

Archived Information

Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools

A Grant Competition to Improve and Strengthen
School Emergency Management Plans
(CFDA # 84.184E)

Information and Application Procedures for Fiscal Year 2008

Application Deadline: February 19, 2008



OMB No. 1890-0009 Expiration Date: June 30, 2008

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools

Assistant Deputy Secretary

January 2008

Dear Colleague:

Thank you for your interest in applying for the Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools grant (CFDA 84.184E) administered by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools.

This grant competition will provide funds to local educational agencies (LEAs) to improve and strengthen emergency management plans, including training school personnel and students in emergency management procedures and coordinating with local government, law enforcement, public safety, public health and mental health agencies.

Taking action now can help save lives, prevent injury, and minimize property damage in the moments of a crisis. Continuously reviewing and revising school and district emergency management plans is critical to ensuring a high level of preparedness. To help schools improve their emergency management plans, the Department has developed several resources related to emergency management for schools, including creating infectious disease plans, implementing an incident command system, and conducting exercises. These publications were developed in collaboration with the Department's Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Technical Assistance Center and can be found at <http://rems.ed.gov>. The Department's publication, Practical Information on Crisis Planning: A Guide for Schools and Communities also provides information on key concepts and components of strong emergency management plans. Every applicant to the Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools grant program should review this guide and address the four phases it identifies for emergency management—Prevention-Mitigation, Preparedness, Response and Recovery. The guide can be found at www.ed.gov/emergencyplan.

We look forward to receiving your application. Thank you for your efforts to ensure the safety of our nation's schools.

Sincerely,

/s/

Deborah A. Price

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I. Application Submission Procedures

Application Transmittal Instructions

Applications for grants under this grant competition may be submitted electronically or in paper format by mail or hand delivery. The electronic submission of applications is voluntary. However, if you choose to submit your application electronically you must use the site listed below. Note: You may not submit your application by e-mail or facsimile.

Attention Electronic Applicants: Please note that you must follow the application procedures as described in the Notice Inviting Applications for this grant competition, published in the Federal Register on January 8, 2008. Some programs may require electronic submission of applications, and those programs will have specific requirements and waiver instructions in the Federal Register notice.

If you want to apply for a grant and be considered for funding, you must meet the following deadline requirements:

Applications Submitted Electronically

You must submit your grant application through the Internet using the software provided on the Grants.gov Web site (www.grants.gov) by 4:30 p.m. (Washington, DC time) on the application deadline date. If you submit your application through the Internet via the Grants.gov Web site, you will receive an automatic acknowledgment when we receive your application.

For more information on using Grants.gov, please refer to the Notice Inviting Applications that was published in the Federal Register on January 8, 2008, the Grants.gov Submission Procedures and Tips for Applicants section on pages 6-8 of this application package, and the Grants.gov Web site (www.grants.gov).

You may access the electronic application for the Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools grant competition at the following Web sites: www.grants.gov or <http://www.ed.gov/programs/dvpemergencyresponse/applicant.html>.

Applications Sent by Mail

You must mail the original and two copies of the application on or before the deadline date. To help expedite our review of your application, we would appreciate your voluntarily including an additional copy of your application. Please mail copies to: U.S. Department of Education, Application Control Center, Attention: CFDA # 84.184E, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202 – 4260.

You must show one of the following as proof of mailing:

- (1) A legibly dated U.S. Postal Service Postmark.
- (2) A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the U.S. Postal Service.
- (3) A dated shipping label, invoice, or receipt from a commercial carrier.

(4) Any other proof of mailing acceptable to the Secretary.

If you mail an application through the U.S. Postal Service, we do not accept either of the following as proof of mailing:

- (1) A private metered postmark.
- (2) A mail receipt that is not dated by the U.S. Postal Service.

Note: The U.S. Postal Service does not uniformly provide a dated postmark. Before relying on this method, you should check with your local post office.

Applications Delivered by Commercial Carrier

Special Note: Due to disruptions to normal mail delivery, the Department encourages you to consider using an alternative delivery method (for example, a commercial carrier, such as Federal Express or United Parcel Service; or U. S. Postal Service Express Mail) to transmit your application for this competition to the Department. If you use an alternative delivery method, please obtain the appropriate proof of mailing under “Applications Sent by Mail,” then follow the mailing instructions under the appropriate delivery method.

Applications that are delivered by commercial carrier, such as Federal Express or United Parcel Service should be mailed to: U.S. Department of Education, Application Control Center – Stop 4260, Attention: CFDA #84.184E, 7100 Old Landover Road, Landover, MD 20785-1506.

Applications Delivered by Hand

You or your courier must hand deliver the original and two copies of your application by 4:30 p.m. (Washington, DC time) on or before the deadline date. To help expedite our review of your application, we would appreciate your voluntarily including an additional copy of your application. Please hand deliver copies to: U.S. Department of Education, Application Control Center, Attention: CFDA #84.184E, 550 12th Street, SW, PCP – Room 7041, Washington, DC 20202-4260. The Application Control Center accepts application deliveries daily between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. (Washington, DC time), except Saturdays, Sundays, and federal holidays.

Grants.gov Submission Procedures and Tips for Applicants

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

- 1. Register Early** – Grants.gov registration may take five or more business days to complete. You may begin working on your application while completing the registration process, but you cannot submit an application until all of the registration steps are complete. For detailed information on the registration steps, go to www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp. **Note:** Your organization will need to update its Central Contractor Registry (CCR) registration annually.
- 2. Submit Early** – We strongly recommend that you do not wait until the last day to submit your application. Grants.gov will put a date and time stamp on your application and then process it after it is fully uploaded. The time it takes to upload an application will vary depending on a number of factors including the size of the application and the speed of your Internet connection, and the time it takes Grants.gov to process the application will vary as well. If Grants.gov rejects your application (see step three below), you will need to resubmit successfully before 4:30 pm on the deadline date. **Note:** To submit successfully, you must provide the D-U-N-S number on your application that was used when your organization registered with the CCR.
- 3. Verify Submission is OK** – You will want to verify that Grants.gov and the Department of Education received your Grants.gov submission timely and that it was validated successfully. To see the date and time your application was received, log in to Grants.gov and click on the Track My Application link. For a successful submission, the date and time received should be earlier than 4:30 p.m. (Washington, DC time) on the deadline date, and the application status should be Validated, Received by Agency, or Agency Tracking Number Assigned.

If the date and time received is later than 4:30 p.m. (Washington, D.C. time) on the closing date, your application is late. If your application has a status of “Received” it is still awaiting validation by Grants.gov. Once validation is complete, the status will either change to “Validated” or “Rejected with Errors.” If the status is “Rejected with Errors,” your application has not been received successfully. Some of the reasons Grants.gov may reject an application can be found on the Grants.gov site (www.grants.gov/help/submit_application_faqs.jsp#10).

For more detailed information on why an application may be rejected, please review the Application Error Tips document (www.grants.gov/section910/ApplicationErrorTips.pdf). If you discover your application is late or has been rejected, please see the instructions below.

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

Submission Problems – What should you do?

If you have problems submitting to Grants.gov before the deadline date, contact Grants.gov Customer Support at (800) 518-4726 or use the customer support available on the Web site (www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant_help.jsp).

If electronic submission is optional and you have problems that you are unable to resolve before the deadline date and time for electronic applications, please follow the transmittal instructions for hard copy applications in the Federal Register notice and get a hard copy application postmarked by midnight on the deadline date.

If electronic submission is required, you must submit an electronic application before 4:30 p.m. (Washington, DC time), unless you follow the procedures in the Federal Register notice and qualify for one of the exceptions to the electronic submission requirement and submit, no later than two weeks before the application deadline date, a written statement to the Department that you qualify for one of these exceptions. See the Federal Register notice for detailed instructions.

Helpful Hints When Working with Grants.gov

Please note that once you download an application from Grants.gov, you will be working offline and saving data on your computer. Please be sure to note where you are saving the Grants.gov file on your computer. You will need to log on to Grants.gov to upload and submit the application. You must provide on your application the D-U-N-S number that was used when your organization registered with the CCR.

Please go to www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant_help.jsp for help with Grants.gov. For additional tips related to submitting grant applications, please refer to the Grants.gov Submit Application FAQs found on Grants.gov (www.grants.gov/help/submit_application_faqs.jsp).

Dial-Up Internet Connections

When using a dial-up connection to upload and submit your application, it can take significantly longer than when you are connected to the Internet with a high-speed connection (e.g. cable modem/DSL/T1). While times will vary depending upon the size of your application, it can take a few minutes to a few hours to complete your grant submission using a dial-up connection. If you do not have access to a high-speed connection and electronic submission is required, you may want to consider following the instructions in the Federal Register notice to obtain an exception to the electronic

submission requirement no later than two weeks before the application deadline date. See the Federal Register notice for detailed instructions.

MAC Users

If you do not have a Windows operating system, you will need to use the Citrix solution discussed on Grants.gov or a Windows Emulation program to submit an application using Grants.gov. For additional information, review the FAQs for non-Windows users (www.grants.gov/resources/download_software.jsp#non_window). To view the white paper for Macintosh users published by Pure Edge, go to www.grants.gov/section678/PureEdgeSupportforMacintosh.pdf or contact Grants.gov Customer Support (www.grants.gov/contactus/contactus.jsp) for more information. If electronic submission is required and you are concerned about your ability to submit electronically as a non-Windows user, please follow the instructions in the Federal Register notice to obtain an exception to the electronic submission requirement no later than two weeks before the application deadline date. See the Federal Register notice for detailed instructions.

II. Program Background Information

General Information

Eligibility

This competition limits eligibility to local educational agencies (LEAs) and consortia thereof.

Note: The REMS grant competition limits eligibility to applicants that do not currently have an active grant under this program. For the purpose of this eligibility requirement, a grant is considered active until the end of the grant's project or funding period, including any extensions of those periods that extend the grantee's authority to obligate funds (71 FR 70369).

For the purpose of this competition, the terms used in this application have the following definitions:

Local Educational Agency (LEA):

A public board of education or other public authority legally constituted within a State for either administrative control of direction of, or to perform a service function for, public elementary or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision of a State, or for such combination of school districts or counties as are recognized in a State as an administrative agency for its public elementary or secondary school.

The term includes any other public institution or agency having administrative control and direction of a public elementary or secondary school. [EDGAR §77.1]

Educational Service Agency (ESA):

An ESA is defined as an LEA that provides educational support programs, such as staff and curriculum development, purchasing, and other programs and services for a group of LEAs. ESAs are also referred to as Area Education Agencies (AEAs), Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), Cooperative Education Service Agencies (CESAs), County Offices of Education (COEs), Education Service Centers/Cooperatives (ESCs), Education Service Districts (ESDs), Education Services Units (ESUs), Intermediate Units (IUs), Intermediate School Districts (ISDs), Regional Education Service Agencies (RESAs), Regional Education Service Centers (RESCs), and Regional Offices of Education (ROEs).

Authority

This application package is based on 34 CFR Parts 75, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 84, 85, 97, 98, 99 and 299 of the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR). This competition is authorized under Title IV, Section 4121 of the

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

Official Documents Notice

The official documents governing this competition are the Notice Inviting Applications published in the Federal Register [See Section III (Legal and Regulatory Documents) of this application package]. These notices are also available electronically at the following Web sites: www.ed.gov/legislation/FedRegister and www.gpoaccess.gov/nara.

Resources

Any questions related to the requirements of this grant competition should be directed to the Competition Manager for this competition, Sara Strizzi of the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools (OSDFS), at (303) 346-0924 or via email at sara.strizzi@ed.gov. Additional information about the Department of Education's school emergency management planning resources may be found at www.ed.gov/emergencyplan.

The U.S. Department of Education will host a series of Grant Question and Answer teleconferences to answer questions regarding the REMS grant competition. For dial-in information and a complete list of teleconference dates and times, please visit: <http://rems.ed.gov>

For more information and resources on school emergency management planning, you may contact the Department's Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Technical Assistance Center at (866) 540-REMS or visit the Web site at <http://rems.ed.gov>.

Grant Awards and Project Period

The project period for this grant is 18 months. No continuation awards will be provided. Budgets should be developed for a single 18-month budget period. Applicants should list their entire budget request in one column on the Form 524. We suggest developing a timeline that starts on July 1, 2008 and runs through January 1, 2010.

Travel Budget

Applicants must budget for attendance at three required meetings. There are no registration fees for these meetings. For planning purposes, applicants should include funds for transportation, lodging, and per diem costs for the following meetings:

Meeting #1: Required Project Director Orientation Meeting

This one-day Project Director Orientation Meeting is intended to provide the grant Project Director with key information needed to manage and implement a discretionary grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Education. This meeting will be held within the first six months of the grant period.

Required Participant: Grant Project Director

Expenses for this meeting include:

- ❑ Round-trip airfare for one participant to Washington, D.C.
- ❑ Lodging expenses for one participant for two nights in Washington, D.C.
- ❑ Per diem expenses for one participant for three days in Washington, D.C.
- ❑ Funds for local ground transportation

Meeting #2: *Emergency Management for Schools Training*

This two-day meeting will provide participants with information related to developing emergency management plans that address all-hazards and that are developed around the four phases of emergency management: Prevention-Mitigation, Preparedness, Response, and Recovery.

