

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**Notice of Proposed Information Collection Requests**

AGENCY: Department of Education.

SUMMARY: The IC Clearance Official, Regulatory Information Management Services, Office of Management, invites comments on the proposed information collection requests as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

DATES: Interested persons are invited to submit comments on or before October 1, 2007.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 3506 of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35) requires that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) provide interested Federal agencies and the public an early opportunity to comment on information collection requests. OMB may amend or waive the requirement for public consultation to the extent that public participation in the approval process would defeat the purpose of the information collection, violate State or Federal law, or substantially interfere with any agency's ability to perform its 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: July 25, 2007.

Angela C. Arrington,

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

Office of the Chief Financial Officer

Type of Review: Extension.

Title: U.S. Department of Education Grant Performance Report Form and Instructions (ED 524B).

Frequency: Annually.

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

Reporting and Recordkeeping Hour Burden:

Responses: 9,000.

Burden Hours: 201,000.

Abstract: The U.S. Department of Education (ED) information collection package, OMB Control number 1890-0004, which expires on October 31, 2007, currently includes three distinct information collection instruments: the ED 524 Budget Form, the ED 524B Grant Performance Report and the recordkeeping and reporting requirements in the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR). As part of the renewal of these instruments, ED is requesting that each of these information collection instruments be approved under separate OMB control numbers. The ED 524B will retain the 1890-0004 control number. In this information collection package, ED is requesting a two-year renewal of the ED 524B. In separate information collection packages, ED is requesting a new OMB control number for the ED 524, Budget Information Form and Instructions and a new OMB control number for the EDGAR administrative requirements.

The ED 524B form and instructions are used in order for grantees to meet ED deadline dates for submission of performance reports for Department discretionary grant programs. Recipients of multi-year discretionary grants must submit an annual performance report for each year funding has been approved in order to receive a continuation award. The annual performance report should demonstrate whether substantial progress has been made toward meeting the approved goals and objectives of the project. ED program offices may also require recipients of "forward funded" grants that are awarded funds for their entire multi-year project up-front in a single grant award to submit the ED 524B on an annual basis. In addition, ED program offices may also require recipients to use the ED 524B to submit their final performance reports to

demonstrate project success, impact and outcomes. In both the annual and final performance reports, grantees are required to provide data on established performance measures for the grant program (e.g., Government Performance and Results Act measures) and on project performance measures that were included in the grantee's approved grant application. The ED 524B also contains a number of questions related to project financial data such as Federal and non-Federal expenditures and indirect cost information.

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 3415. 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 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. Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339.

[FR Doc. E7-14817 Filed 7-31-07; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Office of Postsecondary Education; Overview Information; Underground Railroad Educational and Cultural Program (URR); Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year (FY) 2007

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 84.345A

Dates:

Applications Available: August 1, 2007.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: August 31, 2007.

Eligible Applicants: Nonprofit educational organizations that research, display, interpret, and collect artifacts relating to the history of the Underground Railroad.

Available Funds: \$1,980,000.

Estimated Range of Awards: \$500,000-\$1,000,000 total for up to three years.

Estimated Number of Awards: 2.

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

Project Period: Up to 36 months.

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The purpose of this program is to provide grants to establish a facility to house, display, and interpret artifacts related to the history of the Underground Railroad, and to make the interpretive efforts available to institutions of higher education that award a baccalaureate or graduate degree.

Special Requirements: Each nonprofit educational organization awarded a grant under this program must enter into an agreement with the Department. Each agreement must require the organization—

(1) To demonstrate substantial private support for the facility through the implementation of a public-private partnership between a State or local public entity and a private entity for the support of the facility. The private entity must provide matching funds in an amount equal to *four times* the amount of the contribution of the State or local public entity, except that not more than 20 percent of the matching funds may be provided by the Federal Government;

(2) To create an endowment to fund any and all shortfalls in the costs of the on-going operations of the facility;

(3) To establish a network of satellite centers throughout the United States to help disseminate information regarding the Underground Railroad throughout the United States. These satellite centers must raise 80 percent of the funds required to establish the satellite centers from non-Federal public and private sources;

(4) To establish the capability to link the facility electronically with other local and regional facilities that have collections and programs that interpret the history of the Underground Railroad; and

(5) To submit, for each fiscal year for which an organization receives funding under this program, a report to the Department that contains—

(a) A description of the programs and activities supported by the funding;

(b) The audited financial statement of the organization for the preceding fiscal year;

(c) A plan for the programs and activities to be supported by the funding, as the Secretary may require; and

(d) An evaluation of the programs and activities supported by the funding, as the Secretary may require.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1153.

