

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**Submission for OMB Review;
Comment Request**

AGENCY: Department of Education.

SUMMARY: The Leader, Regulatory Management Group, Office of the Chief Information Officer invites comments on the submission for OMB review as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

DATES: Interested persons are invited to submit comments on or before January 21, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Written comments should be addressed to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Attention: Lauren Wittenberg, Desk Officer, Department of Education, Office of Management and Budget, 725 17th Street, NW., Room 10235, New Executive Office Building, Washington, DC 20503 or should be electronically mailed to the internet address Lauren.Wittenberg@omb.eop.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 3506 of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. chapter 35) requires that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) provide interested Federal agencies and the public an early opportunity to comment on information collection requests. OMB may amend or waive the requirement for public consultation to the extent that public participation in the approval process would defeat the purpose of the information collection, violate State or Federal law, or substantially interfere with any agency's ability to perform its statutory obligations. The Leader, Regulatory Management Group, Office of the Chief Information Officer, publishes that notice containing proposed information collection requests prior to submission of these requests to OMB. Each proposed information collection, grouped by office, contains the following: (1) Type of review requested, e.g. new, revision, extension, existing or reinstatement; (2) Title; (3) Summary of the collection; (4) Description of the need for, and proposed use of, the information; (5) Respondents and frequency of collection; and (6) Reporting and/or Recordkeeping burden. OMB invites public comment.

Dated: December 17, 2002.

John D. Tressler,

*Leader, Regulatory Management Group,
Office of the Chief Information Officer.*

Office of Postsecondary Education

Type of Review: Reinstatement.

Title: Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need (GAANN) Performance Report.

Frequency: Annually.

Affected Public: Not-for-profit institutions.

Reporting and Recordkeeping Hour Burden:

Responses: 225.

Burden Hours: 2,250.

Abstract: GAANN grantees must submit a performance report annually. The reports are used to evaluate grantee performance. Further, the data from the reports will be aggregated to evaluate the accomplishments and impact of the GAANN Program as a whole. Results will be reported to the Secretary in order to respond to Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) requirements.

Written requests for information should be addressed to Vivian Reese, Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., Room 4050, Regional Office Building 3, Washington, DC 20202-4651 or directed to her e-mail address Vivian.Reese@ed.gov. Requests may also be faxed to 202-708-9346. Please specify the complete title of the information collection when making your request. Comments regarding burden and/or the collection activity requirements should be directed to Joseph Schubart at his e-mail address Joe.Schubart@ed.gov. Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339.

[FR Doc. 02-32094 Filed 12-19-02; 8:45 am]

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DATES: Interested persons are invited to submit comments on or before January 21, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Written comments should be addressed to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Attention: Karen Lee, Desk Officer, Department of Education, Office of Management and Budget, 725 17th Street, NW., Room 10235, New Executive Office Building, Washington, DC 20503 or should be electronically

mailed to the internet address Karen_F_Lee@omb.eop.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 3506 of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. chapter 35) requires that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) provide interested Federal agencies and the public an early opportunity to comment on information collection requests. OMB may amend or waive the requirement for public consultation to the extent that public participation in the approval process would defeat the purpose of the information collection, violate State or Federal law, or substantially interfere with any agency's ability to perform its statutory obligations. The Leader, Regulatory Management Group, Office of the Chief Information Officer, publishes that notice containing proposed information collection requests prior to submission of these requests to OMB. Each proposed information collection, grouped by office, contains the following: (1) Type of review requested, e.g. new, revision, extension, existing or reinstatement; (2) Title; (3) Summary of the collection; (4) Description of the need for, and proposed use of, the information; (5) Respondents and frequency of collection; and (6) Reporting and/or Recordkeeping burden. OMB invites public comment.

Dated: December 17, 2002.

John D. Tressler,

*Leader, Regulatory Management Group,
Office of the Chief Information Officer.*

Office of Elementary and Secondary Education

Type of Review: Extension.

Title: State-Flex Application.

Frequency: Semi-annually.

Affected Public: State, Local, or Tribal Gov't, SEAs or LEAs.

Reporting and Recordkeeping Hour Burden:

Responses: 21.

Burden Hours: 13,440.

Abstract: Application for State-Flexibility Authority ("State-Flex"). By statute, the Department can grant State-Flex to up to seven state educational agencies (SEAs) through a competitive process. State-Flex SEAs receive (1) the flexibility to consolidate certain Federal formula funds reserved for State administration and State-level activities for any educational purpose authorized under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) to assist the SEAs, and the local educational agencies (LEAs) with which it enters into performance agreements, in making adequate yearly progress and narrowing achievement gaps; (2) the authority to

specify how LEAs in the State use Innovative Program funds under Part A of Title V; and (3) the authority to, in turn, enter into performance agreements with four to ten LEAs in the State (half of which must be high poverty LEAs), permitting those LEAs to consolidate certain Federal funds and to use those funds for any ESEA purpose consistent with the SEA's State-Flex plan. The purpose of State-Flex is to assist SEAs and LEAs in those states to meet the State's definition of adequate yearly progress (AYP) and narrowing achievement gaps.