Required Participants: Project Director and One School District Representative

Expenses for this meeting include:

- ❑ Round-trip airfare for two participants to a major U.S. city
- ❑ Lodging expenses for two participants for three nights in a major U.S. city
- ❑ Per diem expenses for two participants for four days in a major U.S. city
- ❑ Funds for local ground transportation

Meeting #3: *Required Advanced Emergency Management for Schools Training*

This two-day meeting will provide participants with training in advanced concepts in emergency management for schools.

Required Participants: Project Director and One School District Representative

Expenses for this meeting include:

- ❑ Round-trip airfare for two participants to a major U.S. city
- ❑ Lodging expenses for two participants for up to three nights in a major U.S. city
- ❑ Per diem expenses for two participants for up to four days in a major U.S. city
- ❑ Funds for local ground transportation

NOTE: All meetings will be held in the same hotel where participants will be staying or, within easy walking/shuttle distance. Hotels will be located in a central, downtown location. Therefore, costs for rental cars are not allowed.

Attendance at all three meetings by the required project staff is a REMS grant requirement. All REMS grantees, regardless of the size or location of the district, are required to meet this requirement. Grantees are also expected to attend the meetings in their entirety. Grantee participants that arrive late at the meeting,

leave the meeting early, or fail to send the required district participants, will not be in compliance with this requirement.

E-mail Addresses

As part of our review of your application, we may need to contact you with questions for clarification. Please be sure your application contains valid e-mail addresses for the Project Director and Authorized Representative.

Project Director Time Commitment

Applicants are requested to provide the percent of the Project Director's time that will be dedicated to the grant project if funded. For example, if the Project Director works 40 hours per week and spends 20 hours per week on REMS grant activities, then the time commitment for the Project Director would be 50%. We suggest that applicants include this information in the budget narrative or that they add this information to the Project Director line on the Department of Education Supplement to the SF 424.

Review of Applications and Notification of Awards

The review of applications and notification of awards for this grant competition requires approximately six to eight weeks. We expect to notify successful applicants by late June 2008. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified within 60 days of the award start date.

Contracting for Services

Generally, all procurement transactions must be conducted in a manner providing full and open competition, consistent with the procurement standards in §80.36 of the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR). This section requires that grantees use their own procurement procedures (which reflect State and local laws and regulations) to select contractors, provided those procedures meet certain standards described in EDGAR. EDGAR is available online and can be accessed at <http://www.ed.gov/policy/fund/reg/edgarReg/edgar.html>.

Because grantees must use appropriate procurement procedures to select contractors, **applicants should not include information in their grant applications about specific vendors, nor the names of specific contractors**, that may be used to provide services for the proposed project. Applicants may include information about the scope of work to be completed by outside contractors and contractor qualifications, however they should not pre-identify a specific contractor or enter into an agreement with any contractor(s) until the grant after the grant has been awarded.

Applicants should also consider the following guidance regarding conflicts of interest, competition, and sole source contracts. OSDFS staff will monitor all REMS grantees to ensure that appropriate statutory and regulatory requirements are followed.

EDGAR Sec. 80.36 Procurement -- Requirements

The requirements in EDGAR §80.36 establish the general procurement standards for Department of Education grantees. These provisions permit grantees to use their own procurement procedures, reflecting applicable State and/or local laws and regulations. Also, §80.36(b)(1) requires local government agencies, such as LEAs, to meet the minimum standards for procurement contained in §80.36.

Conflict of Interest

Grantees must maintain a written code of performance for their employees, officers, or agents.

Specifically, §80.36(b)(3) provides conflict of interest requirements that state, in part –

*Grantees and subgrantees will maintain a written code of standards of conduct governing the performance of their employees engaged in the award and administration of contracts. **No employee, officer or agent of the grantee ... shall participate in selection, or in the award or administration of a contract supported by Federal funds if a conflict of interest, real or apparent, would be involved.** Such a conflict would arise when:*

- (i) The employee, officer or **agent**,*
- (ii) Any member of his immediate family,*
- (iii) His or her partner, or*
- (iv) **An organization which employs, or is about to employ, any of the above, has a financial or other interest in the firm selected for award.***

* * * * *

34 CFR 80.36(b)(3) (2007 Ed), emphasis and formatting supplied. We consider an entity that prepares an application or an RFP for a grantee to be an agent of the grantee for the purposes of the grantee's written conflict of interest requirements. As an agent of the grantee, the policy and procedures of the grantee would have to prohibit the entity from participating in a procurement transaction that grows out of the application or RFP prepared by the entity.

We believe this result makes good policy sense because the entity would have inside knowledge regarding the intent of the grantee in the procurement process and would appear to have a competitive advantage in understanding and responding to the requirements of the RFP. These situations also create a playing field that is not level for all offerors, limiting the ability of a "fair" competition to produce contracts that appropriately balance quality of goods or services and price. We believe that the resulting conflict would erode public confidence about whether the procurement was one that best met the needs of the LEA or provided the best value for the project.

Section 80.36(b)(3) continues, requiring the written procedures to include enforcement tools to prohibit conflicts of interests, as follows:

Grantee[s] ... may set minimum rules where the financial interest is not substantial To the extent permitted by State or local law or regulations, such

standards or conduct will provide for penalties, sanctions, or other disciplinary actions for violations of such standards by the grantee's ... officers, employees, or agents, or by contractors or their agents. The awarding agency may in regulation provide additional prohibitions relative to real, apparent, or potential conflicts of interest.

34 CFR 80.36(b)(3) (2007 Ed).

Competition

Grantees must ensure that all competitions are conducted in a manner that provides for full and open competition that is not unduly restrictive.

Section 80.36(c) requires the following:

(1) All procurement transactions will be conducted in a manner providing full and open competition consistent with the standards of Sec. 80.36. Some of the situations considered to be restrictive of competition include but are not limited to:

(i) Placing unreasonable requirements on firms in order for them to qualify to do business,

(ii) Requiring unnecessary experience and excessive bonding,

(iii) Noncompetitive pricing practices between firms or between affiliated companies,

(iv) Noncompetitive awards to consultants that are on retainer contracts,

(v) Organizational conflicts of interest,

(vi) Specifying only a "brand name: product instead of allowing an "equal" product to be offered and describing the performance of other relevant requirements of the procurement, and

(vii) Any arbitrary action in the procurement process.

(2) Grantees ... will conduct procurements in a manner that prohibits the use of statutorily or administratively imposed in-State or local geographical preferences in the evaluation of bids or proposals, except in those cases where applicable Federal statutes expressly mandate or encourage geographic preference. Nothing in this section preempts State licensing laws. When contracting for architectural and engineering (A/E) services, geographic location may be a selection criteria provided its application leaves an appropriate number of qualified firms, given the nature and size of the project, to compete for the contract.

(3) Grantees will have written selection procedures for procurement transactions. These procedures will ensure that all solicitations:

*(i) Incorporate a clear and accurate description of the technical requirements for the material, product, or service to be procured. **Such description shall not, in competitive procurements, contain features which unduly restrict competition.** The description may include a statement of the qualitative nature of the material, product or service to be procured, and when*

necessary, shall set forth those minimum essential characteristics and standards to which it must conform if it is to satisfy its intended use. Detailed product specifications should be avoided if at all possible. When it is impractical or uneconomical to make a clear and accurate description of the technical requirements, a "brand name or equal" description may be used as a means to define the performance or other salient requirements of a procurement. The specific features of the named brand which must be met by offerors shall be clearly stated; and

(ii) Identify all requirements which the offerors must fulfill and all other factors to be used in evaluating bids or proposals.

(4) Grantees ... will ensure that all prequalified lists of persons, firms, or products which are used in acquiring goods and services are current and include enough qualified sources to ensure maximum open and free competition. Also, grantees and subgrantees will not preclude potential bidders from qualifying during the solicitation period.

34 CFR 80.36(c) (emphasis supplied). Based on these standards, RFPs should not include language that specifically identifies unnecessary requirements relative to eligibility or experience, or unnecessarily prescriptive requirements that could limit competition. For example, a REMS grantee may need assistance in developing a flip chart that includes material for quick reference in the event of some different crisis situations. In that instance, an RFP could appropriately request that the contractor develop a flip chart that summarizes roles and responsibilities for administrators, staff and students for specific crisis situations. However, RFP requirements that dictate that the flip chart must have a specific number of tabs or be printed in blue ink or other similar, non-substantive requirements, are unnecessarily prescriptive and limit the ability of offerors to propose alternative approaches that could be superior in terms of content and cost.

In the past, some RFPs for services to be provided under REMS grants that have been reviewed by OSDfS staff appear to include unreasonable eligibility or experience requirements that only a limited number of firms can meet. Other draft RFPs have included very specific requirements about format or other issues that aren't related to the quality or suitability of the goods or services covered by the proposed contract product quality or suitability. One of the primary purposes of the REMS grant program is to help local educational agencies (LEAs) and their community partners strengthen the emergency management capacity of their schools to respond to their unique hazards and vulnerabilities. RFPs that reflect only general requirements or rely on existing products or services do not maximize the opportunity for LEAs to receive goods and services that address local needs and improve local capacity.

OSDfS is also aware that in the past, identical RFP contract requirements have been submitted for review by completely different LEAs. These LEAs represent areas that are diverse in terms of size, geography, populations and other dimensions. Template RFPs do not fully capture the unique needs of individual LEAs. That identical RFPs came from areas of such divergent characteristics also suggests that they were prepared by a

single entity outside the LEA. Even if a particular contractor is not involved in preparing a RFP and, therefore, selection of that contractor does not create a conflict of interest, LEAs must be careful to review documents provided by contractors or current REMS grantees to help prepare applications to ensure that they are modified to reflect the unique needs of the LEA that would be served by the contract. **We believe that the use of identical RFPs and restrictive requirements they may contain does not result in a level playing field for offerors and are likely to produce contracts that do not appropriately balance quality and price – a primary goal of competition.**

Sole Source Procurements

Grantees shall only engage in sole source procurements when specifically appropriate and no other viable vendors exist.

Section 80.36(d)(4) includes the standards for use of sole source contracts:

(4) Procurement by noncompetitive proposals is procurement through solicitation of a proposal from only one source, or after solicitation of a number of sources, competition is determined inadequate.

(i) Procurement by noncompetitive proposals may be used only when the award of a contract is infeasible under small purchase procedures, sealed bids or competitive proposals and one of the following circumstances applies:

(A) The item is available only from a single source;

(B) The public exigency or emergency for the requirement will not permit a delay resulting from competitive solicitation;

(C) The awarding agency authorizes noncompetitive proposals; or

(D) After solicitation of a number of sources, competition is determined inadequate.

* * * * *

34 CFR 80.36(d)(4)(i). Our experience is that the field of emergency management services is growing at a rapid pace and many responsible contractors have the ability to provide technical support for the activities grantees must conduct under their REMS grants. In addition, one of the main purposes of REMS awards is to develop capacity to deal with emergencies. In that context, when an emergency arises, the grantee will have a plan for managing the emergency and will not need to procure goods or services on an emergency basis. Given this background, we do not believe that, as a general matter, the use of sole source procurement procedures for REMS grants is authorized under §80.36(d)(4).

Summary

We understand that many LEAs may not have significant experience in procuring major services under discretionary grants from ED. However, the preceding guidance is designed to help applicants and grantees avoid some of the major pitfalls that may arise in the procurement process. We expect that applicants and grantees will review their written procurement policies and procedures to be sure that they meet the requirements identified above. We highly recommend that applicants and grantees seek advice from

their legal counsel in their review of all procurement procedures so they can be satisfied that their efforts are consistent with this guidance and would not be subject to audit exception under Audit Circular A-133.

We also understand that conducting a competitive bidding process can take a considerable amount of time. Therefore, we recommend that applicants take this into account when developing their proposed project timelines for any projects that will include contracted services.

Expectations of Grantees

By submitting an application for this program, applicants agree to fully cooperate with any evaluation efforts conducted by the U.S. Department of Education (ED) and its contractors. At a minimum, grantees are expected to:

- ❑ Maintain records on the implementation of their project;
- ❑ Maintain records on the extent to which their program objectives are being met;
- ❑ Include specific performance measures in their evaluation plan;
- ❑ Document progress towards addressing the Government Performance and Results (GPRA) Act measures identified for this program; and
- ❑ Make ongoing project information, findings, and products available upon request to ensure the dissemination of knowledge gained from this grant program.

Grantees also may be expected to work with ED's Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools (REMS) Technical Assistance Center to collect key program information that will help assess the extent to which projects supported under this grant competition are meeting their goals and objectives. ED may use the results of these projects in an effort to identify and disseminate to LEAs those strategies that are effective in improving school emergency management planning efforts.

Paperwork Burden Statement

According to the paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for the information collection is OMB No. 1890-0009. The time required to complete the information collection is estimate to average 25 hours per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather and maintain the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20202-4651. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to: Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Room 3E318, Washington, DC 20202-6450.

The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA)

The Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA) is a straightforward statute that requires all Federal agencies to manage their activities with attention to the consequences of those activities. Each agency is to state clearly what it intends to accomplish, identify the resources required, and periodically report its progress to the U.S. Congress. GPRA is intended to contribute to improvements in accountability for the expenditure of public funds; enhance congressional decision making through more objective information on the effectiveness of Federal programs; and promote a new government focus on results, service delivery, and customer satisfaction.

