

statutory obligations. The IC Clearance Official, Regulatory Information Management Services, Office of Management, publishes that notice containing proposed information collection requests prior to submission of these requests to OMB. Each proposed information collection, grouped by office, contains the following: (1) Type of review requested, e.g., new, revision, extension, existing or reinstatement; (2) Title; (3) Summary of the collection; (4) Description of the need for, and proposed use of, the information; (5) Respondents and frequency of collection; and (6) Reporting and/or Recordkeeping burden. OMB invites public comment.

The Department of Education is especially interested in public comment addressing the following issues: (1) Is this collection necessary to the proper functions of the Department; (2) will this information be processed and used in a timely manner; (3) is the estimate of burden accurate; (4) how might the Department enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (5) how might the Department minimize the burden of this collection on the respondents, including through the use of information technology.

Dated: January 26, 2007.

Angela C. Arrington,

IC Clearance Official, Regulatory Information Management Services, Office of Management.

#### Institute of Education Sciences

*Type of Review:* New.

*Title:* The Effect of Connected Mathematics 2(CM2) on the Math Achievement of Middle School Students.

*Frequency:* Monthly; Annually.

*Affected Public:* State, Local, or Tribal Gov't, SEAs or LEAs; Individuals or household; Businesses or other for-profit.

*Reporting and Recordkeeping Hour Burden:*

*Responses:* 11,410.

*Burden Hours:* 3,488.

*Abstract:* This study will address the methodological flaws in the existing research base on Connected Mathematics 1 (CM1) by incorporating methodological lessons from the What Works Clearinghouse review of CM1, as reported in the Intervention Report on the website, into the current study design of Connected Mathematics 2 (CM2). This will, to our knowledge, be the first formal study to look at the efficacy of CM2. Understanding the effects of curricula like CM2 will provide more evidence for ED in developing evidence-based approaches

to mathematics instruction and informing parents and schools about those approaches. The primary respondents in this study will be 6th grade math students and their teachers.

Requests for copies of the proposed information collection request may be accessed from <http://edicsweb.ed.gov>, by selecting the "Browse Pending Collections" link and by clicking on link number 3271. When you access the information collection, click on "Download Attachments" to view. Written requests for information should be addressed to U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Potomac Center, 9th Floor, Washington, DC 20202-4700. Requests may also be electronically mailed to [ICDocketMgr@ed.gov](mailto:ICDocketMgr@ed.gov) or faxed to 202-245-6623. Please specify the complete title of the information collection when making your request.

Comments regarding burden and/or the collection activity requirements should be electronically mailed to [ICDocketMgr@ed.gov](mailto:ICDocketMgr@ed.gov). Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339.

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#### DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

##### Office of Innovation and Improvement; Overview Information; Credit Enhancement for Charter School Facilities Program; Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year (FY) 2007

*Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number:* 84.354A.

*Dates:* Applications Available: February 1, 2007.

*Date of Pre-Application Meeting:* March 20, 2007.

*Deadline for Transmittal of Applications:* April 2, 2007.

*Deadline for Intergovernmental Review:* June 1, 2007.

*Eligible Applicants:* (A) A public entity, such as a State or local governmental entity; (B) A private, nonprofit entity; or (C) A consortium of entities described in (A) and (B).

**Note:** The Secretary will make, if possible, at least one award in each of the three categories of eligible applicants.

*Estimated Available Funds:* The Administration has requested \$36,611,190 for this program for FY 2007. The actual level of funding, if any, depends on final congressional action. However, we are inviting applications to

allow enough time to complete the grant process if Congress appropriates funds for this program.

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

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

*Project Period:* From the start date indicated on the grant award document until the Federal funds and earnings on those funds have been expended for the grant purposes or until financing facilitated by the grant has been retired, whichever is later.

#### Full Text of Announcement

##### I. Funding Opportunity Description

*Purpose of Program:* This program provides grants to eligible entities to permit them to enhance the credit of charter schools so that they can access private-sector and other non-Federal capital in order to acquire, construct, and renovate facilities at a reasonable cost. Grant projects awarded under this program will be of sufficient size, scope, and quality to enable the grantees to implement effective strategies for reaching that objective.

*Priority:* In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(ii), this priority is from the regulations for this program (34 CFR 225.12).

*Competitive Preference Priority:* For FY 2007 and any subsequent year in which we make awards based on the list of unfunded applications from this competition, this priority is a competitive preference priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i) we award up to an additional 15 points to an application, depending on how well the application meets this priority.

