

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: February 25, 2009.

**Angela C. Arrington,**

*Director, Information Collections Clearance Division, Regulatory Information Management Services, Office of Management.*

### Federal Student Aid

*Type of Review:* Extension.

*Title:* Guaranty Agency Financial Report.

*Frequency:* Monthly and Annually.

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

*Reporting and Recordkeeping Hour Burden:*

*Responses:* 468.

*Burden Hours:* 25,740.

*Abstract:* The Guaranty Agency Financial Report (GAFR), ED Form 2000, is used by the thirty-six (36) guaranty agencies under the FFEL program, authorized by Title IV, Part B of the HEA of 1965, as amended. Guaranty agencies use the GAFR to: (1) Request reinsurance from ED; (2) request payment on death, disability, closed school, and false certification claim payments to lenders; (3) remit to ED refunds on rehabilitated loans and consolidation loans; (4) remit to ED default and wage garnishment collections. ED also uses report data to monitor the guaranty agency's financial activities (agency federal fund and agency operating fund) and each agency's Federal receivable balance.

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 3949. When you access the information collection, click on "Download Attachments" to view. Written requests for information should be addressed to Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., LBJ, Washington, DC 20202-4537. Requests may also be electronically

mailed to [ICDocketMgr@ed.gov](mailto:ICDocketMgr@ed.gov) or faxed to 202-401-0920. Please specify the complete title of the information collection when making your request.

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

[FR Doc. E9-4461 Filed 3-2-09; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4000-01-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

### Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

**AGENCY:** Department of Education.

**ACTION:** Correction notice.

**SUMMARY:** On February 25, 2009, the Department of Education published a comment period notice in the **Federal Register** (Page 8515, Column 2) for the information collection, "Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) Deferment Request Forms". This notice amends the invitation for comment period for interested persons to March 27, 2009. The IC Clearance Official, Regulatory Information Management Services, Office of Management, hereby issues a correction notice as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

Dated: February 26, 2009.

**Angela C. Arrington,**

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

[FR Doc. E9-4462 Filed 3-2-09; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4000-01-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

### Office of Elementary and Secondary Education; Overview Information; Early Reading First Program; Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year (FY) 2009.

*Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Numbers:* 84.359A and B.

*Dates: Applications Available:* March 3, 2009.

*Deadline for Transmittal of Pre-Applications:* April 2, 2009.

*Deadline for Transmittal of Full Applications:* June 16, 2009 (for applicants invited to submit full applications only).

*Deadline for Intergovernmental Review:* August 17, 2009.

## Full Text of Announcement

### I. Funding Opportunity Description

*Purpose of Program:* This program supports local efforts to enhance the oral language, cognitive, and early reading skills of preschool-aged children, especially those from low-income families, through strategies, materials, and professional development that are grounded in scientifically based reading research.

The specific activities for which recipients must use grant funds are identified in section 1222(d) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA). This and other relevant provisions of the ESEA are included in the application package.

*Statutory Requirements:* All applicants must meet the application requirements established in section 1222(b) of the ESEA in order to be considered for funding. All applications must include a description of the following:

(1) The programs to be served by the proposed project, including demographic and socioeconomic information on the preschool-aged children enrolled in the programs;

(2) How the proposed project will enhance the school readiness of preschool-aged children in high-quality oral language and literature-rich environments;

(3) How the proposed project will prepare and provide ongoing assistance to staff in the programs, through professional development and other support, in providing high-quality language, literacy, and prereading activities using scientifically based reading research, for preschool-aged children;

(4) How the proposed project will provide services and use instructional materials that are based on scientifically based reading research on early language acquisition, prereading activities, and the development of spoken vocabulary skills;

(5) How the proposed project will help staff in the programs to meet more effectively the diverse needs of preschool-aged children in the community, including such children with limited English proficiency, disabilities, or other special needs;

(6) How the proposed project will integrate such instructional materials and literacy activities with existing preschool programs and family literacy services;

(7) How the proposed project will help children, particularly children experiencing difficulty with spoken language, prereading, and early reading

skills, to make the transition from preschool to formal classroom instruction in school;

(8) If the eligible applicant has received a subgrant under the Reading First program, subpart 1, part B, title I of the ESEA, how the activities conducted under the Early Reading First program will be coordinated with the eligible applicant's activities under the Reading First program at the kindergarten through grade 3 level; and

(9) How the proposed project will evaluate the success of the activities supported under the Early Reading First program in enhancing the early language, literacy, and prereading development of the preschool-aged children served by the project.

