



**U.S. Department of Education  
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education  
Charter Schools Program  
Recording Transcript – June 2024  
FY 2024 Pre-Application Webinar—State Facilities Incentive Grant (SFIG) Program Competition**

Good afternoon and welcome to the Pre-Application Technical Assistance Webinar for the FY 2024 Charter Schools Program, State Facilities Incentive Grant Competition. My name is Anna Hinton and I am the director of the Charter Schools Program at the U.S. Department of Education. On behalf of the Department, we appreciate your participation in today's webinar. We are especially excited about this year's competition since it has been several years since we last hosted a State Facilities Grant Competition. So, let's get started.

Here's today's agenda. As you can see, we have a lot of content to discuss over the next 90 minutes. Our goals with today's webinar are to provide a high-level overview of the FY 2024 State Facilities Incentive Grants Competition, reviewing critical components like eligibility and match requirements, priorities, selection criteria, application requirements, and the process for submitting your application. We also aim to answer as many of your questions as possible and provide you with information on how to submit questions and access competition resources.

Just a little bit about the State Facilities Incentive Grants Program team. The team is led by a newly selected supervisor, Adrienne Hawkins, who works alongside Clif Jones, who's a senior program officer, and Thea Fowles, a program officer for the team.

Before we get started, we do want to take a few moments just to discuss some disclaimers associated with the entire pre-award webinar series and especially today's webinar. This slide deck does not contain the full text of the FY 2024 State Facilities Incentive Grant NIA that was published in the Federal Register on April 24. Before applying for this grant, interested applicants should thoroughly review not only the NIA but the application package along with the instructions as well as other information that can be found on our competition website. Just another note, you will see disclaimers like this one throughout the slide deck, once again reminding all interested applicants to read the entire NIA in the Federal Register as well as the Application Package for all information and requirements associated with submitting a grant application for this year's grant competition.

So, we'd also like to take a few minutes just to discuss the main purposes of the CSP, Charter Schools Program, before we take a deep dive into the State Facilities Incentive Grant Program itself. The CSP Statute outlines seven main purposes of the program. However, in the interest of time, I won't discuss each purpose in detail, but note generally that the CSP aims to expand opportunities for all students, especially those who are traditionally underserved, to attend charter schools and meet challenging academic standards.

The CSP consists of six key components and we refer to them as individual grant competitions or programs that support activities important to the success of charter schools. These include grants to state entities and the State Entity Grant Program is the largest charter school component or Charter School Grant Competition that we have. Replication and Expansion grants or CMO grants: these are grants to our charter management organizations. Grants to Developers: these are grants to independent charter schools where we are supporting one charter school—this is one of our smallest grant programs. And then, we have our National Dissemination Grants. These grants create tools and resources to support the charter sector. And then, we also have two facilities related grants. One grant is the Credit Enhancement Grant designed to enhance the credit of charter school developers. And then, there is the State Charter School Facilities Incentive Program, which is the topic of today's discussion.

We also would like to point out key definitions that are critical to your understanding of the State Facilities Incentive Grant Program. I will not read all the definitions on this slide, but I do want to highlight just a few. On this slide, the Per-Pupil Facilities Aid Program definition, which means a program in which a state makes payments on a per-pupil basis to charter schools to provide the schools with financing: (a) that is dedicated solely to funding charter school facilities or (b) a portion of which is dedicated for funding charter school facilities. And so again, we'd ask that you please take some time to review all of these definitions. We do just want to highlight a few definitions that are critical again to your understanding of how this particular program operates.

Again, I won't read this entire definition, but it is important that you take time to review the definition of a charter school and all of its components. It is important that the charter schools that you support meet our definition as outlined in statute as well as, again, all of the sub-parts of this particular definition, and this is critical for the subgrants that you make. Again, this is just continuation for the charter school definition as outlined in statute.

And then before we get started, in terms of providing an overview of State Facilities Incentive Grants, I do want to just highlight a few things that are new this year. Again, these are issues and topics that are critical for you to understand and know as you pull together your application in a manner that will allow you to be most successful in uploading your grant application. The first is that the ED Standard Form has been updated, so the ED Supplemental Information Form, the SF-424, along with instructions have been updated. This form must be submitted as part of your application package. So again, we ask that you take time to review this form. Abstract Narrative Form, this form has also been updated. Applicants must now identify the Assistance Listing Number 84.282D and the project type in the abstract. Related to this, an abstract must be submitted as part of the application package. So again, just wanted to bring some of these changes to your attention.

