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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Applications for New Awards; Education Innovation and Research (EIR) Program--Early-phase Grants

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

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Education (Department) is issuing a notice inviting applications for fiscal year (FY) 2020 for the EIR program--Early-phase Grants, Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number 84.411C (Early-phase Grants). This notice relates to the approved information collection under OMB control number 1855-0021.

DATES:

Applications Available: [INSERT DATE 2 DAYS AFTER 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: September 10, 2020.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: November 10, 2020.

Pre-Application Information: The Department will post additional competition information for prospective applicants on the EIR program website:

<https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-discretionary-grants-support-services/innovation-early-learning/education-innovation-and-research-eir/fy-2020-competition-2/>.

ADDRESSES: For the addresses for obtaining and submitting an application, please refer to our Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the *Federal Register* on February 13, 2019 (84 FR 3768) and available at www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2019-02-13/pdf/2019-02206.pdf.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ashley Brizzo, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 3E325, Washington, DC 20202-5900. Telephone: (202) 453-7122. Email: eir@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.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The EIR program, established under section 4611 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended (ESEA), provides funding to create, develop, implement, replicate, or take to scale entrepreneurial,

evidence-based, field-initiated innovations to improve student achievement and attainment for high-need students; and rigorously evaluate such innovations. The EIR program is designed to generate and validate solutions to persistent education challenges and to support the expansion of those solutions to serve substantially larger numbers of students.

The central design element of the EIR program is its multi-tier structure that links the amount of funding an applicant may receive to the quality of the evidence supporting the efficacy of the proposed project, with the expectation that projects that build this evidence will advance through EIR's grant tiers: "Early-phase," "Mid-phase," and "Expansion." Applicants proposing innovative practices that are supported by limited evidence can receive relatively small grants to support the development, implementation, and initial evaluation of the practices; applicants proposing practices supported by evidence from rigorous evaluations, such as an experimental study (as defined in this notice), can receive larger grant awards to support expansion across the country. This structure provides incentives for applicants to-- (1) explore new ways of addressing persistent challenges that other educators can build on and learn from; (2) build evidence

of effectiveness of their practices; and (3) replicate and scale successful practices in new schools, districts, and States while addressing the barriers to scale, such as cost structures and implementation fidelity.

All EIR projects are expected to generate information regarding their effectiveness in order to inform EIR grantees' efforts to learn about and improve upon their efforts, and to help similar, non-EIR efforts across the country benefit from EIR grantees' knowledge. By requiring that all grantees conduct independent evaluations of their EIR projects, EIR ensures that its funded projects make a significant contribution to improving the quality and quantity of information available to practitioners and policymakers about which practices improve student achievement and attainment, for which types of students, and in what contexts.

In prior years, the Department has awarded three types of grants under this program: "Early-phase" grants, "Mid-phase" grants, and "Expansion" grants. For FY 2020, the Department will award two types of grants: "Early-phase" grants and "Mid-phase" grants. These grants differ in terms of the level of prior evidence of effectiveness required for consideration for funding, the expectations regarding the kind of evidence and information funded

projects should produce, the level of scale funded projects should reach, and, consequently, the amount of funding available to support each type of project.

The Department expects that Early-phase grants provide funding to support the development, implementation, and feasibility testing of a program, which prior research suggests has promise, for the purpose of determining whether the program can successfully improve student achievement and attainment for high need students. Early-phase grants must demonstrate a rationale. These Early-phase grants are not intended simply to implement established practices in additional locations or address needs that are unique to one particular context. The goal is to determine whether and in what ways relatively newer practices can improve student achievement and attainment for high need students.

The notice inviting applications for Mid-phase grants was published in the *Federal Register* on April 10, 2020 (85 FR 20254), available at www.federalregister.gov/d/2020-07556; applications for that competition were due on June 15, 2020.

Background:

The premise of the EIR program is that new and innovative programs and practices can help to solve the

persistent problems in education that prevent students, particularly high-need students, from succeeding. These innovations need to be evaluated, and, if sufficient evidence of effectiveness can be demonstrated, the intent is for these innovations to be replicated and tested in new populations and settings. EIR is not intended to provide support for practices that are already commonly implemented by educators, unless significant adaptations of such practices warrant testing to determine if they can accelerate achievement, or greatly increase the efficiency and likelihood that they can be widely implemented in a variety of new populations and settings effectively.

As an EIR project is implemented, grantees are encouraged to learn more about how the practices improve student achievement and attainment; and to develop increasingly rigorous evidence of effectiveness and new strategies to efficiently and cost-effectively scale to new school districts, regions, and States. Applicants must develop a logic model (as defined in this notice) that includes the goals, objectives, proposed outcomes, and key project components (as defined in this notice) of the project.

Disseminating evaluation findings is a critical element of every project, even if a rigorous evaluation

does not demonstrate positive results. Such results can influence the next stage of education practice and promote follow-up studies that build upon the results. The EIR program considers all high-quality evaluations to be a valuable contribution to the field of education research and encourages the documentation and sharing of lessons learned.

For those innovations that have positive results and have the potential for continued development and implementation, the Department is interested in learning more about continued efforts regarding cost-effectiveness and feasibility when scaled to additional populations and settings. EIR projects at the Mid-phase level are encouraged to test new strategies for recruiting and supporting new project adoption, seek efficiencies where project implementation has been too costly or cumbersome to operate at scale, and test new ways of overcoming any other barriers in practice or policy that might inhibit project growth. Early-phase grantees that are not yet ready to scale are still encouraged to think about how their innovations might translate to other populations or settings in the long term and to select their partners and implementation sites accordingly.