**Priorities:** This competition includes four invitational priorities. Under this competition we are particularly interested in applications that address the following priorities.

**Invitational 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 invitational priorities. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(1) we do not give an application that meets these invitational priorities a competitive or absolute preference over other applications.

These priorities are:

#### *Invitational Priority 1—Intensity*

The Secretary is especially interested in preschool programs that operate full-time, full-year, early childhood educational programs and that serve children for the two consecutive years prior to their entry into kindergarten.

Scientifically based research on increasing the effectiveness of early childhood education programs serving children from low-income families tells us that children attending these types of programs that have a greater intensity of service make higher and more persistent gains in the language and cognitive domains than children who attend early childhood programs that have lesser intensity of service. In other words, children who spend more time in high-quality early childhood education programs learn more than children who spend less time in those programs. The purpose of this invitational priority is to encourage preschool programs supported with Early Reading First funds to provide services that are of a sufficient duration and intensity to maximize language and early literacy gains for children enrolled in those programs.

#### *Invitational Priority 2—English Language Acquisition Plan*

For applicants serving children with limited English proficiency, the Secretary is especially interested in applications that include a specific plan for the development of English language proficiency for these children from the start of their preschool experience. The Early Reading First program is designed to prepare children to enter kindergarten with the necessary cognitive, early language, and literacy skills for success in school. School success often is dependent on each child entering kindergarten as proficient as possible in English so that the child is ready to benefit from formal reading instruction in English when he or she starts school.

**Note:** The term "limited English proficient" is defined in section 9101(25) of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. 7801(25)). That definition is included in the application package.

Under this invitational priority, the Secretary is interested in English language acquisition plans that, at a minimum: (1) Include a description of the applicant's approach to the development of language, based on the linguistic factors or skills that serve as the foundation for a strong language base, which foundation is a necessary precursor for success in the development of pre-literacy and literacy skills for children with limited English proficiency; (2) Explain the instructional strategies, based on best available valid and reliable research, that the applicant will use to address English language acquisition in a multi-lingual classroom; (3) Describe how the project will facilitate the children's transition to English proficiency through such means as the use of environmental print in appropriate multiple languages and hiring bilingual teachers, paraprofessionals, or translators to work in the preschool classroom; (4) Include intensive professional development for instructors and paraprofessionals on the development of English language proficiency; and (5) Include a timeline that describes benchmarks for the introduction of the development of English language proficiency and the use of measurement tools.

Ideally, at least one instructional staff member in each Early Reading First classroom that serves limited English proficient children will be dual-language proficient in the children's first language and in English so as to facilitate those children's understanding of instruction and transition to English proficiency. At a minimum, each such

classroom should include a teacher who is proficient in English.

#### *Invitational Priority 3—Kindergarten Transition*

The Early Reading First program is designed to prepare children to enter kindergarten with the necessary cognitive, early language, and literacy skills for success in school. The Secretary is especially interested in applications that include a specific plan to transition preschool-aged children to kindergarten.

Under this invitational priority, the Secretary is especially interested in supporting projects that have kindergarten transition plans that, at a minimum: (1) Identify the key issues involved in transitioning preschool-aged children to kindergarten; (2) Explain how the program would support continuity through developmentally appropriate curricula for preschool and kindergarten children; (3) Where applicable, include a description of how the program will effectively support ongoing communication and cooperation between the program and Reading First; (4) Include a description of how the program will effectively support ongoing communication and cooperation between the program and the local educational agency (LEA); (5) Include a timeline that describes benchmarks for transition activities; and (6) Include a description of the role of stakeholders in transitioning preschool-aged children to kindergarten.

#### *Invitational Priority 4—Community-Based Organizations*

The Secretary is especially interested in applications that propose to engage community-based organizations in the delivery of services under this program.

**Program Authority:** 20 U.S.C. 6371–6376.

**Applicable Regulations:** 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.

**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 only.

## **II. Award Information**

**Type of Award:** Discretionary grant.

**Estimated Available Funds:** \$111,424,000. The actual level of funding, if any, depends on final congressional action. However, we are inviting applications to allow enough time to complete the grant process

before the end of the current fiscal year if Congress appropriates funds for this program.