Also, Uniform Guidance has since been updated since last year. Revisions to the Uniform Guidance were published in the Federal Register on April 22 of this year and will go into effect on October 1 [2024]. This is also the start date of the grants that will be awarded under this particular program. So, the revisions to the Uniform Guidance will apply to all grantees in this year's competition. We've also just noted on this slide some examples of some updates to the Uniform Guidance pertaining to supplies and equipment.

And then finally, we want to bring to your attention that the Grants.gov website has been updated and we've once again provided a link along with a QR code for you to quickly access that link. So, with that, I will now turn it over to Adrienne Hawkins who will get us started by providing an overview of the State Facilities Incentive Grant Program. Thank you.

Thank you, Anna.

The State Facilities Incentive Grant Program is authorized under Title IV Part C of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 as amended by ESEA. The State Charter School Facilities Incentive Grant Program is a competitive grant program that provides federal funds to states to help them establish or improve Charter School Facilities Aid Programs. The purpose of the program is to encourage states to share in the cost of charter school facilities funding. To be eligible to receive a grant, a State shall establish or enhance and administer a Per-Pupil Facilities Aid Program for charter schools in a state that is specified in state law and provides annual financing on a per-pupil basis for charter school facilities. As a reminder, Per-Pupil Facilities Aid Program means a program in which a state makes payments on a per-pupil basis to charter schools to provide the schools with financing that is dedicated solely to funding charter school facilities or a portion of which is dedicated for funding charter schools facilities.

For a state to be eligible, the state's program of annual per-pupil facilities funding must provide funds to charter schools on a formula basis, although the formula does not have to provide a flat amount per child or reach every charter school. The per-pupil facilities aid must be dedicated solely or have a portion of which is dedicated solely for charter school facilities. Please note that charter schools may not apply for these funds directly, only states may apply.

State grantees may use up to 5 percent of their grant award for administrative expenses that may include indirect costs, evaluation, technical assistance, dissemination, personnel costs, and any other costs involved in administering the state's Per-Pupil Facilities Aid Program. Charter school subgrantees may use funds for administrative costs that are necessary and reasonable for the proper and efficient performance and administration of this federal grant. This use the funds as well as indirect costs and rates must comply with EDGAR and the Office of Management and Budget Circular A-87. Consistent with requirements 34 CFR 226.23, any charter school subgrantees that use grant funds for construction activities may not be reimbursed for indirect costs for those activities.

Charter schools benefiting from State Facilities Incentive Grant funds must meet the definition of charter school as defined in section 4310(2) of the ESEA. I believe that the definition, Anna also showed you all the definitions as part of this slide deck as well. The definition of a charter school requires that a school be a public school operated under public supervision and direction. Under state [section] 4310(1) of the ESEA for a school to qualify as charter school under this definition and receive federal Charter Schools Program funds, the grantee must assure that each charter school served was authorized by an authorized public charter agency as defined in section 4310(1) of ESEA.

Under 34 CFR 226.21, charter schools that receive grant funds through their state must use the funds for facilities. Allowable expenditures include rent, purchase of building or land, construction, renovation of an existing school facility, leasehold improvements, debt services on a school facility. Charter schools may not use these funds for purchasing land when they have no immediate plans to construct a building on that land. Charter school subgrantees may use grant funds for administrative costs that are necessary and reasonable for the proper and efficient performance and administration of this federal grant.

Other Eligibility Considerations: A state that is required under state law to provide charter schools with access to adequate facility space but does not have a Per-Pupil Facilities Aid Program for charter schools specified in state law is eligible to receive a grant under this program if the state agrees to use the funds to develop a Per-Pupil Facilities Aid Program consistent with requirements in the Notice Inviting Applications.

Each subgrantee or charter school selected to benefit from this program must assure the grantee that it has not relinquished full or substantial control of the charter school to a for-profit organization, for-profit management organization, also referred to as an education management organization or other for-profit entity. And each charter school must assure the grantee that it is fiscally responsible and transparent,

particularly with respect to contractual relationships with for-profit management organizations. To fulfill this requirement in selecting each charter school that it will serve under the State Facilities Incentive Program, the grantee must obtain an assurance from the school that it meets each of the components of the definition of charter school in section 4310(2) of the ESEA.