As required by GPRA, the Department of Education (ED) has developed a strategic plan that reflects organizational priorities and integrates those with our mission and program authorities. We have also developed GPRA measures for the individual programs we administer, including Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Grants. The GPRA measures for this program are:

GPRA 1: The percentage of REMS grant sites that demonstrate they have increased the number of hazards addressed by the improved school emergency management plan as compared to the baseline plan;

GPRA 2: The percentage of REMS grant sites that demonstrate improved knowledge of school and/or district emergency management policies and procedures by school staff with responsibility for emergency management functions; and

GPRA 3: The percentage of REMS grant sites that have a plan for, and commitment to, the sustainability and continuous improvement of the school emergency management plan by the district and community partners beyond the period of Federal financial assistance.

The GPRA measures identified for REMS grants constitute the way in which we will measure the success of this initiative. Consequently, applicants for a grant under this program should give careful consideration to these measures in developing their projects, and particularly to how they will collect and report data for these measures. Grantees are required to collect and report data on these performance measures to the Department. We will aggregate data provided by grantees for these GPRA measures and use that data in developing future budget proposals. We will also share this performance data with Congress. We may also publish results from individual grants to illustrate how grant sites are making progress toward program objectives.

If funded, grantees will be expected to collect data on the performance measures established for this program, and report that data to the Department in their interim and final performance reports. Grantees are expected to complete all performance reports using the ED 524B Form:

http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/ed524b_cover.doc and
http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/ed524b_status.doc.

The ED 524B performance report requires that grantees report data on the GPRA indicators as well as on all project-specific objectives outlined by each individual grant as identified in project applications. Additional information about completing required performance reports may be found at
<http://rems.ed.gov/index.cfm?event=grantees#524bInstructions>

Tips for Preparing and Submitting an Application

A. Before You Begin

- Read this application package in its entirety and make sure you follow all of the instructions.
- Read the Frequently Asked Questions section in this application package.
- If you do not understand an instruction or requirement, contact Sara Strizzi of the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools at (303) 346-0924.
- For more resources related to this grant competition, visit the REMS TA Center Web site at <http://rems.ed.gov>.

B. Preparing Your Application

- Be thorough in your program description. Write so that someone who knows nothing about your school district or your proposed project plan can understand what you are proposing.
- Organize your application according to the selection criteria beginning on page 34. Pay careful attention to the information listed in the Notes for each criterion.
- Be sure your application includes a budget request (ED Form 524) for a single 18-month period (use one column only), and that you have completed the budget narrative justification. The budget narrative should provide sufficient detail about planned expenditures so Department of Education staff can easily determine how the funds will be spent. It is also helpful to include information about the percent of time that the Project Director will work on the project in this section, regardless of how this position is funded.
- Link your planned expenditures to the goals and objectives of the program. Do not request funds for miscellaneous purposes and make sure you demonstrate that your proposed expenditures are necessary to carry out your program.
- Be sure your application includes signed agreements from each of the following: Authorized Representative and the head of your local government, law enforcement, public safety, public health, and mental health agencies. We advise using the sample Partner Agreements provided on pages 105-108 to help you ensure that appropriate signatures have been obtained.

C. Submitting Your Application

- Use the checklist provided in this application package on page 111 to make sure your application is complete before it is submitted.
- Make sure you have met the absolute priority and included the signed agreements from the Authorized Representative and law enforcement, public safety, public health, mental health and head of your local government (again, we recommend you use the agreements provided on pages 104-107).
- Make sure all required forms, including the Program-Specific Assurance on page 101, are signed by an authorized representative of your organization.
- Transmit your application by the deadline date. If you submit your application electronically, you must use the Grants.gov Web site. If you use the U.S. Postal Service, make sure you have a legible postmark date. If you use an overnight carrier, be sure you obtain a receipt.

D. Next Steps

- If you submitted your application by mail, you should receive a postcard in approximately two weeks (depending on the volume of applications) from the Department of Education's Application Control Center acknowledging receipt of your application and giving you its assigned PR/Award number. If you submit your application electronically, the PR/Award number will be generated automatically when you submit your application. Please refer to this PR/Award number if you need to contact the Department about your application.
- Your application will be screened by Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools (OSDFS) staff to ensure that all program eligibility requirements are met, requisite signatures from partners are included and all required forms are included and signed by the Authorized Representative.
- Your application will be assigned to a three-person panel of peer reviewers who will evaluate and score your proposal according to the selection criteria in this package. Your application will receive a score from 0 to 110 depending upon how well you respond to the requirements of the selection criteria and whether or not your application qualifies for a competitive preference.
- A grant award document will be sent to applicants whose proposals score within the funding range. Unsuccessful applicants will receive a notification letter. Both successful and unsuccessful applicants will receive copies of the comments prepared by the peer reviewers. Please be sure your application contains a valid e-mail address for both the Project Director and Authorized Representative.

Emergency Management for Schools

Families trust schools to keep their children safe during the day. Thanks to the efforts of millions of teachers, principals, and students across the country, the majority of schools remain a safe haven for our nation's youth. The unfortunate reality is, however, that at some point many school districts in this country will be touched either directly or indirectly by an emergency or crisis of some kind.

The creation and maintenance of a safe school environment is an issue of national concern. Recent events that have occurred in, or around, schools have made it clear that schools must be prepared to respond to multiple hazards. Natural disasters such as hurricanes, earthquakes, fires, and tornados, can strike a community with little or no warning. School shootings, threatened or actual, are extremely rare, but are traumatizing when they do occur. The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and the devastation caused by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, reinforce the need for schools and communities to plan for natural crises and emergencies, as well as possible terrorist attacks. In addition, recent events and science demonstrate that schools and communities also need to take chemical/biological threats as well as potential public health emergencies into account in their planning process. While studies show that schools are the safest places for children to be during the morning and afternoon hours, schools and communities must take steps to enhance their level of readiness for potential emergencies.

Strong emergency management plans are not developed in isolation. Developing protocols to prepare for multiple hazards should be completed in coordination with officials from local government, law enforcement, public safety, public health, and mental health. These plans should include clearly defined roles and responsibilities based upon the Incident Command System and should be shared with all relevant stakeholders before a crisis occurs. To help reiterate and assess the district's plan for response, it is helpful to conduct practice exercises such as tabletops, drills, and full-scale exercises.

In developing emergency management plans, it is also important to consider the particular vulnerabilities a district or individual school may face. Conducting comprehensive vulnerability assessments—of school buildings and grounds and school cultures and climates—is an important first step in developing emergency management plans. For example, are schools located near a chemical plant or a military base? Are schools' physical plants able to withstand natural disasters a region may encounter? In addressing these, and all other potential vulnerabilities, it is important to ensure that emergency management plans are coordinated with State and local emergency procedures.

To ensure that protocols are consistent with the expectations of local emergency responders, schools should familiarize themselves with the four recognized phases of emergency management and build these into their plans:

Prevention-Mitigation: Prevention is the actions(s) schools and districts take to decrease the likelihood that an event or crisis will occur. Mitigation is the action(s) schools and districts take to eliminate or reduce the loss of life and property damage related to an event(s) that cannot be prevented.

Preparedness: Preparedness includes actions designed to prepare the school community for potential emergencies by coordinating with community partners through the development of policies and protocols, incident command systems, training, and exercises.

Response: Response is taking action to effectively contain and resolve an emergency.

Recovery: Recovery includes actions designed to assist students, staff, and their families in the healing process and to restore education operations in schools.

Plans that are developed to include these four phases should be reviewed and updated on a continuous basis. Moreover, each phase should be seen as being interrelated and as an extension of the others. For example, when creating school incident management teams during the Preparedness phase, school officials should consider the role that the team member will play during the Response phase.

In the event of an emergency, schools must also be prepared to communicate information to parents quickly and efficiently. Developing protocols and expectations for parents and guardians in advance may eliminate some of the chaos that can occur during, and after, an emergency. Schools should pay careful attention to parent/child reunification plans. In addition, emergency management plans must consider the specific needs of all populations – particularly children and staff with disabilities or special needs and parents and students whose first language is other than English.

A REMS grant will enable school districts to improve and strengthen emergency management plans to include:

1. All four phases of emergency management: Prevention-Mitigation, Preparedness, Response and Recovery;
2. Agreements to coordinate among education, local government, law enforcement, public safety, public health, and mental health in the strengthening and improving of the plan;
3. Coordination with the State or local Homeland Security Plan;
4. Support of the National Incident Management System;
5. A comprehensive plan that is based on an all-hazards approach;
6. Support from top leadership;
7. Pre-established roles for faculty, staff, parents, students and first responders;
8. Training programs for staff, teachers, and crisis response team members;
9. Drills and exercises for staff and students;
10. Review and revision of emergency management plans to reflect what works, what does not, and address emerging crises;

11. A district plan and a plan for each individual school building within the district;
12. A plan that does not leave any child (or adult) behind—addressing the needs of all populations, including students with disabilities and special needs;
13. A plan that addresses infectious diseases, including pandemic flu; and
14. Emergency equipment and technology (but not as a majority of the requested funding).

Schools play an essential role in ensuring the safety of their students in the event of any kind of crisis. In recent years, the U.S. Department of Education has been involved in several activities aimed at helping schools understand that important role. These activities include:

- ❑ Establishing the Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Technical Assistance Center (TA Center). The TA Center provides emergency management resources and technical assistance at no charge to schools and school districts. The TA Center can be accessed online at <http://rems.ed.gov> or by calling 1-866-540-REMS.
- ❑ Conducting grantee and non-grantee training for LEAs. Since 2004, the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools has conducted 13 training sessions across the country for grantee and non-grantee LEAs.
- ❑ Development of “Practical Information on Crisis Planning: A Guide for Schools and Communities.” This guide includes information on school emergency management and identifies some of the key principles in developing emergency management plans. Copies of the guide may be requested by calling ED Pubs at 877-4-ED-PUBS. The guide can also be downloaded at www.ed.gov/emergencyplan
- ❑ Development of “Threat Assessment in Schools: A Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and to Creating Safe School Climates” and “Safe School And Threat Assessment Experience: Scenarios Exploring The Findings Of The Safe School Initiative” (Interactive CD-ROM). The Department of Education worked with the U.S. Secret Service to develop a guide for educators with practical advice on differentiating between persons making idle threats and those posing actual threats and an interactive CD-ROM. The guide and CD-ROM are based upon extensive research on school-based attacks. Copies of the guide and CD-ROM may be requested by calling ED Pubs at 877-4-ED-PUBS. The guide is also accessible at www.ed.gov/emergencyplan. The CD-ROM may be ordered from the Department of Education's Publication Center (ED Pubs) by calling (toll free) 1-877-433-7827 or by emailing edpubs@inet.ed.gov. The publication ID is - ED002738C
- ❑ Development of “Tips for Helping Students Recovering from Traumatic Events.” This brochure provides practical information for parents and students who are coping with the aftermath of a natural disaster, as well as teachers, coaches,

school administrators and others who are helping those affected. The brochures is accessible at <http://www.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/recovering/index.html>

- ❑ Production of a “School Preparedness Virtual Town Hall.” The Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Education hosted a Virtual Town Hall on K-12 School Preparedness to provide an overview of grant opportunities, planning, training, and other preparedness tools available to school districts nationwide. The Town Hall is accessible at <http://www.vodium.com/goto/dhs/schoolprep.asp>
- ❑ Meeting and communicating regularly with the chief law enforcement officials from the nation's largest school districts. The chiefs help provide the Department with a better understanding of the problems they face regarding school crime and terrorist threats and on possible solutions.
- ❑ Meeting and communicating regularly with School Safety Center directors from across the country. Following September 11, 2001, approximately 20 States developed school safety resource centers to provide support, training, and information to schools in their State on issues of school preparedness and safety. The Center directors routinely provide the Department with valuable information regarding emerging issues related to school safety in their respective States.
- ❑ White House Conference on School Safety. Convened on October 10, 2006, this day-long Summit provided an opportunity for Federal, State, and local experts to discuss the causes of violence, the scope of school violence, steps for preventing or mitigating violence in the future, and strategies for healing and recovering following a traumatic event. President Bush, First Lady Laura Bush, Secretary Spellings and Attorney General Gonzalez all participated in this gathering. Transcripts and videos from the Conference on School Safety are available for reference at <http://www.schoolsafety.gov>.
- ❑ Collaboration with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools (OSDFS) works with DHS on several issues related to school emergency management planning, including the National Infrastructure Protection Plan (NIPP) and the National Response Plan (NRP). The NIPP is intended to integrate the multiple infrastructure protection initiatives within DHS into a single national effort. As part of this process, OSDFS is working to enhance school and higher education preparedness using the four phases of emergency management. The NRP is an all-hazards plan that incorporates the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and is used to coordinate Federal support to state, local, and tribal authorities, as well as the private sector, in the event of a domestic incident.
- ❑ The Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools grant competition, which helps school districts improve and strengthen emergency management plans. Funds can be used to train school personnel and students in emergency management; communicate emergency policies and procedures with parents;

coordinate with local emergency responders including fire and police; develop written infectious disease plans; purchase equipment; and coordinate with groups and organizations responsible for recovery issues, such as public health and mental health agencies. Since FY 2003, 511 grants have been awarded under this program.

OSDFS is pleased with the advances school districts have made in recent years in the area of emergency management. Emergency management planning may seem overwhelming. It takes time and effort, but is a manageable and worthwhile process that can result in invaluable savings to life and property, as well as aid in the restoration of the learning environment after a crisis.