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:*

\$1,500,000–\$4,500,000.

*Estimated Average Size of Awards:*

\$3,000,000.

*Estimated Number of Awards:* 24–74.

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

*Project Period:* Up to 36 months.

### III. Eligibility Information

1. *Eligible Applicants:* Under this competition, eligible applicants are:

(a) One or more LEAs, including charter schools that are considered LEAs under State law, that are eligible to receive a subgrant under the Reading First program (Title I, Part B, Subpart 1 of the ESEA);

(b) One or more public or private organizations or agencies (including faith-based organizations) located in a community served by an eligible LEA; or

(c) One or more eligible LEAs, applying in collaboration with one or more eligible organizations or agencies.

To qualify under paragraph (b) of this definition, the organization's or agency's application must be on behalf of one or more programs that serve preschool-aged children (such as a Head Start program, a child care program, a family literacy program such as Even Start, or a lab school at a university), unless the organization or agency itself operates a preschool program.

Lists, by State, of LEAs that qualify under paragraph (a) of this definition for this FY 2009 competition are posted on the Early Reading First Web site at <http://www.ed.gov/programs/earlyreading/eligibility.html>. These lists are based on the most recent information provided by each State and the Department of Interior's Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) to the Department's Reading First program, and are posted for the convenience of Early Reading First applicants.

However, we consider it to be each applicant's responsibility to verify with the Reading First office in its State, or with the BIE, as appropriate, whether a particular LEA is eligible to receive a subgrant under the Reading First program as of the date of publication of this notice in the **Federal Register**. A list of State and BIE contacts for this purpose is also posted at the Early Reading First Web site at <http://>

[www.ed.gov/programs/earlyreading/eligibility.html](http://www.ed.gov/programs/earlyreading/eligibility.html).

*Eligibility determination date:* The date governing whether an LEA is eligible to receive a subgrant under the Reading First program is the date of publication in the **Federal Register** of this notice inviting applications for new awards under the Early Reading First program for FY 2009.

*Required submission of eligibility information:* In accordance with the following instructions, each applicant must complete and submit with its pre-application for this competition a Pre-Application Attachment A, Applicant Eligibility, which is included in the application package:

- *LEAs included on a posted eligibility list:* If the LEA on which you, the applicant, are basing your Early Reading First eligibility is included on the State's Reading First subgrant eligibility list posted on the Early Reading First Web site, you must complete section I of Pre-Application Attachment A (Applicant Eligibility) and submit that attachment with your pre-application.

- *LEAs not included on a posted eligibility list:* If the LEA on which you, the applicant, are basing your Early Reading First eligibility is *not* included on the State's Reading First subgrant eligibility list posted on the Early Reading First Web site, you must complete *both* section I and section II of Pre-Application Attachment A (Applicant Eligibility) and submit that form with your pre-application. Section II requires you to verify with your State's Reading First office, or the BIE, as appropriate, that the LEA is in fact eligible to receive a Reading First subgrant as of the date of publication in the **Federal Register** of this notice. You must also submit the name of, and contact information for, the person with whom you verified that information. If you are invited to submit a full application and we are unable to verify the LEA's eligibility from the contact information that you have provided, we may not consider the LEA as an eligible LEA for the purposes of this competition or we may require you to submit additional written information demonstrating eligibility.

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

### IV. Application and Submission Information

1. *Address To Request Application Package:* You can obtain an application package via the Internet or from the Education Publications Center (ED Pubs). To obtain a copy via Internet, use

the following address: <http://www.Grants.gov>. To obtain a copy from ED Pubs, write, fax, or call the following: Education Publications Center, 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](mailto:edpubs@inet.ed.gov).

If you request an application package from ED Pubs, be sure to identify this program or competition as follows: CFDA numbers 84.359A and B.

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.

*Pre-Application:* All applicants must apply in the pre-application phase; as explained in the application package, only selected applicants will be invited to submit a full application.

*Page Limits:* You must include in Part 2 of the pre-application and Part 3 of the full application an Abstract briefly describing your proposed project. You must limit each Abstract to one (1) page.

