application for the National Comprehensive Center on Improving Literacy for Students with Disabilities competition at www.Grants.gov. You must search for the downloadable application package for this competition by the CFDA number. Do not include the CFDA number's alpha suffix in your search (e.g., search for 84.283, not 84.283D).

Please note the following:

- When you enter the Grants.gov site, you will find information about submitting an application electronically through the site, as well as the hours of operation.

- Applications received by Grants.gov are date and time stamped. Your application must be fully uploaded and submitted and must be date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system no later than 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. Except as otherwise noted in this section, we will not accept your application if it is received--that is, date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system--after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. We do not consider an application that does not comply with the deadline requirements. When we retrieve your application from Grants.gov, we will notify you if we are rejecting your application because it was date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date.

- The amount of time it can take to upload an application will vary depending on a variety of factors, including the size of the application and the speed of your Internet connection. Therefore, we strongly recommend that you do not wait until the application deadline date to begin the submission process through Grants.gov.

- You should review and follow the Education Submission Procedures for submitting an application through Grants.gov that are included in the application package for

this competition to ensure that you submit your application in a timely manner to the Grants.gov system. You can also find the Education Submission Procedures pertaining to Grants.gov under News and Events on the Department's G5 system home page at www.G5.gov. In addition, for specific guidance and procedures for submitting an application through Grants.gov, please refer to the Grants.gov Web site at: www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html.

- You will not receive additional point value because you submit your application in electronic format, nor will we penalize you if you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, as described elsewhere in this section, and submit your application in paper format.

- You must submit all documents electronically, including all information you typically provide on the following forms: the Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424), the Department of Education Supplemental Information for SF 424, Budget Information--Non-Construction Programs (ED 524), and all necessary assurances and certifications.

- You must upload any narrative sections and all other attachments to your application as files in a read-

only, non-modifiable Portable Document Format (PDF). Do not upload an interactive or fillable PDF file. If you upload a file type other than a read-only, non-modifiable PDF (e.g., Word, Excel, WordPerfect, etc.) or submit a password-protected file, we will not review that material. Please note that this could result in your application not being considered for funding because the material in question--for example, the project narrative--is critical to a meaningful review of your proposal. For that reason it is important to allow yourself adequate time to upload all material as PDF files. The Department will not convert material from other formats to PDF. Additional, detailed information on how to attach files is in the application instructions.

- Your electronic application must comply with any page-limit requirements described in this notice.

- After you electronically submit your application, you will receive from Grants.gov an automatic notification of receipt that contains a Grants.gov tracking number. This notification indicates receipt by Grants.gov only, not receipt by the Department. Grants.gov will also notify you automatically by email if your application met all the Grants.gov validation requirements or if there were any errors (such as submission of your application by someone

other than a registered Authorized Organization Representative, or inclusion of an attachment with a file name that contains special characters). You will be given an opportunity to correct any errors and resubmit, but you must still meet the deadline for submission of applications.

Once your application is successfully validated by Grants.gov, the Department will retrieve your application from Grants.gov and send you an email with a unique PR/Award number for your application.

These emails do not mean that your application is without any disqualifying errors. While your application may have been successfully validated by Grants.gov, it must also meet the Department's application requirements as specified in this notice and in the application instructions. Disqualifying errors could include, for instance, failure to upload attachments in a read-only, non-modifiable PDF; failure to submit a required part of the application; or failure to meet applicant eligibility requirements. It is your responsibility to ensure that your submitted application has met all of the Department's requirements.

- We may request that you provide us original signatures on forms at a later date.

Application Deadline Date Extension in Case of Technical Issues with the Grants.gov System: If you are experiencing problems submitting your application through Grants.gov, please contact the Grants.gov Support Desk, toll free, at 1-800-518-4726. You must obtain a Grants.gov Support Desk Case Number and must keep a record of it.

If you are prevented from electronically submitting your application on the application deadline date because of technical problems with the Grants.gov system, we will grant you an extension until 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, the following business day to enable you to transmit your application electronically or by hand delivery. You also may mail your application by following the mailing instructions described elsewhere in this notice.