This priority is:

The capacity of charter schools to offer public school choice in those communities with the greatest need for school choice based on—

(1) The extent to which the applicant would target services to geographic areas in which a large proportion or number of public schools have been identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001;

(2) The extent to which the applicant would target services to geographic areas in which a large proportion of students perform below proficient on State academic assessments; and

(3) The extent to which the applicant would target services to communities

with large proportions of students from low-income families.

*Program Authority:* 20 U.S.C. 7223–7223j.

*Applicable Regulations:* (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 74, 75, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 84, 85, 86, 97, 98, and 99.

(b) The regulations for this program in 34 CFR part 225.

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

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

## II. Award Information

*Type of Award:* Discretionary grants.

*Estimated Available Funds:* The Administration has requested \$36,611,190 for this program for FY 2007. The actual level of funding, if any, depends on final congressional action. However, we are inviting applications to allow enough time to complete the grant process if Congress appropriates funds for this program.

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

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

*Project Period:* From the start date indicated on the grant award document until the Federal funds and earnings on those funds have been expended for the grant purposes or until financing facilitated by the grant has been retired, whichever is later.

## III. Eligibility Information

1. *Eligible Applicants:* (A) A public entity, such as a State or local governmental entity; (B) A private, nonprofit entity; or (C) A consortium of entities described in (A) and (B).

**Note:** The Secretary will make, if possible, at least one award in each of the three categories of eligible applicants.

2. *Cost Sharing or Matching:* This program does not involve any cost sharing or matching.

3. *Other:* The charter schools that a grantee selects to benefit from this program must meet the definition of a charter school, as defined in section 5210(1) of the ESEA, as amended.

## IV. Application and Submission Information

1. *Address to Request Application Package:* Education Publications Center (ED Pubs), P.O. Box 1398, Jessup, MD

20794–1398. Telephone (toll free): 1–877–433–7827. FAX: (301) 470–1244. If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), you may call the Federal Relay Service (FRS) at 1–800–877–8339.

You may also contact ED Pubs at its Web site: <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/edpubs.html> or you may contact ED Pubs at its e-mail address: [edpubs@inet.ed.gov](mailto:edpubs@inet.ed.gov). If you request an application from ED Pubs, be sure to identify this competition as follows: CFDA number 84.354A.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain a copy of the application package in an alternative format (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) by contacting one of the program contact persons listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** in section VII of this notice.

In addition, applications will be available at <http://www.ed.gov/programs/charterfacilities/applicant.html>

2. *Content and Form of Application Submission:* Each Credit Enhancement for Charter School Facilities program application must include the following specific elements:

(a) A statement identifying the activities proposed to be undertaken with grant funds (the “grant project”), including how the applicant will determine which charter schools will receive assistance, and how much and what types of assistance these schools will receive.

(b) A description of the involvement of charter schools in the application’s development and in the design of the proposed grant project.

(c) A description of the applicant’s expertise in capital markets financing. (Consortium applicants must provide this information for each of the participating organizations.)

(d) A description of how the proposed grant project will leverage the maximum amount of private-sector and other non-Federal capital relative to the amount of Credit Enhancement for Charter School Facilities program funding used and how the proposed grant project will otherwise enhance credit available to charter schools.

(e) A description of how the eligible entity possesses sufficient expertise in education to evaluate the likelihood of success of a charter school program for which facilities financing is sought.

(f) In the case of an application submitted by a State governmental entity, a description of current and planned State funding actions including other forms of financial assistance that ensure that charter schools within the State receive the funding they need to have adequate facilities.

Additional requirements concerning the content of an application, together with the forms you must submit, are in the application package for this program.

**Page Limit:** We have found that reviewers are able to conduct the highest-quality review when applications are concise and easy to read. Applicants are encouraged to limit their applications to no more than 40 double-spaced pages (not including the required forms and tables), to use a 12-point or larger-size font with one-inch margins at the top, bottom, and both sides, and to number pages consecutively. Furthermore, applicants are strongly encouraged to include a table of contents that specifies where each required part of the application is located.

### 3. Submission Dates and Times:

Applications Available: February 1, 2007.

Date of Pre-Application Meeting: March 20, 2007.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: April 2, 2007.

Applications for grants under this program 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 by mail or hand delivery if you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, please refer to section IV.

6. *Other Submission Requirements* in 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**.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: June 1, 2007.

4. *Intergovernmental Review:* This program 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 program.

### 5. Funding Restrictions:

(a) *Reserve accounts.* Grant recipients, in accordance with State and local law, must deposit the grant funds they receive under this program (other than funds used for administrative costs) in a reserve account established and maintained by the grantee for this purpose. Amounts deposited in such

account shall be used by the grantee for one or more of the following purposes in order to assist charter schools in accessing private-sector and other non-Federal capital:

(1) Guaranteeing, insuring, and reinsuring bonds, notes, evidences of debt, loans, and interests therein.

