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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Applications for New Awards; Enhanced Assessment

Instruments Grant Program--Enhanced Assessment Instruments

AGENCY: Office of Elementary and Secondary Education,
Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice.

Overview Information:

Enhanced Assessment Instruments Grant Program--Enhanced
Assessment Instruments

Notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year
(FY) 2016.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number:
84.368A.

Dates:

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

Deadline for Notice of Intent to Apply: [INSERT DATE 20
DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

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

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: [INSERT DATE 105
DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The purpose of the Enhanced Assessment Instruments Grant program, also called the Enhanced Assessment Grants (EAG) program, is to enhance the quality of assessment instruments and assessment systems used by States for measuring the academic achievement of elementary and secondary school students.

Priorities: This competition includes four absolute priorities and three competitive preference priorities. In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(iv), the absolute priorities are from section 6112 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), 20 U.S.C. 7301a. The competitive preference priorities are from the Department's notice of final priorities published elsewhere in this issue of the Federal Register.

Absolute Priorities: For FY 2016 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, these priorities are absolute priorities. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3) we consider only applications that meet one or more of the absolute priorities.

These priorities are:

Absolute Priority 1--Collaboration.

Collaborate with institutions of higher education, other research institutions, or other organizations to improve the quality, validity, and reliability of State academic assessments beyond the requirements for these assessments described in section 1111(b)(3) of the ESEA, as amended by NCLB.

Absolute Priority 2--Use of Multiple Measures of Student Academic Achievement.

Measure student academic achievement using multiple measures of student academic achievement from multiple sources.

Absolute Priority 3--Charting Student Progress Over Time.

Chart student progress over time.

Absolute Priority 4--Comprehensive Academic Assessment Instruments.

Evaluate student academic achievement through the development of comprehensive academic assessment instruments, such as performance- and technology-based academic assessments.

Competitive Preference Priorities: For FY 2016 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, these priorities are competitive preference priorities. For

Competitive Preference Priority 1, under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i), the Department awards up to an additional 15 points to an application, depending on how well the application meets the priority. Specifically, the Department awards up to an additional 10 points to an application depending on how well the application meets parts (a) and (c), and up to an additional five points to an application depending on how well the application meets parts (b) and (c). For Competitive Preference Priority 2, under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i), the Department awards up to an additional 10 points, depending on how well the application meets the priority. Specifically, the Department awards up to an additional five points to an application depending on how well the application meets parts (a) and (c), and up to an additional five points to an application depending on how well the application meets parts (b) and (c). An applicant may choose to respond to either or both parts (a) and (b) of either of these priorities. For Competitive Preference Priority 3, under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i), the Department awards up to an additional five points to an application, depending on how well the application meets this priority. An applicant may choose to respond to and earn points for how well the

application meets multiple competitive preference priorities.

These priorities are:

Competitive Preference Priority 1--Developing Innovative Assessment Item Types and Design Approaches.

(Up to 15 points.)

Under this priority, SEAs must:

(a) Develop, evaluate, and implement new, innovative item types for use in summative assessments in reading/language arts, mathematics, or science;

(1) Development of innovative item types under paragraph (a) may include, for example, performance tasks; simulations; or interactive, multi-step, technology-rich items that can support competency-based assessments or portfolio projects;

(2) Projects under this priority must be designed to develop new methods for collecting evidence about a student's knowledge and abilities and ensure the quality, validity, reliability, and fairness (such as by incorporating principles of universal design for learning) of the assessment and comparability of student data; or

(b) Develop new approaches to transform traditional, end-of-year summative assessment forms with many items into

a series of modular assessment forms, each with fewer items than the end-of-year summative assessment.

(1) To respond to paragraph (b), applicants must develop modular assessment approaches which can be used to provide timely feedback to educators and parents as well as be combined to provide a valid, reliable, and fair summative assessment of individual students.

(c) Applicants proposing projects under either paragraph (a) or (b) must provide a dissemination plan to share lessons learned and best practices such that their projects can serve as models and resources that can be shared with other States.

Competitive Preference Priority 2--Improving Assessment Scoring and Score Reporting. (Up to 10 points.)

