

Dated: December 16, 2015.

**Kate Mullan,**

*Acting Director, Information Collection Clearance Division, Office of the Chief Privacy Officer, Office of Management.*

[FR Doc. 2015-31998 Filed 12-18-15; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

### Application for New Awards; Indian Education Formula Grants to Local Educational Agencies

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

**ACTION:** Notice.

#### *Overview Information:*

Indian Education Formula Grants to Local Educational Agencies Notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year (FY) 2016.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 84.060A.

#### *Dates:*

Part I of the Formula Grant Electronic Application System for Indian Education (EASIE) Applications Available: January 25, 2016.

Deadline for Transmittal of Part I Applications: February 26, 2016.

Part II of the Formula Grant EASIE Applications Available: April 11, 2016.

Deadline for Transmittal of Part II Applications: May 13, 2016.

**Note:** Applicants must meet the deadlines for both EASIE Part I and Part II to receive a grant. Any application not meeting the Part I and Part II deadlines will not be considered for funding. Failure to submit the required supplemental documentation, described under *Content and Form of Application Submission* in section IV of this notice, by the EASIE Parts I and II deadlines will result in an incomplete application that will not be considered for funding. The Office of Indian Education recommends uploading the documentation at least three days prior to each closing date to ensure that any potential submission issues are resolved prior to the deadlines.

### I. Funding Opportunity Description

*Purpose of Program:* The Indian Education Formula Grants to Local Educational Agencies (Formula Grants) program provides grants to support local educational agencies (LEAs) and other eligible entities described in this notice in reforming and improving elementary and secondary school programs that serve Indian students. The Department funds comprehensive programs that are designed to help Indian students meet the same State academic content and student academic achievement standards used for all students while

addressing the language and cultural needs of Indian students. Such programs include supporting the professional development of teachers of Indian students.

In addition, under section 7116 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA), the Secretary will, upon receipt of an acceptable plan for the integration of education and related services, and in cooperation with other relevant Federal agencies, authorize the entity receiving the funds under this program to consolidate all Federal formula funds that are to be used exclusively for Indian students. Instructions for submitting an integration of education and related services plan are included in the EASIE, which is described under *Application Process and Submission Information* in section IV of this notice.

**Note:** Under the Formula Grants program, applicants are required to develop the project for which an application is made: (a) In open consultation with parents and teachers of Indian students and, if appropriate, Indian students from secondary schools, including through public hearings held to provide a full opportunity to understand the program and to offer recommendations regarding the program (section 7114(c)(3)(C) of the ESEA); (b) with the participation of a parent committee selected in accordance with section 7114(c)(4) of the ESEA; and (c) with the written approval of that parent committee (section 7114(c)(4) of the ESEA).

*Program Authority:* 20 U.S.C. 7421 *et seq.*

*Applicable Regulations:* (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 75, 77, 79, 81, 82, 84, 97, 98, and 99. (b) The Office of Management and Budget Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3485. (c) The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3474.

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

### II. Award Information

*Type of Award:* Formula grants.

*Estimated Available Funds:* \$100,381,000.

*Estimated Range of Awards:* \$4,000 to \$3,144,787.

*Estimated Average Size of Awards:* \$78,213.

*Estimated Number of Awards:* 1,300.

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

*Project Period:* 12 months.

### III. Eligibility Information

1. *Eligible Applicants:* Certain LEAs, including charter schools authorized as LEAs under State law, as prescribed by section 7112(b) of the ESEA; certain schools funded by the Bureau of Indian Education of the U.S. Department of the Interior, as prescribed by section 7113(d) of the ESEA; and Indian tribes under certain conditions, as prescribed by section 7112(c) of the ESEA.

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. Section 7114(c)(1) of the ESEA requires an LEA to use these grant funds only to supplement the funds that, in the absence of these Federal funds, such agency would make available for the education of Indian children, and not to supplant such funds.

### IV. Application and Submission Information

1. *How to Request an Application Package:* You can obtain a login and password for the electronic application for grants under this program by contacting the EdFacts Partner Support Center listed under *Agency Contacts* in section VI of this notice.