(2) Guaranteeing and insuring leases of personal and real property.

(3) Facilitating financing by identifying potential lending sources, encouraging private lending, and other similar activities that directly promote lending to, or for the benefit of, charter schools.

(4) Facilitating the issuance of bonds by charter schools or by other public entities for the benefit of charter schools, by providing technical, administrative, and other appropriate assistance (such as the recruitment of bond counsel, underwriters, and potential investors and the consolidation of multiple charter school projects within a single bond issue).

Funds received under this program and deposited in the reserve account must be invested in obligations issued or guaranteed by the United States or a State, or in other similarly low-risk securities. Any earnings on funds, including fees, received under this program must be deposited in the reserve account and be used in accordance with the requirements of this program.

(b) *Charter school objectives.* An eligible entity receiving a grant under this program must use the funds deposited in the reserve account to assist charter schools in accessing capital to accomplish one or both of the following objectives:

(1) The acquisition (by purchase, lease, donation, or otherwise) of an interest (which may be an interest held by a third party for the benefit of a charter school) in improved or unimproved real property that is necessary to commence or continue the operation of a charter school.

(2) The construction of new facilities, or the renovation, repair, or alteration of existing facilities, necessary to commence or continue the operation of a charter school.

(c) *Other.* Grantees must ensure that all costs incurred using funds from the reserve account are reasonable. The full faith and credit of the United States are not pledged to the payment of funds under such obligation.

Applicants that are selected to receive an award must enter into a written Performance Agreement with the Department prior to drawing down funds, unless the grantee receives written permission from the Department

in the interim to draw down a specific limited amount of funds. Grantees must maintain and enforce standards of conduct governing the performance of their employees, officers, directors, trustees, and agents engaged in the selection, award, and administration of contracts or agreements related to this grant. The standards of conduct must mandate disinterested decision-making.

A grantee may use not more than 0.25 percent (one quarter of one percent) of the grant funds for the administrative costs of the grant.

The Secretary, in accordance with chapter 37 of title 31, United States Code, will collect all of the funds in the reserve account established with grant funds (including any earnings on those funds) if the Secretary determines that the grantee has permanently ceased to use all or a portion of the funds in such account to accomplish the purposes described in the authorizing statute and the Performance Agreement or, if not earlier than two years after the date on which the entity first receives these funds, the entity has failed to make substantial progress in undertaking the grant project.

The charter schools that a grantee selects to benefit from this program must meet the definition of a charter school, as defined in section 5210(1) of the ESEA, as amended.

(d) We reference additional regulations outlining funding restrictions in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice.

6. *Other Submission Requirements:* Applications for grants under this program 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 Credit Enhancement for Charter School Facilities Program—CFDA Number 84.354A must be submitted electronically using the Governmentwide Grants.gov Apply site at <http://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 e-mail 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 Credit Enhancement for Charter School Facilities Program at <http://www.Grants.gov>. You must search for the downloadable application package for this program or competition by the CFDA number. Do not include the CFDA number's alpha suffix in your search (e.g., search for 84.354, not 84.354A).

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 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. Except as otherwise noted in this section, we will not consider your application if it is date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system later than 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. 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 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 program 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 at <http://e-Grants.ed.gov/help/GrantsgovSubmissionProcedures.pdf>.

- To submit your application via Grants.gov, you must complete all steps in the Grants.gov registration process (see [http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get\\_registered.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp)). These steps include

(1) registering your organization, a multi-part process that includes registration with the Central Contractor Registry (CCR); (2) registering yourself as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR); and (3) getting authorized as an AOR by your organization. Details on these steps are outlined in the Grants.gov 3-Step Registration Guide (see <http://www.grants.gov/section910/Grants.govRegistrationBrochure.pdf>). You also must provide on your application the same D-U-N-S Number used with this registration. Please note that the registration process may take five or more business days to complete, and you must have completed all registration steps to allow you to submit successfully an application via Grants.gov. In addition you will need to update your CCR registration on an annual basis. This may take three or more business days to complete.

- 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: 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. Please note that two of these forms—the SF 424 and the Department of Education Supplemental Information for SF 424—have replaced the ED 424 (Application for Federal Education Assistance).

- You must attach any narrative sections of your application as files in a .DOC (document), .RTF (rich text), or .PDF (Portable Document) format. If you upload a file type other than the three file types specified in this paragraph or submit a password-protected file, we will not review that material.