Evaluation of REMS Projects

Evaluation is a powerful tool that supports program planning and an understanding of effective emergency management procedures. Therefore, applicants must propose to implement an evaluation of their efforts, using process and outcome performance measures that document the effectiveness of the project's strategies to improve and enhance emergency management plans.

It is important to remember that what constitutes success may differ from one project to another. In preparing the project design and evaluation plan, applicants are encouraged to develop performance measures that are based upon the specific goals and objectives of their project. The evaluation plan should include both qualitative and quantitative measures, as well as process measures. Applicants should also include a description of all evaluation instruments they intend to use. Examples of evaluation instruments include evaluation forms for training sessions, after-action reports from tabletop practice exercises, and process checklists.

Examples of possible quantitative objectives include:

- (1) Increase in the number of hazards addressed by the emergency management plans in each school;
- (2) Increase in the number of school staff trained in emergency management procedures; and
- (3) Improved response time to drills.

Examples of possible qualitative objectives include:

- (1) Improved partnerships between community partners and the school district;
- (2) Increased parent awareness of school emergency management procedures;
- (3) Increased ability to restore the learning environment after a crisis; and
- (4) Improved quality of response to tabletop exercises.

Examples of specific activities that may support project objectives include:

- (1) Purchasing "Go Kits";
- (2) Conducting training for staff on the emergency plan;
- (3) Conducting vulnerability assessments;

- (4) Implementing lock-down and shelter-in-place drills at each school; and
- (5) Establishing an incident command system.

Related process measures would include:

- (1) Purchase of X# safety supplies or “Go Kits” for schools;
- (2) Number, type, and relevance of training sessions held;
- (3) Number of vulnerability assessments conducted;
- (4) Number and types of drills or exercises conducted; and
- (5) Regularity and outcomes of incident command meetings and planning sessions.

Process objectives may have some additional qualitative or quantitative information associated with them. For example, the number and types of training sessions may also have related information regarding perceptions of the training (qualitative data) and the effectiveness of the training when tested using a practice drill (quantitative data).

Grantees may also be expected to work with the Department’s REMS TA Center to collect key program information that will help assess the extent to which projects supported under this grant competition are meeting their goals and objectives. The Department may use the data or products from these projects to help identify and disseminate effective emergency management strategies to other LEAs.

Funding Priority

Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), we consider only applications that meet the absolute priority established for this competition. Contingent upon the availability of funds, we may make additional awards in fiscal year 2009 and subsequent years from the list of unfunded applications from this competition.

Absolute Priority

We give an absolute preference to applications that meet the following priority, and fund under this competition only those applications that meet the following absolute priority: LEA projects to improve and strengthen emergency management plans, at the district and school-building level, addressing the four phases of emergency management: Prevention-Mitigation, Preparedness, Response, and Recovery. Plans must include: (1) training for school personnel and students in emergency management procedures; (2) coordination with local law enforcement, public safety, public health, mental health agencies, and local government; and (3) a method for communicating school emergency management policies and reunification procedures to parents and guardians.

Competitive Preference Priorities

Priority 1

Competitive Preference Priority for LEAs That Have Not Previously Received a Grant Under The REMS/ERCM Program and Are Located In an Urban Areas Security Initiative Jurisdiction

Under this priority, we give a 10-point competitive preference to applications from LEAs that (1) have not yet received a grant under this program (CFDA 84.184E) and (2) are located in whole or in part within Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) jurisdictions, as determined by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). An applicant must meet both of these criteria in order to receive the competitive preference. Under a consortium application, all members of the LEA consortium need to meet both criteria to be eligible for the preference. Applications submitted by educational service agencies (ESAs) are eligible under this priority if each LEA to be served by the grant is located within a UASI jurisdiction and has not received funding under this program directly, or as the lead agency or as a partner in a consortium; however the ESA itself may have received a previous grant.

Because DHS' determination of UASI jurisdictions may change from year to year, applicants under this priority must refer to the most recent list of UASI jurisdictions published by DHS when submitting their applications. The Governor of each State has designated a State Administrative Agency (SAA) as the entity responsible for applying for, and administering, funds under the Department of Homeland Security Grant Program (which includes the UASI program). The SAA is also responsible for defining the geographic borders for jurisdictions included in the UASI program. Guidance on jurisdiction definitions can be found at http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/odp/docs/fy07_hsgp_urbanareas.pdf

Priority 2

Competitive Preference Priority for LEAs That Have Not Previously Received a Grant Under The REMS/ERCM Program

Under this priority, we give a 5-point competitive preference to applications from LEAs that have not previously received a grant under this program (CFDA 84.184E). Applicants (other than ESAs) that have received funding under this program directly, or as the lead agency or as a partner in a consortium application under this program, will not receive competitive preference under this priority. For applications submitted by ESAs, each LEA to be served by the grant must not have received funding under this program directly, or as the lead agency or as a partner in a consortium application, in order for the ESA to be eligible for the competitive preference under this priority; however, the ESA itself may have received a previous grant.

Requesting Competitive Preference

Applicants that qualify for a competitive preference priority must submit an assurance specifying that the LEA qualifies for Competitive Preference Priority 1 or Competitive Preference Priority 2.

Applicants requesting to be considered for Priority 1, should include a specific request to be considered for that priority. Applicants should indicate the UASI jurisdiction in which the LEA is located on the request. If the LEA is applying as a consortium, all LEAs in the consortium and their location to the UASI jurisdiction should be listed on the request for competitive preference. **The request must be signed by the Authorized Representative for the grant.**

Applicants requesting to be considered for Priority 2 should include a specific request to be considered for that priority. If the LEA is applying as a consortium, all LEAs to be served by the grant should be listed on the request for competitive preference. **The request must be signed by the Authorized Representative for the grant.**

Applicants may choose to complete the sample Competitive Preference Priority Qualification Assurance for that priority. The Assurances may be found on pages 102-103.

Note: Applicants that qualify for both Competitive Priority Preference 1 and Competitive Priority Preference 2 will only receive points under Priority Preference 1. For example, a district that is located within a UASI jurisdiction and has never received a grant under the REMS grant program, will receive a maximum of 10 competitive preference points under Priority 1. The district will not receive points under Priority 2.

Requirements

In order to receive funding, projects must be an eligible applicant and meet the above absolute priority, in addition to the following application requirements.

- To be considered for a grant award, applications **must** include an agreement that details the participation of the LEA and the following five **community-based** partners: law enforcement, public safety, public health, mental health, and the head of the local government (for example the mayor, city manager, or county executive.) The agreement must include a description of each partner's roles and responsibilities in improving and strengthening emergency management plans at the district and school-building level. The agreement must also reflect each partner's commitment to sustainability and continuous improvement of the plan. **Finally, the agreement must include an authorized signature representing the LEA (the Authorized Representative for your application) and each community-based partner.**

If one or more of these five partners is not present in your community, or cannot feasibly participate, the agreement must explain the absence of each missing partner. To be considered eligible for funding, however, at a minimum an application must include a signed agreement between the **LEA, a law enforcement partner, and at least one of the other required partners** (public safety, public health, mental health, or head of local government).

Applications that fail to include the required partner agreements, including information on partners' roles and responsibilities and on their commitment to sustainability and continuous improvement (with signatures and explanations for missing signatures as specified) will **not be considered for funding**.

NOTE: For consortium applications, each LEA to be served by the grant must submit a complete set of partner agreements with appropriate signatures from their own Authorized Representative and the five community partners noted above.

Although this program requires partnerships with other parties, administrative direction and fiscal control for the project must remain with the lead LEA for the project.

- Applications must be coordinated with their State Homeland Security Plan. All emergency management plans must be coordinated with the Homeland Security Plan of the State or locality in which the LEA is located. All States submitted such a plan to the Department of Homeland Security on January 30, 2004. To ensure that emergency services are coordinated, and to avoid duplication of effort within States and localities, applicants must include in their applications an assurance that the LEA will coordinate with, and follow the requirements of their State or local Homeland Security Plan for emergency services and initiatives.
- Applicants must agree to support the implementation of the National Incident Management System (NIMS). The NIMS provides a consistent approach for Federal, State, and local governments to work effectively and efficiently to prepare for, prevent, respond to, and recover from domestic incidents, regardless of cause, size, or complexity.

Applicants must agree to implement their grant in a manner consistent with the implementation of the NIMS in their communities. Applicants must include in their application an assurance that they have met, or will complete, all FY 2007 NIMS requirements by the end of the grant period. Additional information about the FY 2007 NIMS requirements for local governments can be found at http://www.fema.gov/pdf/emergency/nims/imp_mtrx_tribal.pdf

(Note: An LEA's NIMS compliance must be achieved in close coordination with the local government and with recognition of the first responder capabilities held by the LEA and the local government. As LEAs are not traditional response organizations,

first responder services will typically be provided to LEAs by local fire and rescue departments, emergency medical service providers, and law enforcement agencies. This traditional relationship must be acknowledged in achieving NIMS compliance in an integrated NIMS compliance plan for the local government and the LEA. LEA participation in the NIMS preparedness program of the local government is essential to ensure that first responder services are delivered to schools in a timely and effective manner. (Additional information about NIMS implementation is available at <http://www.fema.gov/emergency/nims/index.shtm>.)

- The plan must also take into consideration the communication, transportation, and medical needs of individuals with disabilities and special needs within their school district.
- Applicants must agree to develop a written plan designed to prepare the LEA for a possible infectious disease outbreak, such as influenza pandemic. Plans must address the four phases of emergency management (Prevention-Mitigation, Preparedness, Response, and Recovery) and include a plan for disease surveillance (systematic collection and analysis of data that lead to action being taken to prevent and control a disease), school closure decision-making, business continuity (processes and procedures established to ensure that essential functions can continue during and after a disaster), and continuation of educational services.

Additional information about pandemic flu preparedness for schools can be found at <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/emergencyplan/pandemic/index.html> and <http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/school/index.html>

Additional Requirements

Participation by Private School Children and Teachers

LEAs are required to provide for the equitable participation of private school children, their teachers, and other educational personnel in private schools located in areas served by the grant recipient. In order to ensure that grant program activities address the needs of private school children, the LEA must engage in timely and meaningful consultation with private school officials during the design and development of the program. This consultation must take place before any decision is made that affects the opportunities of eligible private school children, teachers, and other educational personnel to participate.

In order to ensure equitable participation of private school children, teachers, and other educational personnel, an LEA must consult with private school officials on emergency management issues such as: hazards/vulnerabilities unique to private schools in the LEA's service area, training needs, and existing emergency management plans and crisis response resources already available at private schools.

Maintenance of Effort

LEAs may receive a grant only if the state educational agency finds that the combined fiscal effort per student or the aggregate expenditures of the LEA and the State with respect to the provision of free public education by the LEA for the preceding fiscal year were not less than 90 percent of the combined effort or aggregate expenditures for the second preceding fiscal year.

Reporting Requirements

Successful applicants are required to evaluate the effectiveness and outcomes of the activities funded under their grant and to submit an interim and final report documenting the effectiveness of the programs and activities funded under their grant. For additional information regarding project evaluation, please see page 27.

Technical Assistance

Grantees will receive technical assistance throughout the life of the grant. This assistance will take multiple forms, including meetings and workshops, telephone consultations, and other forms of networking to share ideas and identify resources. In addition, each grantee will be assigned a Federal Project Officer who will also serve as a resource. Grantees are encouraged to become familiar with using email, as most correspondence regarding their project will be delivered electronically.

Selection Criteria

The following selection criteria will be used to evaluate applications for grants under this competition. For ease of reading by the reviewers, applicants should develop their narrative description to follow the sequence of criteria provided below. The maximum number of possible points for all selection criteria is 100. **Note:** The criteria contain weighted subcriteria. Applicants must address each subcriterion to qualify for the maximum number of points for each criteria. The maximum score for each criterion is indicated in parentheses.

1) Need for project. (10 points)

In determining the need for the proposed project, the following factors are considered:

- a. The magnitude of the need for the services to be provided or the activities to be carried out by the proposed project. (10 points)

*Note: Under this criterion, we will look for a **clear and convincing demonstration of significant need** to improve and strengthen the LEA's emergency management plan, such as an explanation of hazards and vulnerabilities within the district.*

2) Quality of the project design. (40 points)

In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the following factors are considered:

- a. The extent to which the design of the proposed project reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice. (15 points)

*Note: Under this criterion, we will look for the applicant's understanding and incorporation of the **four phases of emergency management** (Prevention-Mitigation, Preparedness, Response, and Recovery) to strengthen and improve emergency management plans at the district and school building level. Applicants should also include details about their plan to develop a **written infectious disease plan** that includes pandemic influenza.*

We expect that applicants will propose comprehensive approaches that do not rely heavily on equipment and technology purchases.

- b. The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs. (10 points)

*Note: Under this criterion, we will look for the applicant's intent to develop a plan that takes into consideration the **specific needs of each individual school**. Applicants should describe how each school will develop an emergency management plan that is customized based upon its particular vulnerabilities and*

*student population. Applicants should also discuss how they will **address the needs of individuals with disabilities and special needs in their emergency management plans.***

- c. The extent to which the proposed project encourages parental involvement. (5 points)

*Note: Under this criterion, we will look for the applicant's **plan to communicate and disseminate emergency management policies and procedures to parents and guardians.***

- d. The extent to which the proposed activities constitute a coherent, sustained program of training in the field. (10 points)

*Note: Under this criterion, we look for the applicant's plan to provide relevant **training and/or exercises to school staff, emergency management teams, and students.***

3) Significance (15 points)

In determining the significance of the proposed project, the following factor is considered:

- a. The potential contribution of the proposed project to increased knowledge or understanding of educational problems, issues, or effective strategies. (15 points)

Note: Under this criteria, we will look for innovative strategies to improve and enhance emergency management plans that do not rely heavily on pre-packaged solutions and that could contribute to increased knowledge or understanding of emergency management planning for schools and their community partners.