Individuals with disabilities can obtain a copy of the application package in an accessible format (e.g., braille, large print, audiotape, or compact disc) by contacting the EdFacts Partner Support Center listed under *Agency Contacts* in section VI 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 EASIE.

a. *Supplementary Documentation:* The EASIE application requires the electronic Portable Document Format (PDF) submission of the following supplementary documentation:

(i) In EASIE Part I, applicants that are tribes must upload their verification of eligibility no later than the deadline for transmittal of EASIE Part I, which is February 26, 2016. The details of the verification process, which is necessary to meet the statutory eligibility requirements for tribes, are in the application package. Tribes may use the sample agreement for Tribes Applying in Lieu of LEAs, which is available in EASIE as a downloadable document, as a guide.

(ii) In EASIE Part I, an applicant that is the lead LEA for a consortium of LEAs must upload a consortium agreement that meets the requirements of 34 CFR 75.128(b) no later than the deadline for transmittal of EASIE Part I, which is February 26, 2016. The consortium may use the sample agreement, which is available in EASIE as a downloadable document, as a guide.

(iii) In EASIE Part II, an applicant that is an LEA or consortia of LEAs must upload the Indian Parent Committee Approval form no later than the deadline for transmittal of EASIE Part II, which is May 13, 2016. The required form is available in EASIE.

3. *Submission Dates and Times:*

Part I of the Formula Grant EASIE Applications Available: January 25, 2016.

Deadline for Transmittal of Part I Applications: February 26, 2016, 8:00:00 p.m., Washington, DC time.

Part II of the Formula Grant EASIE Applications Available: April 11, 2016.

Deadline for Transmittal of Part II Applications: May 13, 2016, 8:00:00 p.m., Washington, DC time.

Part III Formula Grant EASIE Annual Performance Report (APR) Available: September 19, 2016.

Deadline for Transmittal of Part III APR: October 21, 2016, 8:00:00 p.m., Washington, DC time.

Applications and the APR for grants under this program must be submitted electronically using EASIE. 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 requirements, please refer to

*Other Submission Requirements* in section IV of this notice.

We do not consider an application that does not comply with the deadline requirements.

Individuals with disabilities who need an accommodation or auxiliary aid in connection with the application process should contact the person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** in section VI of this notice. If the Department provides an accommodation or auxiliary aid to an individual with a disability in connection with the application process, the individual's application remains subject to all other requirements and limitations in this notice.

Below are tables summarizing the FY 2016 EASIE deadlines for Part I, Part II and Part III, the APR.

Entity type	Requirement	Open date	Close/due date
All Applicants .....	EASIE Part I .....	Jan 25, 2016 .....	Feb 26, 2016, 8:00:00 p.m., Washington, DC time
Tribe in Lieu of LEA(s) .....	Upload Tribes Applying in Lieu of LEAs Agreement.	Jan 25, 2016 .....	Feb 26, 2016, 8:00:00 p.m., Washington, DC time
LEA Consortium .....	Upload Consortium Agreement ....	Jan 25, 2016 .....	Feb 26, 2016, 8:00:00 p.m., Washington, DC time

Applicants must meet the deadlines for Part I to be eligible to complete Part II of the application process.

Entity type	Requirement	Open date	Close/due date
All Applicants .....	EASIE Part II .....	Apr 11, 2016 .....	May 13, 2016, 8:00:00 p.m., Washington, DC time
All LEA (and Consortia) Applicants	Upload Indian Parent Committee Approval Form.	Apr 11, 2016 .....	May 13, 2016, 8:00:00 p.m., Washington, DC time

Grantees receiving grants in FY 2016 must also complete Part III, the APR.

Entity type	Requirement	Open date	Close/due date
All Grantees .....	EASIE Part III .....	Sep 19, 2016 .....	Oct 21, 2016, 8:00:00 p.m., Washington, DC time

4. *Intergovernmental Review:* This program is not subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79.

5. *Funding Restrictions:* We reference additional regulations outlining funding restrictions under *Applicable Regulations* in section I of this notice.

6. *Data Universal Numbering System Number, Taxpayer Identification Number, and System for Award Management:* To do business with the Department of Education, you must—

a. Have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and a Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN);

b. Register both your DUNS number and TIN with the System for Award Management (SAM) (formerly the Central Contractor Registry), the Government's primary registrant database;

c. Provide your DUNS number and TIN on your application; and

d. Maintain an active SAM registration with current information while your application is under review by the Department and, if you are

awarded a grant, during the project period.

You can obtain a DUNS number from Dun and Bradstreet at the following Web site: <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>. A DUNS number can be created within one to two business days.