If you submit an application after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date, please contact the person listed under For Further Information Contact in section VII of this notice and provide an explanation of the technical problem you experienced with Grants.gov, along with the Grants.gov Support Desk Case Number. We will accept your application if we can confirm that a technical problem occurred with the Grants.gov system and that the problem affected your ability to submit your application by 4:30:00 p.m.,

Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. We will contact you after we determine whether your application will be accepted.

Note: The extensions to which we refer in this section apply only to the unavailability of, or technical problems with, the Grants.gov system. We will not grant you an extension if you failed to fully register to submit your application to Grants.gov before the application deadline date and time or if the technical problem you experienced is unrelated to the Grants.gov system.

Exception to Electronic Submission Requirement: You qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, and may submit your application in paper format, if you are unable to submit an application through the Grants.gov system because--

- You do not have access to the Internet; or
- You do not have the capacity to upload large documents to the Grants.gov system;

and

- No later than two weeks before the application deadline date (14 calendar days or, if the fourteenth calendar day before the application deadline date falls on a Federal holiday, the next business day following the Federal holiday), you mail or fax a written statement to

the Department, explaining which of the two grounds for an exception prevents you from using the Internet to submit your application.

If you mail your written statement to the Department, it must be postmarked no later than two weeks before the application deadline date. If you fax your written statement to the Department, we must receive the faxed statement no later than two weeks before the application deadline date.

Address and mail or fax your statement to: Kristen Rhoads, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 5142, Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC 20202-5076. FAX: (202) 245-7619.

Your paper application must be submitted in accordance with the mail or hand delivery instructions described in this notice.

b. Submission of Paper Applications by Mail.

If you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, you may mail (through the U.S. Postal Service or a commercial carrier) your application to the Department. You must mail the original and two copies of your application, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the following address:

U.S. Department of Education

Application Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.283D)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

You must show proof of mailing consisting of one of the following:

- (1) A legibly dated U.S. Postal Service postmark.
- (2) A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the U.S. Postal Service.
- (3) A dated shipping label, invoice, or receipt from a commercial carrier.
- (4) Any other proof of mailing acceptable to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.

If you mail your application through the U.S. Postal Service, we do not accept either of the following as proof of mailing:

- (1) A private metered postmark.
- (2) A mail receipt that is not dated by the U.S. Postal Service.

Note: The U.S. Postal Service does not uniformly provide a dated postmark. Before relying on this method, you should check with your local post office.

We will not consider applications postmarked after the application deadline date.

c. Submission of Paper Applications by Hand Delivery.

If you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, you (or a courier service) may deliver your paper application to the Department by hand. You must deliver the original and two copies of your application by hand, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the following address:

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.283D)
550 12th Street, SW.
Room 7039, Potomac Center Plaza
Washington, DC 20202-4260

The Application Control Center accepts hand deliveries daily between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, except Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal holidays.

Note for Mail or Hand Delivery of Paper Applications: If you mail or hand deliver your application to the Department--

(1) You must indicate on the envelope and--if not provided by the Department--in Item 11 of the SF 424 the CFDA number, including suffix letter, if any, of the competition under which you are submitting your application; and

(2) The Application Control Center will mail to you a notification of receipt of your grant application. If you do not receive this notification within 15 business days

from the application deadline date, you should call the U.S. Department of Education Application Control Center at (202) 245-6288.

V. Application Review Information

1. Selection Criteria: The selection criteria for this competition are from 34 CFR 75.210 and are listed in the application package.

2. Review and Selection Process: We remind potential applicants that in reviewing applications in any discretionary grant competition, the Secretary may consider, under 34 CFR 75.217(d)(3), the past performance of the applicant in carrying out a previous award, such as the applicant's use of funds, achievement of project objectives, and compliance with grant conditions. The Secretary may also consider whether the applicant failed to submit a timely performance report or submitted a report of unacceptable quality.

In addition, in making a competitive grant award, the Secretary requires various assurances including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department of Education (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

3. Additional Review and Selection Process Factors:

In the past, the Department has had difficulty finding peer reviewers for certain competitions because so many individuals who are eligible to serve as peer reviewers have conflicts of interest. Therefore, the Department has determined that for some discretionary grant competitions, applications may be separated into two or more groups and ranked and selected for funding within specific groups. This procedure will make it easier for the Department to find peer reviewers by ensuring that greater numbers of individuals who are eligible to serve as reviewers for any particular group of applicants will not have conflicts of interest. It also will increase the quality, independence, and fairness of the review process, while permitting panel members to review applications under discretionary grant competitions for which they also have submitted applications.

