U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Office of Elementary and Secondary Education
Washington, DC 20202

Fiscal Year 2020

**APPLICATION FOR GRANTS
UNDER THE
EDUCATION STABILIZATION FUND –
RETHINK K-12 EDUCATION MODELS (ESF-REM)
DISCRETIONARY GRANTS PROGRAM**
(CFDA NUMBER: 84.425B)
OMB No. 1894-0006

APPLICATION CLOSING DATE: JUNE 29, 2020

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April 30, 2020

Dear Chief State School Officer:

I want to thank you again for all that you are doing to support students and teachers during this unprecedented time. I hope you have found my staff and me to be helpful partners as you tackle the unique challenges in your state and work to keep teachers teaching and students learning. As you know, just last week the Department made available to States approximately $13.2 billion through the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER Fund), authorized under section 18003 of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. Today, I write you to announce the details of a new discretionary grant competition that I hope you find exciting and inspiring.

Rethinking K-12 Education Models (REM) is a new opportunity that will fund adaptable, innovative learning opportunities for K-12 students impacted by the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). The competition is open to State educational agencies (SEAs) that demonstrate coronavirus burden and propose projects in one of the three following areas:

1. Microgrants for families, so that States can ensure families have access to the technology and educational services needed to advance learning;
2. Statewide virtual learning and course access programs, so that students can access a full range of subjects, even those not taught in the traditional or assigned setting; or,
3. New, field-initiated models for providing remote education not yet imagined, to ensure that every child is learning and preparing to be successful.

The current disruption to the traditional education model is reaffirming something I have said for years: we must rethink education to better match the realities of the 21st century. Through this grant competition, you have the opportunity to unleash your creativity and ingenuity and expand students' access to new, unique learning environments.

Authorized under section 18001(a)(3) of the CARES Act, which set aside 1% of appropriated funding under the Education Stabilization Fund (ESF) for grants to States with the highest coronavirus burden, the Department anticipates making 12-13 awards averaging approximately $15 million each. In total, the estimated available funds for the REM program is $180 million. Of the remaining funds under the 1% set-aside of the ESF, the Department separately announced another competition to fund new workforce initiatives proposed by eligible State workforce agencies, higher education systems, and community colleges.

For purposes of evaluating coronavirus burden, each State will be given a score calculated through use of multiple measures, which include measures of public health, access to broadband, and demographic data suggestive of need. An applicant will also provide a narrative and/or submit additional data to describe the extent of its coronavirus burden.

As with most of the Department's discretionary grant competitions, applications will be evaluated by a panel of independent peer reviewers, and only the highest-scoring applications will be funded.

The enclosed notice inviting applications (NIA) describes the grant competition in additional detail. The enclosed application package should be reviewed, completed, and submitted by interested applicants no later than June 29, 2020. For additional information about how to apply, please consult the enclosed application. The Department intends to make awards by no later than August 2020. Please send any questions to ESF-REM@ED.gov.

Thank you for your continued commitment to our nation's students during these extraordinary times. I am looking forward to seeing your creativity and ingenuity in action.

Sincerely,

Betsy DeVos

I.   A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE APPLICATION PROCESS

The following is a brief overview of the application process for the ESF-REM Grants Program.

1. **Getting Started**
   All interested applicants should first thoroughly review the Notice Inviting Applications (NIA) for FY 2020 ESF-REM Grants Program published in the Federal Register and on the Department's website at: https://oese.ed.gov/offices/education-stabilization-fund/states-highest-coronavirus-burden/.

   This Application Package does not contain the full-text of the NIA and should only be used as a guide when completing and submitting an ESF-REM application. The NIA will orient applicants to the ESF-REM Grants Program by providing details associated with the following information:

   - Background information and purpose of the program;
   - Eligibility requirements;
   - Absolute Priorities;
   - Selection Criteria and assigned points;
   - Key definitions; and
   - Instructions on how to electronically submit the application.

   Applicants should pay close attention to the selection criteria as applications will be evaluated and scored against these criteria.

2. **Completing and Submitting Your Application**
   A complete application consists of the following components:
   - Project Abstract - where applicants provide a brief overview of the proposed project including primary goal and key objectives and activities

   - Project Narrative – where applicants respond to absolute priorities, application requirements, and selection criteria

   - Budget Narrative - where applicants provide an itemized breakdown and narratives for project costs

   - Appendices (which may include the following):
     - ✓ Applicant Eligibility Checklist;
     - ✓ Resumes of Key Personnel;
     - ✓ Memorandum of Understanding or letters of support;

   - Required Forms:
     - ✓ Standard Forms, and
     - ✓ Assurances and Certifications

Once the application is complete, it must be submitted electronically using the Grants.gov system.

3. **Tips for Submitting of Your Application**
    ➢ Thoroughly review the "Important Tips & Reminders for Applicants' section in the subsequent pages of this application package.

    ➢ All ESF-SEAD grant applications must be submitted electronically via Grants.gov unless an applicant qualifies 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. *Please refer to the NIA for more information on the exceptions to electronic submission.*

    ➢ Before you are ready to submit your application familiarize yourself as early as possible with Grants.gov.