4) Quality of the management plan. (20 points)

In determining the quality of the management plan, the following factors are considered:

- a. The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks. (10 points)

*Note: Under this criterion, we will look for the applicant's plan to **manage the development and implementation of emergency management plans at all schools covered by the project.** Applicants should include a detailed project implementation timeline in this section, taking into consideration any additional time that may be needed for relevant procurement procedures.*

- b. How the applicant will ensure that a diversity of perspectives are brought to bear in the operation of the proposed project, including those of parents, teachers, the

business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipient or beneficiaries of services, or others as appropriate. (10 points)

*Note: Under this criterion, we will look at the quality of the applicant's **planned coordination and collaboration with community partners** including, the head of the local government, community-based law enforcement, public safety, public health, and mental health agencies in the strengthening and improvement of the plan. This description should go beyond simply stating the roles and responsibilities discussed in the absolute priority. We will also look for the applicant's description of how their project is coordinated with their State or local Homeland Security Plan and how they plan to support **implementation of the National Incident Management System**. Applicants should also explain how the needs of private schools are included in grant activities.*

5) Quality of the project evaluation. (15 points)

In determining the quality of the evaluation, the following factors are considered:

- a. The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible. (10 points)

*Note: Under this criterion, we will look for a description of the evaluation plan that includes methods to be used to evaluate the outcomes and effectiveness of the project, including the applicant's plan to address the **Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) measures** established for this program. We will look for clearly identified project activities, objectives, and goals.*

- b. The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes. (5 points)

*Note: Under this criterion, we will look for the applicant's plan to **continuously monitor the project's implementation**, including a review of improvements made to emergency management plans. In particular, we will look for the applicant's strategy for modifying their emergency management plans and procedures to incorporate feedback received from site assessments, practice drills, or after-action reports. Please refer to page 27 for additional information regarding project evaluation.*

Frequently Asked Questions

General

- ❑ What steps can I take to maximize my chances of receiving a grant?
- ❑ How much money is available for this program?
- ❑ How many new awards will be made?
- ❑ For my GEPA 427 statement (see page 108), is it adequate to state that our organization does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, sex, etc.?
- ❑ What should I use as the project start date?
- ❑ What is the project and budget period for these grants?
- ❑ What is the deadline date for transmittal of applications under this grant competition?
- ❑ May I get an extension of the deadline date?
- ❑ Do applicants need to include the address for responses in the letter to the State Single Point of Contact?
- ❑ What is required from an applicant whose State Single Point of Contact indicates that they are not reviewing applications for this grant competition?
- ❑ By what date do applicants have to submit their application to their State Single Point of Contact, if participating?

Eligibility

- ❑ Who is eligible to apply?
- ❑ If an Emergency Response and Crisis Management (ERCM) grantee is operating under a no-cost extension, is the district eligible to re-apply?
- ❑ Are ESAs with active REMS/ERCM grants eligible to apply for REMS funding in FY 2008?
- ❑ May private schools apply?
- ❑ May institutions of higher education apply?
- ❑ May LEAs apply as a consortium of districts (i.e., collaborative, BOCES, etc.)?
- ❑ If a district received services under a previous REMS/ERCM grant, would that district still be eligible to receive Competitive Preference Priority 2 under the FY 2008 REMS competition?
- ❑ Can an ESA who is a previous ERCM grant recipient receive points under the Competitive Preference Priorities?
- ❑ Are previous ERCM grant recipients eligible to apply for the REMS grant in FY 2008?
- ❑ Is a consortium application serving multiple school districts given greater merit than an application serving an individual LEA?

Program-Specific Content Questions

- ❑ What must applicants do to prove that they plan to coordinate with local government, law enforcement, public safety, public health and mental health agencies?
- ❑ May applicants coordinate with more than five partners?

- ❑ What is meant by “law enforcement,” “public safety,” “public health,” “mental health,” and “head of local government”?
- ❑ How do applicants demonstrate “coordination” with State or local Homeland Security Plans?
- ❑ Will a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with one of the community partners suffice as a partner agreement?
- ❑ Can previous REMS/ERCM applicants re-use the partner agreements submitted with previous applications?
- ❑ What is the National Incident Management System?
- ❑ How do applicants demonstrate support for the implementation of NIMS?
- ❑ The FY 2007 NIMS requirements stipulate completion of several preparedness training courses. How do schools access those courses and who is required to complete them to demonstrate compliance?
- ❑ What is the Urban Areas Security Initiative?
- ❑ How do applicants know if their district is located within an UASI jurisdiction?
- ❑ If only part of an LEA is located within the UASI jurisdiction, do they still qualify for Competitive Preference Priority 1?
- ❑ Are applicants required to use an outside evaluator or may the Project Director also serve as the Evaluator?
- ❑ Is there a recommended percentage of the grant to be dedicated to the evaluator?
- ❑ May applicants hire an outside contractor or consultant to assist in implementation of the REMS project?
- ❑ How long can a grantee contract for services paid for with grant funds?
- ❑ How much work may be contracted out to a consultant?
- ❑ What is a vulnerability assessment?
- ❑ What does mitigation mean?
- ❑ Are prevention programs (i.e., bullying prevention, suicide prevention, violence prevention, etc.) allowable?
- ❑ May the Department of Education share a copy of an LEA’s application with the public?
- ❑ Are copies of successful REMS grant applications available from prior years?
- ❑ Is guidance available for incorporating the needs of students and staff with disabilities into a school or district’s emergency management efforts?
- ❑ Is guidance available for incorporating pandemic influenza plans into a school or district’s emergency management plan?
- ❑ Should parents be involved in creating the REMS application?
- ❑ How much detail should applicants include about project evaluation in the application?

Program-Specific Budget Questions

- ❑ What is the average amount of each grant?
- ❑ How should applicants count the number of school facilities in the district?
- ❑ What is the project and budget period for these grants?
- ❑ How does the Department differentiate between supplies and equipment?

- ❑ If a proposed budget is too high, will the Department of Education work with the applicant to reduce the budget, or will the application be dismissed?
- ❑ Is there a recommended salary for REMS Project Directors or Coordinators?
- ❑ Should applicants budget for private and faith-based schools?
- ❑ Is there a matching requirement?
- ❑ What is an indirect cost rate?
- ❑ How do applicants obtain a negotiated, unrestricted indirect cost rate?
- ❑ Who in an organization may be able to provide information about our negotiated, restricted indirect cost rate?
- ❑ May grant funds be used for professional development workshops for teachers and other educators?
- ❑ May districts use grant funds to hire program coordinators?
- ❑ May funds be used to hire safety personnel, a school nurse, mental health professionals, etc.?
- ❑ Many first responders will provide services to districts under this grant. Can first responders working with schools be reimbursed for this work?
- ❑ May districts use grant funds to buy safety and security equipment?
- ❑ Are funds to hire a NIMS trainer allowable?
- ❑ How much detail should be included in the budget narrative?
- ❑ What guidance is available on developing a budget narrative?
- ❑ Are there certain items that cannot be purchased with these funds?

Electronic Application

- ❑ How do I submit my grant electronically?
- ❑ Do I have to submit my application electronically?
- ❑ How do I register to submit my grant electronically?
- ❑ If I am submitting my application electronically, how should I submit the Partner Agreements, Program-Specific Assurance, Competitive Preference, and other forms with signatures?
- ❑ Does Grants.gov support the new Microsoft Vista Operating System?
- ❑ Do I need to provide the Funding Opportunity Number (Item #12) and the Competition Identification Number (Item #13) on the SF-424?

***Additional FAQs available at <http://rems.ed.gov>**

General

What steps can I take to maximize my chances of receiving a grant?

- Before preparing your application, read the application package carefully and completely.
- Follow all of the instructions exactly.
- If you're uncertain about any aspects of this application package, please first review the Frequently Asked Questions section. Most commonly asked questions are answered in this section. If your questions are not addressed, please contact the competition manager for clarification.
- Absolute priorities establish the parameters for applications under a grant competition. If your application does not meet the absolute priority or the additional requirements for this grant competition, it will not be considered for funding.
- Transmit your application on or before the deadline date of February 19, 2008.

How much money is available for this program?

Approximately \$24 million is available for these grants in FY 2008.

How many new awards will be made?

Approximately 96 new grant awards are anticipated under this program in FY 2008.

For my GEPA 427 statement (see page 108), is it adequate to state that our organization does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, sex, etc.?

No. An organization's non-discrimination statement is not sufficient to meet the GEPA requirements. A GEPA statement should outline an entity's potential barriers and solutions to equal access, specific to the proposed project.

What should I use as the project start date?

Should you receive a grant, the start date for a project may have to be flexible, depending on when funds can be awarded. We expect that grants will be awarded in late June, so please plan for a date soon thereafter. For planning purposes, the Department recommends using the following project period: July 1, 2008 – January 1, 2010. If necessary, your proposed project start date will be modified to a date shortly after the award date.

What is the project and budget period for these grants?

Up to 18 months.

What is the deadline date for transmittal of applications under this grant competition?

February 19, 2008.

May I get an extension of the deadline date?

Waivers for individual applications failing to meet the deadline will not be granted, except in the circumstances described under the section on Grants.gov. Under very

extraordinary circumstances the Department may change the closing date for a grant competition. When this occurs, the Secretary announces such a change in a notice published in the Federal Register.

Do applicants need to include the address for responses in the letter to the State Single Point of Contact?

Yes, applicants should direct them to send comments to the following address: The Secretary, EO 12372-CFDA #84.184E, U.S. Department of Education, room 7W301, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202.

What is required from an applicant whose State Single Point of Contact indicates that they are not reviewing applications for this grant competition?

Applicants should include a copy of such a response from the State Single Point of Contact in their application package submitted to the U.S. Department of Education and check the appropriate line on the SF 424 form.

By what date do applicants have to submit their application to their State Single Point of Contact, if participating?

Applicants must submit their application to the State Single Point of Contact on or before the deadline date for transmitting their application to the Department.

Eligibility

Who is eligible to apply?

Only local educational agencies (LEAs) that do not have an active REMS/ERCM grant are eligible to apply. A grant is considered active until the end of the grant's project or funding period, including any no-cost extension periods. For applications from a consortium of school districts, each district must meet the eligibility requirement (i.e., none of the consortium districts may be included in another active REMS/ERCM grant).

If an Emergency Response and Crisis Management (ERCM) grantee is operating under a no-cost extension, is the district eligible to re-apply?

In order to be eligible to for funding, the grant project period must end prior to the deadline for transmittal of applications for this competition, or by February 19, 2008.

Are ESAs with active grants eligible to apply for REMS funding in FY 2008?

No. The December 4, 2006 Notice of final eligibility requirement for the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools limits eligibility under the discretionary grant competition to applicants that do not currently have an active grant under the same discretionary grant program. This action was taken to ensure equitable distribution of awards among eligible applicants for grants under OSDFS discretionary grant programs and also to ensure that successful grantees have an opportunity to focus their efforts on completing a current project and to use information and results from that current project in designing future projects. An ESA with an active REMS/ERCM grant (CFDA 84.184E) holds "applicant" status for that grant award and thus they are not eligible to apply.

LEAs (either singly or in a consortium) that are served by an ESA that is not eligible to apply may submit an application, provided that the LEA, or the LEAs in the consortium, do not have a current grant or are not receiving services under a current grant. ESAs may support and assist an LEA or a consortium of LEAs in developing and submitting an application under this program, and may also participate in implementing the project if a grant is received.

May private schools apply?

No, only LEAs may apply for funding. However, all LEAs are required to provide equitable access to services for private school students and their teachers with these grant funds. (See requirement on Participation by Private School Children and Teachers on page 32.)

May institutions of higher education apply?

No, only LEAs may apply for funding under the REMS competition (CFDA 184.84E).

May LEAs apply as a consortium of districts (i.e., collaborative, BOCES, etc.)?

Yes; however, none of the LEAs can have an active REMS/ERCM grant and only one LEA may serve as the fiscal agent and administrative lead. The lead LEA is responsible for the administration of all grant activities, including the development of customized plans at the individual school building level. Plans that involve multiple districts need to include a management plan that is strong enough to support a multi-district project.

Consortium applicants that are requesting a competitive preference under either Priority 1 or Priority 2 will only qualify for the preference provided that all of the districts are located within a UASI jurisdiction (if applicable) and that none of the districts to be served by the grant have previously received funding under a REMS/ERCM grant.

If a district received services under a previous REMS/ERCM grant, would that district still be eligible to receive Competitive Preference Priority 2 under the FY 2008 REMS competition?

No, recipients of services under prior REMS/ERCM grants are not eligible to receive points under the Competitive Preference Priority.

Can an ESA who is a previous ERCM grant recipient receive points under the Competitive Preference Priorities?

Yes, ESAs are eligible for the Competitive Preference Priorities, but only if the ESA does not have an active grant and if **none** of the LEAs to be served under the grant have received services under a prior REMS/ERCM grant.