Written requests for information should be addressed to Vivian Reese, Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., Room 4050, Regional Office Building 3, Washington, DC 20202-4651 or directed to her e-mail address Vivian.Reese@ed.gov. Requests may also be faxed to 202-708-9346. Please specify the complete title of the information collection when making your request. Comments regarding burden and/or the collection activity requirements should be directed to Kathy Axt at her e-mail address Kathy.Axt@ed.gov. Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339.

[FR Doc. 02-32095 Filed 12-19-02; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act; Notice of Request to Obtain Public Comments Related to the Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act

SUMMARY: The Secretary of Education (Secretary) is soliciting comments and recommendations from interested parties on proposals for amending and extending the Higher Education Act (HEA). To facilitate the receipt of these comments, the Department has established a web site from which users can transmit their comments, suggestions and ideas to the Department.

DATES: We request your comments on or before February 28, 2003. If possible, we will consider comments received after that date.

ADDRESSES: Comments concerning the reauthorization of the HEA should be transmitted via the Internet: <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OPE/reauthorization>. The Secretary encourages interested persons to take advantage of this user-friendly web interface. Interested persons wishing to

submit comments by mail may address them to Jeffrey R. Andrade, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy, Planning and Innovation, Office of Postsecondary Education, 1990 K Street, NW., Room 8046, Washington, DC 20006
ATTENTION: HEA Reauthorization.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: To obtain additional information about the Department's reauthorization web interface please call Daniel Pollard or Jean-Didier Gaina at (202) 502-7575.

If you use a telecommunication device for the deaf (TDD), you may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339.

Individuals with Disabilities may obtain this document in an alternative format (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) on request to the person listed under **ADDRESSES**.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: As we begin to consider proposals to reauthorize the HEA, we look to ensure that the significant amounts of funding for the programs authorized in the HEA are wisely spent. We also look to build upon successful program results in providing access to students and improving the quality of postsecondary education.

Background

Since the last reauthorization of the HEA in 1998, funding for the programs authorized under the HEA has increased significantly. Notably, the amount of Federal student aid available has been increased by \$23 billion between 1998 and 2002. The fiscal year 2002 appropriations bill signed by President Bush on January 10, 2002, increased the Federal student aid available to students through the grant, loan, and work-study programs authorized by the HEA to a record \$69 billion for an estimated 8.1 million students. The President's fiscal year 2003 budget request would provide Federal student aid to an additional 340,000 students.

Many of these increases have been directed to those HEA programs that serve the neediest students. For example, the Pell Grant maximum was increased from \$3,000 in 1998 to \$4,000 in 2002, and funding for the Pell Grant program has increased from \$7.3 billion in 1998 to \$10.3 billion in 2002. The amount appropriated for the Work-Study program increased 22 percent from 1998 to 2002 to more than \$1 billion.

The period since the last reauthorization of the HEA has been a period of constant change and rapid growth for the Federal student loan programs. Education loans have become

a valuable source of postsecondary student aid for many students and parents. The total amount borrowed annually, including consolidation loans, under the two major Federal loan programs, the Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) Program—formerly the Guaranteed Student Loan (GSL) Program—and the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (Direct Loan) Program, has increased more than 50 percent, from \$36 billion in fiscal year 1998 to an estimated \$55 billion in fiscal year 2002.

Funding has also increased significantly for programs that aim to expand access and encourage first-generation, low-income, college students to attend and complete college. In fiscal year 2002, the Federal TRIO programs were funded at \$803 million, an increase of 52 percent from 1998. These programs serve more than 850,000 at-risk students by providing outreach and support services, as well as information about postsecondary opportunities. Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) has grown significantly since its inception in 1998 and in fiscal year 2002 was funded at \$285 million and serves 1.2 million students. Taken together, these programs represent more than \$1 billion each year in annual funding and provide services to 2.1 million students from low-income families to help them enter and complete postsecondary education.

Funding for programs authorized by Title III of the HEA that strengthen the quality of institutions that serve large numbers of disadvantaged and minority students has also been increased since 1998. Specifically, funding for Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Historically Black Graduate Institutions (HBGIs) has increased by 74 percent and 96 percent, respectively. Funding has also been increased for the Strengthening Institutions program to improve the academic quality, institutional management, and fiscal stability of a wide range of postsecondary institutions that serve large numbers of financially needy students by 33 percent.

Funding for the Hispanic-serving Institutions (HSIs) program authorized by Title V of the HEA has increased by \$75 million—a six-fold increase. This program provides significant support to expand and enhance the academic quality, institutional management, fiscal stability, and self-sufficiency of the colleges and universities that enroll large percentages of Hispanic students.

The emerging importance of American higher education in the