    ➢ Please ensure proper browser support. The latest versions of Microsoft Internet Explorer (IE), Mozilla Firefox, Google Chrome, and Apple Safari are supported for use with Grants.gov. However, these web browsers undergo frequent changes and updates, so we recommend you use the latest version when submitting your application via Grants.gov. Legacy versions of these web browsers may be functional, but you may experience issues. For additional information or updates, please see the Grants.gov Browser information in the Applicant FAQs: http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-faqs.html#browser.

    ➢ Do not wait until the last day to submit your application. The time it takes to upload the narratives for your application will vary depending on several factors including the size of the files and the speed of your Internet connection. If you try to submit your application after 11:59:59 on the deadline date, the Grants.gov system will not accept it.

    ➢ Late applications will not be accepted. The Department is required to enforce the established deadline to ensure fairness to all applicants.

    ➢ **All applications must be received on or before June 29, 2020**. No changes or additions to an application will be accepted after the deadline date and time.

4. **Addressing Your Questions**
    The Department provides an avenue for interested applicants to ask questions to clarify their understanding of the ESF-REM Grants competition and process. Applicants should keep in mind that the Department cannot provide guidance on specific applications. The Department cannot provide guidance or recommendations on an applicant's proposed approach, plan, or

response to priorities, program requirements, and selection criteria. Interested applicants may send all other questions to ESF-REM@ed.gov.

II. THE ESF-REM GRANTS COMPETITION

OVERVIEW

Applications Available: April 30, 2020

Deadline for Notice of Intent to Apply
The Department can develop a more efficient process for reviewing grant applications if it has a better understanding of the number of entities that intend to apply for funding under this competition. **Each potential applicant is strongly encouraged to notify the Department of its intent to apply by sending a short email message with the applicant organization's name and address to ESF-REM@ed.gov with "Intent to Apply" in the email subject line by May 19, 2020.** Applicants that do not provide this email notification may still apply for funding.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications
All applications must be received on or before 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern Time, on June 29, 2020. Your application must be fully uploaded and submitted and must be date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system no later than 11:59:59 p.m. (Eastern Time), on the application deadline date. Late applications <u>will not be accepted</u>. The Department is required to enforce the established deadline to ensure fairness to all applicants. No changes or additions to an application will be accepted after the deadline date and time.

Award Information:
Estimated Available Funds: $180,000,000.
Estimated Range of Awards: $5,000,000 - $20,000,000.
Estimated Average Size of Awards: $15,000,000.
Estimated Number of Awards: 13-14; 4 awards under each absolute priority, dependent on sufficient quality. *Note: The Department is not bound by any estimates in the NIA.*
Project Period: Up to 36 months

ESF-REM Authorizing Legislation
Section 18001(a)(3) of Title VIII of Division B of the CARES Act, Pub. Law 116-36 (enacted March 27, 2020).

Program Purpose
The purpose of the ESF-REM Grant program is to provide support to State educational agencies SEAs) (as defined in the NIA) in States with the highest coronavirus burden (as defined in the NIA) to address specific educational needs of students, their parents, and teachers in public and non-public elementary and secondary schools. The Department plans to make awards to States for a variety of activities to help prevent, prepare for, and respond to the devastating effects of the coronavirus, to include addressing the remote learning (as defined in the NIA) needs of students throughout the United States.

Absolute Priorities
The ESF-REM Grants competition includes three absolute priorities of which the applicant addresses one priority. The Secretary intends to award grants under each of the absolute priorities for which applications of sufficient quality are submitted. An SEA may only submit one application to the ESF-REM Grants competition.

These priorities are:

Absolute Priority 1— Continued Learning Parent Microgrants.
Applications that propose microgrants to allow a parent to access high-quality remote learning options from a list of education and related services, expenses, and providers, which may include any needed connectivity and devices, that meets the student's educational needs.

Absolute Priority 2— Statewide Virtual Learning and Course Access Programs.
Applications that propose projects that encourage the development and/or expansion of a high-quality course-access program (as defined in the NIA) or statewide virtual school (as defined in the NIA).

Absolute Priority 3— Field-Initiated Projects for Educational Models for Remote Learning to Improve Student Outcomes.
Applications that propose projects that demonstrate a rationale and that are designed to create, develop, implement, replicate, or take to scale field-initiated educational models for remote learning. Projects should address specific needs pertaining to accessing high-quality remote learning opportunities.

NOTE: Applicants must refer to the NIA for the full text of the requirements associated with each absolute priority.

Application Requirements
This competition includes **six application requirements** that eligible applicants must meet in order to be considered for funding.

(1) Describe the applicant's approach to addressing one of the three absolute priorities contained in this notice. This description should include an implementation plan and timeline for key grant activities and a plan for how the applicant will assess the number of students served, and, if applying for Absolute Priority 1, how the grantee will select parents to receive microgrants; how the applicant will assess parent satisfaction with the State's grant-related remote learning offerings; and the number and different types, as defined by the grantee of new remote learning options provided in order to address the performance measures for the grant.

(2) Provide an analysis of the immediate needs in the State to support remote learning and describe how the proposed project will address those needs.

(3) Include a description of the State's coronavirus burden based on indicators and information factors other than those provided in the application package appendix that demonstrate the significance of the impact of COVID-19 on students, parents, and schools in the State. This description may include additional data, including other public health measures such as coronavirus-related deaths per capita, or any other relevant education, labor or demographic data.