There's a lot of important content on this slide. The State Facilities Incentive Grant is a discretionary grant and we estimate that we will make one to three awards this fiscal year. The estimated available funds is \$30 million. The estimated range of awards is \$1 million to \$10 million and the estimated average size of the award is \$10 million. The project period is up to 60 months. I do want to emphasize that the Department is not bound by any of the estimates on this slide or in this slide deck or in the NIA. The estimated range of awards and the average size of awards are based on a single 12-month budget period. We may use available funds to support multiple 12-month budget periods for one or more grantees. And the application deadline, again, and you'll hear this several times throughout today's presentation, the application deadline is July 23, 2024, at 11:59 p.m. Eastern time.

I do want to emphasize here that Grants.gov offers applicant support but it will not be available on federal holidays. And we know that Juneteenth and Independence Day are two days that we have federal holidays between now and the July 23 deadline.

And so, at this time, I will hand it over to my colleague, Clif Jones. Thank you.

**Cost-Sharing, Matching Requirements, and Other Requirements:** The state must provide a State share of the total cost of the project. The minimum State share of the total cost of the project increases each year of the grant from 10 percent in the first year, 20 percent in year two, 40 percent in year three, 60 percent in year four, and 80 percent in year five. The state has options for what it may use to qualify as non-federal matching funds. The state may partner with one or more organizations and such organizations may provide up to 50 percent of the State's share of the cost of establishing or enhancing and administering the Per-Pupil Facilities Aid Program. The Department generally considers that state and local funds would be available for this purpose at least in the amount that was available in the preceding comparison year and that the federal funds and matching non-federal funds under this program would supplement that amount. Applicants that are provisionally selected to receive grants will not receive a grant unless they demonstrate by September 1, 2024, that they are or will be able to provide the State share required under the program.

**Supplement-Not-Supplant:** This program involves the supplement, and not supplant, funding requirement. Program funds must be used to supplement, not supplant, State and local public funds expended to provide per-pupil facilities aid, operations, financing programs, or other programs for charter schools. Therefore, the federal funds under this program as well as the matching funds provided by the grantee must be in addition to the state and local funds that would otherwise be used to provide per-pupil facilities aid in absence of this federal program. All state applicants, but in particular those that are enhancing existing charter school facility programs, must ensure that neither they nor their charter school recipients violate this program statutory non-supplanting requirements.

**Indirect Cost Rate Information:** For states, administrative costs include indirect costs, evaluation, technical assistance, dissemination, personnel, and any other costs involved in administering the state's Per-Pupil Facilities Aid Program. These costs may not exceed 5 percent of the grant award for each fiscal year in which funds are received. This program has a restricted indirect cost rate. For more information regarding indirect costs or to obtain a negotiated indirect cost rate, please see Indirect Cost Division webpage. Please send any questions concerning indirect costs to the Indirect Cost Division email address: [IndirectCostDivision@ed.gov](mailto:IndirectCostDivision@ed.gov).

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.

Build America, Buy America Act: This program is subject to Build America, Buy America domestic sourcing requirements established in 2021. Under this program, grantees, subgrantees, and contractors must assure grant funds for infrastructure projects or activities—such as construction, remodeling, and broadband infrastructure—meet the following requirements. All iron and steel used in the infrastructure project or activity are produced in the United States. All manufactured products used in the infrastructure project or activity are produced in the United States. And all construction materials are manufactured in the United States. A state grantee may request waivers to these requirements by submitting a Build America, Buy America Act Waiver Request Form. For more information, including a link to the waiver request form, please see the Department’s Build America, Buy America Waiver website. The link is provided. So, we are now at a question and answer part of our presentation.

So, we’ve received a number of questions. The first question is about, “The federal spending package indicated that there would be technical assistance, technical support that is provided for states with biennial legislatures who may struggle to meet timelines for state match. Can you please advise how we would get that technical support?” So again, tomorrow’s webinar is focused exclusively on the match and cost-sharing requirement. And we would strongly encourage you to participate in that particular webinar. But I will add, and I do want to be clear, there’s only a limited amount of technical assistance that we can provide, but that webinar is designed to focus exclusively on the match requirement and building out your budget. We would strongly encourage you to participate on that webinar. And if you have additional questions after we go through the content that we have to share in the TA that we are offering up for states that have biennial legislatures, we are happy to continue the conversation to the extent that we can provide TA beyond that particular webinar. But tomorrow is the webinar where we hope to provide some tools and resources to address that particular question.