If you are a corporate entity, agency, institution, or organization, you can obtain a TIN from the Internal Revenue Service. If you are an individual, you can obtain a TIN from the Internal Revenue Service or the Social Security Administration. If you need a new TIN,

please allow two to five weeks for your TIN to become active.

The SAM registration process can take approximately seven business days, but may take upwards of several weeks, depending on the completeness and accuracy of the data you enter into the SAM database. Thus, if you think you might want to apply for Federal financial assistance under a program administered by the Department, please allow sufficient time to obtain and register your DUNS number and TIN. We strongly recommend that you register early.

**Note:** Once your SAM registration is active, it may be 24 to 48 hours before you can access the information in, and submit an application through, [Grants.gov](http://Grants.gov).

If you are currently registered with SAM, you may not need to make any changes. However, please make certain that the TIN associated with your DUNS number is correct. Also note that you will need to update your registration annually. This may take three or more business days.

Information about SAM is available at [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov). To further assist you with obtaining and registering your DUNS number and TIN in SAM or updating your existing SAM account, we have prepared a SAM.gov Tip Sheet, which you can find at: <http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/sam-faqs.html>.

**7. 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 Formula Grants program, CFDA number 84.060A, must be submitted electronically using the EASIE application located in the ED Facts System Portal at <https://eden.ed.gov>.

Applications submitted in paper format will be rejected unless you qualify for one of the exceptions to the electronic submission requirement described later in this section under *Exception to Electronic Submission Requirement*, and follow the submission rules outlined therein.

**Electronic Application System for Indian Education (EASIE):** EASIE is an easy-to-use, electronic application found in the EdFacts System Portal at <https://eden.ed.gov>.

The EASIE application is divided into three parts.

Part I, Student Count, provides the appropriate data-entry screens to submit

your verified Indian student count totals. All applicants must submit a current Indian student count for FY 2016. Applicants must use the Indian Student Eligibility Certification Form (ED 506 Form) to document eligible Indian students; however Bureau of Indian Education schools may use either Indian School Equalization Program (ISEP) count or ED 506 Form count to verify Indian student count.

Applicants that are either an LEA or a tribe must document their Indian student counts by completing the following procedures: (1) The LEA or tribe must submit an ED 506 Form for each Indian child included in the count; (2) all ED 506 Forms included in the count must be completed, signed, and dated by the parent, and be on file with the LEA or tribe; (3) the LEA or tribe must maintain a copy of the student enrollment roster(s) covering the same period of time indicated in the application as the "count period," and (4) each Indian child included in the count must be listed on the LEA's enrollment roster(s) for at least one day during the count period.

Bureau of Indian Education schools will be required to enter either their ISEP count or ED 506 Form count as an Indian student count in Part I of the application.

In Part I, applicants will indicate the time span for the project objectives and corresponding activities and services for American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) students. Applicants can choose to set objectives that remain the same for up to four years in order to facilitate data collection and enhance long-term planning. Grantees that have previously established multiyear project objectives will not have to re-enter information in EASIE Part II if they have no changes to their project objectives, activities, or coordination of services. Grantees that previously established multiyear project objectives and would like to change the objectives, activities, or coordination of services for FY 2016 will need to indicate in Part I the duration of the new selections.

In EASIE Part II, new applicants or applicants making changes to either the objectives, activities, or coordination of services must: (1) Identify, from a list of possible programs (e.g., ESEA title I), the programs in the school district that are currently coordinated with a title VII project, or with which the school district plans to coordinate during the project year, in accordance with the statutory requirement to provide a comprehensive program that includes other Federal, State, and local funds; (2) describe the coordination of services for AI/AN students and identify specific

project objectives towards the goal of providing culturally responsive education for AI/AN students to meet their academic needs and help them meet State achievement standards and choose the data sources that will be used to measure progress towards meeting project objectives, and on which you will report in the APR after the grant year closes; and (3) submit a realistic program budget based on the estimated grant amount that the EASIE system calculates from the Indian student count you submitted in EASIE Part I. After the initial grant amounts are determined, additional funds may become available due to such circumstances as withdrawn applications or reduction in an applicant's student count. An applicant whose award amount increases or decreases more than \$1,000 must submit a revised budget prior to receiving its grant award but will not need to re-certify its application. For an applicant that receives an increase or decrease in its award of less than \$1,000, there will be no need for further action. For any applicant that receives notification of an increased award amount following submission of its original budget, the applicant must allocate the increased amount only to previously approved budget categories.

