U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Formula Grant Electronic Application System for Indian Education (Formula Grant EASIE)

Getting Started

The links below lead users directly to pertinent information about the selected topic. Click on a link or scroll through the contents.

Introduction

The Indian Education Formula Grant Program (Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act) offers funding for eligible LEAs that serve Indian children. Each applicant is to provide a comprehensive program focused on helping Indian children to achieve to the same challenging state standards as all other students are expected to meet. The statute requires that projects be based on assessment of needs and prioritization of the unique educational, language, and culturally related academic needs of the American Indian and Alaska Native students.

Application for Title VII funds is through the Formula Grant Electronic Application System for Indian Education (EASIE), an online application system that is available via any computer that has access to the Internet. This Getting Started provides an overview of using EASIE. See the FAQs document for more detail. During the application period, questions not covered by the Getting Started or the FAQs may be directed to the Partner Support Center (PSC); contact information is provided in the last section of this Getting Started.

Eligible entities may apply individually; or in some cases an application may include multiple LEAs (see the FAQs). Where this Getting Started or the FAQs refer to LEA**s,** the plural applies to applications that include multiple LEAs.

Two Parts of Formula Grant EASIE. Formula Grant EASIE is divided into two parts, with each part having a separate open time period to access it. All official closing dates are published in the *Federal Register* and information published there is firm. There are no extensions to the timelines for submitting either Part I or Part II.

Part I: Student Count. This part provides data entry screens for you to enter the following:

- Your applicant type (individual LEA, consortium of LEAs, BIE school, Tribe, etc.).

- The student count period for your LEA and any partner LEAs, including beginning and ending dates for the count.

- The count of Indian students, by category, for the LEA(s).

- Enrollment of the LEA(s).

- Certification of your submission by an authorized official of the applicant entity. THIS STEP IS CRITICAL. Uncertified applications are not submitted to the U.S. Department of Education.

See screen-by-screen instructions in the FAQs for further detail.

Generally EASIE Part I opens in December, but be sure to consult the *Federal Register* for official opening and closing dates.

After Part I closes, the Office of Indian Education reviews Part I submissions; and applicants will be notified by e-mail of the opening date for Part II. However, be sure to check the *Federal Register* for official dates.

Part II: Program and Budget Information. This part informs you of your project's allocation based on the Indian student count total submitted under Part I and provides data entry screens for you to enter the following:

- The date you choose for your grant to begin.

- Student performance data for both Indian students and all students in your LEA(s).

- Your project objectives and the services and activities that you will use toward meeting these objectives.

- Professional development opportunities you will provide for personnel involved in your project.

- Your budget, based on a known allocation for the upcoming grant year.

- Your explanation of how you use and share performance information with your community.

- Waiver requests and waiver reports as required.

- Certification of your submission by an authorized representative of the applicant entity. THIS STEP IS CRITICAL. Uncertified applications are not submitted to the U.S. Department of Education.

See screen-by-screen instructions in the FAQs for further detail.

Generally, Part II opens in February or March, but be sure to consult the *Federal Register* for official opening and closing dates.

After Part II closes, the Office of Indian Education reviews Part II submissions. If additional information is needed, applicants are notified by e-mail and are asked to go back into EASIE to make necessary modifications. The review period generally extends from the close of Part II through early July. During that time period, the applicant's point of contact should be regularly check their e-mail used for EASIE in case changes are needed.

General Flow for Using EASIE. The general flow for using EASIE is as follows:

1. Access EASIE at https://eden.ed.gov/EDENPortal/

2. Log into EASIE using the login and password assigned during the registration process. If you haven't registered, contact the Partner Support Center; contact information is provided in the last section of this Getting Started.

3. In the left menu of the EDEN portal, select the active part—Part I or Part II to reach the main screen of that part of EASIE.

4. On the main screen, locate the section menu on the right-hand side and choose a section to work on.

5. Enter the data for that section.

6. Declare that section "finished." Users should indicate that a section is finished if (1) the applicant has entered the appropriate data for that item or (2) the applicant has not entered data for an item and does not plan to do so. (You can still edit after this step.) Some sections have sub-sections that must be separately declared "finished."