On the availability of funds, you say that our, and I am reading the question here, “Say that our project proposes using \$30 million in federal funds over five years. When you say up to \$10 million, is that how much you plan to spend over a five-year period or might that be an annual amount?” So that is an annual amount. And so, for this year, and again these are all rough estimates; this year we have roughly \$30 million available. However, again, in the federal spending package, Congress gave us some flexibility to be able to move money across CSP Grant Programs to fund as many high-scoring applications as possible. So, although we are estimating that we will only have about \$30 million available, depending on the outcomes with some of the other grant programs, there may be more money available for us to make more grant awards. It may not be, but we do have some flexibility to make more grants and again, award higher dollar amounts, provided the funding is available. But we do provide these estimates just to provide some sort of guidance to applicants. But yes, all of the numbers that we presented on that particular slide are annual estimates.

So, with that, I will turn it over to Clif who will keep going with the presentation. Clif.

Thank you, Anna.

Competitive Preference Priority and Selection Criteria: This year’s competition has one competitive preference priority and five selection criteria. The competitive preference priority can award applicants that meet the priority 10 points and the selection criteria can provide 100 points to applicants for a total of 110 points for this year’s competition. So, there’s one competitive preference priority this year and any

year in which we make awards from this competition, that competitive preference priority is applicants that have not previously received a grant under this program.

So, the first selection criteria—Need for Facilities Funding—30 points are available for this selection criteria. There are two sub-factors for this criterion. The need for per-pupil charter school facility funding in the state and the second, the extent to which the proposal meets the need to fund charter school facilities on a per-pupil basis.

Reviewers may consider, when rating against the selection criteria, state budget proposals and tables; a description of how charter schools' costs and operating capital and interest costs are financed in the State and the level of that funding; a description of how public school facilities are financed within the State with a focus on a comparison between how facilities are financed for charter schools and non-charter public schools; a description of what represents an adequate amount of facilities funding for charter schools in the State; and a description of the unmet need for charter school facility funding absent the assistance that would be provided under the proposal.

The second selection criteria, Quality of Plan: there are 40 points available for this criterion. There are six sub-factors for this criterion. The likelihood that the proposed grant project will result in the State either retaining a new Per-Pupil Facilities Aid Program or continuing to enhance such a program without the total amount of assistance, state and federal, declining over a five-year period. The flexibility charter schools have in their use of facility funds for the various authorized purposes. The quality of the plan for identifying charter schools and determining their eligibility to receive funds. The per-pupil facilities aid formulas available to target resources to charter schools with the greatest need and the highest proportions of students in poverty. For projects that plan to reserve funds for evaluation, the quality of the applicant's plan to use grant funds for this purpose. For projects that plan to reserve funds for technical assistance, dissemination, or personnel, the quality of the applicant's plan to use grant funds for these purposes.

Reviewers may consider the following when rating the selection criteria: The enabling statutes and other relevant legislation; the program specific forms; Table One—per-pupil facilities aid paid by State; Table Three—grant funds as a percentage of the cost of per-pupil facilities aid; a statement identifying the activities proposed to be undertaken with grant funds and the timeline for the activities, including the distribution of funds; and the procedures the applicant may use for documenting grant project procedures and results.

The Grant Project Team: There are 10 points available for this selection criteria. There are two sub-factors for this selection criteria. The first: the qualifications including relevant training and experience of the project manager and other members of the grant project team, including employees not paid with grant funds, consultants, and subcontractors. The second: the adequacy and appropriateness of the applicant's staffing plan for the grant project. Reviewers may consider the following when rating against the selection criteria: A description of current job responsibilities, the educational background, and the experience and skills of each member of the grant project team as described in current resumes. The resumes should pay particular attention to experience in the fields of education, finance, and charter schools. Position qualification statements provided for any staff including through contracts the applicant plans to hire for the project. A staffing plan for the project including a description of the assignments by activity or service.

The Budget: There are 10 points available for this selection criteria. There are three sub-factors. The extent to which the requested grant amount and the project costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed grant project; the extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of students served and to the anticipated results and benefits; [and] the extent to which the non-federal share exceeds the minimum percentages, particularly in the initial

years of the program. Reviewers may consider the following when rating against this selection criteria: Program-specific budget tables. A description of how charter schools' costs including operating capital and interest costs are financed in the state and the level of that funding. A description of how the unmet need for charter schools funding absent the assistance would be provided under the proposal.