Under this priority, SEAs must:

(a) Develop innovative tools that leverage technology to score assessments;

(1) To respond to paragraph (a), applicants must propose projects to reduce the time it takes to provide test results to educators, parents, and students and to make it more cost-effective to include non-multiple choice items on assessments. These innovative tools must improve automated scoring of student assessments, in particular

non-multiple choice items in reading/language arts, mathematics, or science; or

(b) Propose projects, in consultation with organizations representing parents (including parents of English learners and parents of students with disabilities), students, teachers, counselors, and school administrators to address needs related to score reporting and improve the utility of information about student performance included in reports of assessment results and provide better and more timely information to educators and parents;

(1) To respond to paragraph (b), applicants must include one or more of the following in their projects:

(i) Developing enhanced score reporting templates or digital mechanisms for communicating assessment results and their meaning (such as by providing clear and actionable next steps for parents);

(ii) Improving the assessment literacy of educators and parents to help them interpret test results and to support teaching and learning in the classroom (such as by providing training on test development and interpretation of test scores); and

(iii) Developing mechanisms for secure transmission and individual use of assessment results by students and parents.

(c) Applicants proposing projects under either paragraph (a) or (b) must provide a dissemination plan to share lessons learned and best practices such that their projects can serve as models and resources that can be shared with other States.

Competitive Preference Priority 3--Inventory of State and Local Assessment Systems. (Up to 5 points.)

(a) Under this priority, SEAs must--

(1) Review statewide and local assessments to ensure that each test is of high quality, maximizes instructional goals, has a clear purpose and utility, and is designed to help students demonstrate mastery of State standards;

(2) Determine whether assessments are serving their intended purpose to measure student achievement and identify gaps in students' knowledge and skills and to eliminate redundant and unnecessary testing; and

(3) Review State and LEA strategies and activities related to test preparation to make sure those strategies and activities are focused on academic content and not on test-taking skills.

(b) To meet the requirements in paragraph (a), SEAs must ensure that tests, including statewide and local assessments are--

(1) Worth taking, meaning that assessments are a component of good instruction and require students to perform the same kind of complex work they do in an effective classroom and the real world;

(2) High quality, resulting in actionable, objective information about students' knowledge and skills, including by assessing the full range of relevant State standards, eliciting complex student demonstrations or applications of knowledge, providing an accurate measure of student achievement, and producing information that can be used to measure student growth accurately over time;

(3) Time-limited, in order to balance instructional time and the need for assessments, for example, by eliminating duplicative assessments and assessments that incentivize low-quality test preparation strategies that consume valuable classroom time;

(4) Fair for all students and used to support equity in educational opportunity by ensuring that accessibility features and accommodations level the playing field so tests accurately reflect what all students, including

students with disabilities and English learners, know and can do;

(5) Fully transparent to students and parents, so that States and districts can clearly explain to parents the purpose, the source of the requirement (if appropriate), and the use by teachers and schools, and provide feedback to parents and students on student performance; and

(6) Tied to improving student learning as tools in the broader work of teaching and learning.

(c) Approaches to assessment inventories under paragraph (a) must include:

(1) Review of the schedule for administration of all assessments required at the Federal, State, and local levels;

(2) Review of the purpose of, and legal authority for, administration of all assessments required at the Federal, State, and local levels; and

(3) Feedback on the assessment system from stakeholders, which could include information on how teachers, principals, other school leaders, and administrators use assessment data to inform and differentiate instruction, how much time teachers spend on assessment preparation and administration, and the

assessments that administrators, teachers, principals, other school leaders, parents, and students do and do not find useful.

(d) Projects under this priority--

(1) Must be no longer than 12 months;

(2) Must include a longer-term project plan, understanding that, beginning with FY 2017, there may be dedicated Federal funds for assessment audit work as authorized under section 1202 of the ESEA, as amended by the ESSA, and understanding that States and LEAs may use other Federal funds, such as the State assessment grant funds, authorized under section 1201 of the ESEA, as amended by the ESSA, consistent with the purposes for those funds, to implement such plans; and

(3) Must have a budget of \$200,000 or less.

Requirements: The following requirements are from the notice of final priorities, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria for this program published in the Federal Register on April 19, 2011 (76 FR 21985) (2011 NFP). With respect to requirement (b), the Department notes that the Race to the Top Assessment program ended in 2015. As a result, while the grantees will be expected to meet this requirement broadly, they will not need to coordinate with the Race to the Top Assessment program.