4. Risk Assessment and Special Conditions:

Consistent with 2 CFR 200.205, before awarding grants under this competition the Department conducts a review of the risks posed by applicants. Under 2 CFR 3474.10, the Secretary may impose special conditions and, in appropriate circumstances, high-risk conditions on a grant if the applicant or grantee is not financially stable; has a history of unsatisfactory performance; has a financial or

other management system that does not meet the standards in 2 CFR part 200, subpart D; has not fulfilled the conditions of a prior grant; or is otherwise not responsible.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. Award Notices: If your application is successful, we notify your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators and send you a Grant Award Notification (GAN); or we may send you an email containing a link to access an electronic version of your GAN. We may notify you informally, also.

If your application is not evaluated or not selected for funding, we notify you.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements: We identify administrative and national policy requirements in the application package and reference these and other requirements in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice.

We reference the regulations outlining the terms and conditions of an award in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice and include these and other specific conditions in the GAN. The GAN also incorporates your approved application as part of your binding commitments under the grant.

3. Reporting: (a) If you apply for a grant under this competition, you must ensure that you have in place

the necessary processes and systems to comply with the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 170 should you receive funding under the competition. This does not apply if you have an exception under 2 CFR 170.110(b).

(b) At the end of your project period, you must submit a final performance report, including financial information, as directed by the Secretary. If you receive a multiyear award, you must submit an annual performance report that provides the most current performance and financial expenditure information as directed by the Secretary under 34 CFR 75.118. The Secretary may also require more frequent performance reports under 34 CFR 75.720(c). For specific requirements on reporting, please go to www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html.

(c) Under 34 CFR 75.250(b), the Secretary may provide a grantee with additional funding for data collection analysis and reporting. In this case the Secretary establishes a data collection period.

4. Performance Measures: To evaluate the overall success of the Comprehensive Center program, the Department will use three performance measures to assess the quality, relevance, and usefulness of center activities funded under this competition. These measures, adapted from a set of common measures developed to help assess performance across

the Department's TA programs, are: (1) the percentage of all Comprehensive Centers' products and services that are deemed to be of high quality by qualified experts or individuals with appropriate expertise to review the substantive content of the products and services; (2) the percentage of all Comprehensive Centers' products and services that are deemed to be of high relevance to educational policy or practice by target audiences; and (3) the percentage of all Comprehensive Centers' products and services that are deemed to be of high usefulness to educational policy or practice by target audiences.

All grantees will be expected to submit, as part of their performance reports, quantitative data documenting their progress with regard to these performance measures.

5. Continuation Awards: In making a continuation award under 34 CFR 75.253, the Secretary considers, among other things: whether a grantee has made substantial progress in achieving the goals and objectives of the project; whether the grantee has expended funds in a manner that is consistent with its approved application and budget; and, if the Secretary has established performance measurement requirements, the performance targets in the grantee's approved application.

In making a continuation award, the Secretary also considers whether the grantee is operating in compliance with the assurances in its approved application, including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

VII. Agency Contact

For Further Information Contact: Kristen Rhoads, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 5142, Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC 20202-5076. Telephone: (202) 245-6715.

If you use a TDD or a TTY, call the Federal Relay Service (FRS), toll free, at 1-800-877-8339.

VIII. Other Information

Accessible Format: Individuals with disabilities can obtain this document and a copy of the application package in an accessible format (e.g., braille, large print, audiotape, or compact disc) by contacting Wendell Bell, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 5113, Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC 20202-5108. Telephone: (202) 245-7268. If you use a TDD or a TTY, call the FRS, toll free, at 1-800-877-8339.

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You may also access documents of the Department published in the Federal Register by using the article search feature at: www.federalregister.gov. Specifically, through the advanced search feature at this site, you can limit your search to documents published by the Department.

Dated: June 3, 2016

Ann Whalen,
Delegated the Authority to Perform
the Functions and Duties of
Assistant Secretary for Elementary
and Secondary Education.

Sue Swenson,
Acting Assistant Secretary for
Special Education and
Rehabilitative Services.

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