All EIR applicants and grantees should also consider how they need to develop their organizational capacity, project financing, or business plans to sustain their projects and continue implementation and adaptation after Federal funding ends. The Department intends to provide grantees with technical assistance in their dissemination, scaling, and sustainability efforts.

EIR is designed to offer opportunities for States, districts, schools, and educators to develop innovations and scale effective practices that address their most pressing challenges. Early-phase grantees are encouraged to make continuous improvements in project design and implementation before conducting a full-scale evaluation of effectiveness. Grantees should consider how easily others could implement the proposed practice, and how its implementation could potentially be improved. Additionally, grantees should consider using data from early indicators to gauge initial impact and to consider possible changes in implementation that could increase student achievement and attainment.

By focusing on continuous improvement and iterative development, Early-phase grantees can make adaptations that are necessary to increase their practice's potential to be

effective and ensure that the EIR-funded evaluation assesses the impact of a thoroughly conceived practice.

Early-phase applicants should develop, implement, and test the feasibility of their projects. The evaluation of an Early-phase project should be an experimental or quasi-experimental design study (as defined in this notice) that can determine whether the program can successfully improve student achievement and attainment for high-need students. Early-phase grantees' evaluation designs are encouraged to have the potential to demonstrate a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes or other relevant outcomes based on moderate evidence (as defined in this notice) from at least one well-designed and well-implemented experimental study. The Department intends to provide grantees and their independent evaluators with evaluation technical assistance. This evaluation technical assistance could include grantees and their independent evaluators providing to the Department or its contractor updated comprehensive evaluation plans in a format as requested by the technical assistance provider and using such tools as the Department may request. Grantees will be encouraged to update this evaluation plan at least annually to reflect any changes to the evaluation, with updates

consistent with the scope and objectives of the approved application.

The FY 2020 Early-phase competition includes three absolute priorities and two competitive preference priorities. All Early-phase applicants must address Absolute Priority 1. Early-phase applicants are also required to address one of the other two absolute priorities. Applicants addressing Absolute Priority 2 also have the option to address Competitive Preference Priority 1. Applicants addressing Absolute Priority 3 have the option to address Competitive Preference Priority 2. The absolute priorities and the competitive preference priorities align with the purpose of the program and the Administration's priorities.

Absolute Priority 1--Demonstrates a Rationale, establishes the evidence requirement for this tier of grants. All Early-phase applicants must submit prior evidence of effectiveness that meets the demonstrates a rationale (as defined in this notice) evidence standard.

Absolute Priority 2--Field-Initiated Innovations--STEM, is intended to highlight the Administration's efforts to ensure our Nation's economic competitiveness by improving and expanding STEM learning and engagement, including computer science (as defined in this notice).

In Absolute Priority 2, the Department recognizes the importance of funding Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) through grade 12 STEM education and anticipates that projects would expand opportunities for high-need students. Within this absolute priority, the Department includes Competitive Preference Priority 1, which specifically focuses on expanding opportunities in computer science for underserved populations such as minorities, girls, and youth from rural communities and low-income families, to help reduce achievement and attainment gaps in a manner consistent with nondiscrimination requirements contained in the U.S. Constitution and Federal civil rights laws.

Absolute Priority 3--Teacher-Directed Professional Learning--is intended to support efforts to develop, implement, and evaluate teacher-directed professional learning projects designed to enhance instructional practice and improve achievement and attainment for high-need students. The Department believes that teacher-directed professional development provided through such projects may be more effective in improving instructional practice and student outcomes than the one-size-fits-all professional development activities often funded by school systems in response to districtwide improvement goals.

In Absolute Priority 3, the Department identifies a

need for innovative projects that develop and test approaches providing teachers with professional learning stipends. With the autonomy to identify instructionally relevant professional learning, teachers can improve their craft to better support student achievement and attainment for high-need students. Within this absolute priority, the Department includes Competitive Preference Priority 2, which encourages partnerships between an eligible entity and a State educational agency (SEA).

Through these priorities, the Department intends to advance innovation, build evidence, and address the learning and achievement of high-need students beginning in Pre-K through grade 12.

Priorities: This notice includes three absolute priorities and two competitive preference priorities. In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(ii), Absolute Priority 1 is from the notice of final priorities published in the *Federal Register* on March 9, 2020 (85 FR 13640) (Administrative Priorities). In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(iv), Absolute Priority 2 is from section 4611(a)(1)(A) of the ESEA and the Secretary's Final Supplemental Priorities and Definitions for Discretionary Grant Programs (Supplemental Priorities) published in the *Federal Register* on March 2, 2018 (83 FR 9096). Competitive Preference Priority 1 is

from the Supplemental Priorities. Absolute Priority 3 and Competitive Preference Priority 2 are from the Department's notice of final priorities, requirements, definition, and selection criteria published elsewhere in this issue of the *Federal Register* (NFP).

In the Early-phase grant competition, Absolute Priorities 2 and 3 constitute their own funding categories. The Secretary intends to award grants under both of these absolute priorities provided that applications of sufficient quality are submitted. To ensure that applicants are considered for the correct type of grant, applicants must clearly identify the specific absolute priority that the proposed project addresses. If an entity is interested in proposing two separate projects (one that addresses Absolute Priority 2 and another that addresses Absolute Priority 3), separate applications must be submitted.