The fifth and final selection criteria, State Experience. There are 10 points available for this criterion and there is one factor. The experience of the State in addressing the facility needs of charter schools through various means including providing per-pupil aid and access to state loan or bonding pools. Reviewers may consider the following rating against the selection criteria: State budget proposals and tables. A description of how public school facilities are financed within the state with a focus on a comparison between how facilities are financed for charter schools and non-charter public schools.

Performance Measures: There is one GPRA measure for this program. The GPRA measure is the ratio of funds by state for charter school facilities to funds awarded by the Department under this program. Project-Specific Performance Measures: Applicants must propose project-specific performance measures and performance targets consistent with the objectives of the project and program. In the key definition section, you will find definitions for performance measures and performance targets. Some additional notes on performance measures. Throughout the grant project, state incentive grantees must report on their performance measures in the annual performance report. If a grantee is unable to report on a measure annually, it should not be identified as a project-specific performance measure. For additional support in developing effective performance measures, applicants are encouraged to review information provided by the Department's Regional Educational Laboratories [RELs] and other resources posted on our website.

So, we have reached another Q&A section of the presentation. There was a question regarding the monitoring of the state matching funds and according to Uniform Guidance, grantees must monitor the matching funds the same as they would monitor the federal funds. So, the same requirements for the federal funds are the same requirements for the matching funds.

And so, with that, I will turn it over to Thea. Thank you.

Thank you, Clif. Now, we are going to discuss the various components of the State Facilities Incentive Grant Program Application Package. So, this slide is an overview of the critical documents and resources that applicants should review in depth prior to submitting their application. The first resource is the Federal Register that publicly announces the Federal CSP SFIG Competition and contains the Notice Inviting Application, also known as the NIA, specifically for this competition. The NIA invites grant application submissions for the SFIG competition and outlines the instructions for applying to the grant competition. The Application Package Instructions provide guidance to assist you in the creation of your application. And the third resource listed here on this slide is the SFIG Competition website. Our website contains important information about the competition such as links to various competition resources including the FY 2024 NIA, provides information about our competition timeline, and other information that applicants can utilize.

So, a complete application consists of all the components listed here on the slide. Applicants should complete each component listed to the best of their ability and submit their grant applications using Grants.gov. Now, we will discuss the components listed here, starting with the Application for Federal Assistance, which is also known as the SF-424 Form. So, when completing the application for the Federal Assistance SF-424 Form, applicants should for line 8c use the same UEI number used when registering in Grants.gov. For line 16 a through b, enter the [Congressional] District the applicant's organization is located in and the district in which activities will occur. For line 17 a through b, use the start date of October 1,

2024, and applicants may request funding for up to 60 months, which is five years. And so, applicants should also include the end date, if they are requesting up to five years, of September 30, 2029. For line 18, this line should only reflect amount requested for the first project year, which is October 1, 2024, to September 30, 2025. And then for line 19, this program is subject to the Executive Order [12372].

So, the Abstract should use language that a range of audiences can easily understand and not exceed one double-spaced page. It should include basic information like the official name and address of the organization; the name, phone number, and email address of the contact person for the project; and the project title if applicable. Additionally, the Abstract Narrative should provide information on the project objectives, application priorities, proposed project outcomes, and the location of proposed sites.

The Project Narrative should consist of a response to the application requirements and selection criteria. Applicants should organize and we ask that you all organize your project narrative in the following order. So, starting with the table of contents. Then, following will be the competitive preference priority. Then will be a response to the selection criteria. And then lastly, the application requirements. As a reminder, the recommended page limit for the project narrative is 50 double-spaced pages.

So, this slide is just an overview of additional tips for when drafting and writing your Abstract for your grant application. So, this slide is an overview of the ED 524B Form, which is also known as our Budget Form. So, we're going to first start with discussing Section A, which is pictured here. So, applicants are required to complete all of the years for which funds are requested and that is up to five years. Requested funds must match the detailed Budget Narrative so it's important to check your math. If you have an approved Indirect Cost Rate, please provide that in your budget narrative as well as at the bottom of this form. As a reminder, the de minimis rates of the indirect cost rates have gone up from 10 percent to 15 percent. Construction is an allowable cost. Training Stipends is not applicable, so that line item would not be applicable. And applicants should know that because this program requires matching funds, Section B should also be completed of this form.