In EASIE Part III, grantees must submit a performance report. More information on annual performance reporting is provided later in section V. of this notice, titled *Grant Administration Information* under part 3. *Reporting*.

**Registration for Formula Grant EASIE:** Current, former, and new applicants interested in submitting an Indian Education Formula Grant EASIE application must register for Formula Grant EASIE. Entities are encouraged to register as soon as possible at the registration Web site [www.easie.org](http://www.easie.org), to ensure that any potential registration issues are resolved prior to the deadline for the submission of an application. Through this initial registration, an entity activates or re-activates access to EASIE and ensures that the correct entity information (e.g., NCES or DUNS numbers) is pre-populated into the first part of Formula Grant EASIE. Registration at this Web site *does not* serve as the entity's grant application. For assistance registering, contact the ED Facts Partner Support Center listed under *Agency Contacts* in section VI of this notice.

**Certification for Formula Grant EASIE:** The applicant's authorized representative, who must be authorized by the applicant/able to legally bind the applicant, must certify Part I, Part II and

Part III of EASIE. Only users with the role type “managing user” or “certifying official user” in the EASIE system can certify an application. The certification process ensures that the information in the application is true, reliable, and valid. An applicant that provides a false statement in the application is subject to penalties under the False Claims Act, 18 U.S.C. 1001.

**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 EASIE system because—

- You do not have access to the Internet; or
- You do not have the capacity to upload documents to the EASIE system; and

- No later than two weeks before the application deadline date for Part I (14 calendar days or, if the fourteenth calendar day before the application deadline date falls on a Federal holiday, the next business day following the Federal holiday), you mail or fax a written statement to the Department, explaining which of the two grounds for an exception prevents you from using the Internet to submit your application.

If you mail your written statement to the Department, it must be postmarked no later than two weeks before the application deadline date. If you fax your written statement to the Department, we must receive the faxed statement no later than two weeks before the application deadline date.

Address and mail or fax your statement to: Bernard Garcia, U.S. Department of Education, Office of Indian Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW., Room 3W115, Washington, DC 20202–6335. FAX: (202) 205–0606.

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 dates for both Part I and Part II, to the Department at the following address: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Indian Education, Attention: CFDA Number 84.060A, 400 Maryland Avenue SW., Room 3W115, Washington, DC 20202–6335.

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.

**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.

We will not consider applications postmarked after the application deadline date for Part I or Part II.

**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 dates for both Part I and Part II, to the Department at the following address: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Indian Education, Attention: CFDA Number 84.060A, 400 Maryland Avenue SW., Room 3W115, Washington, DC 20202–6335.

The program office 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 program office will mail 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 contact the program office at (202) 260–3774.

**V. Grant Administration Information**

**1. Risk Assessment and Special Conditions:** Consistent with 2 CFR 200.205, before awarding grants under this program the Department conducts a review of the risks posed by applicants.

Under 2 CFR 3474.10, the Secretary may impose special conditions and, in appropriate circumstances, high-risk conditions on a grant if the applicant or grantee is not financially stable; has a history of unsatisfactory performance; has a financial or other management system that does not meet the standards in 2 CFR part 200, subpart D; has not fulfilled the conditions of a prior grant; or is otherwise not responsible.

**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 a grant in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice.

**3. Reporting:** (a) If you apply for a grant under this program, you must ensure that you have in place the necessary processes and systems to comply with the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 170 should you receive funding. This does not apply if you have an exception under 2 CFR 170.110(b).

(b) You must submit a performance report using the ED*Facts* System Portal at <https://eden.ed.gov>, including financial information, as directed by the Secretary, within 90 days after the close of the grant year. The performance report is located within EASIE as Part III.

(c) Under 34 CFR 75.250(b), the Secretary may provide a grantee with additional funding for data collection analysis and reporting. In this case the Secretary establishes a data collection period.

**4. Performance Measures:** The Secretary has established the following key performance measures for assessing the effectiveness and efficiency of the Formula Grants program: (1) The percentage of AI/AN students in grades four and eight who score at or above the basic level in reading on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP); (2) the percentage of AI/AN students in grades four and eight who score at or above the basic level in mathematics on the NAEP; (3) the percentage of AI/AN students in grades three through eight meeting State performance standards by scoring at the proficient or the advanced levels in reading and mathematics on State assessments; (4) the difference between the percentage of AI/AN students in grades three through eight at the proficient or advanced levels in reading and mathematics on State assessments and the percentage of all students scoring at those levels; (5) the

percentage of AI/AN students who graduate from high school; and (6) the percentage of funds used by grantees prior to award close-out.