Absolute Priorities: For FY 2020 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 Absolute Priority 1—Demonstrates a Rationale, and one additional absolute

priority (either Absolute Priority 2 or Absolute Priority 3).

These priorities are:

Absolute Priority 1--Applications that Demonstrate a Rationale.

Under this priority, an applicant proposes a project that demonstrates a rationale (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1).

Absolute Priority 2--Field-Initiated Innovations--Promoting STEM Education, With a Particular Focus on Computer Science.

Under the priority, we provide funding to projects that are designed to--

(1) Create, develop, implement, replicate, or take to scale entrepreneurial, evidence-based (as defined in this notice), field-initiated innovations to improve student achievement and attainment for high-need students; and

(2) Improve student achievement or other educational outcomes in one or more of the following areas: science, technology, engineering, math, or computer science.

Absolute Priority 3--Teacher Directed Professional Learning.

Under this priority, an applicant must propose a project in which classroom teachers receive stipends to select professional learning alternatives that are

instructionally relevant and meet their individual needs related to instructional practices for high-need students. Additionally, teachers receiving stipends must be allowed the flexibility to replace a significant portion (no less than 20 percent) of existing mandatory professional development with such teacher-directed learning, which must also be allowed to fully count toward any mandatory teacher professional development goals (e.g., professional development hours required as part of certification renewal, designated professional days mandated by districts).

Competitive Preference Priorities: For FY 2020 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, these priorities are competitive preference priorities. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i) we award up to an additional five points to an application, depending on how well the application addresses the applicable competitive preference priority. Within Absolute Priority 2, we give competitive preference to applications that address Competitive Preference Priority 1. Within Absolute Priority 3, we give competitive preference to applications that address Competitive Preference Priority 2.

These priorities are:

Competitive Preference Priority 1--Computer Science
(up to 5 Points).

Projects designed to improve student achievement or other educational outcomes in computer science (as defined in this notice). These projects must address the following priority area: Expanding access to and participation in rigorous computer science coursework for traditionally underrepresented students such as racial or ethnic minorities, women, students in communities served by rural local educational agencies (as defined in this notice), children or students with disabilities (as defined in this notice), or low-income individuals (as defined under section 312(g) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended).

Competitive Preference Priority 2--State Educational Agency Partnership (up to 5 points).

Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate it has established a partnership between an eligible entity and an SEA (with either member of the partnership serving as the applicant) to support the proposed project.

Application Requirements: There are no application requirements for applicants that address Absolute Priority 2. For FY 2020, and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this

competition, applicants that address Absolute Priority 3 must meet the following application requirements from the NFP.

An applicant must--

(a) Describe the pool of teachers eligible to request a stipend, including whether the applicant intends to prioritize eligibility based on content areas, strategic staffing initiatives, or other factors (and including a rationale for how such a determination addresses the needs of high-need students, as defined by the applicant);

(b) Describe the anticipated level of teacher participation, including--

(1) Current information on teacher satisfaction with existing professional learning;

(2) Details on the planned outreach strategy to communicate the stipend opportunity to eligible teachers;

(3) A summary of the ways in which teachers were involved in developing the proposed project; and

(4) A plan for how to include teachers in key decisions about the stipend system.

(c) Describe the proposed stipend structure, including--

(1) Estimated dollar amount per stipend, including associated expenses related to the professional learning (e.g., materials, transportation, etc.);

(2) A rationale for how the estimated dollar amount per stipend is sufficient to ensure access to professional learning activities that are, at minimum, comparable in quality, frequency, and duration to the professional development other non-participating teachers will receive in a given year;

(3) Mechanisms to protect against fraud, waste, and abuse (e.g., monitoring systems, reviews for conflicts of interest); and

(4) Plans for how the applicant will select participants if there is more interest than available stipends (e.g., prioritizing by student need or teacher need, content area, human capital priorities, rubric-based review of requests, lottery);

(d) Describe details about the stipend system, including--

(1) How the applicant will update its policies to offer stipends to teachers such that a significant portion (no less than 20 percent) of existing mandatory professional development is replaced by teacher-directed professional learning, including--

(i) The professional development days or activities from which participating teachers will be released in order to enable teacher-directed learning opportunities and to ensure that teacher-directed learning replaces a significant portion of existing mandatory professional development; or

(ii) Other methods in which participating teachers will be given the flexibility to participate in teacher-directed learning (e.g., by providing release from and substitute teacher coverage during regular instructional days) and how such methods will also ensure participating teachers are released from a significant portion of existing professional development requirements;

(2) How the applicant will ensure that teacher-directed learning will fully substitute for mandatory professional development in meeting mandatory professional development goals or activities (e.g., professional development hours required as part of certification renewal, district- or contract-required professional development hours);

(3) How the applicant will provide information to teachers about professional learning options not previously available to teachers (e.g., list of innovative options, qualified providers, other resources); and

(4) In addition to any list of professional learning options or providers identified by the applicant, mechanisms for teachers to independently select different high-quality, instructionally relevant professional learning activities connected to the achievement and attainment of high-need students (based on teacher-identified needs such as self-assessment surveys, student assessment data, and professional growth plans);

(e) Describe strategies for supporting teachers' implementation of changes in instructional practice as a result of their professional learning;