So, Section B of the ED 524 Form covers matching funds. As stated earlier, matching funds are required for this grant program. Therefore, applicants are required to complete Section B, which will allow for you all to provide cost-sharing or matching funds information for your state incentive project. As a reminder, lines one through 11 of Section B should be completed. For lines one through 11, column A through E, this is detailing each project year and this should be completed. And then, column F details, or applicants should provide in column F the total cost for each project period. And line 12 should show the total amount of what is contributed for all years of the multi-year projects. If non-federal contributions are provided for only one year, please leave this space blank.

So, what is the Budget Narrative? A budget narrative is an itemized budget in narrative/descriptive form. It is broken down by project year for each budget category listed in Section A and B of the ED 524 Form. The budget narrative must describe the budget activities during all years of your grant and should not include an assumption of a no-cost extension. Listed on this slide are additional budget forms that you can refer to as you are developing your budget narrative.

So listed on this slide is the Allowable Cost Framework. Cost must meet three criteria. [First of] which is Reasonable. A cost is reasonable if it's in nature and amounts, and it does not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person in comparable circumstances. A cost is Allocable if expended for a particular purpose or time period that benefits the grant. And the cost is considered Allowable if it is either permitted or not specifically prohibited in regulations and policies and necessary for the success of a project. Allowable cost also conforms to the limitations or exclusions set forth in the principles for Federal award.

Again, it's important that the information in your budget narrative aligns with the information in your ED 524 Form. The totals from your budget justification should match the totals on your budget narrative form. It is important that applicants align their budget narratives with the categories in the ED 524 Form, which in the long run will ensure that when it comes to monitoring your grant, that that process runs smoothly. Ensure that justifications are included for all costs and it is clear if costs are associated with the 5 percent that is allowable for administrative funds.

So now, we're going to do a quick overview of the Other Attachments Files. So listed here on the screen are required application components that should be uploaded as Other Attachment Files. So, as we can see here, we're going to start with Enabling the Statutes and Other Relevant Legislation. The next document would be the Table One, next Table Two, next Table Three, and then the Individual Resumes for the Project Directors and Key Personnel, Program-Specific Assurances, and then Appendices. The assurances can be found as a sheet to be signed in Application Package Instructions and they include assurances from statute in the NIA, as discussed earlier.

So now, we're going to do another overview of the tables listed here on this slide. So, the purpose of Table One is to determine the amount of per-pupil facilities aid and assistance in general for charter schools. Some things to note about Table One is that line 2a should include funds that are distributed on a per-pupil basis that are dedicated, one, solely for the funding of charter school facilities, and two, the portion of the funds that are dedicated for charter school facilities that are part of a distribution of funds that may be used for other purposes such as operating expenses for charter schools or facility funds for regular public schools. Additionally, line 3a should include operating funds for each: for charter schools per-pupil allocations to charter schools that are not designated solely for facilities, facility funds that are not awarded to charter schools on a per-pupil basis.

So, Table two is a Program-Specific Budget Form. Applicants should use this form to provide additional information about the administrative funds, indirect costs, per-pupil facilities aid for charter schools, and the total federal grants amount requests. This budget form should be aligned to the ED 524 Form that was discussed earlier in today's webinar.

So, Table three addresses the grant funds as a percentage of the cost per-pupil facilities aid. Each line includes instructions for how to calculate this percentage for each project period in the performance period. And lastly, the Program Specific Assurance. This is used to ensure that the applicant has the capacity to follow through with the matching requirement for this program. This form must be signed and submitted with your application package.

And so, this slide is an overview as to how to upload these Other Attachments as well as the Appendices. So, all attachments must be in a PDF or a Microsoft Word format. We highly suggest the PDF format. Each file should be labeled with the appendix name and then uploaded to the other attachments form. Please make sure to identify your attachments in your table of contents. The other attachment form can support up to 10 attachments. You can merge appendices into one document as needed. One tip is to avoid special characters in file names because they are not properly processed by Grants.gov when an application is uploaded. Please do not use colons or back slashes when naming documents. And for more information on these requirements, please see the Application Package Instructions for additional guidance.

Applicants should consider the following Funding Considerations. So successful applicants, the performance period will start on October 1 and applicants should use the budget period of the grants, not your fiscal year. Grants awarded may be made for a period of not more than 60 months, which is five years. And grantees must attend the Annual Project Directors' Meeting. Thus, applicants are encouraged to include the cost of attending in your proposed budgets.