## VI. Agency Contacts

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For questions about the Formula Grants program, contact Bernard Garcia, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW., Room 3W115, Washington, DC 20202-6335. Telephone: (202)260-1454 or by email: [Bernard.Garcia@ed.gov](mailto:Bernard.Garcia@ed.gov). For questions about the EASIE application and uploading documentation, contact the EDFacts Partner Support Center, telephone: 877-457-3336 (877-HLP-EDEN) or by email at: [eden\\_OIE@ed.gov](mailto:eden_OIE@ed.gov).

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf or a text telephone, call the EDFacts Partner Support Center, toll free, at 1-888-403-3336 (888-403-EDEN).

## VII. Other Information

**Accessible Format:** Individuals with disabilities can obtain this document and a copy of the application package in an accessible format (e.g., braille, large print, audiotope, or compact disc) by contacting the EDFacts Partner Support Center listed under *Agency Contacts* in section VI of this notice.

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

You may also access documents of the Department published in the **Federal Register** by using the article search feature at: [www.federalregister.gov](http://www.federalregister.gov). Specifically, through the advanced search feature at this site, you can limit your search to documents published by the Department.

Dated: December 15, 2015.

### Ann Whalen,

*Delegated the authority to perform the functions and duties of Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education.*

[FR Doc. 2015-32012 Filed 12-18-15; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000-01-P

## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

[Docket No.: ED-2015-ICCD-0123]

### Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission to the Office of Management and Budget for Review and Approval; Comment Request; Educational Quality Through Innovative Partnerships (EQUIP) Experimental Sites Initiative

**AGENCY:** Federal Student Aid (FSA), Department of Education (ED).

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. chapter 3501 *et seq.*), ED is proposing a new information collection. **DATES:** Interested persons are invited to submit comments on or before January 20, 2016.

**ADDRESSES:** To access and review all the documents related to the information collection listed in this notice, please use <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching the Docket ID number ED-2015-ICCD-0123. Comments submitted in response to this notice should be submitted electronically through the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov> by selecting the Docket ID number or via postal mail, commercial delivery, or hand delivery. *Please note that comments submitted by fax or email and those submitted after the comment period will not be accepted.* Written requests for information or comments submitted by postal mail or delivery should be addressed to the Director of the Information Collection Clearance Division, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW., LBJ, Room 2E103, Washington, DC 20202-4537.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For specific questions related to collection activities, please contact Beth Grebeldinger, 202-377-4018.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Department of Education (ED), in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA) (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)), provides the general public and Federal agencies with an opportunity to comment on proposed, revised, and continuing collections of information. This helps the Department assess the impact of its information collection requirements and minimize the public's reporting burden. It also helps the public understand the Department's information collection requirements and provide the requested data in the desired format. ED is soliciting comments on the proposed information collection request (ICR) that is described below. 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. Please note that written comments received in response to this notice will be considered public records.

**Title of Collection:** Educational Quality through Innovative Partnerships (EQUIP) Experimental Sites Initiative.

**OMB Control Number:** 1845-NEW.

**Type of Review:** A new information collection.

**Respondents/Affected Public:** Private Sector, State, Local and Tribal Governments.

**Total Estimated Number of Annual Responses:** 20.

**Total Estimated Number of Annual Burden Hours:** 1,500.

**Abstract:** The Department of Education (the Department) is requesting this new information collection package to provide for a series of questions that are components of the selection process for a new Federal Student Aid experimental site project. The Educational Quality through Innovative Partnerships (EQUIP) project is being undertaken in order to advance the Department's understanding of how to best increase access to high quality innovative programs in higher education. An invitation to participate and an explanation of this proposed experimental site was published separately in the **Federal Register**. This experimental site project is designed to explore ways to increase access for low-income students to high-quality innovate programs in higher education through the engagement of institutions of higher education (IHEs) with non-IHE providers and quality assurance entities that can develop new quality assurance processes for student and taxpayer protection. The data and information collected can provide valuable guidance for the Department in determining future policy in these areas.

Dated: December 16, 2015.

### Kate Mullan,

*Acting Director, Information Collection Clearance Division, Office of the Chief Privacy Officer, Office of Management.*

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