

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Office of Innovation and Improvement; Overview Information; Transition to Teaching Grant Program; Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year (FY) 2009

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 84.350A, 84.350B, and 84.350C.

DATES:

Applications Available: November 13, 2008.

Deadline for Notice of Intent to Apply: December 15, 2008.

Date of Pre-Application Meeting: December 4, 2008.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: January 21, 2009.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: March 23, 2009.

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The Transition to Teaching program encourages (1) the development and expansion of alternative routes to full State teacher certification, as well as (2) the recruitment and retention of highly qualified mid-career professionals, recent college graduates who have not majored in education, and highly qualified paraprofessionals as teachers in high-need schools operated by high-need local educational agencies (LEAs), including charter schools that operate as high-need LEAs.

Priorities: The Department has established two competitive preference priorities that are explained in the following paragraphs. In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(iv), Competitive Preference Priority 1 is from section 2313(c) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA) (20 U.S.C. 6683(c)). Competitive Preference Priority 2 is from the notice of final priorities and requirements for this program (NFP), published in the **Federal Register** on April 30, 2004 (69 FR 24002).

Competitive Preference Priorities: For FY 2009 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applicants from this competition, these priorities are competitive preference priorities. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i) we award an additional 5 points to an application that meets Competitive Preference Priority 1, and up to an additional 10 points to an application depending on how well the application meets Competitive Preference Priority 2.

These priorities are:

Competitive Preference Priority 1—Partnerships or Consortia That Include

a High-need LEA or a High-need State Educational Agency (SEA). This priority supports projects that are designed and implemented in active partnerships or consortia that include at least one high-need LEA or high-need SEA.

Competitive Preference Priority 2—District Projects To Streamline Teacher Hiring Systems, Timelines, and Processes. This priority supports projects by one or more high-need LEAs to streamline their hiring systems, timelines, and processes. A participating high-need LEA will need to conduct both of the following activities:

(a) *Examine its current hiring system, processes, and policies to identify the critical barriers to hiring highly qualified teachers.* The lack of highly qualified teachers in most urban and rural LEAs has often been attributed to their difficulty in recruiting interested and qualified individuals. However, recent research indicates that the problem may not be one of recruitment but may stem from inefficient and untimely LEA hiring systems and processes. This is especially true in high-poverty LEAs and schools—the very LEAs and schools the Transition to Teaching program is targeted to serve. Accordingly, each participating LEA will need to examine its current hiring processes and policies and, based upon that examination, identify the critical barriers to hiring highly qualified teachers.

(b) *Design and implement efforts to remove the identified barriers and put in place systems that streamline and revamp the hiring process.* In conducting this activity, LEAs are encouraged to create an efficient and timely applicant hiring process with a strong data tracking system and clear hiring goals. These efforts also should involve negotiating policy reforms that remove critical barriers, such as delayed notification of vacancies and seniority and retirement rules.

Participating LEAs also will carry out the requirements of the Transition to Teaching program by recruiting nontraditional candidates, using the streamlined hiring system to hire these individuals for teaching in high-need schools, working with them to achieve full State certification, and retaining them for at least three years.

Note: While all applicants may address Competitive Preference Priority 2, only applicants that meet the eligibility requirements of a high-need LEA, as contained in this notice, may receive points under this competitive preference priority. In response to Competitive Preference Priority 2, applicants are encouraged (1) to identify existing barriers to an efficient and timely

process of hiring new teachers and (2) to describe a specific plan to address these barriers that includes: (a) The active engagement of LEA officials, teacher unions, and other stakeholders in removing existing barriers and implementing changes; (b) the actions each participating LEA intends to undertake to streamline teacher hiring systems, timelines, and processes that will result in early notification and hiring of new teachers; (c) a timeline for major action steps; (d) a strong data tracking system; and (e) clear hiring goals, objectives, and performance measures that provide evidence of success in meeting the goals of hiring new teachers supported through the Transition to Teaching program.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 6681–6684.

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 notice of final priorities and requirements for this program published in the **Federal Register** on April 30, 2004 (69 FR 24002).

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

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

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Discretionary grants.

Estimated Available Funds: The Administration has requested \$43,707,000 for this program for FY 2009, of which we intend to use an estimated \$7,000,000 for this competition. 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.