This slide provides an overview of a resource that is available to all prospective applicants. So please refer to this slide for more information about Writing Competitive Grant Applications. Linked, you will see that there is a training course that is offered by the Department for writing competitive grant applications and we encourage all of our applicants to explore this training course and utilize it as needed.

And so with that, I'm going to pass this presentation back to Adrienne. Thank you.

Thank you, Thea. All applications must be submitted electronically via Grants.gov unless you qualify for an exception to this requirement. Applicants are required to follow the common instructions for applicants to the Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs published in the Federal Register on December 7, 2022. It can be found in 87 FR 75045. The link to this particular notice that was published in the Federal Register on December 7, 2022, can also be found in the NIA for this grant competition.

As a reminder, all applications are due no later than July 23, 2024, 11:59 p.m. Eastern time. Late applications will not be reviewed. Please be sure to include program contact information in your application. The contact information includes but is not limited to the project director's name, organization's name and address, email, and telephone contact information. We recommend for State Facilities Incentive Grant applicants to limit their application narrative to 40 pages. So, the recommended page limit is 40 pages.

As a friendly reminder, the application narrative is where applicants will respond to the selection criteria. Please refer to the NIA for details on the page and font requirements. Also, applicants are strongly encouraged to include a table of contents that specifies where each required part of the application is located. Please ensure that only U.S. Department of Education approved files are attached, see the NIA and application instructions for detailed descriptions 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 name to be less than 50 characters. Please be sure to refer to the application instructions for detailed information.

Grants.gov is an external application system used throughout the Federal government. Here is a screenshot of what the homepage looks like.

There is a registration process that you must undertake to be able to submit your application on Grants.gov. First, register with SAM.gov to obtain your Unique Entity Identifier. You need to set up an Authorized Organization Representative profile. Then, you will need to be authorized as an Authorized Organization Representative by your organization's e-Biz POC [electronic business point of contact] and then you can track your authorized organization representative status.

The registration process for Grants.gov is outlined on this slide. Please note that it could take up to four weeks to complete, so you need to start now if you don't already have the proper information to submit your application. You must be registered on Grants.gov to submit an application. However, you can search grant opportunities and download application packages without registration.

So, this slide just shows you where you need to register. Again, it is SAM.gov and the deadline for the application, again, is July 23, 2024.

So here are a few other tips to help you use Grants.gov. For detailed instructions, review the Grants.gov Submission Procedures and Tips for Applicants on the application page. An applicant must download the correct version of Adobe in order to read any Grants.gov application packages. In Adobe, applicants must

move all mandatory forms from left to right in order to open each form. Once the form is on the right side, the applicant can complete and save each form. While in process, the application package is saved offline. Once you download the application, multiple people can work on it and you can work offline. Make sure to save often. I'll just repeat that one more time, make sure to save often. Include both forms and attachments in your application. Submit all documents as PDFs. Once the application is complete, the Save and Submit button becomes active. Press the final Save and Submit button before the final submission of the application. And just to reiterate, that date is July 23, 11:59 p.m. Eastern Standard Time.

Here are a few ways to tell if your application submission In Grants.gov was successful or unsuccessful. With a successful submission, you should receive a confirmation email with a time and date stamp and an assigned tracking number from Grants.gov. A validation email from Grants.gov. This means the application is ready for the Department to pick up. An email with your assigned PR Award number is also an indication that your application was submitted successfully.

Signs that the submission was not successful include not receiving a confirmation email with the date and time stamp and an assigned tracking number from Grants.gov. If the application is received after the deadline, and again, the deadline is July 23, 2024, 11:59 p.m. Eastern time, or validation is not successful, the applicant should receive an error email. The email may list the error or applicant can use their tracking number to find the submission error.

This slide will give you instructions on how to Track Your Application Submission or check on a submission error. The screenshot shows the navigation on Grants.gov on where to track your application in the Track My Application link. Once you've navigated there, verify that your submission was on time and validated successfully. The date and time received should be earlier than 11:59 p.m. on July 23, 2024. The application status should be validated. Do not rely solely on email to confirm whether your application has been received on time and validated successfully. Take these steps outlined here to track your application and confirm on Grants.gov.