An eligible applicant awarded a grant under this program must:

(a) Evaluate the validity, reliability, and fairness of any assessments or other assessment-related instruments developed under a grant from this competition, and make available documentation of evaluations of technical quality through formal mechanisms (e.g., peer-reviewed journals) and informal mechanisms (e.g., newsletters), both in print and electronically;

(b) Actively participate in any applicable technical assistance activities conducted or facilitated by the Department or its designees, coordinate with the Race To The Top Assessment program in the development of assessments under this program, and participate in other activities as determined by the Department;

(c) Develop a strategy to make student-level data that result from any assessments or other assessment-related instruments developed under a grant from this competition available on an ongoing basis for research, including for prospective linking, validity, and program improvement studies;¹

¹ Eligible applicants awarded a grant under this program must comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and 34 CFR part 99, as well as State and local requirements regarding privacy.

(d) Ensure that any assessments or other assessment-related instruments developed under a grant from this competition will be operational (ready for large-scale administration) at the end of the project period;

(e) Ensure that funds awarded under the EAG program are not used to support the development of standards, such as under the English language proficiency assessment system priority or any other priority;

(f) Maximize the interoperability of any assessments and other assessment-related instruments developed with funds from this competition across technology platforms and the ability for States to move their assessments from one technology platform to another by doing the following, as applicable, for any assessments developed with funds from this competition by--

(1) Developing all assessment items in accordance with an industry-recognized, open-licensed, interoperability standard that is approved by the Department during the grant period, without non-standard extensions or additions; and

(2) Producing all student-level data in a manner consistent with an industry-recognized open-licensed interoperability standard that is approved by the Department during the grant period;

(g) Unless otherwise protected by law or agreement as proprietary information, make any assessment content (i.e., assessments and assessment items) and other assessment-related instruments developed with funds from this competition freely available to States, technology platform providers, and others that request it for purposes of administering assessments, provided that those parties receiving assessment content comply with consortium or State requirements for test or item security; and

(h) For any assessments and other assessment-related instruments developed with funds from this competition, use technology to the maximum extent appropriate to develop, administer, and score the assessments and report results.

Definitions: The following definitions are from the 2011 NFP and the notice of final priorities, requirement, definitions, and selection criteria for this program published in the Federal Register on May 23, 2013 (78 FR 31343) (2013 NFP).

English learner means a child, including a child aged three and younger, who is an English learner consistent with the definition of a child who is "limited English proficient," as applicable, in section 9101(25) of the ESEA, as amended by NCLB. (2013 NFP)

Student with a disability means a student who has been identified as a child with a disability under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, as amended. (2011 NFP)

Program Authority: Section 6112 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by NCLB, and section 1203(b)(1) of the ESEA, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (Pub. L. No. 114-95) (ESSA).

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 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. (d) The notice of final priorities published elsewhere in this issue of the Federal Register. (e) The 2011 NFP and the 2013 NFP.

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Discretionary grants.

Estimated Available Funds: \$8,860,000.

Contingent upon the availability of funds and the quality of applications, we may make additional awards in FY 2016 from the list of unfunded applications from this competition.

Estimated Range of Awards: \$100,000 to \$4,000,000.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$2,500,000.

Estimated Number of Awards: 3-6.

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

Project Period: Up to 48 months.

Note: For Competitive Preference Priority 1 and Competitive Preference Priority 2, applicants should submit a single budget and propose a project period of up to 48 months. Applicants should propose a project period that is up to 48 months, based on a timeline that takes into account the urgency of the need of the final project findings and products to be accessible to the field. Subject to the availability of future years' funds, the Department may make supplemental grant awards to grants awarded in this competition. Applicants that address Competitive Preference Priority 3 may not propose a project period of greater than 12 months or a budget of greater than \$200,000. If an applicant addresses Competitive Preference Priority 3, as well as one of the other

competitive preference priorities, then that portion of the proposed project period attributable to the project activities under Competitive Preference Priority 3 may not exceed 12 months; and that portion of the proposed budget attributable to the project activities under Competitive Preference Priority 3 may not exceed \$200,000.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants: State educational agencies (SEAs) as defined in section 9101(41) of the ESEA, as amended by NCLB, and consortia of such SEAs.