The Department has established separate funding categories for projects of different scope. These categories are:

- (1) National/regional projects (84.350C) that serve eligible high-need LEAs in more than one State;
- (2) Statewide projects (84.350B) that serve eligible high-need LEAs statewide or eligible high-need LEAs in more than one area of a State; and
- (3) Local projects (84.350A) that serve one eligible high-need LEA or two or more eligible high-need LEAs in a single area of a State.

Contingent upon the availability of funds and the quality of applications, we may make additional awards in FY 2010 from the list of unfunded applicants from this competition.

Estimated Range of Awards: National/regional projects—\$450,000–\$750,000

per year; Statewide projects—\$300,000–\$650,000 per year; and Local projects—\$150,000–\$450,000 per year.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: National/regional projects—\$600,000 per year; Statewide projects—\$440,000 per year; and Local projects—\$300,000 per year.

Estimated Number of Awards: National/regional projects—3; Statewide projects—5; and Local projects—10.

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

Project Period: Up to 60 months.

III. Eligibility Information

1. *Eligible Applicants:* A State educational agency (SEA); a high-need LEA; a for-profit or nonprofit organization that has a proven record of effectively recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers, in partnership with a high-need LEA or an SEA; an IHE in partnership with a high-need LEA or an SEA; a regional consortium of SEAs; or a consortium of high-need LEAs.

Each application must identify participating LEAs that meet the definition of “high-need LEA” in section 2102(3) of the ESEA.

Note: Section 2102(3) of the ESEA defines a high-need LEA as an LEA—

(a) That serves not fewer than 10,000 children from families with incomes below the poverty line (as that term is defined in section 9101(33) of the ESEA), or for which not less than 20 percent of the children served by the LEA are from families with incomes below the poverty line; and

(b) For which there is (1) a high percentage of teachers not teaching in the academic subjects or grade levels that the teachers were trained to teach, or (2) a high percentage of teachers with emergency, provisional, or temporary certification or licensing.

The NFP describes how applicants must demonstrate that a participating LEA meets this statutory definition of “high-need LEA” (69 FR 24002, 24006). Pursuant to the NFP, we provide the following supplementary information regarding the data an applicant uses to demonstrate eligibility as a “high-need LEA” under this competition:

As described in the NFP, absent a showing of alternative LEA data that reliably show the number of children from families with incomes below the poverty line that are served by the LEA, the eligibility of an LEA as a “high-need LEA” under component (a) of the definition must be determined on the basis of the most recent U.S. Census Bureau data. The most recent U.S. Census Bureau data can be found in the charts on the Internet at: <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/saipe/district.html>. The Department examines

the eligibility of any LEA not listed on these charts on a case-by-case basis.

We understand that the U.S. Census Bureau may release data for 2007 before the closing date for applications under this competition. If the U.S. Census Bureau publishes 2007 poverty data before the application due date, the Department will consider U.S. Census Bureau poverty data available for either 2005 or 2007 to be the most recent. Hence, if the U.S. Census Bureau releases its poverty data for 2007 prior to the closing date of this competition, we will consider an LEA to have the requisite poverty needed to be a “high-need LEA” if the LEA had the requisite level of poverty, based on the U.S. Census Bureau data, in either 2005 or 2007. If the U.S. Census Bureau does not release the 2007 poverty data, we will rely on the U.S. Census Bureau’s poverty data for 2005.

As discussed in the NFP, with respect to component (b)(1) of the definition of “high-need LEA,” whether an LEA has a “high percentage of teachers not teaching in the academic subjects or grade levels that the teachers were trained to teach” is determined on a case-by-case basis.

In addition, as noted in the NFP, with respect to component (b)(2) of the definition of “high-need LEA,” an LEA has a “high percentage” of teachers with emergency, provisional, or temporary certification or licensing if the percentage of teachers on waivers, as the LEA reported to the State for purposes of the State’s latest report to the Secretary under section 207 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA), was at least the national average percentage of teachers on waivers of State certification for all LEAs. As outlined in the NFP, the Secretary determines the national average percentage of teachers on waivers based on data contained in the most currently available HEA section 207 State reports. At the time of publication of this notice, the Department has received all 2007 State HEA section 207 reports and those reports reflect a national percentage of teachers on waivers of State certification in all LEAs of 1.5 percent.