The pre-application narrative and the full application narrative for this program (Part 3 of the pre-application and Part 4 of the full application) are where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your pre- and full applications. You must limit Part 3 of the pre-application to the equivalent of no more than fifteen (15) pages and Part 4 of the full application to no more than forty (40) pages.

Part 4 of the pre-application is where you, the applicant, provide the Appendices for the pre-application. Pre-application Appendices are limited to the following: a list and a brief description of the existing preschool programs that the proposed Early Reading First project would support; an English language acquisition plan, if applicable; a kindergarten transition plan, if applicable; and endnote citations for research cited specifically in the pre-application narrative. You must limit the list and the brief description of the existing preschool

programs to the equivalent of no more than five (5) pages. You must limit any English language acquisition plan to the equivalent of no more than two (2) pages. You must limit any kindergarten transition plan to the equivalent of no more than two (2) pages. No page limit applies to the pre-application endnote citations.

Part 5 of the full application is where you, the applicant, provide a budget narrative that reviewers use to evaluate your full application. You must limit the budget narrative in Part 5 of the full application to the equivalent of no more than five (5) pages.

Part 6 of the full application is where you, the applicant, provide the Appendices for the full application. Full application Appendices are limited to the following: A list and a brief description of the existing preschool programs that the proposed Early Reading First project would support; an English language acquisition plan, if applicable; a kindergarten transition plan, if applicable; position descriptions (and resumes or curriculum vitae if available) for up to five (5) key personnel; endnote citations for research cited specifically in the full application narrative; and documentation demonstrating the stakeholder support for the project. You must limit the list and the brief description of the existing preschool programs to the equivalent of no more than five (5) pages. You must limit each resume or curriculum vitae to the equivalent of no more than three (3) pages, and limit the documentation demonstrating stakeholder support for the project to the equivalent of no more than five (5) pages. You must limit any English language acquisition plan to the equivalent of no more than five (5) pages. You must limit any kindergarten transition plan to the equivalent of no more than five (5) pages.

For all page limits, use the following standards:

- A "page" is 8.5" × 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 and budget narratives, including titles, headings, quotations, references, and captions included in the body of the narrative.
- Text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs may be single-spaced.
- Use one of the following commonly used 12-point fonts or larger, or no smaller than 10 pitch (characters per inch) including for text in endnotes, charts, tables, figures, and graphs: Times New Roman, Times, Courier, or CG

Times. An application submitted in any other font will not be accepted.

The page limits do not apply to any title page or table of contents, or the forms in Part I of the pre- and full applications; or the following portions of the full application: the budget form (ED Form 524) in Part 2; or the assurances and certifications and the endnotes in Part 7.

Our reviewers will not read any pages of your pre-application or full application that exceed the page limit if you apply these standards; or exceed the equivalent of the page limit if you apply other standards.

3. *Submission Dates and Times: Applications Available:* March 3, 2009.

*Deadline for Transmittal of Pre-Applications:* April 2, 2009.

*Deadline for Transmittal of Full Applications:* June 16, 2009 (for applicants invited to submit full applications only).

Pre- and full 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* 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 VII 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.

*Deadline for Intergovernmental Review:* August 17, 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 of this notice.

6. *Other Submission Requirements:* Pre- and full 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.*

Pre- and full applications for grants under the Early Reading First program, CFDA number 84.359A (pre-application) and CFDA number 84.359B (full application), 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 pre- or full application. You may not e-mail an electronic copy of a grant application to us.

We will reject your pre- or full 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 pre- or full 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 pre- or full application deadline date is provided later in this section under *Exception to Electronic Submission Requirement*.

You may access the electronic grant application for the Early Reading First competition 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 84.359, not 84.359A).

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 pre- and full applications 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 pre- or full application deadline date, as appropriate. Except as otherwise noted in this section, we will not accept your pre- or full 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 pre- or full application deadline date, as

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

- The amount of time it can take to upload a pre- or full 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 pre- or full 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 pre- and any full 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 pre- or full application via Grants.gov, you must complete all steps in the Grants.gov registration process (see [http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get\\_registered.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp)). These steps include (1) Registering your organization, a multi-part process that includes registration with the Central Contractor Registry (CCR); (2) registering yourself as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR); and (3) getting authorized as an AOR by your organization. Details on these steps are outlined in the Grants.gov 3-Step Registration Guide (see <http://www.grants.gov/section910/Grants.govRegistrationBrochure.pdf>). You also must provide on your pre- and full 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 a pre- or full 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 pre- or full 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 pre- or full 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.