7. Do these three steps (choose section, enter data, declare finished) for each section until all sections are "finished." You can check the status of each section on the main screen of EASIE. Part I has only one section plus certification. Part II has 9 sections plus certification.

8. Once all sections are "finished" and you have no further need to edit the information, **certify your application**. By certifying, an authorized official of the applicant agency is verifying the correctness of the application and agreeing to abide by the program assurances once funds are awarded. While on the certification screen, review and download the program assurances. To certify, press the [I certify] button; this action releases the application to the Office of Indian Education (OIE) at the U.S. Department of Education. The system will provide an on-screen confirmation when the application has successfully been transmitted to OIE. The confirmation will provide the certifying official's name, date and time of certification. **Be advised that your application is not submitted to the Department of Education until you complete the certification step.** Because there will be no extensions to the closing date published in the *Federal Register,* we

strongly recommend that you complete and certify your application several days before the due date to avoid any possible technical difficulties. Call the Partner Support Center if you have any technical difficulties or questions about certification. See also the section on Certification in this Getting Started.

9. Download and save the PDF of your certified application. The PDF of your certified application will show the certifying official's name, date, and time of certification. Be sure to do this step before the closing date of the part you are in (Part I or Part II). Once the system is closed, you will not have access to the PDF except by calling the Partner Support Center.

10. Once certified/submitted, your application data will be locked from additional edits. To make changes to an application that has been certified/submitted, you must create a new version.

Part II only:

11. Send a copy of the PDF of your certified application to your state education agency.

12. Fax your signed Parent Committee Approval form to OIE within 3 days. (Schools funded by the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) and tribes applying in lieu of an LEA are exempt from this requirement.)

13. Follow any further instructions you receive in response to OIE's review of your submission; these requests will come via e-mail from the Partner Support Center.

Special Features of EASIE. Formula Grant EASIE provides several special features that will assist applicants in providing the data required for your application for Indian Education Formula Grant funds.

- **Actual allocation.** During Part II, you will be provided with your actual allocation for the upcoming school year before you are asked to submit your performance information, objectives, and budget. See the FAQs for factors that affect your allocation.

- **Selection from a List of Acceptable Choices.** On many of the EASIE screens, you will find dropdown lists of choices. You can be assured that all choices in the list are eligible entries. It will, of course, be your responsibility to ensure that your choices in each list are compatible with your choices in other lists. For example, if you choose an objective of mathematics at grades 6, 7, and 8, you should be sure that you provided assessment data for mathematics and that your services and activities are appropriate for improving mathematics at the middle school level. See the Objectives section in the FAQs.

- **Pre-population of ED*Facts* Data.** ED*Facts* is the U.S. Department of Education's (ED) data collection system containing performance information from state educational agencies (SEAs) about schools and federal education programs. To the extent that your state has provided the

necessary state assessment proficiency, attendance, and graduation data to ED*Facts*, that information for your LEA will automatically appear in your Formula Grant EASIE workspace. You may use these values or use your own values. See the Getting Started section on pre-population.

User Roles

EASIE provides three distinct user roles for applicant users. The user role determines what the user will be permitted to do in the EASIE application system.

- Managing User—This user role permits the user to use all applicant functions—add data; edit data; preview, save, and print the application information; certify/submit application data to the U.S. Department of Education; and create a new version to replace what has already been submitted.

- General User—This user role permits the user to add data; edit data; and preview, save, and print the application information. This user role does not permit the user to certify/submit or to create a new version to replace what has already been submitted.

- Certifying Official User—This user role permits the user to preview, save and print application data that was entered by either a general user or a managing user and to certify/submit that application. This user role does not permit the user to enter or edit data or to create a new version to replace what has already been submitted.

Applicant user roles are available during and only during the time periods when the EASIE application system is open for applicant use.

The primary point of contact is automatically assigned a Managing User role. The applicant entity must choose the user roles for any additional users. Additional users can be assigned to any one of the three user roles.