Are previous REMS/ERCM grant recipients eligible to apply for the REMS grant in FY 2008?

Yes, provided the REMS/ERCM grant is not in active status. Previously funded districts do not qualify for additional points under the competitive preference priorities.

Is a consortium application serving multiple school districts given greater merit than an application serving an individual LEA?

No. Each application is reviewed and scored on its own merit, regardless of whether it is an application from a consortium, or from an individual LEA.

Program-Specific Content Questions

What must applicants do to prove that they plan to coordinate with local government, law enforcement, public safety, public health and mental health agencies?

This grant competition is for LEA projects to review and strengthen emergency management plans, including training school personnel and students in emergency management procedures and coordinating with the local community-based law enforcement, public safety, public health, and mental health agencies, as well as local government. The absolute priority for this competition requires that applicants collaborate with these partners to review and strengthen their plans. Applicants that do not provide signatures of at least two of these partners (one of which must be local law enforcement), along with descriptions of each partner's roles and responsibilities in the strengthening and improving of plans, will not be read.

It is important to ensure that necessary partners are familiar with schools, facilities, and students before an event occurs. To fully meet this requirement, applicants must include partner agreements that detail not only partners' names, but also specific examples of the roles and responsibilities each partner will have in the emergency management plan. Therefore, we require applicants to work with local partners, drawing on their knowledge and expertise as they review and revise school-based emergency management plans, and then provide them with a copy of the final plan. We understand that not all applicants may, for specific reasons, be able to include all of these partners.

An application is eligible if only two signatures from the list of partners are included; however, one of the partners must be the local law enforcement agency. Applicants must provide explanations when fewer than all five signatures are submitted. We strongly encourage participation and coordination of all these partners, for the safety of students and the successful implementation of school plans. Applicants are encouraged to use the Partner Agreements form provided in this application package on pages 104-107 to obtain the signatures and details of the roles and responsibilities.

NOTE: For consortium applications, each LEA to be served by the grant must submit a complete set of partner agreements with appropriate signatures from their own Authorized Representative and the five community partners noted above.

May applicants coordinate with more than five partners?

Yes. The Department only requires that applicants demonstrate (with signatures and descriptions of their responsibilities) coordination with at least two of the partners in the

list noted above, but, if an applicant would like to coordinate with others (i.e., public works or transportation departments), they are welcome to do so.

What is meant by “law enforcement,” “public safety,” “public health,” “mental health,” and “head of local government”?

These labels may mean different things in different communities. The most relevant “law enforcement” partner for one community plan may be the local sheriff’s office or the police chief. “Public safety” may be the local fire department or a community-based emergency medical services entity. “Public health” may be the community public health organization that serves a district. “Mental health” may be the local agency that provides mental health services to children. “Head of local government” may be the mayor, the county executive, the city manager, or the head of the town council. While different localities have different names for these entities and individuals, what is important is that applicants include the relevant high-level community-based representatives in the strengthening and improving of the plan, so that they are familiar with local schools and students *before* a crisis occurs.

How do applicants demonstrate “coordination” with State or local Homeland Security Plans?

Applicants should consult with their State or local emergency management agency during the development of their application to ensure that efforts are coordinated. Applicants do not need to obtain a formal approval from their State/local emergency management agency on their plan, nor do they need to see a copy of their State or local Homeland Security plan. However, they must indicate in their application how State and LEA emergency services and initiatives are coordinated. Applicants must also include a signed assurance with their application acknowledging such coordination.

Contact information for State Homeland Security agencies may be found at http://www.dhs.gov/xgovt/editorial_0291.shtm

Will a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with one of the community partners suffice as a partner agreement?

The signed agreement must state the partners and detail each of their roles in carrying out the grant activities and improving project performance. The agreement must be written specifically for this project and should identify specific responsibilities in connection to the proposed project. A separate MOU from a previously established relationship will not meet the requirements.

Can previous REMS/ERCM applicants re-use the partner agreements submitted with previous applications?

No, all applicants must submit new partner agreements.

What is the National Incident Management System?

On February 28, 2003, the President issued Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD)-5, which directs the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security to develop and administer a National Incident Management Systems (NIMS). The NIMS

provides a consistent approach for Federal, State, and local governments to work together to prepare for, prevent, respond to, and recover from domestic incidents, regardless of cause, size, or complexity. Additional information on the NIMS may be found at <http://www.fema.gov/emergency/nims/index.shtm> and <http://rems.ed.gov/views/documents/NIMS.pdf>

How do applicants demonstrate support for the implementation of NIMS?

Since school districts are an integral part of local government, their use of NIMS should be achieved in close coordination with other components of the local government. School districts are not traditional response organizations; they more typically are recipients of first responder services provided by fire and rescue, emergency medical and law enforcement agencies. This traditional relationship should be acknowledged in achieving NIMS compliance within an integrated local government plan for NIMS compliance. School district participation in local government's NIMS preparedness program is essential to ensure that first responder services are delivered to schools in a timely and effective manner. Applicants must also include a signed assurance with their application stating that the LEA has met, or will complete, all NIMS requirements by the end of the grant period.

The FY 2007 NIMS requirements stipulate completion of several preparedness training courses. How do schools access those courses and who is required to complete them to demonstrate compliance?

FY 2007 NIMS compliance activities for tribal and local jurisdictions include completion of four courses: *IS-700 NIMS: An Introduction*, *IS-800 NRP: An Introduction*, *ICS-100*, and *ICS-200*. Each of these courses are available online, free of charge through the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Emergency Management Institute: <http://training.fema.gov/>

The NIMS Implementation guidance for FY 2007 includes information about who should complete each course:

IS-700 NIMS: An Introduction should be completed by all personnel with a direct role in emergency preparedness, incident management or response.

IS-800 NRP: An Introduction should be completed by emergency management personnel in middle management and command and general staff.

ICS 100 should be completed by all personnel with a direct role in emergency preparedness, incident management or response.

ICS 200 should be completed by emergency management personnel in middle management and command and general staff.

Command staff generally refers to any staff that serves in the role of incident commander, public information officer, safety officer, or liaison officer. General staff

includes any staff that serve on the Operations, Planning, Logistics, or Finance/Administration branches of the Incident Command System.

What is the Urban Areas Security Initiative?

In FY 2003, the Department of Homeland Security established the Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) program to focus Federal preparedness resources on the unique planning, equipment, training, and exercise needs of high-threat, high-density urban areas. The intent of the UASI program is to create a sustainable national model program that will enhance security and overall preparedness in order to prevent, respond to, and recover from acts of terrorism. Jurisdictions included in the UASI program are determined by a formula using a combination of current threat estimates, critical assets within the specific urban area, and population density.

How do applicants know if their district is located within an UASI jurisdiction?

Information about UASI jurisdiction definitions can be found at http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/odp/docs/fy07_hsgp_urbanareas.pdf

Only part of an LEA is located within the UASI jurisdiction. Do they still qualify for Competitive Preference Priority 1?

Yes, provided that the district has not previously received funding under this program.

Are applicants required to use an outside evaluator or may the Project Director also serve as the Evaluator?

Applicants are not required to use an outside evaluator. However, to ensure an unbiased and fair evaluation of the grant project, we recommend including funds in project budgets to hire an outside evaluator. The Department would not expect that the same individual or organization that manages or completes some of the primary activities under the project (i.e., Project Director, consultant, etc.) would also be evaluating those activities, as that would not support an unbiased evaluation.

Is there a recommended percentage of the grant to be dedicated to the evaluator?

The amount budgeted for an evaluator will vary based upon the scope of the grant activities and the size of the school district. Applicants should ensure that the evaluator could commit sufficient time to capture data related to the three GPRA measures and other relevant performance measures outlined in the application. Typically, evaluation expenses related to REMS grant activities do not exceed \$25,000.

May applicants hire an outside contractor or consultant to assist in implementation of the REMS project?

Yes, applicants may hire outside contractors to assist in the implementation of project objectives. However, in order to ensure sustainability of effort, the Department recommends use of contractors to help build capacity within the LEA, rather than to complete a majority of the project activities. For example, a good use of contractors would be to help establish protocols and provide training in conducting vulnerability assessments. This is in contrast to hiring a contractor to complete all vulnerability assessments on behalf of the LEA.

If funded, grantees are required to follow basic procurement guidelines outlined in section 80.36 of Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) available at <http://www.ed.gov/policy/fund/reg/edgarReg/edgar.html>. The primary standard noted here is that "Grantees and sub grantees will use their own procurement procedures which reflect applicable State and local laws and regulations, provided that the procurements conform to applicable Federal law and the standards identified in this section."

These standards, which should be reviewed in EDGAR, set forth basic guidelines for grantees that plan to award contracts under their grants. In very brief summary, these standards include, but are not limited to, ensuring that grantees: have an effective contract administration system in place, do not have any conflicts of interest between the contractors and the contract administrators, have a system for ensuring that duplicative services are not being procured; foster economical and efficient contracts; maintain thorough records of the contracts/procurements; have a system for managing disputes; have written selection procedures for procurements and related transactions; and ensure maximum free and open competition is used when announcing competitions.

In general, sole source awards (i.e., contracts awarded without a competitive bid process) are unallowable under EDGAR §80.36.

EDGAR goes on to describe standards for engaging in procurements for both small purchases and sealed bids, as well as for competitive and (rarely) non-competitive proposals. See EDGAR §80.36 and the guidance on pages 12-17 for more detail.

How long can a grantee contract for services paid for with grant funds?

Applicants are only permitted to contract for services paid with grant funds for the time period of the grant, or 18-months.

How much work may be contracted out to a consultant?

There is no standard for the amount of work a consultant can do on the grant. However, if a consultant is doing a large part of the work, it is helpful to build capacity building activities into the management plan for the district. These activities should promote the district's ability to support these activities when the grant is over.

What is a vulnerability assessment?

A vulnerability, or needs, assessment is the process used to determine the kinds of hazards schools may encounter. It is important to study the district and the surrounding community to determine what might cause danger so that schools can be as prepared as possible. Working with law enforcement, public safety, emergency medical services, the department of transportation, and other government agencies will be very helpful in assessing these vulnerabilities. For example, are schools located near a nuclear plant? Are schools located near railroad tracks, or major highways where crashes may occur and endanger students, or put them in harm's way? Is the local area prone to

earthquakes or hurricanes? It is important to prepare for the kinds of emergencies or crises districts may encounter. It is important to prepare for social and emotional environments that may lead to crises, as well.

What does mitigation mean?

In this application and in the Department’s Guide on emergency planning, “mitigation” refers to taking action to eliminate or reduce the loss of life and property damage related to an emergency that cannot be prevented. For example, while school administrators and teachers cannot avoid an earthquake, they may be able to *mitigate* the impact of one on their school and students by securing bookcases so that they do not fall down, and training students and staff how to protect themselves during tremors. Another example is taking inventory of a school location to determine if it might be vulnerable to a threat from any nearby nuclear power plants, railroad tracks, or other potential hazards.

Are prevention programs (i.e., bullying prevention, suicide prevention, violence prevention, etc.) allowable?

No; prevention programs are beyond the scope of this grant competition. While we realize the importance of a comprehensive approach to violence prevention, those activities are not directly related to development of an effective emergency management plan. Requests for funds to implement a prevention program will not be allowed.

May the Department of Education share a copy of an LEA’s application with the public?

The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) was enacted in 1966 and provides that any person has the right to request access to federal agency records or information. All applications submitted for funding consideration under this grant competition are subject to the FOIA. All agencies of the U.S. Government are required to disclose records upon receiving a written request for them, except for those records that are protected from disclosure by the nine exemptions listed in the FOIA. Under FOIA Exemption 1, we are able to withhold any information needed to protect vulnerable security information from unauthorized or untimely disclosure. This may include information related to risks and vulnerabilities within the district or at particular schools. To read the text of the Freedom of Information Act, visit www.usdoj.gov/04foia/foiastat.htm

Are copies of successful REMS/ERCM grant applications available from prior years?

In order to obtain successful applications, applicants need to submit a FOIA request. FOIA requests often involve small fees for staff time and duplication services. After a FOIA request is submitted to the Department of Education, a cost estimate is provided before the material is delivered. Requestors have the option of canceling the request based on the cost estimate.

FOIA requests must be submitted to the Department of Education in writing. More information is available at <http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/foia/foiatoc.html>

Please be aware that FOIA requests may take several weeks to process. If an applicant has specific questions about previous grant projects, they may want to consider contacting project directors from previous grantees directly. Lists of previous and current grant project directors are available at www.ed.gov/emergencyplan

Is guidance available for incorporating the needs of students and staff with disabilities into a school or district’s emergency management efforts?

Yes. OSDIFS, along with REMS TA Center, created a newsletter on this topic that can be viewed at http://rems.ed.gov/views/documents/Disability_NewsletterV2I1.pdf

Is guidance available for incorporating pandemic influenza plans into a school or district’s emergency management plan?

Yes. The U.S. Department of Education has established a pandemic influenza Web site with several resources that provide useful information for schools on developing pandemic influenza plans, available at <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/emergencyplan/pandemic/index.html>

More information can also be found at

<http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/school/index.html>

<http://rems.ed.gov/index.cfm?event=PandemicPreparedns4Schools>

and http://rems.ed.gov/views/documents/PandemicFluNewsletter_072106.pdf

Should parents be involved in creating the REMS application?