Here are some additional tips for Application Submission. Save a copy of your application. Original signatures on forms may be requested by the Department at a later date. Applications cannot be un-submitted; they cannot be in an un-submitted status. Applicants may resubmit an application at any point before the closing deadline. The Department will review the most recent submission before the closing date and time. If you experience problems submitting your application via Grants.gov, reach out to the support desk at the number provided on this screen. Make sure to keep a record of the Case Support Number. If these documented technical issues cause you to submit an application after the 11:59 p.m. Eastern time, July 23, 2024, July 23, 2024, deadline, contact the person listed in the 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 explanation and grant a one-day extension if we can confirm that a technical problem occurred with the Grants.gov system and that a problem affected your ability to submit your application by the deadline. The Department will contact you after a determination is made on whether your application will be accepted. An extension may be granted only due to the unavailability of or technical problems with the Grants.gov system. We will not grant you an extension if you fail to fully register to submit your application on Grants.gov before the application deadline, date, and time or if the technical problem you experienced is unrelated to Grants.gov. We recommend you take a few minutes today to make sure your organization has an active Grants.gov account.

The Application Review Process: The application review process has four stages. First, the Eligibility Review. Before making awards, the Department will screen applications submitted in accordance with the

requirements in the notice to determine whether applications have met eligibility and other requirements. The screening process may additionally occur at various stages in the review process. Applicants that are determined to be ineligible will not receive a grant regardless of peer reviewer scores or comments.

Next, is the Peer Review. During this stage, applications are evaluated by a three-person non-federal panel. Each reviewer individually reads, evaluates, and scores their assigned applications based on the selection criteria listed in the notice. The panel is given time to discuss applications as well as their respective scores and comments. The three reviewer scores are then averaged to create an overall application score. After the peer review, the rank order is created. The rank order list is prepared based on the overall application scores. The Department uses this list to determine how many applications will be funded based on rank-order scores. And finally, the award notification. Prior to making final awards, the Department's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education is in consultation with the Office of General Counsel, and other Departmental offices as appropriate will work together to develop funding recommendations and identify any special terms and conditions on the grant that may be needed. Following the vetting of the highest-rated applications, the competition manager will prepare and submit a funding slate to the Secretary for review and approval.

This slide notes applicable statutory and regulatory requirements. Please be sure to review this information ahead of writing your application.

Resources and Reminders: Here are several resources to help support you while you are writing your application. Please be sure to review these documents as you work with your team on your application.

So, the next few slides will discuss Additional Notes to consider for the application package. Here are some important reminders for applicants. You need to review the NIA, the Application Package, and the Charter Schools Program State Facilities Incentive Grant Competition website. All of the links are here on this particular page. Also, the Notice of Intent, so we recommend and we encourage you to send us a notification if you intend to apply. This is optional. It is not mandatory. If you do not submit a notice of intent to apply, it's okay. We will still review your application so long as you are an eligible entity and you meet other requirements.

Registration, again, cannot emphasize enough that you want to register on SAM.gov as well as Grants.gov. You want to make sure that you are ready to go. And in order to do that, you want to probably log onto those two websites today, just to know your status. And then, Technical Assistance: Utilize the Charter Schools Program technical assistance webinars and other resources and you can find that information at the link that's available on this particular slide.

Again, and I can't emphasize this enough, the closing date is on July 23, 2024, at 11:59 p.m.

If your application is successful, we will notify your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators and send you a Grant Award Notification, commonly known as GAN. We will also notify you informally. If your application is not evaluated or selected for funding, we will notify you via mail.

We received a question earlier about infrastructure project—what does that mean? According to the Notice Inviting Applications, 2 CFR Part 180 applies to the State Incentive Grant Program, which is the part for Buy America Preferences for Infrastructure. Within 2 CFR Part 180 is a definition for infrastructure project. Infrastructure project means any activity related to construction, alteration, maintenance, or repair of infrastructure in the United States, regardless of whether infrastructure is the primary purpose of

the project. So again, if you go to 2 CFR Part 180, you can find some guidance on the code for federal regulations and how it addresses infrastructure.

In tomorrow's webinar, we are going to cover some of the scenarios when it comes to the cost-sharing and matching. There were questions regarding cost-sharing and matching that we intend to cover and address tomorrow by providing some scenarios that can help answer some of the questions that participants today had when it comes to cost-sharing and matching. So, with that, I'll turn it back over to Adrienne.

Thank you so much, Clif. Thank you so much to my Department of Ed colleagues, as well as our contractors, and to you potential applicants for hanging in there with us today. Have a wonderful evening. Thank you.