Only individuals who are employees of the applicant agency and authorized to enter or certify the information should have access to Formula Grant EASIE. Each authorized user must have an individual user name and password. **Do not share user names and passwords.** If you need user names and passwords for additional users, please contact Partner Support Center at 1-877-HLP-EDEN (1-877-457-3336).

Multiple Users – The system is designed to allow multiple users from the same applicant entity to access the system and enter data simultaneously. If two users work on the same screen (or page) simultaneously, the data saved last will be the data that goes into the database. Therefore, we recommend that you avoid

potential confusion by assigning responsibilities in such a way that no two users will work in the same section at the same time.

Pre-population from ED*Facts* Data

ED will pre-populate the following tables in Formula Grant EASIE from state submissions to ED*Facts* : student enrollment (for some applicant types), proficiency on state assessments, graduation rate, and attendance.

On EASIE screens that require you to report these data, to the extent that your state has provided the necessary ED*Facts* data files, the cells on the left side of the screen will display the ED*Facts* values; the cells on the right side of the screen will ask for your EASIE values. As an EASIE applicant, you may do one of three things to complete the EASIE data fields on the right side:

- Enter data directly into the EASIE data fields. You <u>must</u> enter this data if your state has not provided the ED*Facts* data files to pre-populate the data fields.
- Copy the ED*Facts* pre-population data to the EASIE data fields, individually or all at once by pressing the box or arrow(s).
- Copy ED*Facts* pre-population data to the EASIE data fields, as above, then modify it as needed.

The data for pre-population is refreshed from the ED*Facts* database on a nightly basis. This means that data files submitted by your state to ED*Facts* one day will show up on your pre-population screens the next day. ED*Facts* updates will not overwrite data that you have supplied.

The ED*Facts* pre-population tables in EASIE will always use data from the school year that EASIE applicants are required to use for their performance data, which is the last school year for which data are expected to be available at the time of application.

Download and Print Blank Forms

EASIE Part I and Part II. PDF samples of Part I and Part II application forms are available within Formula Grant EASIE. We encourage applicants to use these PDF versions as a resource—you can download, review, and circulate these documents, and use them to gather information in preparation for using EASIE. **However, do NOT fill in the blank application form and submit it to OIE. Provide all information through EASIE unless prior arrangements have been made with OIE via the Partner Support Center.**

- Sample Part I Formula Grant EASIE Application Form (pdf) is available via EASIE for your use.
- Sample Part II Formula Grant EASIE Application Form (pdf) is available via EASIE for your use.

Parent Committee Approval Form. If you are required to have a Parent Committee for your project, download the Parent Committee Approval form, complete it in hard copy with the Parent Committee signatures, and submit it to the Office of Indian Education by fax at (202) 205-0606 or by e-mail to Indianeducation@ed.gov.   *This form must be faxed to the Office of Indian Education within three business days of the certification of Part II.*

Parent Committee Approval Form (pdf) is available via EASIE for your use.

Title VII Student Eligibility Certification (Form ED506). Form ED 506 is also available via EASIE for your use.

Get Adobe Acrobat Reader

Data Entry Tips

Navigation within EASIE is similar to other online tools such as Turbo Tax. As you finish each screen and click on a navigation button (Back, Save, or Continue) within the system, the data is saved to a database. You can enter data over the course of multiple sessions without losing data.

The system will "time out" if there is no activity for 15 minutes. If the system does time out, you will receive the login prompt when you return. If you will be away from the system for an extended period of time, we recommend that you save the page you are on before you leave to ensure that no data entry is lost.

EASIE Parts I and II are divided into logical sections to facilitate online navigation. After successful login, once you click the active part (Part I or II) on the left side navigation panel, you will get the main screen for that part. At the top right of he main screen is a list of the sections, with links to them.

Throughout EASIE, there are five main types of data entry screens: text data, numeric data, either/or data, check-box data, and drop-down box data.