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

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Discretionary grants.

Available Funds: \$1,980,000.

Estimated Range of Awards: \$500,000–\$1,000,000 total for up to three years.

Estimated Number of Awards: 2.

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

Project Period: Up to 36 months.

III. Eligibility Information

1. *Eligible Applicants:* Nonprofit educational organizations that research, display, interpret, and collect artifacts relating to the history of the Underground Railroad.

2. *Cost Sharing or Matching:* Not more than 20% of the total funds for this project may be provided by the Federal Government. See 20 U.S.C. 1153(b)(2).

IV. Application and Information Submission

1. *Address to Request Application Package:* Jay Donahue, U.S. Department of Education, room 6164, 1990 K Street, NW., Washington, DC 20006–8544. Telephone: (202) 502–7507 or by e-mail: jay.donahue@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 a copy of the application package in an alternative format (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) by contacting the program contact person listed in this section.

2. *Content and Form of Application Submission:* Requirements concerning the content of applications, together with the forms you must submit, are in the application package and instructions for this program. Page Limit: The program narrative is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application. You must limit the section of the narrative that addresses the selection criteria to the equivalent of no more than 30 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. Page numbers and an identifier may be within the 1” margin.

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

• Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial. Applications submitted in any other font (including Times Roman and Arial Narrow) will be rejected.

• Use not less than 12-point font.

• The page limit does not apply to: the application for federal assistance (SF 424), the Supplemental Information Required for Department of Education Grants, the budget information summary form (ED Form 524), and the assurances and certifications. The page limit also does not apply to a table of contents. The budget narrative and any attachments or appendices will be counted as part of the Program Narrative for purposes of the page limit requirement. You must include your complete response to the selection criteria in the program narrative.

We will reject your application if—

• You apply these standards and exceed the page limit; or

• You apply other standards and exceed the equivalent of the page limit.

3. *Submission Dates and Times:* Applications Available: August 1, 2007.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: August 31, 2007.

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 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.*

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 accommodation or auxiliary aid to an individual with a disability in connection with the application process, the individual's application remains subject to all other requirements and limitations in this notice.

4. *Intergovernmental Review:* This 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:* We reference regulations outlining funding restrictions in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice.

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 at: <http://www.grants.gov>.

a. *Electronic Submission of Applications.* Applications for grants under the Underground Railroad Educational and Cultural Program—CFDA Number 84.345A 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 Underground Railroad Educational and Cultural Program at: <http://www.grants.gov>. You must search for the downloadable application package for this program by the CFDA number. Do not include the CFDA number's alpha suffix in your search.

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 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 Education 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-specific 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 as 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** 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 the 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: Jay Donahue, U.S. Department of Education, room 6164, 1990 K Street, NW., Washington, DC 20006–8544. FAX: (202) 502–7877.

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 84.345A), 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 84.345A), 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, or
- (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, or
- (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 84.345A), 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

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

VI. Award Administration Information

1. *Award Notices:* If your application is successful, we notify your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators and send you a Grant Award Notification (GAN). 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:* At the end of your project period, you must submit a final performance report, including financial information, as directed by the Secretary. If you receive a multi-year award, you must submit an annual performance report that provides the most current performance and financial expenditure information as specified by the Secretary in 34 CFR 75.118.

4. *Performance Measures:* The success of this program depends upon the manner in which projects are being institutionalized and continued after funding. This performance measure constitutes the indicator of the success of the program. If funded, you will be asked to collect and report data from your project on steps taken toward

achieving this goal. Consequently, applicants are advised to include this outcome in conceptualizing the design, implementation, and evaluation of their proposed projects.