- 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.) The Department then will retrieve your application from Grants.gov and send a second notification to you by e-mail. This second notification indicates that the Department has received your

application and has assigned your application a PR/Award number (an ED-specified identifying number unique to your application).

- 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 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 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 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date, please contact the person listed elsewhere in this notice under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** 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 that problem affected your ability to submit your application by 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. The Department will contact you after a determination is made on 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 prevent 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: Ann Margaret Galiatsos or Jim Houser, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., Room 4W245, Washington, DC 20202-6140. FAX: (202) 205-5630.

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 applicable following address:

*By mail through the U.S. Postal Service:* U.S. Department of Education, Application Control Center, Attention: (CFDA Number 84.354A), 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20202-4260

or

*By mail through a commercial carrier:* U.S. Department of Education, Application Control Center, Stop 4260, Attention: (CFDA Number 84.354A), 7100 Old Landover Road, Landover, MD 20785-1506.

Regardless of which address you use, 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.

If your application is postmarked after the application deadline date, we will not consider your application.

**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 84.354A), 550 12th Street, SW., Room 7041, Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC 20202-4260.

The Application Control Center accepts hand deliveries daily between 8 a.m. and 4:30 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 program are from 34 CFR 225.11 and are listed in this section. The maximum score for all the selection criteria is 100 points. The maximum score for each criterion is indicated in parentheses. Each criterion also includes the factors that the reviewers will consider to determine how well an application meets the criterion. We encourage applicants to make explicit connections to the selection criteria and factors in their applications.

#### A. *Quality of project design and significance.* (35 points)

In determining the quality of project design and significance, the Secretary considers—

(1) The extent to which the grant proposal would provide financing to charter schools at better rates and terms than they can receive absent assistance through the program;

(2) The extent to which the project goals, objectives, and timeline are clearly specified, measurable, and appropriate for the purpose of the program;

(3) The extent to which the project implementation plan and activities, including the partnerships established, are likely to achieve measurable objectives that further the purposes of the program;

(4) The extent to which the project is likely to produce results that are replicable;

(5) The extent to which the project will use appropriate criteria for selecting charter schools for assistance and for determining the type and amount of assistance to be given;

(6) The extent to which the proposed activities will leverage private or public-sector funding and increase the number and variety of charter schools assisted in meeting their facilities needs more than would be accomplished absent the program;

(7) The extent to which the project will serve charter schools in States with strong charter laws, consistent with the criteria for such laws in section 5202(e)(3) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965; and

(8) The extent to which the requested grant amount and the project costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the project.

#### B. *Quality of project services.* (15 points)

In determining the quality of the project services, the Secretary considers—

(1) The extent to which the services to be provided by the project reflect the identified needs of the charter schools to be served;

(2) The extent to which charter schools and chartering agencies were involved in the design of, and demonstrate support for, the project;

(3) The extent to which the technical assistance and other services to be provided by the proposed grant project involve the use of cost-effective strategies for increasing charter schools' access to facilities financing, including the reasonableness of fees and lending terms; and

(4) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed grant project are focused on assisting charter schools with a likelihood of success and the greatest demonstrated need for assistance under the program.

#### C. *Capacity.* (35 points)

In determining an applicant's business and organizational capacity to carry out the project, the Secretary considers—

(1) The amount and quality of experience of the applicant in carrying out the activities it proposes to undertake in its application, such as enhancing the credit on debt issuances, guaranteeing leases, and facilitating financing;

(2) The applicant's financial stability;

(3) The ability of the applicant to protect against unwarranted risk in its loan underwriting, portfolio monitoring, and financial management;

(4) The applicant's expertise in education to evaluate the likelihood of success of a charter school;

(5) The ability of the applicant to prevent conflicts of interest, including conflicts of interest by employees and members of the board of directors in a decision-making role;

(6) If the applicant has co-applicants (consortium members), partners, or other grant project participants, the specific resources to be contributed by each co-applicant (consortium member), partner, or other grant project participant to the implementation and success of the grant project;

(7) For State governmental entities, the extent to which steps have been or will be taken to ensure that charter schools within the State receive the funding needed to obtain adequate facilities; and

(8) For previous grantees under the charter school facilities programs, their performance in implementing these grants.

#### D. *Quality of project personnel.* (15 points)

In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers—

(1) The qualifications of project personnel, including relevant training and experience, of the project manager and other members of the project team, including consultants or subcontractors; and

(2) The staffing plan for the grant project.

2. *Review and Selection Process:* Additional factors we consider in selecting an application for an award are in 34 CFR 225.12.

