

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

October 20, 2008

Open Letter to All Potential Applicants Under the
FY 2009 Student Support Services Competition

Dear Colleague:

This letter is to inform you that the planned Fiscal Year (FY) 2009 Student Support Services (SSS) competition has been delayed for a year until FY 2010.

As you may be aware, the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 (HEOA) was signed into law on August 14, 2008. As a result of several statutory changes to the SSS program contained therein, including, but not limited to, the restructure of the activities for an SSS project into required and permissible activities and new provisions on applicant eligibility for SSS projects serving a different campus or a different population of students, it would be imprudent to proceed with the SSS competition until the Department of Education (Department) can fully address these changes in the program regulations and application materials.

To accommodate the delay in the competitive process, the Secretary has invoked the authority contained in the HEOA to make a one-time extension to the current SSS grant award periods to synchronize the grant periods. That is, the grant end date for all currently funded SSS projects with end dates in 2009 will be extended one year to August 31, 2010. Although this extension will not synchronize the grant periods for all currently-funded SSS projects, by delaying the SSS competition by just one year beyond its typical four-year cycle, potential new applicants will not find themselves in a position of having to wait another three to four years to submit applications. You can find updated information on the status of the competition on our Web site at: <http://www.ed.gov/programs/triostudsupp/index.html> and clicking under "What's New."

Thank you for your continued interest in the Federal TRIO Programs. We look forward to working with you as we move forward with the SSS competition.

Sincerely,

Vickie L. Schray
Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary
for Higher Education Programs

1990 K STREET N.W., WASHINGTON, DC 20006
www.ed.gov

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