Accordingly, an LEA will be considered to have met component (b)(2) of the definition if the data that it provided to the State for purposes of the State’s October 2007 HEA section 207 report demonstrate that at least 1.5 percent of its teachers were on waivers of State certification requirements.

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

b. *Supplement-Not-Supplant:* This program involves supplement-not-

supplant funding requirements. In accordance with section 2313(h)(2) of the ESEA, funds made available under this section shall be used to supplement, and not supplant, State and local public funds expended for teacher recruitment and retention programs, including programs to recruit teachers through alternative routes to certification.

3. *Other:* The NFP describes eligibility restrictions for individuals participating in this program.

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), call, toll free: 1–877–576–7734.

You can contact ED Pubs at its Web site, also: <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/edpubs.html> or at its e-mail address: edpubs@inet.ed.gov.

If you request an application package from ED Pubs, be sure to identify this program or competition as follows: CFDA number 84.350A, 84.350B, or 84.350C.

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

2. *Content and Form of Application Submission:* Requirements concerning the content of an application, together with the forms you must submit, are in the application package for this competition. Additional information concerning application content requirements is in the NFP.

Notice of Intent to Apply: December 15, 2008. The Department will be able to develop a more efficient process for reviewing grant applications if it has a better understanding of the number of entities that intend to apply for funding under this competition. Therefore, the Secretary strongly encourages each potential applicant to notify the Department by sending a short e-mail message indicating the applicant’s intent to submit an application for funding. The e-mail need not include information regarding the content of the proposed application, only the applicant’s intent to submit it. The Secretary requests that this e-mail notification be sent to Thelma Leenhouts at: transitiontoteaching@ed.gov.

Applicants that fail to provide this e-mail notification may still apply for funding.

Page Limit: The application narrative (Part III of the application) is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application. You must limit the application narrative Part III to the equivalent of no more than 50 pages, using the following standards:

- A "page" is 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.

- Double space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative, except titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs.

- Use a font that is either 12 point or larger or no smaller than 10 pitch (characters per inch).

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

The 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, or letters of support. However, you must include all of the application narrative in Part III.

Our reviewers will not read any pages of your application that exceed the page limit.

3. Submission Dates and Times:
Applications Available: November 13, 2008.

Deadline for Notice of Intent To Apply: December 15, 2008.

Date of Pre-Application Meeting: December 4, 2008, from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the LBJ Auditorium at the U.S. Department of Education headquarters, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., in Washington, DC. The Department is accessible by Metro on the Blue, Orange, Green, and Yellow lines at the 7th Street and Maryland Avenue exit of the L'Enfant Plaza Metro station. Please contact the U.S. Department of Education contact persons listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** if you have any questions about the details of the pre-application meeting.

Individuals interested in attending this pre-application meeting are encouraged to pre-register by e-mailing their name, organization, and contact information to transitiontoteaching@ed.gov. There is no registration fee for this pre-

application meeting. We encourage attendance from those who will be responsible for submitting the application or otherwise providing technical support for submitting the application electronically using the Grants.gov Apply site.

Assistance to Individuals With Disabilities at the Pre-Application Meeting

The meeting site is accessible to individuals with disabilities, and a sign language interpreter will be available. If you will need an auxiliary aid or service other than a sign language interpreter in order to participate in the meeting (e.g., other interpreting service such as oral, cued speech, or tactile interpreter; assistive listening device; or materials in alternate format), notify the contact person listed in this notice at least two weeks before the scheduled meeting date. Although we will attempt to meet a request we receive after this date, we may not be able to make available the requested auxiliary aid or service because of insufficient time to arrange it.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: January 21, 2009.

Applications for grants under this competition must be submitted electronically using the Grants.gov Apply site (Grants.gov). For information (including dates and times) about how to submit your application electronically, or in paper format by mail or hand delivery if you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, please refer to 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** in section VII in this notice. If the Department provides an accommodation or auxiliary aid to an individual with a disability in connection with the application process, the individual's application remains subject to all other requirements and limitations in this notice.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: March 23, 2009.

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

is in the application package for this competition.

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

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

a. Electronic Submission of Applications. Applications for grants under the Transition to Teaching Competition, CFDA number 84.350A, 84.350B, and 84.350C 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 Transition to Teaching at <http://www.Grants.gov>. You must search for the downloadable application package for this competition by the CFDA number. Do not include the CFDA number's alpha suffix in your search (e.g., search for 84.350, not 84.350A).