## 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 Notice (GAN). We may also notify you informally.

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:** Applicants selected for funding will be required to submit the following reports to the Department:

(a) An annual report that includes the information from section 5227(b) of the ESEA and any other information the Secretary may require in the performance report.

(b) A semiannual report that includes internal financial statements and other information as the Secretary may require.

Grantees must also cooperate and assist the Department with any periodic financial and compliance audits of the grantee, as determined necessary by the Department. The specific Performance Agreement between the grantee and the Department may contain additional reporting requirements.

(c) At the end of your project period, you must submit a final performance report, including financial information, as directed by the Secretary.

**4. Performance Measures:** The performance measures for this program are: (1) The amount of funding grantees leverage for charter schools to acquire, construct, and renovate school facilities and (2) the number of charter schools served. Grantees must provide this information as part of their annual performance reports.

## VII. Agency Contacts

*For Further Information Contact:* Ann Margaret Galiatsos or Jim Houser, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 4W245, Washington, DC 20202-6140. Telephone: (202) 205-9765 or by e-mail: [charter.facilities@ed.gov](mailto:charter.facilities@ed.gov).

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), you may call the Federal Relay Service (FRS) at 1-800-877-8339.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain this document in an alternative format (e.g., Braille, large print,

audiotape, or computer diskette) on request to the program contact persons listed in this section.

## VIII. Other Information

**Electronic Access to This Document:** You may view this document, as well as all other documents of this Department published in the **Federal Register**, in text or Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) on the Internet at the following site: <http://www.ed.gov/news/fedregister>.

To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at this site. If you have questions about using PDF, call the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO), toll free, at 1-888-293-6498; or in the Washington, DC, area at (202) 512-1530.

**Note:** 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 on GPO Access at: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/nara/index.html>.

Dated: January 26, 2007.

**Morgan S. Brown,**

*Assistant Deputy Secretary for Innovation and Improvement.*

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**BILLING CODE 4000-01-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

### Office of Innovation and Improvement; Overview Information; Voluntary Public School Choice Program (VPSC); Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year (FY) 2007

*Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance  
(CFDA) Number: 84.361A*

*Dates: Applications Available:*  
February 1, 2007.

*Deadline for Notice of Intent to Apply:*  
February 26, 2007.

*Deadline for Transmittal of  
Applications:* April 2, 2007.

*Deadline for Intergovernmental  
Review:* June 1, 2007.

*Eligible Applicants:*

(a) One or more State educational agencies (SEAs);

(b) One or more local educational agencies (LEAs);

(c) One or more SEAs in partnership with one or more LEAs or other public, for-profit, or non-profit entities; or

(d) One or more LEAs in partnership with one or more public, for-profit, or non-profit entities.

**Note:** For regulations governing partnership applications, see 34 CFR 75.127 through 75.129.

*Estimated Available Funds:* The Administration has requested

\$26,278,000 for this program for FY 2007. The actual level of funding, if any, depends on final congressional action. However, we are inviting applications to allow enough time to complete the grant process before the end of the current fiscal year, if Congress appropriates funds for this program.

*Estimated Range of Awards:*  
\$700,000-\$3,000,000 per year.

*Estimated Average Size of Awards:*  
\$2,000,000 per year.

*Estimated Number of Awards:* 10-15.

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

*Project Period:* Up to 60 months.

## Full Text of Announcement

### I. Funding Opportunity Description

**Purpose of Program:** This program provides grants for eligible applicants to establish or expand a program of voluntary public school choice. This public school choice program must focus on providing parents with greater options in acquiring a high-quality public education for their children, particularly parents whose children currently attend schools in need of improvement as defined in section 1116(b) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (ESEA).

**Priorities:** This notice contains five competitive preference priorities. In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(iv) and (b)(2)(v), Competitive Preference Priorities 1 through 3 are from section 5244 of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. 7225c) and Competitive Preference Priorities 4 and 5 are from the notice of final priorities for discretionary grant programs published in the **Federal Register** on October 11, 2006 (71 FR 60046).

**Competitive Preference Priorities:** For FY 2007, these priorities are competitive preference priorities. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2), we give preference to and award up to 60 points to an application that meets one or more of these priorities over an application that does not meet one or more of these priorities.

These priorities are:

**Competitive Preference Priority 1: Partnership/Interdistrict Approach.** Up to 20 points for establishing or expanding a partnership that implements an interdistrict approach to carrying out a public school choice program. This priority focuses on implementing different models of interdistrict choice arrangements that foster collaboration and cooperation between LEAs in order to expand options for students to attend higher-performing schools.