Text Data. For the sections within EASIE that require textual responses we recommend that users compose and save their response in Word and then use the copy and paste feature to move their response into the appropriate section of EASIE. The online system will not automatically save newly typed text, and will only save your work when one of the navigation buttons (Back, Save, or Continue) is clicked. Most EASIE text fields require fairly short responses; for the

larger text fields, data will be limited to a maximum of 1000 characters for a single response. If you exceed this limit, you will receive an error message and be asked to reduce the number of characters in the text, or risk having your response truncated after the character limit is reached. Additionally, these text responses will be saved as plain text, with no formatting, so do not devote time to formatting the text sections in Word.

Numeric Data. Generally, you will enter the data for these items directly into the cells using the numeric keypad or the numbers across the top of your keyboard. The tab key will advance the cursor from one cell to the next. The system will not allow users to copy entire tables directly from Word or Excel onto the screens. Each of the numeric fields has basic validity checks built in that will trigger the appropriate error message (e.g., student counts should be provided in whole numbers) if the rule is violated. Additionally, the online submission tool does not allow characters other than numbers to be typed into these fields. If your curser is on a numeric field and you type a letter, nothing will appear on the screen. To remove information entered by mistake, use the delete key not blanks or zeroes.

Either/Or Data.   For the sections that capture Either/Or data (choices where you are limited to a single response), indicate the answer as required using clickable radio buttons, where a dot appears in a circle.

Check-box Data. For the sections that capture data with the potential for multiple responses, indicate all answers that apply by checking the appropriate boxes.

Drop-down Menus. Some sections provide you with pre-determined permissible selections that you will choose from a drop-down box. Choose by clicking on your selection.

Below are other helpful data entry features included in the EASIE:

Missing Data. If your district is unable to provide data for one or more items in EASIE, indicate this by leaving the field blank. In Part II, you can explain such an anomaly by selecting the comment section from the menu on the main screen.

Validity Edit Checks. In the interest of improving data quality, some of the sections in EASIE have built in "validity edit checks" either to check for internal consistency or to check for large changes from the previous year. These edit checks mirror the data verification process that in the past was performed manually by OIE after the submissions were received. If your entry fails one of these validity checks, you will receive an error message and you must correct the invalid entry before you will be able to complete and certify your submission. The number of these edit checks will be increased in future years in order to better catch erroneous entries in the submission process rather than during the review process.

Screen Navigation

Specific buttons within the screens in EASIE include:

- **Left Menu Navigation Panel.** Throughout an EASIE data entry session, the left side of the screen will display links to the main parts of EASIE. Linking on Part I or Part II will take the user to the main screen for that part.

- **Section Menu on Main Screen.** The upper right portion of the main screen for each part displays a menu with the EASIE data entry sections. Users can use the links on this menu to enter any section, but should use the Save, Continue, or Back buttons at the bottom of the screen to leave a screen to ensure that the contents of any data entry are saved to the database before leaving the screen.

- **Definitions.** Primary definitions are located below the data entry tables. (Other definitions may be accessed from the FAQs.)

- **Scroll bars.** The scroll bars (both up/down and right/left) will appear on each screen as an indication that additional information is available. Use these to navigate a screen that has more text than is visible at one time.

- **Buttons at the bottom of screens**.
  - o **Continue**. The Continue button saves the information in the current screen to the database and then moves the user to the next screen.
  - o **Clear.** The Clear button discards any changes made to the current screen since the screen was opened or saved last.
  - o **Back.** The Back button saves the content of the current screen and then takes the user to the previous screen. **Use this button, rather than the browser Back button (at the top left corner of the browser screen), to navigate backwards as the <u>browser</u> Back option does not save the contents of the screen.**
  - o **Save.** The Save button saves the content of the current screen without going forward or back. Once users have clicked the Save button, they can log off or move to another section. However, when a user moves forward or back, as noted above, the data will automatically be saved without clicking the Save button.

Certification and Transmittal to OIE

Certification is Required. The last step of each part of EASIE (Part I and Part II) is the certification of your submission by an authorized official of the applicant entity. By certifying, you are verifying the correctness of the application. THIS STEP IS CRITICAL. Uncertified applications are not submitted to the U.S.