(4) Provide an analysis of State assets and collaborative efforts made by the State (including supports already provided from Federal and non-Federal sources) to improve student outcomes for students during the national emergency, including, at a minimum, parent and student supports and collaborations with nonprofits, local businesses, LEAs, institutions of higher education, and other relevant stakeholders. At a minimum this analysis should also include the following:
>   (a) A description of the steps the State is taking at the time of the application to address the State's immediate needs, including how the State is meeting the needs of students.
>   (b) A description of the barriers the State has faced in meeting such needs.

(5) Provide an assurance that the applicant will provide information to the Secretary, as requested, for evaluations that the Secretary may carry out.

(6) Demonstrate support for the proposed project by the Governor of the State, such as through a letter signed by the Governor.

Eligibility Information
>   1. <u>Eligible Applicants</u>: SEAs.
>   2. <u>Cost Sharing or Matching</u>: This program does not require cost sharing or matching.
>   3. <u>Subgrantees</u>: A grantee under this competition may not award subgrants to entities to directly carry out project activities described in its application.

Intergovernmental Review
Under 34 CFR 79.8(a), the Department waives intergovernmental review in order to make timely awards.

Funding Restrictions
To maximize the funds available for services to students and the public, the Department encourages each eligible entity to minimize the amount of administrative costs charged to the program. *See the NIA for more information on funding restrictions.*

Recommended Page Limit
The project narrative is where the applicant addresses the absolute priorities, application requirements, and selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application. We recommend that you limit the project narrative to no more than 25 pages. *See the NIA for more information on the recommended page limit and other submission standards.*

Application Review Information: Selection Criteria
A. Highest Coronavirus Burden (up to 40 points).
>   In determining the States with the highest coronavirus burden, the Secretary considers the extent to which the State has a high coronavirus burden as follows:

(1) The extent to which the applicant, based on the factors listed in the application package *(see the appendix for the coronavirus burden factors)*, when weighted equally, is in the—
      (i) Up to 20th percentile of coronavirus burden (4 points);
      (ii) 21st to 40th percentile of coronavirus burden (8 points);
      (iii) 41st to 60th percentile of coronavirus burden (12 points);
      (iv) 61st to 80th percentile of coronavirus burden (16 points); or
      (v) 81st to 100th percentile of coronavirus burden. (20 points) (GEPA Waiver)

(2) The extent to which the applicant has a high coronavirus burden based on indicators and information factors identified by the applicant in response to Application Requirement 3. (20 points) (GEPA Waiver)

B. *Quality of Project Services and Project Plan (up to 35 points).*
The Secretary considers the quality of project services and project plan. In determining the quality of the project services and project plan, the Secretary considers the quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. (up to 5 points)
In addition, the Secretary considers--
(1) The extent to which the proposed project is an exceptional approach to absolute priority being addressed and includes a detailed project plan for addressing the absolute priority. (up to 10 points) (GEPA waiver)
(2) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project to respond to the needs of students. (up to 10 points) (GEPA waiver)
(3) The likelihood that the services to be provided by the proposed project will expand access to remote learning options and lead to improvements in student outcomes. (up to 5 points) (GEPA waiver)
(4) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice. (up to 5 points) (GEPA waiver)

C. *Quality of the Management Plan and Adequacy of Resources (up to 25 points).*
The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan and adequacy of resources. In determining the quality of the management plan and adequacy of resources, the Secretary considers--
(1) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks. (up to 5 points) (34 CFR 75.210)
(2) The extent to which the proposed use of funds will adequately support the proposed project. (up to 5 points) (GEPA waiver)
(3) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project. (up to 5 points) (34 CFR 75.210)

(4) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served and to the anticipated results and benefits. (up to 10 points) (34 CFR 75.210)

Open Licensing Requirements

Unless an exception applies, if you are awarded a grant under this competition, you will be required to openly license to the public grant deliverables created in whole, or in part, with Department grant funds. *See the NIA for the full text associated with the open licensing requirements.*

Reporting

If you apply for a grant under this competition, 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 under the competition. This does not apply if you have an exception under 2 CFR 170.110(b). *See the NIA for the full text associated with the reporting requirements.*

Performance and Project-specific Measures

The Department has established the following performance measures for the ESF-REM Grants program: (1) the number of students served by the project; (2) the percentage of parents who reported satisfaction with the remote learning options available; and (3) the number and different types, as defined by the grantee, of new remote learning options provided. In addition, applicants must propose project-specific performance measures and performance targets consistent with the objectives of the proposed project. *See the NIA for more information pertaining to project specific measures.*

III. APPLICATION SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

Applicants are required to follow the Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the Federal Register on February 13, 2019 (84 FR 3768) and available at www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2019-02-13/pdf/2019-02206.pdf which contain requirements and information on how to submit an application.

Submission Procedures
To do business with the Department, and to submit your application electronically using Grants.gov, you must:

> (1) Have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and a Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN);
>
> (2) Register both your DUNS and TIN with the System for Award Management (SAM.gov), the Government's primary registrant database;
>
> (3) Provide your DUNS and TIN on your application; and
>
> (4) 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.

DUNS
The DUNS number is a unique nine-digit number that does not convey any information about the recipient. A built-in check digit helps assure the accuracy of the DUNS number. The ninth digit of each number is the check digit, which is mathematically related to the other digits. It lets computer systems determine if a DUNS number has been entered correctly.