Please note the following:

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

- Applications received by Grants.gov are date and time stamped. Your application must be fully uploaded and submitted, and must be date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system no later than 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. Except as otherwise noted in this section, we will not accept your application if it is received—that is, date and time stamped by the Grants.gov

system—after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. We do not consider an application that does not comply with the deadline requirements. When we retrieve your application from Grants.gov, we will notify you if we are rejecting your application because it was date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date.

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

- You should review and follow the Education Submission Procedures for submitting an application through Grants.gov that are included in the application package for this competition to ensure that you submit your application in a timely manner to the Grants.gov system. You can also find the Education Submission Procedures pertaining to Grants.gov 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). 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, toll free, at 1-800-518-4726. You must obtain a Grants.gov Support Desk Case Number and must keep a record of it.

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

If you submit an application after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date, please

contact the person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** in section VII in this notice and provide an explanation of the technical problem you experienced with Grants.gov, along with the Grants.gov Support Desk Case Number. We will accept your application if we can confirm that a technical problem occurred with the Grants.gov system and that that problem affected your ability to submit your application by 4:30:00 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: Thelma Leenhouts, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., Room 4W302, Washington, DC 20202-5960. FAX: (202) 401-8466.

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

b. *Submission of Paper Applications by Mail.* If you qualify for an exception

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

U.S. Department of Education,
Application Control Center, Attention:
(CFDA Number 84.350A, 84.350B, or
84.350C), LBJ Basement Level 1, 400
Maryland Avenue, SW., Washington,
DC 20202–4260.

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

(1) A legibly dated U.S. Postal Service postmark.

(2) A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the U.S. Postal Service.

(3) A dated shipping label, invoice, or receipt from a commercial carrier.

(4) Any other proof of mailing acceptable to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.

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

(1) A private metered postmark.

(2) A mail receipt that is not dated by the U.S. Postal Service.

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 84.350A, 84.350B, or
84.350C), 550 12th Street, SW., Room
7041, Potomac Center Plaza,
Washington, DC 20202–4260.

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

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

(1) You must indicate on the envelope and—if not provided by the Department—in Item 11 of the SF 424 the CFDA number,

including suffix letter, if any, of the competition under which you are submitting your application; and

(2) The Application Control Center will mail to you a notification of receipt of your grant application. If you do not receive this notification within 15 business days from the application deadline date, you should call the U.S. Department of Education Application Control Center at (202) 245–6288.

V. Application Review Information

1. *Selection Criteria:* The selection criteria for this competition are from the statute for this program and § 75.210 of EDGAR 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 in determining how well an application meets the criterion. In addressing each criterion, applicants are encouraged to make explicit connections to relevant aspects of responses to other selection criteria.

The *Notes* we have included after each criterion are guidance to assist applicants in understanding the criterion as they prepare their applications and are not required by statute or regulation.

A. *Quality of the Project Design* (35 points).

The Secretary considers the quality of the project design for the proposed project by considering how well the applicant describes a plan—

(1) To recruit and retain highly qualified mid-career professionals (including highly qualified paraprofessionals) and recent graduates of an IHE as teachers in high-need schools operated by high-need LEAs; and

(2) To enable individuals to become eligible for teacher certification under State-approved alternative routes to certification programs within a reduced period of time, relying on such factors as experience, expertise, and academic qualifications in lieu of traditional course-work in education.

In considering the quality of the project design and the applicant's plan, the Secretary considers the following factors:

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

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

(c) 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.

(d) The extent to which the proposed project is designed to build capacity and yield results that will extend beyond the period of Federal financial assistance.

Note: The Secretary encourages applicants to address this criterion by discussing the overall project design and its key components, and the degree to which the design's key components are based on sound research and practice. Applicants are also encouraged to address this criterion by connecting the project design to the needs of the partner districts and identifying the specific teacher-shortage areas faced by the participating high-need LEAs on which their proposed project would focus. Applicants should understand that a project's strategy for helping participating high-need LEAs to identify and hire highly qualified individuals to fill teaching positions in high-need subjects may rely on existing alternative routes to certification, the expansion of alternative routes to certification into new areas, or the creation of wholly new alternative routes.

Additionally, applicants are encouraged to address such key components of project design as:

(1) Recruitment and selection, including identifying the target group(s) on which the program will focus and why and how the project is designed to rigorously select participants with the requisite content knowledge, skills, and commitment to teach in high-need schools in high-need LEAs. Recruitment may include members of groups that are traditionally underrepresented.