- You must attach any narrative sections of your pre- and full applications 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 pre- and full applications must comply with any page-limit requirements described in this notice.

- After you electronically submit your pre- or full 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 pre- or full application from Grants.gov and send a second notification to you by e-mail. This second notification indicates that the Department has received your pre- or full application and has assigned your pre- or full application a PR/Award number (an ED-specified identifying number unique to your pre- or full 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 pre- or full 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 pre- or full application on the applicable 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 pre- or full application electronically or by hand delivery. You also may mail your pre- and full applications by following the

mailing instructions described elsewhere in this notice.

If you submit a pre- or full application after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the applicable application deadline date, please contact the person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** in section VII of 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 pre- or full 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 pre- or full application by 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the applicable application deadline date. The Department will contact you after a determination is made on whether your pre- or full 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 pre- or full application to Grants.gov before the pre- or full 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 pre- or full application in paper format, if you are unable to submit a pre- or full 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 pre- or full application deadline date (14 calendar days or, if the fourteenth calendar day before the pre- or full application deadline date falls on a Federal holiday, the next business day following the Federal holiday), as appropriate, 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 pre- or full application.

If you mail your written statement to the Department, it must be postmarked no later than two weeks before the applicable 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 pre- or full application deadline date.

Address and mail or fax your statement to: Pilla Parker, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 3E247, Washington, DC 20202-6200. FAX: (202) 260-8969; or Rebecca Marek, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 33E250, Washington, DC 20202-6200. FAX: (202) 260-8969.

Your paper pre- or full 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 pre- or full application to the Department. You must mail the original and two copies of your pre- or full application, on or before the applicable application deadline date, to the Department at the following address: U.S. Department of Education, Application Control Center, Attention: (CFDA Numbers 84.359A and B), 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 pre- or full 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 pre- or full application is postmarked after the pre- or full application deadline date, we will not consider your pre- or full 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 pre- or full application to the Department by hand. You must deliver

the original and two copies of your pre- or full application by hand, on or before the applicable application deadline date, to the Department at the following address: U.S. Department of Education, Application Control Center, Attention: (CFDA Numbers 84.359A and B), 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 pre- or full 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 pre- or full application; and

(2) The Application Control Center will mail to you notification of receipt of your grant application. If you do not receive this notification within 15 business days from the pre- or full 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:* This competition has separate selection criteria for pre-applications and full applications.

*A. Pre-application:* The following selection criteria for this competition for the pre-application are from 34 CFR 75.210 of EDGAR. Further information about each of these selection criteria is in the application package. There are two selection criteria, *Need for Project and Quality of the Project Design*. The maximum score for the pre-application selection criteria is 100 points.

(i) *Need for project* (0–20 points)  
The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(a) The extent to which the proposed project will provide services or otherwise address the needs of students at risk of educational failure. (34 CFR 75.210(a)(2)(iii))

(b) The extent to which the proposed project will focus on serving or otherwise addressing the needs of disadvantaged individuals. (34 CFR 75.210(a)(2)(iv))

(ii) *Quality of the project design* (0–80 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of

the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(a) The extent to which the design of the proposed project reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice. (34 CFR 75.210(c)(2)(xiii))

(b) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach for meeting statutory purposes and requirements. (34 CFR 75.210(c)(2)(xiv))

(c) The extent to which the proposed project will be coordinated with similar or related efforts, and with other appropriate community, State, and Federal resources. (34 CFR 75.210(c)(2)(xvi))

*B. Full Application:* The following selection criteria for those invited to submit full applications are from 34 CFR 75.210 of EDGAR. Further information about each of these selection criteria is in the application package. The maximum score for each criterion is indicated after the title of the criterion. The maximum score for the full application selection criteria is 100 points.