Dun & Bradstreet, a global information services provider, has assigned DUNS numbers to over 43 million companies worldwide. Check with your fiscal office to see if your agency has an assigned DUNS number before contacting Dun & Bradstreet.

You can obtain a DUNS number at no charge by calling **1-800-333-0505** or by completing a D-U-N-S Number request online at the following URL: http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform.

TIN
Corporate entities, agencies, institutions, and organizations can obtain a TIN from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). If you need a new TIN, please allow two to five weeks for your TIN to become active.

SAM
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.gov database. Once your SAM registration is active, it may be 24-48 hours before you can access the information in Grants.gov and apply through 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. **NOTE:** Your agency must update its SAM registration annually.

Important COVID-19 SAM registration update
During this time, grants.gov has relaxed the requirement for applicants to have an active registration in the System for Award Management (SAM) in order to apply for funding. In the event a registration expires before an award is issued, the Department will relax the active registration requirement, and not delay funds due to the COVID-19 crisis.

Grants.gov
In order to submit your application via Grants.gov, you must:

(1) Register as an applicant using the DUNS number your organization used when it registered in SAM; and

(2) Be designated by your organization's E-Biz Point of Contact as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR). Details on these steps are outlined at http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html.

Grants.gov System Maintenance
Please keep in mind that the Grants.gov system will not be available for use during the times listed below.

Date	Details
May 16-18, 2020	**Scheduled Maintenance Outage:** Production System will go **Offline** Saturday May 16, 2020 at 12:01 AM ET. Production System will go **Online** Monday May 18, 2020 at 6:00 AM ET.
June 20-22, 2020	**Scheduled Maintenance Outage:** Production System will go **Offline** Saturday June 20, 2020 at 12:01 AM ET. Production System will go **Online** Monday June 22, 2020 at 6:00 AM ET.

IMPORTANT TIPS & REMINDERS FOR APPLICANTS

To facilitate your use of Grants.gov, below are important submission procedures you need to be aware of to ensure your application is received in a timely manner and accepted by the Department of Education.

Browser Support
The latest versions of Microsoft Internet Explorer (IE), Mozilla Firefox, Google Chrome, and Apple Safari are supported for use with Grants.gov. However, these web browsers undergo frequent changes and updates, so we recommend you have the latest version when using Grants.gov. Legacy versions of these web browsers may be functional, but you may experience issues.

For additional information or updates, please see the Grants.gov Browser information in the Applicant FAQs: http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-faqs.html#browser

ATTENTION – Workspace, Adobe Forms and PDF Files
Grants.gov applicants can apply online using Workspace. Workspace is a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different web forms within an application. For each funding opportunity announcement (FOA), you can create individual instances of a workspace.

Below is an overview of applying on Grants.gov. For access to complete instructions on how to apply for opportunities, refer to: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html

1) Create a Workspace: Creating a workspace allows you to complete it online and route it through your organization for review before submitting.

2) Complete a Workspace: Add participants to the workspace to work on the application together, complete all the required forms online or by downloading PDF versions, and check for errors before submission. The Workspace progress bar will display the state of your application process as you apply. As you apply using Workspace, you may click the blue question mark icon near the upper-right corner of each page to access context-sensitive help.

   a. Adobe Reader: If you decide not to apply by filling out web forms you can download individual PDF forms in Workspace. The individual PDF forms can be downloaded and saved to your local device storage, network drive(s), or external drives, then accessed through Adobe Reader.

   NOTE: Visit the Adobe Software Compatibility page on Grants.gov to download the appropriate version of the software at:
   https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html.

b. Mandatory Fields in Forms: In the forms, you will note fields marked with an asterisk and a different background color. These fields are mandatory fields that must be completed to successfully submit your application.

c. Complete SF-424 Fields First: The forms are designed to fill in common required fields across other forms, such as the applicant name, address, and DUNS Number. Once it is completed, the information will transfer to the other forms.

3) Submit a Workspace: An application may be submitted through workspace by clicking the Sign and Submit button on the Manage Workspace page, under the Forms tab. Grants.gov recommends submitting your application package at least 24-48 hours prior to the close date to provide you with time to correct any potential technical issues that may disrupt the application submission.

4) Track a Workspace Submission: After successfully submitting a workspace application, a Grants.gov Tracking Number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) is automatically assigned to the application. The number will be listed on the Confirmation page that is generated after submission. Using the tracking number, access the Track My Application page under the Applicants tab or the Details tab in the submitted workspace.

5) For additional training resources, including video tutorials, refer to https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-training.html.

Helpful Reminders

1) **REGISTER EARLY** – Grants.gov registration involves many steps including registration in the System for Award Management (SAM). SAM registration may take approximately one week to complete but could take upwards of several weeks to complete, depending upon the completeness and accuracy of the data entered into the SAM database by an applicant. You may begin working on your application while completing the registration process, but you cannot submit an application until all of the Registration steps are complete. Please note that once your SAM registration is active, it will take 24-48 hours for the information to be available in Grants.gov, and before you can submit an application through Grants.gov. Your organization will also need to update its SAM registration annually. For detailed information on the Registration Steps, please go to: http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html.