(2) Preparation, including how the project provides a route to certification that is accelerated, integrates coursework and field experience, is adapted to participants' learning needs, and will yield highly qualified teachers who are prepared to teach in high-need schools in high-need LEAs.

(3) Teacher placement, including evidence that the proposed project will meet the needs of high-need LEAs and is developed in coordination with appropriate partners, and that the project includes a system of tracking to meet statutory requirements.

(4) Support services, including mentoring, that are designed to retain participants and meet their needs in terms of length, content, and means of delivery in order to be successful in high-need schools in high-need LEAs.

(5) Certification, including consideration of how the timeline for achieving certification will meet the needs of participants, LEAs, and partners, as well as the "Highly Qualified Teacher" requirements established in section 9101(23) of the ESEA.

In addition, applicants are encouraged to clarify the means by which the project's specified outcomes and benefits may be sustained once Federal funding has ended.

B. Quality of the Project Evaluation (25 points). The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation to be conducted, the Secretary considers the following factors:

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

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

Note: The Secretary encourages applicants to address this criterion by including benchmarks to monitor progress toward specific and measurable program and project objectives, as well as performance measures to assess the impact on teaching and learning or other important outcomes for project participants. The Secretary encourages applicants to consider the use of a logic model in determining intended short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes. (The specific performance measures established for the overall Transition to Teaching program are discussed under *Performance Measures* in section VI of this notice. Section 2314 of the ESEA also requires grantees to submit both an interim evaluation of the first three years of the grant and a final evaluation at the end of the grant.)

With respect to the implementation of the project and monitoring progress toward achieving project objectives, applicants are encouraged to describe the following: (1) What types of data will be collected; (2) when various types of data will be collected; (3) what methods will be used; (4) what instruments will be developed and when; (5) how the data will be analyzed; (6) when reports of results and outcomes will be available; and (7) how the applicant will use the information collected through the evaluation to monitor progress and improve implementation of the funded project and to provide accountability information about project success. Applicants are encouraged to design an evaluation that provides data for annual as well as midpoint and final reporting. Applicants are encouraged to devote an appropriate level of resources to project evaluation.

Finally, the Secretary encourages applicants to identify the individual or

organization that has agreed to serve as the objective evaluator for the project and describe the qualifications of that evaluator.

C. Quality of Project Services (20 points).

In determining the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project are appropriate to the needs of the intended recipients or beneficiaries of those services.

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

(3) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are likely to alleviate the personnel shortages that have been identified or are the focus of the proposed project.

(4) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project involve the collaboration of appropriate partners for maximizing the effectiveness of project services.

Note: The Secretary encourages applicants to address this criterion by discussing how the proposed project services will meet the needs of both the high-need LEAs identified in the application and the project participants they would recruit to become teachers. Applicants are encouraged to consult the list of authorized activities in section 2313(g) of the ESEA in describing the specific services to be delivered to recruit, prepare, and retain participants that will increase the number of highly qualified teachers in high-need schools in high-need LEAs. In addition, the Secretary encourages applicants to consider carefully the breadth of activities that section 2313(g) of the ESEA authorizes and then to address how the project will:

(1) Provide preparation that meets the learning needs of the participants and makes use of appropriate media (such as face-to-face instruction, Web-based instruction, and distance learning) to provide them with the knowledge and skills needed to be highly qualified and effective teachers in the identified high-need subject areas and high-need schools in high-need LEAs.

(2) Support project participants' success in high-need schools in high-need LEAs during the period of their service obligation, through individual mentoring, support of participants as a group, use of technology, or other appropriate means.

(3) Encourage the participation of all project partners, including school

leaders, in providing services related to the recruitment, preparation, and retention of project participants and ensuring lasting benefits or outcomes. Applicants are encouraged to clarify the roles of partners in each phase of the project and the extent of coordination that will occur with similar efforts at the State and district levels. In addition, applicants are encouraged to consider how they might demonstrate (e.g., through narrative discussion, letters of support, or formal memoranda of understanding) the commitment of partners to the project, and the partners' understanding of responsibilities they have agreed to assume in service delivery.

Applicants are encouraged to link their description of project services to be provided by the project to the overall project design described in the Quality of Project Design criterion.