(f) Describe the process for managing the stipend system, including--

(1) For professional learning options that are among a list of options identified by the applicant: the processes for teachers to submit their requests to participate in those options in place of a previously required training and the processes for direct vendor payment using the stipend; and

(2) For professional learning options selected by a teacher that are not on the applicant's list of options: how the applicant will determine that the activity meets the definition of "professional learning" and is

reasonable, and what processes the applicant will implement to ensure payment or timely reimbursement to teachers;

(g) Describe the proposed strategy to expand the use of professional learning stipends (pending the results of the evaluation), including--

(1) Plans for continuously improving the stipend system in order to, over time, offer more teachers the opportunity to engage in teacher-directed professional learning and, for participating teachers, ensure a higher percentage of all mandatory professional learning is teacher-directed; and

(2) Mechanisms for incorporating effective practices discovered through teacher-directed professional learning into the professional development curriculum for all teachers; and

(h) Provide an assurance that--

(1) At a minimum, the SEA or local educational agency (LEA) involved in the project (as an applicant, partner, or implementation site) will maintain its current fiscal and administrative levels of effort in teacher professional development and allow the professional learning activities funded through the stipends to supplement the level of effort that is typically supported by the applicant;

(2) Project funds will only be used for instructionally relevant professional learning activities and not solely for obtaining advanced degrees, taking or preparing for licensure exams, or for pursuing personal enrichment activities; and

(3) Projects will allow for a variety professional learning options for teachers and not limit use of the stipend to an overly restrictive set of choices (for example, professional learning provided only by the applicant or partners, specific pedagogical or philosophical viewpoints, or organizations with specific methodological stances). The applicant and any application partners will not be the primary financial beneficiaries of the professional learning stipends, and there is no conflict between the applicant, any application partner, and the purpose of providing teachers the autonomy to select their own professional learning opportunities.

Definitions: The definitions of "baseline," "demonstrates a rationale," "experimental study," "logic model," "moderate evidence," "nonprofit," "performance measure," "performance target," "project component," "quasi-experimental design study," "relevant outcome," and "What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (WWC Handbook)" are from 34 CFR 77.1. The definitions of "children or students with

disabilities," "computer science," and "rural local educational agency" are from the Supplemental Priorities. The definitions of "evidence-based," "local educational agency," and "State educational agency" are from section 8101 of the ESEA. The definition of "professional learning" is from the Department's NFP.

Baseline means the starting point from which performance is measured and targets are set.

Children or students with disabilities means children with disabilities as defined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or individuals defined as having a disability under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) (or children or students who are eligible under both laws).

Computer science means the study of computers and algorithmic processes and includes the study of computing principles and theories, computational thinking, computer hardware, software design, coding, analytics, and computer applications.

Computer science often includes computer programming or coding as a tool to create software, including applications, games, websites, and tools to manage or manipulate data; or development and management of computer

hardware and the other electronics related to sharing, securing, and using digital information.

In addition to coding, the expanding field of computer science emphasizes computational thinking and interdisciplinary problem-solving to equip students with the skills and abilities necessary to apply computation in our digital world.

Computer science does not include using a computer for everyday activities, such as browsing the internet; use of tools like word processing, spreadsheets, or presentation software; or using computers in the study and exploration of unrelated subjects.

Demonstrates a rationale means a key project component included in the project's logic model is informed by research or evaluation findings that suggest the project component is likely to improve relevant outcomes.

Evidence-based means an activity, strategy, or intervention that 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.

Experimental study means a study that is designed to compare outcomes between two groups of individuals (such as students) that are otherwise equivalent except for their

assignment to either a treatment group receiving a project component or a control group that does not. Randomized controlled trials, regression discontinuity design studies, and single-case design studies are the specific types of experimental studies that, depending on their design and implementation (e.g., sample attrition in randomized controlled trials and regression discontinuity design studies), can meet What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) standards without reservations as described in the WWC Handbook:

(i) A randomized controlled trial employs random assignment of, for example, students, teachers, classrooms, or schools to receive the project component being evaluated (the treatment group) or not to receive the project component (the control group).

(ii) A regression discontinuity design study assigns the project component being evaluated using a measured variable (e.g., assigning students reading below a cutoff score to tutoring or developmental education classes) and controls for that variable in the analysis of outcomes.

(iii) A single-case design study uses observations of a single case (e.g., a student eligible for a behavioral intervention) over time in the absence and presence of a controlled treatment manipulation to determine whether the outcome is systematically related to the treatment.

Local educational agency (LEA) means:

(a) In General. A public board of education or other public authority legally constituted within a State for either administrative control or direction of, or to perform a service function for, public elementary schools or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision of a State, or of or for a combination of school districts or counties that is recognized in a State as an administrative agency for its public elementary schools or secondary schools.

(b) Administrative Control and Direction. The term includes any other public institution or agency having administrative control and direction of a public elementary school or secondary school.

(c) Bureau of Indian Education Schools. The term includes an elementary school or secondary school funded by the Bureau of Indian Education but only to the extent that including the school makes the school eligible for programs for which specific eligibility is not provided to the school in another provision of law and the school does not have a student population that is smaller than the student population of the local educational agency receiving assistance under the ESEA with the smallest student population, except that the school shall not be subject to

the jurisdiction of any SEA (as defined in this notice) other than the Bureau of Indian Education.