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

3. Other: An application from a consortium of SEAs must designate one SEA as the fiscal agent.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package: Donald Peasley, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 3E124, Washington, DC 20202-6132. Telephone: (202) 453-7982 or by email: Donald.Peasley@ed.gov.

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

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 program contact person listed in this section.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission:

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

Page Limit: The project narrative is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application. You must limit the application narrative to the equivalent of no more than 65 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, references, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs.
- Use a font that is either 12 point or larger or no smaller than 10 pitch (characters per inch).
- Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial.

The page limit applies to the project narrative, including the table of contents, which must include a discussion of how the application meets one or more of the absolute priorities; if applicable, how the application meets one or more of the competitive preference priorities; and how well the application addresses each of the selection criteria. The page limit also applies to any attachments to the project narrative other than the items mentioned in Part 6 of the application package, including the references/bibliography. In other words, the entirety of the project narrative, including the aforementioned discussion and any attachments to the project narrative, must be limited to the equivalent of no more than 65 pages. The only allowable attachments other than those included in the project narrative are outlined in Part 6, "Other Attachments Forms," in the application package. Any attachments other than those included within the page limit of the project narrative and those outlined in Part 6 will not be reviewed.

The 65-page limit, or its equivalent, does not apply to the following sections of an application: Part 1 (including the response regarding research activities involving human subjects); Part 2 (budget information); Part 3 (two-page project abstract); Part 5 (the budget

narrative); Part 6 (memoranda of understanding or other binding agreement, if applicable; copy of applicant's indirect cost rate agreement; letters of commitment and support from collaborating SEAs and organizations; other attachments forms, including, if applicable, references/bibliography for the project narrative and individual résumés for project director(s) and key personnel); and Part 7 (standard assurances and certifications). Applicants are encouraged to limit each résumé to no more than five pages.

In addition, do not use hyperlinks in an application. Reviewers will be instructed not to follow hyperlinks if included. Our reviewers will not read any pages of your project narrative that exceed the page limit, or the equivalent of the page limit if you apply other standards. Applicants are encouraged to submit applications that meet the page limit following the standards outlined in this section rather than submitting applications that are the equivalent of the page limit applying other standards.

3. Submission Dates and Times:

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

Deadline for Notice of Intent to Apply: [INSERT DATE 20 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

We will be able to develop a more efficient process for reviewing grant applications if we have a better understanding of the number of applicants that intend to apply for funding under this competition. Therefore, we strongly encourage each potential applicant to notify us of the applicant's intent to submit an application for funding. This notification should be brief, and identify the SEA applicant and, if applicable, the SEA that it will designate as the fiscal agent for an award (e.g., in the case of consortia applicants). Submit this notification by email to Donald.Peasley@ed.gov with "Intent to Apply" in the email subject line or mail to Donald Peasley, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 3E124, Washington, DC 20202-6132. Applicants that do not provide this email notification may still apply for funding.

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.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: [INSERT DATE 105 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

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), 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: 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 EAG competition, CFDA number 84.368A, 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 EAG 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 84.326, not 84.326A).

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 application 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.

- 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: Donald Peasley, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue,

SW., room 3E124, Washington, DC 20202-6132. FAX: (202) 401-1557.

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 84.368A)
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.

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

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.

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 84.368A)
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. We will award up to 120 points to an application under the selection criteria; the total possible points for each selection criterion are noted in parentheses.

(a) Need for project. (5 points)

The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project.

In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

1. The magnitude of severity of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project.

2. The magnitude of the need for the services to be provided or the activities to be carried out by the proposed project.

3. The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses.

(b) Significance. (25 points)

The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

1. The significance of the problem or issue to be addressed by the proposed project.

2. The potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of theory, knowledge, and practices in the field of study.

3. The potential for generalizing from the findings or results of the proposed project.

4. The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies.

5. The likely utility of the products (such as information, materials, processes, or techniques) that will result from the proposed project, including the potential for their being used effectively in a variety of other settings.