NOTE: As a reminder, grants.gov has relaxed the requirement for applicants to have an active registration in the System for Award Management (SAM) in order to apply for funding. However, the Department strongly encourages applicants to start the SAM registration process as soon as possible, and in the event a registration expires before an award is issued, the Department will relax the active registration requirement, and not delay funds due to the COVID-19 crisis.

More information about SAM is available at www.sam.gov; and to further assist you with obtaining and registering your DUNS number and TIN in SAM or updating your existing

SAM account, the Department of Education has prepared a SAM.gov Tip Sheet available at: http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/sam-faqs.html.

2) **SUBMIT EARLY** – **We strongly recommend that you do not wait until the last day to submit your application. Grants.gov will put a date/time stamp on your application and then process it after it is fully uploaded.** The time it takes to upload an application will vary depending on several factors including the size of the application and the speed of your Internet connection. The time it takes Grants.gov to process the application will also vary. If Grants.gov rejects your application (see step three below), you will need to ensure a successful resubmission in Grants.gov before 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern Time on the deadline date.

   Note: To ensure a successful resubmission in Grants.gov, you must utilize the DUNS number on your application that was used when you registered as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) on Grants.gov. This DUNS number is typically the same number used when your organization registered with the SAM. If you do not enter the same DUNS number on your application as the DUNS you registered with, Grants.gov will reject your application.

3) **VERIFY SUBMISSION IS OK** – You will want to verify that Grants.gov received your application submission on time and that it was validated successfully. To see the date and time your application was received, login to Grants.gov and click on the Track My Application link. For a successful submission, the date and time received should be earlier than 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern Time, on the deadline date, AND the application status should be: Validated, Received by Agency, or Agency Tracking Number Assigned. Once the Department of Education receives your application from Grants.gov, an Agency Tracking Number (PR/award number) will be assigned to your application and will be available for viewing on Grants.gov's Track My Application link.

   If the date and time received is later than 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern Time, on the deadline date, your application is late. If your application has a status of "Received" it is still awaiting validation by Grants.gov. Once validation is complete, the status will either change to "Validated" or "Rejected with Errors." If the status is "Rejected with Errors," your application has not been received successfully.

   Some of the reasons Grants.gov may reject an application can be found on the Grants.gov site: http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/encountering-error-messages.html. For more detailed information on troubleshooting Adobe errors, you can review the Adobe Reader Software Tip Sheet at: http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html. If you discover your application is late or has been rejected, please see the instructions below.

   Note: You will receive a series of confirmations both online and via e-mail about the status of your application. Please do not rely solely on e-mail to confirm whether your application has been received timely and validated successfully.

Submission Problems – What should you do?

If you have problems submitting to Grants.gov before the closing date, please contact Grants.gov Customer Support via phone at 1-800-518-4726; via email at: mailto:support@grants.gov; or, access the Grants.gov Self-Service Knowledge Base web portal at: https://grants-portal.psc.gov/Welcome.aspx?pt=Grants.

If electronic submission is <u>required</u>, you must submit an electronic application before 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern Time, unless you follow the procedures in the Federal Register notice and qualify for one of the exceptions to the electronic submission requirement <u>and</u> 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. If electronic submission is <u>optional</u> and you have problems that you are unable to resolve before the deadline date and time for electronic applications, please follow the transmittal instructions for hard copy applications in the Federal Register notice and get a hard copy application postmarked by midnight on the deadline date. *(See the Federal Register notice for detailed instructions.)*

Helpful Hints When Working with Grants.gov

Please go to http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support.html for help with Grants.gov. For additional tips related to submitting grant applications, please refer to the Grants.gov Applicant FAQs found at this Grants.gov link: http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-faqs.html as well as additional information on Workspace at https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-faqs.html#workspace.

Dial-Up Internet Connections

When using a dial up connection to upload and submit your application, it can take significantly longer than when you are connected to the Internet with a high-speed connection, e.g. cable modem/DSL/T1. While times will vary depending upon the size of your application, it can take a few minutes to a few hours to complete your grant submission using a dial up connection. If you do not have access to a high-speed connection and electronic submission is required, you may want to consider following the instructions in the Federal Register notice to obtain an exception to the electronic submission requirement no later than two weeks before the application deadline date. *(See the Federal Register notice for detailed instructions.)*

Attaching Files – Additional Tips

Please note the following tips related to attaching files to your application:

When you submit your application electronically, you must upload any narrative sections and all other attachments to your application as files in either Portable Document Format (PDF) or Microsoft Word. Although applicants have the option of uploading any narrative sections and all other attachments to their application in either PDF or Microsoft Word, we **recommend** applicants submit all documents as read-only flattened PDFs, meaning any fillable PDF files must be saved and submitted as non-fillable PDF files and not as interactive or fillable PDF files, to better ensure applications are processed in a more timely, accurate, and efficient manner.

- Grants.gov cannot process an application that includes two or more files that have the same name within a grant submission. Therefore, each file uploaded to your application package should have a unique file name.

- When attaching files, applicants should follow the guidelines established by Grants.gov on the size and content of file names. Uploaded file names must be fewer than 50 characters, and, in general, applicants should not use any special characters. However, Grants.gov does allow for the following UTF-8 characters when naming your attachments: A-Z, a-z, 0-9, underscore, hyphen, space, period, parenthesis, curly braces, square brackets, ampersand, tilde, exclamation point, comma, semi colon, apostrophe, at sign, number sign, dollar sign, percent sign, plus sign, and equal sign. Applications submitted that do not comply with the Grants.gov guidelines will be rejected at Grants.gov and not forwarded to the Department.