VII. Agency Contact

For Further Information Contact: Jay Donahue, U.S. Department of Education, room 6164, 1990 K Street, NW., Washington, DC 20006-8544. Telephone: (202) 502-7507.

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 person 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: July 26, 2007.

James F. Manning,

Delegated the Authority of Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education.

[FR Doc. E7-14929 Filed 7-31-07; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Recognition of Accrediting Agencies, State Agencies for the Approval of Public Postsecondary Vocational Education

AGENCY: National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity, Department of Education (The Advisory Committee).

What Is the Purpose of This Notice?

The purpose of this notice is to invite written comments on accrediting

agencies and State approval agencies whose applications to the Secretary for renewed recognition, requests for an expansion of the scope of recognition, or reports will be reviewed at the Advisory Committee meeting to be held on December 17-19, 2007, in the Mt. Vernon Rooms A and B at The Madison, 1177 15th Street, NW., Washington, DC 20005, telephone: 202-862-1600.

Where Should I Submit My Comments?

Please submit your written comments by mail, fax, or e-mail no later than August 31, 2007 to Ms. Robin Greathouse, Accreditation and State Liaison. You may contact her at the U.S. Department of Education, Room 7126, MS 8509, 1990 K Street, NW., Washington, DC 20006, telephone: (202) 219-7011, fax: (202) 219-7005, or e-mail: Robin.Greathouse@ed.gov. Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339.

What is the Authority for the Advisory Committee?

The National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity is established under Section 114 of the Higher Education Act (HEA), as amended, 20 U.S.C. § 1011c. One of the purposes of the Advisory Committee is to advise the Secretary of Education on the recognition of accrediting agencies and State approval agencies.

Will This Be My Only Opportunity to Submit Written Comments?

Yes, this notice announces the only opportunity you will have to submit written comments. However, a subsequent **Federal Register** notice will announce the meeting and invite individuals and/or groups to submit requests to make oral presentations before the Advisory Committee on the agencies that the Committee will review. That notice, however, does not offer a second opportunity to submit written comments.

What Happens to the Comments That I Submit?

We will review your comments, in response to this notice, as part of our evaluation of the agencies' compliance with Section 496 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, and the Secretary's Criteria for Recognition of Accrediting Agencies and State Approval Agencies. The Criteria are regulations found in 34 CFR part 602 (for accrediting agencies) and in 34 CFR part 603 (for State approval agencies) and are found at the following site:

<http://www.ed.gov/admins/finaid/accred/index.html>.

We will also include your comments with the staff analyses we present to the Advisory Committee at its December 2007 meeting. Therefore, in order for us to give full consideration to your comments, it is important that we receive them by (August 31, 2007). In all instances, your comments about agencies seeking continued recognition and/or an expansion of an agency's scope of recognition must relate to the Criteria for Recognition. In addition, your comments for any agency whose interim report is scheduled for review must relate to the issues raised and the Criteria for Recognition cited in the Secretary's letter that requested the interim report.

What Happens to Comments Received After the Deadline?

We will review any comments received after the deadline. If such comments, upon investigation, reveal that the accrediting agency or State approval agency is not acting in accordance with the Criteria for Recognition, we will take action either before or after the meeting, as appropriate.

What Agencies Will the Advisory Committee Review at the Meeting?

The Secretary of Education recognizes accrediting agencies and State approval agencies for public postsecondary vocational education and nurse education if the Secretary determines that they meet the Criteria for Recognition. Recognition means that the Secretary considers the agency to be a reliable authority as to the quality of education offered by institutions or programs it accredits that are encompassed within the scope of recognition she grants to the agency.

The following agencies will be reviewed during the December 2007 meeting of the Advisory Committee:

Nationally Recognized Accrediting Agencies

Petition for Renewal of Recognition That Includes a Contraction of the Scope of Recognition

1. *American Optometric Association, Accreditation Council on Optometric Education (Current scope of recognition: The accreditation in the United States of professional optometric degree programs, optometric technician (associate degree) programs, and optometric residency programs and for the preaccreditation categories of Preliminary Approval and Reasonable Assurance for professional optometric*