(i) *Quality of the project design* (0–60 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(a) The extent to which the design of the proposed project reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice. (34 CFR 75.210(c)(2)(xiii))

(b) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach for meeting statutory purposes and requirements. (34 CFR 75.210(c)(2)(xiv))

(c) The extent to which the proposed project will be coordinated with similar or related efforts, and with other appropriate community, State, and Federal resources. (34 CFR 75.210(c)(2)(xvi))

(ii) *Quality of project personnel* (0–10 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. (34 CFR 75.210(e)(1), (2))

In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(a) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the

project director or principal investigator. (34 CFR 75.210(e)(3)(i))

(b) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel. (34 CFR 75.210(e)(3)(ii))

(c) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of project consultants or subcontractors. (34 CFR 75.210(e)(3)(iii))

(iii) *Adequacy of resources* (0–5 points)

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

(a) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project. (34 CFR 75.210(f)(2)(ii))

(b) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project. (34 CFR 75.210(f)(2)(iv))

(iv) *Quality of the management plan* (0–15 points)

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

(a) 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. (34 CFR 75.210(g)(2)(i))

(b) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project. (34 CFR 75.210(g)(2)(ii))

(c) 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. (34 CFR 75.210(g)(2)(iv))

(v) *Quality of the project evaluation* (0–10 points) The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(a) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project. (34 CFR 75.210(h)(2)(i))

(b) 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. (34 CFR 75.210(h)(2)(iv))

## VI. Award Administration Information

1. *Award Notices*: If your pre-application is successful, we notify you in writing and post the list of successful applicants on the Early Reading First Web site at <http://www.ed.gov/programs/earlyreading/awards.html>. If your full application is successful, we notify your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators and send you a Grant Award Notification (GAN). We may notify you informally, also.

If your pre-application is not evaluated, or following the submission of your pre-application you are not invited to submit a full application, we notify you. If your full 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 directed by the Secretary under 34 CFR 75.118. The Secretary may also require more frequent performance reports under 34 CFR 75.720(c). Early Reading First grantees also are required to meet the annual reporting requirements outlined in section 1225 of the ESEA. For specific requirements on reporting, please go to: <http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>.

4. *Performance Measures*: Under the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA), the Secretary has established the following four (4) measures for evaluating the overall effectiveness of the Early Reading First program: (1) The cost per preschool-aged child participating in Early Reading First programs who achieves a significant gain in oral language skills

after each year of implementation; (2) the percentage of preschool-aged children participating in Early Reading First programs who demonstrate age-appropriate oral language skills after each year of implementation; (3) the average number of letters Early Reading First preschool-aged children are able to identify after each year of implementation; and (4) the percentage of preschool-aged children participating in Early Reading First programs who achieve significant gains in oral language skills after each year of implementation. The Department will provide further information on selecting valid, reliable, and age-appropriate assessment instruments on the program Web site at <http://www.ed.gov/programs/earlyreading/applicant.html>.

All grantees must provide information on these performance measures in the annual performance report referred to in section VI.3. of this notice.

## VII. Agency Contact

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Pilla Parker, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 3E247, Washington, DC 20202–6132. Telephone: (202) 260–3710 or by e-mail: [Pilla.Parker@ed.gov](mailto:Pilla.Parker@ed.gov); or Rebecca Marek, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 3E250, Washington, DC 20202–6132. Telephone: (202) 260–0968 or by e-mail: [Rebecca.Marek@ed.gov](mailto:Rebecca.Marek@ed.gov).

If you use a 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 of 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>.

**Delegation of Authority:** The Secretary of Education has delegated authority to Joseph C. Conaty, Director, Academic Improvement and Teacher Quality Programs for the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education to perform the functions of the Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education.

Dated: February 26, 2009.

**Joseph C. Conaty,**

*Director, Academic Improvement and Teacher Quality Programs.*

[FR Doc. E9-4497 Filed 3-2-09; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4000-01-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

### Office of Postsecondary Education; Title IV, Part I, Section 499 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as Amended—Competitive Loan Auction Pilot Program

**AGENCY:** Office of Postsecondary Education, U.S. Department of Education.

**ACTION:** Notice inviting eligible lenders to participate in the Competitive Loan Auction Pilot Program for the right to originate PLUS loans to parent borrowers under the Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) Program.

**SUMMARY:** Through this notice, the Secretary of Education (the Secretary) invites eligible lenders to participate in the Competitive Loan Auction Pilot Program (Auction Program) for the rights to originate PLUS loans to parent borrowers under the FFEL Program. Through the Competitive Loan Auction (Auction), the Secretary will award the rights to originate PLUS loans to new parent borrowers under the Federal PLUS Program authorized by section 428B of Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA), for loan periods beginning on or after July 1, 2009 and ending June 30, 2011. This notice establishes the dates for submission of information to participate in the Auction, describes the information that lenders must submit and the auction process, and describes the statutory requirements a lender must meet if it is selected as a winning bidder in the Auction.