- Applicants should limit the size of their file attachments. Documents submitted that contain graphics and/or scanned material often greatly increase the size of the file attachments and can result in difficulties opening the files. For reference, the average discretionary grant application package with all attachments is less than 5 MB. Therefore, you may want to check the total size of your package before submission.

IV.   THE APPLICATION

THE APPLICATION NARRATIVES

The ESF-REM grant application will use Grants.gov Narrative Forms. Each form is identified below along with application instructions.

ED Abstract Narrative Form Instructions
The project abstract should be attached as a single document to the ED Abstract Form in accordance with the instructions found on Grants.gov. The abstract should be no more than 1-2 paragraphs, [limited to 2000 characters], and should include the following items:
- ✓ The primary goal of the project;
- ✓ A succinct description of the key project objectives and activities;
- ✓ A brief description of the key uses of grant funds;
- ✓ A list of participating partners in the project, if applicable.

Project Narrative Form Instructions
The project narrative should be attached as a single document to the Project Narrative Attachment Form in accordance with the instructions found on Grants.gov and should include the following parts in order to expedite the review process:
- ✓ A Table of Contents;
- ✓ A description of the proposed project;
- ✓ The applicant's response to the selection criteria; and,
- ✓ The applicant's response to the Absolute Priority and Requirements.

The project narrative should, as a general matter, follow the order of the selection criteria. It should contain clear headings to help the Department staff and peer reviewers match the narrative with the selection criteria because the application will be evaluated and scored against these criteria. Also, when addressing the criteria, applicants are encouraged to make explicit connections to the Absolute Priority and application requirements.

Please limit the project narrative to 25 pages, double-spaced, and number the pages consecutively. Please provide any charts, graphs, citations, or examples within the 25 pages of the projective narrative.

Note: *Please see the NIA for additional application submission requirements and detailed information regarding the Absolute Priorities and Application Requirements.*

Budget Narrative Form Instructions
The budget narratives should be attached as a single document to the "Budget Narrative Attachment Form" in accordance with the instructions found on Grants.gov. The Budget Narrative Form is where the applicant provides an itemized budget breakdown and narrative for each budget category listed in Sections A (Federal Funds Budget) and B (Non-Federal Funds Budget) of the ED 524 form. The itemized budget and accompanying budget narratives should

project all costs of the proposed project and reflect an annual budget for all 3 years of the proposed project.

In accordance with 34 CFR 75.232, Department of Education staff will perform a cost analysis of each project recommended for funding to ensure that costs relate to the activities and objectives of the project, are reasonable, allowable, and allocable. Therefore, budget should only include costs that are reasonable, allowable, and necessary for carrying out the objectives of the ESF-REM Grant Program project. Rules about allowable costs are set out in 2 C.F.R. 200, as adopted by the Department at 2 C.F.R. 3474. We may delete or reduce costs from the budget during this review.

Other Attachments Form Instructions
Applicants should **attach all other information, including required items (Governor's letter, assurances, certifications, and standard forms)** as appendices using the Other Attachments Form. For each appendix, applicants are asked to save files as a .PDF, label each file with the Appendix name and upload the file to the Other Attachments Form. The Other Attachments Form can support up to ten attachments.

Applicants are encouraged to follow the order below when uploading information to the Appendix:

- ✓ **Appendix 1:** Letter of support from Governor of State, pursuant to Application Requirement 6
- ✓ **Appendix 2:** Individual Resumes for Project Director and Key Personnel
- ✓ **Appendix 3:** Current Indirect Cost Rate Agreement
- ✓ **Appendix 4:** List of proprietary information found in the application, if applicable
- ✓ **Appendix 5:** Assurance that Applicant will participate in an evaluation, pursuant to Application Requirement 5 – Applicants should create a statement providing assurance that they will submit information to the Department, as requested, for evaluations the Secretary may care out.

TIPS FOR SUBMITTING THE NARRATIVES AND APPENDICES

➢ When attaching files, applicants should limit the size of their file names. Lengthy file names could result in difficulties with opening and processing your application. We recommend your file names be less than 50 characters. **Please note that Grants.gov cannot process an application that includes two or more files that have the same name within a grant submission.**

➢ Please ensure that only U.S. Department of Education approved file types are attached. See the NIA for a detailed description of these files (read-only, non-modifiable .pdf files). Also, do not upload any password-protected files to your application. Lengthy file names could result in difficulties with opening and processing your application. We recommend your file names be less than 50 characters.

➢ If you have multiple documents to be attached to one of the above narrative sections, it is recommended that you merge them into one .PDF file and upload them to the appropriate narrative.

➢ The recommended page limit does not apply to the cover sheet; the budget section, including the narrative budget justification; the assurances and certifications; or the one-page abstract, the resumes, the bibliography, or the letters of support. However, the recommended page limit does apply to entire the project narrative.

REQUIRED FORMS

Standard Forms Instructions
Applicants must submit along with their project narratives the required standard forms, assurances, and certifications included in the list below.

• Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424);

  NOTE: Please do not attach any narratives, supporting files, or application components to the Standard Form (SF 424). Although this form accepts attachments, the Department of Education will review only materials/files attached to the section labeled "Other Attachments Form."

• Department of Education Supplemental Information form SF 424;

• Department of Education Budget Summary Form (ED 524) Sections A & B;

• Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL);

• General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) Requirements - Section 427;

• Assurances, Non-Construction Programs (SF 424B) (*This form is completed in SAM*); and

• Grants.gov Lobbying form (formerly ED 80-0013 form).

Electronic copies and instructions for the required forms can be downloaded at the following address: https://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html and can be found in the Grants.gov submission package.

V.   ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Paperwork Burden Statement

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 40 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefit and voluntary. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20210-4537 or email ICDocketMgr@ed.gov and reference the OMB Control Number 1894-0006.

NOTE: Please do not return the completed 1894-0006 application to this address.

VI.   OPTIONAL APPLICATION PACKAGE ATTACHMENTS

Optional Application Checklist

Applicants should review this optional checklist once they believe they have completed their applications. The checklist contains all mandatory parts of the application. The Application Checklist is optional; however, applicants are strongly encouraged to fill in the checklist or something similar, to ensure that all requirements have been addressed and to ensure that program staff and peer reviewers can find the information in your application that addresses each applicable element from the NIA.

ED Standard Forms

☐   Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424)
☐   Department of Education Supplemental Information for SF 424
☐   Department of Education Budget Summary Form (ED 524) Sections A & B
☐   Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL)

Assurances and Certifications

☐   GEPA Section 427
☐   Assurances – Non-Construction Programs (SF 424B)
☐   Grants.gov Lobby form (formerly ED 80-0013 form)

Application Narrative

☐   ED Abstract Narrative Form
☐   Project Narrative Form
☐   Budget Narrative Form
☐   Other Attachments Form (Upload Appendices here)

Appendices:

☐   Appendix 1: Letter of support from Governor of State, pursuant to Application Requirement 6
☐   Appendix 2: Individual Resumes for Project Director and Key Personnel
☐   Appendix 3: Current Indirect Cost Rate Agreement
☐   Appendix 4: List of proprietary information found in the application, if applicable
☐   Appendix 5: Assurance that Applicant will participate in an evaluation, pursuant to Application Requirement 5

NOTE: Eligible applicants should attach all appendices to the Other Attachments Form. The Grants.gov system will allow applicants to attach as many as ten separate appendices in this section.

VII. APPENDIX: CORONAVIRUS BURDEN FACTORS

Percentile calculation of coronavirus burden by State, as referenced in the Notice Inviting Applications.

State	1 % of Population Without Broadband Access	2 % of Students Ages 5-17 in Poverty	3 State % Share of Confirmed COVID-19 Cases Per Capita[1]	4 % of Students in Rural Local Educational Agencies	Percentile based on 4 factors weighted equally
Alabama	16.5	22.37	1.05	34.07	81st to 100th percentile
Alaska	10.3	12.87	0.45	25.88	41st to 60th percentile
Arizona	11.7	18.86	0.71	6.17	21st to 40th percentile
Arkansas	19.2	21.51	0.61	30.44	81st to 100th percentile
California	8.9	16.59	0.76	3.75	21st to 40th percentile
Colorado	8.2	11.33	1.75	5.88	up to 20th percentile
Connecticut	8.9	12.84	5.20	10.11	21st to 40th percentile
Delaware	9.2	16.19	4.11	10.34	21st to 40th percentile
District of Columbia	11.7	24.50	2.93	0.04	21st to 40th percentile
Florida	12.5	18.45	1.24	5.41	21st to 40th percentile
Georgia	13.2	19.50	1.84	26.63	61st to 80th percentile
Hawaii	10.2	10.58	0.42	0.00	up to 20th percentile
Idaho	10	12.54	0.98	23.59	21st to 40th percentile
Illinois	11	15.00	2.46	8.62	41st to 60th percentile
Indiana	13.6	15.69	1.73	24.03	61st to 80th percentile
Iowa	11.9	12.18	0.95	32.34	61st to 80th percentile
Kansas	11.6	13.19	0.66	22.89	41st to 60th percentile

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[1] **The COVID-19 per capita percentages for each State are provided here for informational purposes, and the Department will update these data as of the June 29, 2020 deadline for transmittal of applications, which may adjust State percentiles and rankings.**