(d) Educational Service Agencies. The term includes educational service agencies and consortia of those agencies.

(e) State Educational Agency. The term includes the SEA in a State in which the SEA is the sole educational agency for all public schools.

Logic model (also referred to as a theory of action) means a framework that identifies key project components of the proposed project (i.e., the active "ingredients" that are hypothesized to be critical to achieving the relevant outcomes) and describes the theoretical and operational relationships among the key project components and relevant outcomes.

Moderate evidence means that there is evidence of effectiveness of a key project component in improving a relevant outcome for a sample that overlaps with the populations or settings proposed to receive that component, based on a relevant finding from one of the following:

(i) A practice guide prepared by the WWC using version 2.1 or 3.0 of the WWC Handbook reporting a "strong evidence base" or "moderate evidence base" for the corresponding practice guide recommendation;

(ii) An intervention report prepared by the WWC using version 2.1 or 3.0 of the WWC Handbook reporting a "positive effect" or "potentially positive effect" on a relevant outcome based on a "medium to large" extent of evidence, with no reporting of a "negative effect" or "potentially negative effect" on a relevant outcome; or

(iii) A single experimental study or quasi-experimental design study reviewed and reported by the WWC using version 2.1 or 3.0 of the WWC Handbook, or otherwise assessed by the Department using version 3.0 of the WWC Handbook, as appropriate, and that--

(A) Meets WWC standards with or without reservations;

(B) Includes at least one statistically significant and positive (i.e., favorable) effect on a relevant outcome;

(C) Includes no overriding statistically significant and negative effects on relevant outcomes reported in the study or in a corresponding WWC intervention report prepared under version 2.1, or 3.0 of the WWC Handbook; and

(D) Is based on a sample from more than one site (e.g., State, county, city, school district, or postsecondary campus) and includes at least 350 students or other individuals across sites. Multiple studies of the same project component that each meet requirements in

paragraphs (iii) (A), (B), and (C) of this definition may together satisfy this requirement.

Nonprofit, as applied to an agency, organization, or institution, means that it is owned and operated by one or more corporations or associations whose net earnings do not benefit, and cannot lawfully benefit, any private shareholder or entity.

Performance measure means any quantitative indicator, statistic, or metric used to gauge program or project performance.

Performance target means a level of performance that an applicant would seek to meet during the course of a project or as a result of a project.

Professional learning means instructionally relevant activities to improve and increase classroom teachers'--

(1) Content knowledge;

(2) Understanding of instructional strategies and intervention techniques for high-need students, including how best to analyze and use data to inform such strategies and techniques; and

(3) Classroom management skills to better support high-need students.

Professional learning must be job-embedded or classroom-focused, collaborative, data-driven, part of a

sustained and intensive program, and related to the achievement and attainment of high-need students. Professional learning may include innovative activities such as peer shadowing opportunities, virtual mentoring, online modules, professional learning communities, communities of practice, action research, micro-credentials, and coaching support.

Project component means an activity, strategy, intervention, process, product, practice, or policy included in a project. Evidence may pertain to an individual project component or to a combination of project components (e.g., training teachers on instructional practices for English learners and follow-on coaching for these teachers).

Quasi-experimental design study means a study using a design that attempts to approximate an experimental study by identifying a comparison group that is similar to the treatment group in important respects. This type of study, depending on design and implementation (e.g., establishment of baseline equivalence of the groups being compared), can meet WWC standards with reservations, but cannot meet WWC standards without reservations, as described in the WWC Handbook.

Relevant outcome means the student outcome(s) or other outcome(s) the key project component is designed to improve, consistent with the specific goals of the program.

Rural local educational agency means a local educational agency that is eligible under the Small Rural School Achievement (SRSA) program or the Rural and Low-Income School (RLIS) program authorized under Title V, Part B of the ESEA. Eligible applicants may determine whether a particular district is eligible for these programs by referring to information on the Department's website at www2.ed.gov/nclb/freedom/local/reap.html.

State educational agency (SEA) means the agency primarily responsible for the State supervision of public elementary schools and secondary schools.

What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (WWC Handbook) means the standards and procedures set forth in the WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook, Version 3.0 or Version 2.1 (incorporated by reference, see 34 CFR 77.2). Study findings eligible for review under WWC standards can meet WWC standards without reservations, meet WWC standards with reservations, or not meet WWC standards. WWC practice guides and intervention reports include findings from

systematic reviews of evidence as described in the Handbook documentation.

Note: The What Works Clearinghouse Procedures and Standards Handbook (Version 3.0), as well as the more recent What Works Clearinghouse Handbooks released in October 2017 (Version 4.0) and January 2020 (Version 4.1), are available at <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Handbooks>.

Program Authority: Section 4611 of the ESEA, 20 U.S.C. 7261.

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations 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 Administrative Priorities. (e) The Supplemental Priorities. (f) The NFP.

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

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Discretionary grants.

Estimated Available Funds: \$178,600,000.

These estimated available funds are the total available for both Early-phase and Mid-phase grants. Contingent upon the availability of funds and the quality of applications, we may make additional awards in subsequent years from the list of unfunded applications from this competition.

Estimated Range of Awards for Absolute Priority 2:

\$3,000,000-\$4,000,000.

Estimated Average Size of Awards for Absolute Priority 2:

\$4,000,000.

Maximum Award for Absolute Priority 2: We will not make an award exceeding \$4,000,000 for a project period of 60 months.