Department of Education. Failure to certify your application will prevent you from receiving funds.

What Certification Means. By certifying, an authorized official of the applicant agency is verifying the correctness of the application and agreeing to abide by the program assurances once funds are awarded.

When to Certify. You are ready to certify when all sections of the active part (Part I or Part II) are "Finished" and you have no further need to edit any information. You can ascertain if all sections are finished from the section menu at the upper right of the main screen for the active part. See also "General Flow for Using EASIE, under Introduction in this Getting Started.

Please note that having all sections marked "Finished", does not mean that your application is certified and submitted. You must complete the certification process by having the appropriate user certify the application.

Who Can Certify. Only users who have role type of Managing User or Certifying Official User can certify an application. Who may certify your application is based on the authority delegated to each of these users within your school system. See User Roles in this Getting Started.

How to Certify.

- **Part I.** Once data entry is finished for Part I, the final screen will display the *I Certify* button for Managing and Certifying Official users. The user should click this button, which will officially certify and submit the student count to OIE. For general users, EASIE will instruct the user to have the application certified by a Managing User or Certifying Official User. If you need to know who in your LEA has certification rights, please contact the Partner Support Center at 1-877-HLP-EDEN (1-877-457-3336) for more information.

- **Part II.** In Part II, Certification is one of the sections displayed in the section menu on the right-hand side of the main screen. Once all other sections are finished, a Managing User or a Certifying Official User should click the Certification section to display the *I Certify* button. That user should click this button, which will officially certify and submit the application to OIE.

Additional EASIE Versions
Once Part I or Part II of EASIE is certified, users can no longer make revisions to that certified part. However, the Managing User can create a new version if the deadline for that part has not passed. The fields in this new version will be pre-filled with the information submitted in the previous version. You should make necessary changes and then certify the submission of the new version.

Once you open a new version, the previous version will be archived by the system. Only the most recent version will be available for the applicant to edit,

view, and print. Once you certify the new version, it becomes the official version. If you open a new version but do not certify it before the deadline for that part, the latest certified version will be used. If you need access to previous versions, contact the Partner Support Center at 1-877-HLP-EDEN (1-877-457-3336) for help.

Printing File Copies of EASIE

PDF file copies of the EASIE application can be downloaded, saved, and printed as long as EASIE is in the open period for that part—you can access the Part I PDF while Part I is open; you can access the Part II PDF while Part II is open. The PDF file copy accessed before certification will contain all data entered and saved up to the point that the file was downloaded; however it does not contain the name of the certifying official or a date or time of certification. The PDF version generated after certification shows the name of the certifying official and the date and time of certification.

Be sure to save the PDF of your final certified application on a CD or on your hard drive during the application open period because it is your official record and you cannot access it from EASIE after the closing date.

If you create a second (or third or fourth) version of the EASIE application, the previously certified PDF file is archived. If you need access to previous versions, contact the Partner Support Center at 1-877-HLP-EDEN (1-877-457-3336) for help.

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. The valid OMB control number for Formula Grant EASIE (Electronic Application System for Indian Education) is 1810-0021. The time required to complete the information collection is estimated to average 5.5 hours per response, inclusive of both Part I and Part II, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202-4700. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to: Office of Indian Education, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., LBJ/Room 5C152, Washington, D.C. 20202-6335.

Contact Partner Support Center

The ED*Facts* Partner Support Center (PSC) is available for questions and technical support between 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, Eastern Time, excluding federal holidays. Contact PSC for all issues related to EASIE for the current application year, including technical difficulties, policy questions, registering new staff for access to EASIE, forgotten user IDs or passwords, etc. The PSC contact information is as follows:

Telephone: 877-457-3336 (877-HLP-EDEN)
Fax: 888-329-3336 (888-FAX-EDEN)
TTY/TDD: 888-403-3336 (888-403-EDEN)
E-mail Address: eden_OIE@ed.gov

The URL for the Formula Grant EASIE system is: https://eden.ed.gov/EDENPortal/

It can be accessed from any computer with Internet capability.