Though it is not required, a district may certainly consider reaching out to parents and guardians during the application process. Parents are key stakeholders in school emergency management efforts and it may be very helpful to solicit their suggestions and feedback in the beginning. Including parents at this stage may help districts better understand what parents’ particular needs or concerns are regarding emergency management. This could enable the applicant to address those concerns in their project plan. Previous grantees have worked with Parent Teacher Organizations and/or Parent Teacher Associations and have even invited parents to serve on their steering committees.

How much detail should applicants include about project evaluation in the application?

Applicants should ensure that their evaluation plan clearly relates to the proposed grant activities and describes objectives and methods to be used in evaluating the implementation of the grant. Applicants should indicate their proposed plan for conducting evaluation and for incorporating feedback into ongoing planning efforts. Applicants are also required to address the Government Performance and Results Act measures (GPRA), which have been established for this grant.

Applicants may view the REMS TA Center Web site (<http://rems.ed.gov>) for more information on reporting requirements for grantees. On the Web site, the “Grantees” button will display a link to instructions for completing the reporting form required for the grant (ED 524B form). The Web page includes a sample 524B form that includes how to

report out on the GPRA measures. Grantees need to collect baseline and end of grant data on these measures.

REMS-Specific Budget Questions

What is the average amount of each grant?

Awards will range from \$100,000 to \$500,000. We estimate that a small-size school district (with 1-20 school facilities) will need up to \$100,000 for the 18-month period; a medium-size school district (with between 21 and 75 school facilities) will need a maximum of \$250,000 for the 18-month period; and a large-size school district (with 76 or more school facilities) will need a maximum of \$500,000 for the 18-month period.

Applicants requesting funds in excess of the recommended amounts will need to carefully justify their need for those funds. Applicants may apply for less or more than the average range of these awards as stated above. These figures represent estimates and are not binding.

How should applicants count the number of school facilities in the district?

When indicating whether an applicant is a small, medium or large district, please present a count of facilities. When counting facilities, please count school sites, or campuses, but not individual structures. For example, if one school has two trailers and one permanent school building on its campus, please count that school as only one facility, not three.

What is the project and budget period for these grants?

Projects are to be completed in 18 months. A single budget period (18-months) should be detailed on the 524 budget form in a single column.

How does the Department differentiate between supplies and equipment?

If an item falls under \$5,000 per unit cost, then it is designated as a supply item according to the Federal guidelines. If an item costs \$5,000 or more per unit, it is designated as equipment.

If a proposed budget is too high, will the Department of Education work with the applicant to reduce the budget, or will the application be dismissed?

Suggested budget amounts are provided in the grant announcement. Applications will not be ruled ineligible if the requested budget amount is higher than U.S. Department of Education estimates. It is most important that the requested budget is reasonable and adequately explained within the budget narrative and justified by the identified project needs.

Once applications have been submitted, Department staff will review proposed budgets to ensure that the amount requested is necessary, reasonable, and included in the scope of work for the proposed project. If a budget item is determined to be unreasonable, unnecessary, or outside the scope of the grant or if the item is

unallowable according to the Office of Management and Budget's cost principles, the budget will be reduced accordingly. Peer reviewers do not evaluate application budgets.

Is there a recommended salary for REMS Project Directors or Coordinators?

No. The proposed salaries should be commensurate with the scope of the position, cost of living for the local area, and the experience required. Applicants may include funds for the Project Director and/or Coordinator positions in their budget and justification request. Applicants should work within their district to determine the appropriate salary for project staff under this project.

Should applicants budget for private and faith-based schools?

Yes, providing private schools with equitable access to grant activities and services is a requirement of the REMS grant. Therefore, applicants should budget for private and parochial schools in the area to be served by the grant. Applicants should work with local private schools during the application process to determine what their specific needs may be, so that those needs can be accurately reflected in the project application and the requested project budget.

Is there a matching requirement for this competition?

No, there is not a matching requirement.

What is an indirect cost rate?

An indirect cost is an expense that you incur that is necessary to implement the grant, but may be difficult to identify with your grant. For example, indirect costs may include money spent for heat, light, rent, telephone, security, accounting, and Internet use.

If your organization prefers to use all of its grant funds for direct project costs, you are not required to charge the grant for indirect costs. If you wish to charge indirect costs, however, *you must use a **negotiated unrestricted indirect cost rate** for this competition and provide proof of the approved rate with your grant application.*

For more information, please see:

<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/fipao/icgindex.html>.

How do I obtain a negotiated, unrestricted indirect cost rate?

Generally, negotiated indirect cost rates are calculated by State Education Agencies. However, in some cases, they may be negotiated with a Federal government agency. If your organization has not negotiated this rate in the past, please contact Katrina McDonald with the Department of Education's Indirect Cost Group at 202-377-3838 or Katrina.Mcdonald@ed.gov.

Who in my organization may be able to provide information about our negotiated, unrestricted indirect cost rate?

If you do not know your negotiated, unrestricted indirect cost rate, please contact your business office. Please note, you will need to submit proof of this cost rate with your application, such as a signed letter or a page from a state web site.

May grant funds be used for professional development workshops for teachers and other educators?

Yes, provided that the activities directly support the purposes of the grant.

May districts use grant funds to hire program coordinators?

Yes, provided the costs are reasonable and necessary to carry out the purpose of the grant. Applicants should be sure to fully substantiate all expenditures in the budget narrative.

May funds be used to hire safety personnel, a school nurse, mental health professionals, etc.?

No, this is not a hiring grant.

Many first responders will provide services to districts under this grant. Can first responders working with schools be reimbursed for this work?

Yes. To the extent that costs are necessary, reasonable and allowable to the grant.

May districts use grant funds to buy safety and security equipment?

Yes, applicants may propose to use a small portion of these funds to buy safety and security equipment and technology. However, applicants that propose in their application to use these funds primarily to buy safety and security equipment will NOT score highly on their application, and will decrease their chances of receiving funds. The selection criteria for this competition call for a comprehensive, systematic, coordinated improvement of emergency management plans, and applications that mainly request funds for technology and equipment will not meet those criteria.

Are funds to hire a NIMS trainer allowable?

Yes, however funds for NIMS courses are limited to \$1,000 per course. Since these courses have already been developed, and are available online free-of-charge, funds may only be used to pay for the trainer's time to deliver the training, not for any course development expenses. Given these facts, we believe that \$1000 is sufficient to cover the cost of a trainer to deliver a NIMS course.

How much detail should be included in the budget narrative?

Please provide as much detail as possible in the budget narrative. Please include a per unit cost breakdown for all costs listed, number of items to be purchased or activities (training, assessments, etc.) to be completed, and describe in the narrative how each cost links to the goals and objectives of the program. Budget narratives should be thorough enough to justify the budget amount being requested.

What guidance is available on developing a budget narrative?

For additional guidance on preparing a budget narrative, please see http://www.ed.gov/admins/grants/apply/techassist/resource_pg8.html.

Are there certain items that cannot be purchased with these funds?

Yes. Grant funds cannot be used to purchase refreshments, incentives or prizes, or other items identified by the Office of Management and Budget's Cost Principles. In addition, REMS grant funds cannot be used to support direct counseling services or direct prevention programming (i.e., bullying training).

Electronic Application**How do I submit my grant electronically?**

If you would like to submit your grant electronically, please use www.grants.gov to do so. Instructions on electronic submission can be found on pages 6-8 and 90-94 of this application package. Please follow the instructions carefully.

Do I have to submit my application electronically?

No, this program does not have a mandatory electronic submission policy.

How do I register to submit my grant electronically?

You are required to register on Grants.gov prior to submitting your application, as well as with the Central Contractor Registry. Both of these systems require that you have a valid D-U-N-S number. Registration may take several days or weeks so please begin early.

If I am submitting my application electronically, how should I submit the Partner Agreements, Program-Specific Assurance, Competitive Preference, and other forms with signatures?

If you are submitting an electronic application, you may either upload signed versions of the forms, in a .pdf format, to Grants.gov or you may fax the signed forms, including the Partner Agreements and Program-Specific Assurance, to the Department of Education. These documents may be faxed to: (202) 205-5722 or (202) 260-7767.

Does Grants.gov support the new Microsoft Vista Operating System?

Grants.gov uses two viewer products – Adobe Acrobat Reader and PureEdge – that predate the release of Windows Vista. Adobe Reader 7.0.9 **may** work with Vista, but Adobe does not fully support this configuration. PureEdge Viewer v.6.0.2 is only compatible with Vista when using a Citrix server connection. Grants.gov is anticipating the release of Adobe Reader 8.1.1 shortly, which will be compatible with Microsoft Vista. Until Adobe Reader 8.1.1 is released, you have two choices: Use an operating system other than Vista or use Citrix, which has been identified as an option for any applicant that is using Vista. The Grants.gov Web site (www.grants.gov/help/general_fags.jsp#18) has been updated to provide applicants with instructions on how to utilize the Citrix solution.

Do I need to provide the Funding Opportunity Number (Item #12) and the Competition Identification Number (Item #13) on the SF-424?

If you are submitting your application electronically via Grants.gov, then you will need to provide these numbers. They can be located on Grants.gov website on the application download page and also on the application package page once the package has been downloaded. If you are submitting a hard copy of your application, then you do not need to provide these numbers as they are used strictly for an electronic application package submitted via Grants.gov.

Additional FAQs may be viewed at <http://rems.ed.gov>

III. Legal and Regulatory Documents

Notice of Final Priority and Other Application Requirements Federal Register Publish Date—June 21, 2005

4000-01-U

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

AGENCY: Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice of final priority and other application requirements.

SUMMARY: The Assistant Deputy Secretary for Safe and Drug-Free Schools announces a priority and other application requirements under the Emergency Response and Crisis Management Grants program. We may use this priority and these application requirements for competitions in fiscal year (FY) 2005 and later years. We intend the priority to focus Federal financial assistance on supporting grants to local educational agencies (LEAs) in improving and strengthening emergency response and crisis management plans.

EFFECTIVE DATE: This priority and other application requirements are effective July 21, 2006.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sara Strizzi, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 3E320, Washington, DC 20202. Telephone: (202) 708-4850 or via Internet:

sara.strizzi@ed.gov

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), you may call the Federal Relay Service (FRS) 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 contact person listed under FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The events of September 11, 2001, made schools and communities aware that, in addition to planning for traditional crises and emergencies, schools must now plan to respond

to possible terrorist attacks on campus or in the community. The purpose of this program is to support LEA projects to improve and strengthen emergency response and crisis management plans, at the district and school-building level, addressing the four phases of crisis planning: Prevention/Mitigation, Preparedness, Response, and Recovery. Plans must include: (1) training for school personnel and students in emergency response procedures; (2) coordination with local law enforcement, public safety, public health, and mental health agencies; and (3) a method for communicating school emergency response policies and reunification procedures to parents and guardians.

We published a notice of proposed priority and other application requirements for this program in the Federal Register on April 14, 2005 (70 FR 19736).

Analysis of Comments and Changes: In response to our invitation in the notice of proposed priority and other application requirements, three parties submitted comments on the proposed priority. An analysis of the comments and of any changes in the priority since publication of the notice of proposed priority follows.

Generally, we do not address technical and other minor changes and suggested changes the law does not authorize us to make under the applicable statutory authority.

Comment: One commenter requested clarification regarding the implementation date of September 30, 2005 for requirements under the National Incident Management System (NIMS). The commenter noted that the July 29, 2005 application due date does not allow adequate time to complete implementation of the NIMS requirements by September 30, 2005.

Discussion: The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has established minimum NIMS compliance activities and deadlines for the State, territorial, and local levels for FY 2005, which ends on September 30, 2005. The activities and deadlines listed in the Notice of Proposed Priority reflected these requirements. However, as FY 2005 is a start-up year for NIMS implementation, full compliance with the NIMS is not a requirement to receive FY 2005 grant funds. LEAs that have not completed all FY 2005 NIMS

requirements by September 30, 2005 should leverage preparedness assistance to complete NIMS implementation by September 30, 2006.

Change: We have revised the priority to clarify NIMS implementation deadlines. The priority now allows for LEAs that have not completed all FY 2005 NIMS requirements to complete implementation during FY 2006.

Comment: One commenter suggested substituting “local public health agencies” for “local health agencies” in the priority and requirements.

Discussion: We agree that the priority would be clearer with the change recommended by the commenter. The term “public health” is used consistently at the Federal, State, and local levels to describe an agency or entity that performs essential functions that characterize public health programs, activities, or services. Public health agencies are directly responsible for critical aspects related to emergency planning and response. According to DHS, public health agencies are the primary entities responsible for conducting one or more of the following functions or activities: Monitor health status to identify community health problems; diagnose and investigate health problems and health hazards in the community; inform, educate and empower people about health issues; mobilize community partnerships to identify and solve health problems; develop policies and plans that support individual and community health efforts; enforce laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety; evaluate the effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based health services; and research for new insights and innovative solutions to health problems. The term “public health agencies” more accurately reflects the role of the health care system in emergency planning and response.

Change: We have substituted “local public health agencies” for “local health agencies” in the priority and requirements.

Comment: One commenter suggested that the priority allow for funding State educational agencies (SEAs) in order to encourage standardization and involvement at the State as well as the local level.