Estimated Number of Awards for Absolute Priority 2: 5-9.

Estimated Range of Awards for Absolute Priority 3:

\$8,000,000-\$12,000,000.

Estimated Average Size of Awards for Absolute Priority 3:

\$10,000,000.

Maximum Award for Absolute Priority 3: We will not make an award exceeding \$12,000,000 for a project period of 60 months.

Estimated Number of Awards for Absolute Priority 3: 6-8.

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

Project Period: Up to 60 months. We anticipate that initial awards under this competition will be made for a three-year (36-month) period.

Contingent upon the availability of funds and each grantee's substantial progress towards accomplishing the goals and objectives of the project as described in its approved application, we may make continuation awards to grantees for the remainder of the project period.

Applicants must propose a budget that covers the entire project period of up to 60 months.

Note: Under section 4611(c) of the ESEA, the Department must use at least 25 percent of EIR funds for a fiscal year to make awards to applicants serving rural areas, contingent on receipt of a sufficient number of applications of sufficient quality. For purposes of this competition, we will consider an applicant as rural if the applicant meets the qualifications for rural applicants as described in the Eligible Applicants section and the applicant certifies that it meets those qualifications through the application.

In implementing this statutory provision and program requirement, the Department may fund high-quality

applications from rural applicants and applications submitted under Absolute Priorities 2 and 3 out of rank order in the Early-phase competition.

In addition, for FY 2020 Early-phase competition, the Department intends to award an estimated \$34 million in funds for STEM projects, contingent on receipt of a sufficient number of applications of sufficient quality.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants:

- (a) An LEA;
- (b) An SEA;
- (c) The Bureau of Indian Education (BIE);
- (d) A consortium of SEAs or LEAs;
- (e) A nonprofit organization; and
- (f) An LEA, an SEA, the BIE, or a consortium

described in clause (d), in partnership with--

- (1) A nonprofit organization;
- (2) A business;
- (3) An educational service agency; or
- (4) An IHE.

To qualify as a rural applicant under the EIR program, an applicant must meet both of the following requirements:

- (a) The applicant is--

(1) An LEA with an urban-centric district locale code of 32, 33, 41, 42, or 43, as determined by the Secretary;

(2) A consortium of such LEAs;

(3) An educational service agency or a nonprofit organization in partnership with such an LEA; or

(4) A grantee described in clause (1) or (2) in partnership with an SEA; and

(b) A majority of the schools to be served by the program are designated with a locale code of 32, 33, 41, 42, or 43, or a combination of such codes, as determined by the Secretary.

Applicants are encouraged to retrieve locale codes from the National Center for Education Statistics School District search tool

(<https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/districtsearch/>), where districts can be looked up individually to retrieve locale codes, and Public School search tool

(<https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/>), where individual schools can be looked up to retrieve locale codes. More information on rural applicant eligibility is in the application package.

If you are a nonprofit organization, under 34 CFR 75.51, you may demonstrate your nonprofit status by providing: (1) proof that the Internal Revenue Service

currently recognizes the applicant as an organization to which contributions are tax deductible under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, (2) a statement from a State taxing body or the State attorney general certifying that the organization is a nonprofit organization operating within the State and that no part of its net earnings may lawfully benefit any private shareholder or individual, (3) a certified copy of the applicant's certificate of incorporation or similar document if it clearly establishes the nonprofit status of the applicant, or (4) any item described above if that item applies to a State or national parent organization, together with a statement by the State or parent organization that the applicant is a local nonprofit affiliate. In addition, any IHE is eligible to be a partner in an application where an LEA, SEA, BIE, consortium of SEAs or LEAs, or a nonprofit organization is the lead applicant that submits the application. A nonprofit organization, such as a development foundation, that is affiliated with a public IHE can apply for a grant. A public IHE that has 501(c)(3) status would also qualify as a nonprofit organization and could be a lead applicant for an EIR grant. A public IHE without 501(c)(3) status, or that could not provide any other documentation described

in 34 CFR 75.51(b), however, would not qualify as a nonprofit organization, and therefore could not apply for and receive an EIR grant.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching: Under section 4611(d) of the ESEA, each grant recipient must provide, from Federal, State, local, or private sources, an amount equal to 10 percent of funds provided under the grant, which may be provided in cash or through in-kind contributions, to carry out activities supported by the grant. Grantees must include a budget showing their matching contributions to the budget amount of EIR grant funds and must provide evidence of their matching contributions for the first year of the grant in their grant applications. Section 4611(d) of the ESEA also authorizes the Secretary to waive this matching requirement on a case-by-case basis, upon a showing of exceptional circumstances, such as:

(a) The difficulty of raising matching funds for a program to serve a rural area;

(b) The difficulty of raising matching funds in areas with a concentration of LEAs or schools with a high percentage of students aged 5 through 17--

(1) Who are in poverty, as counted in the most recent census data approved by the Secretary;

(2) Who are eligible for a free or reduced price lunch under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1751 et seq.);

(3) Whose families receive assistance under the State program funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.); or

(4) Who are eligible to receive medical assistance under the Medicaid program; and

(c) The difficulty of raising funds on Tribal land.

Applicants that wish to apply for a waiver must include a request in their application that describes why the matching requirement would cause serious hardship or an inability to carry out project activities. Further information about applying for waivers can be found in the application package. However, given the importance of matching funds to the long-term success of the project, the Secretary expects eligible entities to identify appropriate matching funds.