(c) Quality of the project design. (35 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

1. The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

2. The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.

3. The extent to which the proposed activities constitute a coherent, sustained, program of research and

development in the field, including, as appropriate, a substantial addition to an ongoing line of inquiry.

4. The extent to which the proposed project is based upon a specific research design, and the quality and appropriateness of that design, including the scientific rigor of the studies involved.

5. The extent to which the proposed development efforts include adequate quality controls and, as appropriate, repeated testing of products.

6. The extent to which the design of the proposed project reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice.

7. The quality of the methodology to be employed in the proposed project.

8. The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the applicant beyond the end of the grant.

(d) Quality of project services. (5 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project. In determining the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project, the Secretary considers the quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members

of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors:

1. The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.

2. The likelihood that the services to be provided by the proposed project will lead to improvements in the achievement of students as measured against rigorous academic standards.

(e) Quality of project personnel. (8 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages 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. In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors:

1. The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator.

2. The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

3. The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of project consultants or subcontractors.

(f) Adequacy of resources. (12 points)

The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

1. The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the application organization or the lead applicant organization.

2. The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.

3. The extent to which the budget is adequate to support the proposed project.

4. The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.

(g) Quality of the management plan. (12 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

1. The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

2. The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

3. The adequacy of mechanisms for ensuring high-quality products and services from the proposed project.

4. The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.

(h) Quality of the project evaluation. (10 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

1. The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

2. The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

3. The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.

4. The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

5. The extent to which the evaluation will provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings.

(i) Strategy to scale. (8 points)

The Secretary considers the applicant's strategy to scale the proposed project. In determining the applicant's capacity to scale the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

1. The applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management

capacity) to further develop and bring to scale the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice, or to work with others to ensure that the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice can be further developed and brought to scale, based on the findings of the proposed project.

2. The mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.

3. The extent to which the applicant demonstrates there is unmet demand for the process, product, strategy, or practice that will enable the applicant to reach the level of scale that is proposed in the application.

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. 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.

4. Integrity and Performance System: If you are selected under this competition to receive an award that over the course of the project period may exceed the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$150,000), under 2 CFR 200.205(a)(2), we must make a judgment about your integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards--that is, the risk posed by you as an

applicant--before we make an award. In doing so, we must consider any information about you that is in the integrity and performance system (currently referred to as the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)), accessible through SAM. You may review and comment on any information about yourself that a Federal agency previously entered and that is currently in FAPIIS.

Please note that, if the total value of your currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from the Federal Government exceeds \$10,000,000, the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 200, Appendix XII, require you to report certain integrity information to FAPIIS semiannually. Please review the requirements in 2 CFR part 200, Appendix XII, if this grant plus all the other Federal funds you receive exceed \$10,000,000.

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: Under the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993, the Department has developed four measures to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the EAG program: (1) the number of States that participate in EAG projects funded by this competition; (2) the percentage of grantees that, at least twice during the period of their grants, make available to SEA staff in non-participating States and to assessment researchers information on findings resulting from the EAG through presentations at national conferences, publications in refereed journals, or other products disseminated to the assessment community; (3) for each grant cycle and as determined by an expert panel, the percentage of EAG that yield significant research, methodologies, products, or tools regarding assessment systems or assessments; and (4) for each grant cycle and as determined by an expert panel, the percentage of EAG that yield significant research,

methodologies, products, or tools specifically regarding accommodations and alternate assessments for students with disabilities and limited English proficient students. Grantees will be expected to include in their interim and final performance reports information about the accomplishments of their projects because the Department will need data on these 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: Donald Peasley, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 3e124, Washington, DC 20202-6132. Telephone: (202) 453-7982 or by email: Donald.Peasley@ed.gov.

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) on request to the program contact person listed under For Further Information Contact in section VII of this notice.

Electronic Access to This Document: The official version of this document is the document published in the Federal Register. Free Internet access to the official edition of the Federal Register and the Code of Federal Regulations is available via the Federal Digital System at: www.gpo.gov/fdsys. At this site you can view this document, as well as all other documents of this Department published in the Federal Register, in text or PDF. To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at the site.

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: August 1, 2016.

Ann Whalen,
Senior Advisor to the Secretary
Delegated the Duties of Assistant
Secretary for Elementary and
Secondary Education.

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