State	1 % of Population Without Broadband Access	2 % of Students Ages 5-17 in Poverty	3 State % Share of Confirmed COVID-19 Cases Per Capita[1]	4 % of Students in Rural Local Educational Agencies	Percentile based on 4 factors weighted equally
Kentucky	14.4	20.53	0.68	31.25	61st to 80th percentile
Louisiana	17.6	24.89	5.31	13.46	61st to 80th percentile
Maine	11.7	13.04	0.67	50.58	81st to 100th percentile
Maryland	9.0	11.38	2.34	6.89	up to 20th percentile
Massachusetts	8.7	11.40	5.70	8.01	21st to 40th percentile
Michigan	12.1	17.48	4.70	17.89	41st to 60th percentile
Minnesota	9.3	10.57	0.45	17.54	up to 20th percentile
Mississippi	19.4	26.63	1.56	48.72	81st to 100th percentile
Missouri	13.1	16.60	0.96	20.05	41st to 60th percentile
Montana	12.2	14.34	0.42	32.22	61st to 80th percentile
Nebraska	9.9	11.19	0.79	23.28	21st to 40th percentile
Nevada	11.3	16.73	1.27	1.62	up to 20th percentile
New Hampshire	7.6	8.76	1.06	31.41	21st to 40th percentile
New Jersey	9.1	12.53	9.89	6.04	41st to 60th percentile
New Mexico	20.6	23.31	0.91	18.58	61st to 80th percentile
New York	11.7	17.46	12.59	10.83	81st to 100th percentile
North Carolina	13.2	18.59	0.65	35.34	81st to 100th percentile
North Dakota	15.1	9.53	0.80	35.40	61st to 80th percentile
Ohio	11.8	17.37	1.03	21.10	41st to 60th percentile
Oklahoma	14.4	19.41	0.68	28.40	61st to 80th percentile
Oregon	8.9	13.89	0.47	9.10	up to 20th percentile
Pennsylvania	11.9	15.53	2.60	15.58	41st to 60th percentile
Puerto Rico	33.6	54.18	0.39	0.00	81st to 100th percentile

State	1 % of Population Without Broadband Access	2 % of Students Ages 5-17 in Poverty	3 State % Share of Confirmed COVID-19 Cases Per Capita[1]	4 % of Students in Rural Local Educational Agencies	Percentile based on 4 factors weighted equally
Rhode Island	10.3	16.24	4.60	8.02	Up to 20th percentile
South Carolina	15.1	20.96	0.89	18.62	61st to 80th percentile
South Dakota	14.6	14.31	1.91	40.25	81st to 100th percentile
Tennessee	14.3	19.64	1.04	29.75	61st to 80th percentile
Texas	13.3	19.93	0.68	13.24	41st to 60th percentile
Utah	7.1	8.82	1.03	5.42	up to 20th percentile
Vermont	13.9	10.85	1.34	54.20	81st to 100th percentile
Virginia	11.0	12.51	1.09	19.89	41st to 60th percentile
Washington	7.4	11.49	1.62	7.58	up to 20th percentile
West Virginia	16.4	21.09	0.49	36.44	81st to 100th percentile
Wisconsin	11.4	12.59	0.77	18.81	21st to 40th percentile
Wyoming	11.0	11.36	0.76	25.75	21st to 40th percentile

Data sources and methodology:

Available Broadband Access

The number in column 1 is the percent of the population in each State without broadband access of any kind in 2018, as determined by 100 minus the percent of households with broadband access in 2018. The source for the percent of households with broadband access of any kind is the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey in 2018. This data may be retrieved through the customization of this table: https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=S2802&tid=ACSST1Y2018.S2802.

Students in Poverty

The number in column 2 is the percentage of students ages 5-17 in each State living in poverty in 2018, as determined by the number of students in poverty divided by the total number of students ages 5-17 in the State. The source for the percentage of students living in poverty is the U.S. Census Bureau Small Area Income and Poverty Assessments Program estimates for 2018. This data is provided to the Department and informs some Title I calculations. Portions of these data may be retrieved from the Census website: https://www.census.gov/data/datasets/2018/demo/saipe/2018-state-and-county.html.

COVID-19 Cases Per Capita

The number in column 3 is the percent share of total COVID-19 cases per capita for each State. This number is derived by taking the total number of COVID-19 cases per capita reported to the Centers for Disease Control, by State, as of 5:51pm on April 25, 2020 and dividing that by the total number of cases per capita in the U.S. The per capita data and the sum of all cases per capita may be retrieved from the Centers for Disease Control at https://www.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/index.html by downloading the Excel document that accompanies the visual displays. **It is important to note that the Department will update the number in column 3 as of the June 29, 2020 deadline for transmittal of applications, which may adjust State percentiles and rankings.**

Rural Local Educational Agencies (LEAs)

The number in column 4 is the percentage of students in LEAs in each State that are rural, as determined by the number of students in rural LEAs in the State divided by the total number of students in the State. The source for the percentage of students in rural LEAs in the State is the Common Core of Data from the Nation Center for Education Statistics. Portions of these data may be retrieved from the Common Core of Data Files: https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/ccddata.asp.

Ranking Methodology

To determine ranking, States were assigned total burden scores based on sum of the values of the indicators relative to one another.[2] All four indicators were weighted equally in calculating burden scores. Higher values on the indicators shows higher need for the State (e.g., higher share of COVID-19 cases, higher percentage of households without broadband access, etc.).

The States were then ranked based on their total burden score—which again, was calculated based on all four indicators. Points were then awarded by the percentile of their rank as indicated below.

Percentile	Number of Points Awarded	State Ranks[3]
81st to 100th percentile	20	43 through 52
61st to 80th percentile	16	32 through 42
41st to 60th percentile	12	22 through 31
21st to 40th percentile	8	11 through 21
20th percentile and below	4	1 through 10

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[2] Each indicator is worth 25 points out of 100 possible total burden points. The State with the highest burden for an indicator is awarded 25 points and all other States are assigned points based on the percentage of their burden relative to the state with the highest burden for that indicator. Total burden is the sum of all the points for each indicator.

[3] Higher scores indicate higher burden.