3. Subgrantees: A grantee under this competition may not award subgrants to entities to directly carry out project activities described in its application.

4. Other: a. Funding Categories: An applicant will be considered for an award only for the type of EIR grant for which it applies (i.e., Early-phase: Absolute Priority

2 or Early-phase: Absolute Priority 3). An applicant may not submit an application for the same proposed project under more than one type of grant (e.g., both an Early-phase grant and Mid-phase grant).

Note: Each application will be reviewed under the competition it was submitted under in the Grants.gov system, and only applications that are successfully submitted by the established deadline will be peer reviewed. Applicants should be careful that they download the intended EIR application package and that they submit their applications under the intended EIR competition.

b. Evaluation: The grantee must conduct an independent evaluation of the effectiveness of its project.

c. High-need students: The grantee must serve high-need students.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Application Submission Instructions: Applicants are required to follow the Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the *Federal Register* on February 13, 2019 (84 FR 3768) and available at www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2019-02-13/pdf/2019-02206.pdf, which contain requirements and information on how to submit an application.

2. Submission of Proprietary Information: Given the types of projects that may be proposed in applications for Early-phase grants, your application may include business information that you consider proprietary. In 34 CFR 5.11 we define "business information" and describe the process we use in determining whether any of that information is proprietary and, thus, protected from disclosure under Exemption 4 of the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552, as amended).

Because we plan to make successful applications available to the public, you may wish to request confidentiality of business information.

Consistent with Executive Order 12600, please designate in your application any information that you believe is exempt from disclosure under Exemption 4. In the appropriate Appendix section of your application, under "Other Attachments Form," please list the page number or numbers on which we can find this information. For additional information please see 34 CFR 5.11(c).

3. 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.

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

5. Recommended 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. We recommend that you (1) limit the application narrative for an Early-phase grant to no more than 25 pages and (2) use 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.
- 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 recommended page limit does 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 one-page abstract, the resumes, the bibliography, or the letters of support. However, the

recommended page limit does apply to all of the application narrative.

6. Notice of Intent to Apply: We will be able to develop a more efficient process for reviewing grant applications if we know the approximate number of applicants that intend to apply for funding under this competition. Therefore, the Secretary strongly encourages each potential applicant to notify us of the applicant's intent to apply by completing a web-based form. When completing this form, applicants will provide (1) the applicant organization's name and address and (2) which absolute priority the applicant intends to address. Applicants may access this form using the link available on the Notice of Intent to Apply section of the competition website: <https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-discretionary-grants-support-services/innovation-early-learning/education-innovation-and-research-eir/fy-2020-competition-2/>. Applicants that do not complete this form may still submit an application.

V. Application Review Information

1. Selection Criteria: The selection criteria for Absolute Priority 2 are from 34 CFR 75.210. The selection criteria for Absolute Priority 3 are from 34 CFR 75.210 and the NFP. The points assigned to each criterion are

indicated in the parentheses next to the criterion. An applicant may earn up to a total of 100 points based on the selection criteria for the application.

In evaluating an application for Absolute Priority 2, the Secretary considers the following criteria:

A. Quality of the Project Design (up to 40 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. (10 points)

(2) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs. (10 points)

(3) The extent to which the design of the proposed project reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice. (10 points)

(4) The potential contribution of the proposed project to increased knowledge or understanding of educational problems, issues, or effective strategies. (10 points)

B. Adequacy of Resources and Quality of the Management Plan (up to 35 points).

The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources and the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources and 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. (10 points)

(2) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project. (5 points)

(3) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel. (5 points)

(4) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project. (10 points)

(5) The extent to which the results of the proposed project are to be disseminated in ways that will enable others to use the information or strategies. (5 points)

C. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 25 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 will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse standards with or without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in this notice). (15 points)

(2) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key project components, mediators, and outcomes, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation. (5 points)

(3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide valid and reliable performance data on relevant outcomes. (5 points)

In evaluating an application for Absolute Priority 3, the Secretary considers the following criteria:

A. Quality of the Project Design (up to 45 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 professional learning funded through the stipend will replace existing mandatory professional development for participating teachers at the following levels:

(i) Replacing less than 20 percent of required professional learning. (0 points)

(ii) Replacing 20 percent of required professional learning. (5 points)

(iii) Replacing 40 percent of required professional learning. (10 points)

(iv) Replacing 60 percent of required professional learning. (15 points)

(v) Replacing 80 percent of required professional learning. (20 points)

(vi) Replacing 100 percent of required professional learning. (25 points)

(2) The adequacy of plans to ensure that stipends are appropriately used for high-quality professional learning. (5 points)

(3) The extent to which the proposed project will offer teachers flexibility and autonomy regarding the

extent of the choice teachers have in selecting their professional learning. (5 points)

(4) The likelihood that the procedures and resources for teachers result in a simple process to select or request professional learning based on their professional learning needs and those identified needs of high-need students. (5 points)

(5) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable. (5 points)

B. Adequacy of Resources and Quality of the Management Plan (up to 30 points).

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

(1) The sufficiency of the stipend amount to enable professional learning funded through the stipend to replace a significant portion of existing mandatory professional development for participating teachers. (5 points)

(2) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project. (5 points)

(3) The extent to which the proposed payment structure will enable teachers to have an opportunity to apply for and use the stipend with minimal burden. (5 points)