D. Quality of the Management Plan (20 points).

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

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

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

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

Note: Section 75.112 of EDGAR requires an applicant for a multi-year grant to include a narrative that describes how and when, in each budget period of the project, the applicant plans to meet each project objective. The Secretary encourages applicants to address this criterion by including in this narrative a clear, well thought-out implementation plan that includes annual timelines, key project milestones, and a schedule of activities with sufficient time for developing an adequate implementation plan, as well as specific timelines for providing project participants the direct support they need in their initial year(s) as teachers.

Applicants are encouraged to provide timelines that include benchmarks for determining whether the project is achieving its stated goals and objectives, with strategies for monitoring progress as well as making mid-project corrections and adjustments, as

appropriate. In addition, the Secretary encourages applicants to further address this criterion by providing specific information, such as name, title, responsibilities, and time commitment of each key individual working to implement the project's goals and objectives.

2. *Review and Selection Process:* Additional factors we consider in selecting an application for an award are in the NFP.

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 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 in this notice.

We reference the regulations outlining the terms and conditions of an award in the *Applicable Regulations* section in 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:* The Secretary requires successful applicants to submit annual performance reports and, after the last year of the project, a final report. The annual performance report documents the grantee's yearly progress toward meeting expected programmatic and project specific outcomes. These outcomes must be based on measurable performance objectives including, but not limited to, the performance measures described in paragraph 4 of this section. These reports must evaluate—

(1) The grantee's progress in meeting the application's objectives;

(2) The project's effectiveness in meeting the purposes of the Transition to Teaching program; and

(3) The project's effect on the specific LEAs the project serves.

Among other things, the Department uses the annual performance reports to determine whether a grantee has demonstrated substantial progress in meeting the goals and objectives (as described in its approved application), and thereby merits a continuation award (for years 2–5). See § 75.118 of EDGAR.

Grantees also will be required to submit a final performance report, due no later than 90 days after the end of the project period.

In addition, section 2314 of the ESEA requires grantees to submit to the Department and to the Congress interim and final evaluations at the end of the third and fifth years of the grant period, respectively. These evaluations must describe the extent to which high-need LEAs that received funds through the grant have met their goals relating to teacher recruitment and retention as described in the project application. Additional requirements pertaining to these reports are in the NFP.

For specific requirements on reporting, please go to <http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>.

4. *Performance Measures:* The Secretary has established one performance indicator for assessing the effectiveness of the Transition to Teaching program: the percentage of new, highly qualified Transition to Teaching teachers who teach in high-need schools in high-need LEAs for at least three years. We will track this indicator through the use of the following three performance measures. We will gather the data for these measures from the grantees.

Measure One: The percentage of all Transition to Teaching participants who become teachers of record in high-need schools in high-need LEAs. For this measure we will collect data on the number of participants and the number of teachers of record in high-need schools in high-need LEAs.

Measure Two: The percentage of Transition to Teaching participants receiving certification/licensure within three years. For this measure, we will collect data on the number of participants who become certified within three years.

Measure Three: The percentage of Transition to Teaching teachers of record who teach in high-need schools in high-need LEAs for at least three years. For this measure, we will collect data on the number of participants who become teachers of record who have been teaching in high-need schools in high-need LEAs for at least three years.

VII. Agency Contacts

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Thelma Leenhouts, Patricia Barrett, Beatriz Ceja, Anthony Sepulveda, or Salimah Shabazz, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., Room 4W320, Washington, DC 20202. Telephone: (202) 260-0223 (Thelma Leenhouts), (202) 260-7350 (Patricia Barrett), (202) 205-5009 (Beatriz Ceja), (202) 260-0464 (Anthony Sepulveda), or (202) 260-2434 (Salimah Shabazz), or by e-mail: transitiontoteaching@ed.gov.

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

VIII. Other Information

Accessible Format: Individuals with disabilities can obtain this document and a copy of the application package in an accessible format (e.g., braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) on request to the program contact persons listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** in section VII in this notice.

Electronic Access to This Document: You can 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>.

Douglas B. Mesecar,

Assistant Deputy Secretary for Innovation and Improvement.

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

Proposed Agency Information Collection

AGENCY: U.S. Department of Energy.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Department of Energy (DOE) invites public comment on a proposed collection of information that DOE is developing for submission to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for clearance under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the