**DATES:** Deadline for Submission of Pre-Qualification Information: FFEL Program eligible lenders that wish to bid in the Auction must submit the required prequalification information to the

Secretary at the address provided in the **ADDRESSES** section of this notice by April 1, 2009.

**Deadline for Submission of PLUS Lender of Last Resort Applications:** FFEL Program eligible lenders interested in serving as a PLUS lender of last resort must submit their applications to the Secretary at the address provided in the **ADDRESSES** section of this notice by April 1, 2009.

**Date of Auction:** The Auction will be conducted on April 15, 2009. Bids for origination rights must be submitted on the date of the Auction to the Secretary at the address provided in the **ADDRESSES** section of this notice. Bids will only be accepted during the time period the Auction is open on that date, as designated by the Secretary. The time period the Auction will be open will be included in an Auction Information Sheet that will be sent to those eligible lenders meeting the prequalification requirements to participate in the Auction. The Auction Information Sheet will: (1) Describe the procedures for submitting bids, (2) provide the Web address of the on-line Auction, and (3) assign eligible bidders a password to submit a bid during the period the Auction is open. When the Auction is complete, the Secretary will notify winning bidders and announce the winning bidders for each State no later than April 24, 2009. Further information on the Auction procedures is in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section of this notice.

**ADDRESSES:** Pre-qualification information, PLUS Lender of Last Resort applications, and bids should be sent by e-mail to: [plus-auction@ed.gov](mailto:plus-auction@ed.gov).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For information about the Auction Program go to <http://www.ed.gov/ope/plus-auction> or contact: Donald Conner, U.S. Department of Education, 1990 K Street, NW., room 8030, Washington, DC 20006. Telephone (202) 502-7818, or by fax to (202) 502-7873. You may also e-mail your questions about the Auction to: [donald.conner@ed.gov](mailto:donald.conner@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.

Individuals with disabilities can obtain this document in an accessible format (e.g., braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) by contacting the program contact person listed in this section.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Secretary announces his intention to conduct and invites eligible FFEL lenders to participate in the Auction for the rights to originate PLUS loans to

parent borrowers under the FFEL Program. Through the Auction, the Secretary will award the rights to originate PLUS loans to new parent borrowers under the Federal PLUS Program authorized by section 428B of Title IV of the HEA, for loan periods beginning on or after July 1, 2009 and ending June 30, 2011. The right to originate PLUS loans to parent borrowers under the Federal PLUS Program will be determined through a competitive, sealed bid, one-round auction to be conducted for each State, the District of Columbia, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and Puerto Rico (State). Loans to borrowers attending schools outside of these areas are not included in the Auction Program and may be made by any eligible FFEL Program lender.

Two winning bidders will be identified for each State and will be the only eligible lenders authorized to originate Federal PLUS loans to parent borrowers who are borrowing on behalf of a dependent student who will be enrolled in an eligible postsecondary educational institution in that State and who are new borrowers on or after July 1, 2009. Parents currently borrowing on behalf of a dependent student enrolled prior to July 1, 2009 may continue with their current lender or secure a loan from another eligible FFEL Program lender. Loans to graduate and professional student borrowers under the PLUS Program are not included in the Auction process.

All eligible Federal PLUS Program loans originated under the Auction will be insured by a guaranty agency against losses. The insurance rate shall be in an amount equal to 99 percent of the unpaid principal and interest due on the loan. The Secretary will not collect a loan fee with respect to eligible Federal PLUS Program loans originated under this program.

To see a listing of the PLUS loan volume by State for Award Years 2006-07 and 2007-08, go to: <http://www.ed.gov/ope/plus-auction/>.

### Auction Requirements

#### Prequalification Requirements

All eligible FFEL Program lenders that want to participate in the Auction for PLUS loans to parent borrowers in a State under the Federal PLUS Program must meet the following prequalification requirements:

**Required Agreement:** A lender with a winning bid is obligated to enter into an agreement with the Secretary in accordance with section 499(b)(3)(C)(i) of the HEA, to make PLUS loans to all