(4) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel. (5 points)

(5) 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. (5 points)

(6) The adequacy of procedures for leveraging the stipend program to inform continuous improvement and systematic changes to professional learning. (5 points)

C. Quality of the Project Evaluation (up to 25 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 will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse standards with or without reservations as

described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)). (15 points)

(2) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key project components, mediators, and outcomes, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation. (5 points)

(3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes. (5 points)

Note: Applicants may wish to review the following technical assistance resources on evaluation: (1) WWC

Procedures and Standards Handbooks:

<https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Handbooks>; (2) "Technical Assistance Materials for Conducting Rigorous Impact Evaluations":

<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/projects/evaluationTA.asp>; and (3)

IES/NCEE Technical Methods papers:

http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/tech_methods/. In addition,

applicants may view an optional webinar recording that was hosted by the Institute of Education Sciences. The webinar focused on more rigorous evaluation designs, discussing strategies for designing and executing experimental studies that meet WWC evidence standards without reservations.

This webinar is available at:

<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Multimedia/18>.

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 (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

Before making awards, we will screen applications submitted in accordance with the requirements in this notice to determine whether applications have met eligibility and other requirements. This screening process may occur at various stages of the process; applicants that

are determined to be ineligible will not receive a grant, regardless of peer reviewer scores or comments.

Peer reviewers will read, prepare a written evaluation of, and score the assigned applications, using the selection criteria provided in this notice.

3. Risk Assessment and Specific 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 specific 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 \$250,000), 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 the System for Award Management. 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. Open Licensing Requirements: Unless an exception applies, if you are awarded a grant under this competition, you will be required to openly license to the public grant deliverables created in whole, or in part, with Department grant funds. When the deliverable consists of modifications to pre-existing works, the license extends only to those modifications that can be separately identified and only to the extent that open licensing is permitted under the terms of any licenses or other legal restrictions on the use of pre-existing works. Additionally, a grantee or subgrantee that is awarded competitive grant funds must have a plan to disseminate these public grant deliverables. This

dissemination plan can be developed and submitted after your application has been reviewed and selected for funding. For additional information on the open licensing requirements please refer to 2 CFR 3474.20(c).

Note: The evaluation report is a specific deliverable under an Early-phase grant that grantees must make available to the public. Additionally, EIR grantees are encouraged to submit final studies resulting from research supported in whole or in part by EIR to the Educational Resources Information Center (<http://eric.ed.gov>).

4. 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.

5. Performance Measures: The overall purpose of the EIR program is to expand the implementation of, and investment in, innovative practices that are demonstrated to have an impact on improving student achievement and attainment for high-need students. We have established several performance measures (as defined in this notice) for the Early-phase grants.

Annual performance measures: (1) The percentage of grantees that reach their annual target number of students as specified in the application; (2) the percentage of grantees that reach their annual target number of high-need students as specified in the application; (3) the percentage of grantees with ongoing well-designed and independent evaluations designed to provide performance feedback to inform project design; (4) the percentage of grantees with ongoing well-designed and independent evaluations that will provide evidence of their effectiveness at improving student outcomes; (5) the

percentage of grantees that implement an evaluation that provides information about the key elements and the approach of the project so as to facilitate testing, development, or replication in other settings; and (6) the cost per student served by the grant.

Cumulative performance measures: (1) The percentage of grantees that reach the targeted number of students specified in the application; (2) the percentage of grantees that reach the targeted number of high-need students specified in the application; (3) the percentage of grantees that use evaluation data to make changes to their practice(s); (4) the percentage of grantees that implement a completed well-designed, well-implemented, and independent evaluation that provides evidence of their effectiveness at improving student outcomes; (5) the percentage of grantees with a completed evaluation that provides information about the key elements and the approach of the project so as to facilitate testing, development, or replication in other settings; and (6) the cost per student served by the grant.

Project-Specific Performance Measures: Applicants must propose project-specific performance measures and performance targets (as defined in this notice) consistent with the objectives of the proposed project. Applications

must provide the following information as directed under 34 CFR 75.110(b) and (c):

(1) Performance measures. How each proposed performance measure would accurately measure the performance of the project and how the proposed performance measure would be consistent with the performance measures established for the program funding the competition.

(2) Baseline (as defined in this notice) data. (i) Why each proposed baseline is valid; or (ii) if the applicant has determined that there are no established baseline data for a particular performance measure, an explanation of why there is no established baseline and of how and when, during the project period, the applicant would establish a valid baseline for the performance measure.

(3) Performance targets. Why each proposed performance target is ambitious yet achievable compared to the baseline for the performance measure and when, during the project period, the applicant would meet the performance target(s).

(4) Data collection and reporting. (i) The data collection and reporting methods the applicant would use and why those methods are likely to yield reliable, valid, and meaningful performance data; and (ii) the applicant's

capacity to collect and report reliable, valid, and meaningful performance data, as evidenced by high-quality data collection, analysis, and reporting in other projects or research.

All grantees must submit an annual performance report with information that is responsive to these performance measures.

6. 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. 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.

Electronic Access to This Document: The official version of this document is the document published in the *Federal Register*. You may access the official edition of the *Federal Register* and the Code of Federal Regulations at www.govinfo.gov. 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 Portable Document Format (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.

Frank T. Brogan,
Assistant Secretary
for Elementary and Secondary
Education.

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