Discussion: Generally, we believe that LEAs are better positioned to support the development of emergency response and crisis management plans that are specific to individual school sites – the primary purpose of this grant program. LEAs need to identify their local first responders and mental health professionals that will be charged with helping schools respond to a crisis and support students and their families and staff in the recovery process, and work with them directly in developing plans that address unique local threats and conditions. While some issues associated with response and recovery lend themselves to a degree of standardization (for example selection of communication equipment and communication protocols), even standardized processes or plans must be able to be modified to address unique local needs and issues. We believe that SEAs have a very significant and valuable role to play in the development of Statewide or regional protocols, practices, and templates related to crisis prevention, response and recovery, but that those plans must be adapted and practiced at the LEA and school building level if they are to provide school personnel and other first responders with the skills and confidence they need to effectively manage a crisis situation. We encourage SEAs to work in collaboration with individual districts and to provide guidance as needed.

Change: None.

Note: This notice does not solicit applications. In any year in which we choose to use this priority and other application requirements, we invite applications through a notice in the Federal Register. When inviting applications we designate the priority as absolute, competitive preference, or invitational. The effect of each type of priority follows:

Absolute priority: Under an absolute priority we consider only applications that meet the priority (34 CFR 75.105(c)(3)).

Competitive preference priority: Under a competitive preference priority we give competitive preference to an application by either (1) awarding additional points, depending on how well or the extent to which the application meets the competitive priority (34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i)); or (2) selecting an application

that meets the competitive priority over an application of comparable merit that does not meet the priority (34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(ii)).

Invitational priority: Under an invitational priority we are particularly interested in applications that meet the invitational priority. However, we do not give an application that meets the invitational priority a competitive or absolute preference over other applications (34 CFR 75.105(c)(1)).

PRIORITY:

Improvement and Strengthening of School Emergency Response and Crisis Management Plans

The priority supports LEA projects to improve and strengthen emergency response and crisis management plans, at the district and school building levels addressing the four phases of crisis planning: Prevention/Mitigation, Preparedness, Response, and Recovery. Plans must include: (1) training for school personnel and students in emergency response procedures; (2) coordination with local law enforcement, public safety, public health, and mental health agencies; and (3) a method for communicating school emergency response policies and reunification procedures to parents and guardians.

Other Application Requirements:

1. Partner Agreements -- To be considered for a grant award, an applicant must include in its application an agreement that details the participation of each of the following five community-based partners: law enforcement, public safety, public health, mental health, and the head of the applicant's local government (for example the mayor, city manager, or county executive). The agreement must include a description of each partner's roles and responsibilities in improving and strengthening emergency response plans at the district and school-building level, a description of each partner's commitment to the sustainability and continuous improvement of emergency response plans at the district and school-building level, and an authorized signature representing the LEA and each partner acknowledging the agreement. If one or more of the five partners listed is not present in the applicant's community, or cannot feasibly participate, the agreement must explain the absence of each missing partner. To be considered eligible for

funding, however, an application must include a signed agreement between the LEA, a law enforcement partner, and at least one of the other required partners (public safety, public health, mental health, or head of local government).

Applications that fail to include the required agreement, including information on partners' roles and responsibilities and on their commitment to continuation and continuous improvement (with signatures and explanations for missing signatures as specified above), will not be read.

Although this program requires partnerships with other parties, administrative direction and fiscal control for the project must remain with the LEA.

2. Coordination with State or Local Homeland Security Plan -- All emergency response and crisis management plans must be coordinated with the Homeland Security Plan of the State or locality in which the LEA is located. All States submitted such a plan to the Department of Homeland Security on January 30, 2004. To ensure that emergency services are coordinated, and to avoid duplication of effort within States and localities, applicants must include in their applications an assurance that the LEA will coordinate with, and follow, the requirements of their State or local Homeland Security Plan for emergency services and initiatives.

3. Support of the National Incident Management System. Applicants must also agree to support the implementation of the National Incident Management System (NIMS). In accordance with the Homeland Security Presidential Directive/HSPD-5, the NIMS provides a consistent approach for Federal, State, and local governments to work effectively and efficiently together to prepare for, prevent, respond to, and recover from domestic incidents, regardless of cause, size, or complexity.

LEAs, in collaboration with state and local resources, are encouraged to achieve full NIMS implementation by September 30, 2005. To the extent that full compliance is not possible by September 30, 2005, LEAs, working in coordination with state and local resources, should leverage federal preparedness assistance to complete NIMS implementation by September 30, 2006. To be considered eligible for funding, an

application must include an assurance that the LEA has completed, or will complete by September 30, 2006, the following steps to support NIMS implementation:

- Administer the NIMS Awareness Course: “National Incident Management System (NIMS), An Introduction” (IS 700) to key district and school staff. This independent study course, developed by the Emergency Management Institute (EMI), explains the purpose, principles, key components, and benefits of the NIMS. The course is available online and will take between forty-five minutes to three hours to complete. The course is available on the EMI website at: <http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is700.asp>
- Formally recognize the NIMS and adopt NIMS principles and policies. Districts and/or their local government should establish an executive order, resolution, or ordinance to formally adopt the NIMS.
- Establish a NIMS baseline to determine which NIMS requirements have been met by the LEA. Districts should coordinate with their community partners to assess the district’s overall compliance with the NIMS, and determine gaps in compliance that need to be closed in order to reach full implementation of the NIMS.
- Establish a timeframe and strategy for full implementation of the NIMS requirements identified by the Department of Homeland Security.
- Establish the use of the Incident Command System (ICS). The ICS has been established by the NIMS as the standardized incident organizational structure for the management of all incidents. Districts should coordinate with community partners listed above in institutionalizing the use of the ICS in a manner that is consistent with the concepts and principles in the NIMS.

(Note: Since LEAs are integral to local governments, an LEA’s NIMS compliance must be achieved in close coordination with the local government and with recognition of the first responder capabilities held by the LEA and the local government. As LEAs are not traditional response organizations, first responder services will typically be provided to LEAs by local fire and rescue departments, emergency medical service providers, and law enforcement agencies. This traditional relationship must be acknowledged in achieving NIMS compliance in an integrated NIMS

compliance plan for the local government and the LEA. LEA participation in the NIMS preparedness program of the local government is essential to ensure that first responder services are delivered to schools in a timely and effective manner. Additional information about NIMS implementation is available at www.fema.gov/nims.)

4. Individuals with Disabilities -- The applicant's must demonstrate that the applicant has taken into consideration the communication, transportation, and medical needs of individuals with disabilities within the school district.

Executive Order 12866

This notice of final priority and other application requirements has been reviewed in accordance with Executive Order 12866. Under the terms of the order, we have assessed the potential costs and benefits of this regulatory action.

The potential costs associated with the notice of final priority are those resulting from statutory requirements and those we have determined as necessary for administering this program effectively and efficiently.

In assessing the potential costs and benefits--both quantitative and qualitative--of this notice of final priority and other application requirements, we have determined that the benefits of the final priority and other application requirements justify the costs.

We have also determined that this regulatory action does not unduly interfere with State, local, and tribal governments in the exercise of their governmental functions.

We summarized the costs and benefits in the notice of proposed priority and other application requirements.

Intergovernmental Review

This program is subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. One of the objectives of the Executive order is to foster an intergovernmental partnership and a strengthened

federalism. The Executive order relies on processes developed by State and local governments for coordination and review of proposed Federal financial assistance.

This document provides early notification of our specific plans and actions for this program.

Electronic Access to This Document: You may view this document, as well as all other documents of this Department published in the Federal Register, in text or Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) on the Internet at the following site: www.ed.gov/news/fedregister

To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at this site. If you have questions about using PDF, call the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO), toll free, at 1-888-293-6498; or in the Washington, DC, area at (202) 512-1530.

You may also view this document in text or PDF at the following sites:

www.ed.gov/emergencyplan

www.ed.gov/programs/dvpeemergencyresponse/index.html

Note: The official version of this document is the document published in the Federal Register. Free Internet access to the official edition of the Federal Register and the Code of Federal Regulations is available on GPO Access at:

www.gpoaccess.gov/nara/index.html

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number 84.184.E-Emergency Response and Crisis Management Grant program)

PROGRAM AUTHORITY: 20 U.S.C. 7131.

Dated: June 16, 2005

Deborah A. Price,
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Safe and Drug-Free
Schools.

**Notice of Final Priority and Application Requirements
Federal Register Publish Date—May 11, 2006**

4000-01-U

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

AGENCY: Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice of final priorities and application requirements.

SUMMARY: The Assistant Deputy Secretary for Safe and Drug-Free Schools announces two priorities and application requirements under the Emergency Response and Crisis Management Grants program. We may use one or more of these priorities and application requirements for competitions in fiscal year (FY) 2006 and later years. We take this action to focus Federal financial assistance on an identified national need. We intend these priorities and application requirements to support grants to local educational agencies (LEAs) that are at high risk for crisis situations, as well as those that have not yet received funding under this program; and to strengthen the quality of applications under this program in addressing multiple hazards, including infectious diseases.

EFFECTIVE DATE: These priorities and application requirements are effective June 12, 2006.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tara Hill, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 3E340, Washington, DC 20202. Telephone: (202) 708-4850 or via Internet: tara.hill@ed.gov

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), you may call the Federal Relay Service (FRS) 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 contact person listed under FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The events of September 11, 2001, and more recently, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, reinforce the need for schools and communities to plan for traditional crises and emergencies, as well as possible terrorist attacks or other catastrophic events. The purpose of this program is to support LEA projects to improve and strengthen emergency response and crisis management plans, at the district and school-building level, addressing the four phases of crisis planning: Prevention/Mitigation, Preparedness, Response, and Recovery.

We published a notice of proposed priorities and application requirements for this program in the Federal Register on March 1, 2006 (71 FR 10482).

Analysis of Comments and Changes

In response to our invitation in the notice of proposed priorities and application requirements, three parties submitted comments on the proposed priorities. An analysis of the comments and of any changes in the priorities since publication of the notice of proposed priorities and application requirements follows. We did not make any changes to the application requirements proposed in the notice of proposed priorities and application requirements.

Generally, we do not address technical and other minor changes and suggested changes the law does not authorize us to make under the applicable statutory authority.

Comment: One commenter recommended that we revise the competitive preference priorities to include educational service agencies (ESAs) that have previously received funding, provided the new grant application is on behalf of previously unfunded LEAs. The commenter suggested that since ESAs do not directly benefit from the grant, they should not be excluded from the competitive preference priorities if applying on behalf of LEAs that have not previously received funding under this program.

Discussion: We agree that the competitive preference priorities should be revised to include ESAs that have previously received funding under this program provided the ESA is applying on behalf of previously unfunded LEAs. The primary role of ESAs is to provide educational support programs for LEAs, such as

staff and curriculum development, purchasing, and other programs. By consolidating programmatic, fiscal, or administrative services within an ESA, LEAs are able to cooperatively share services and costs for programs that may be costly or difficult to administer by a single LEA. Since ESAs often serve an administrative function for several LEAs, they are often the lead applicant in requests for funding.

Change: We have revised the competitive preference priorities to clarify the eligibility of ESAs for a competitive preference under this program if the ESAs are applying on behalf of previously unfunded LEAs.

Comment: Two commenters suggested that the competitive preference priority for LEAs located in Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) jurisdictions provides an unfair advantage over applicants that are not located in UASI jurisdictions.

Discussion: We believe that establishing a funding priority for LEAs located within UASI jurisdictions is justified because the UASI effectively identifies the areas that are most likely to be targets of terrorist attacks and other crises and, thus, have the greatest need for emergency plans.

However, we recognize that effective crisis plans are a priority for all LEAs, regardless of their location. Accordingly, Proposed Priority 2 was designed to address the needs of LEAs that are not located within UASI jurisdictions and that have not previously received funding under the ERCM grant program. We believe that this is an equitable approach for addressing the needs of LEAs that are not located in designated high-risk areas and whose crisis planning needs have not previously received support under this program.

Change: None.

Note: This notice does not solicit applications. In any year in which we choose to use one or more of these priorities and application requirements, we invite applications through a notice in the Federal Register.

PRIORITIES:

Priority 1--Competitive Preference Priority for LEAs That Have Not Previously Received a Grant Under The ERCM Program and Are Located In an Urban Areas Security Initiative Jurisdiction

Under this priority, we give a competitive preference to applications from local educational agencies (LEAs) that (1) have not yet received a grant under this program and (2) are located in whole or in part within Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) jurisdictions, as determined by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). An applicant must meet both of these criteria in order to receive the competitive preference. Under a consortium application, all members of the LEA consortium need to meet both criteria to be eligible for the preference. Applications submitted by educational service agencies (ESAs) are eligible under this priority if each LEA to be served by the grant is located within a UASI jurisdiction and has not received funding under this program directly, or as the lead agency or as a partner in a consortium; however the ESA itself may have received a previous grant.

Because DHS' determination of UASI jurisdictions may change from year to year, applicants under this priority must refer to the most recent list of UASI jurisdictions published by DHS when submitting their applications. In any notice inviting applications using this priority, the Department will provide applicants with information necessary to access the most recent DHS list of UASI jurisdictions.

Priority 2--Competitive Preference Priority for LEAs That Have Not Previously Received a Grant Under The ERCM Program

Priority: Under this priority, we give competitive preference to applications from local educational agencies (LEAs) that have not previously received a grant under this program. Applicants (other than educational service agencies (ESAs)) that have received funding under this program directly, or as the lead agency or as a partner in a consortium application under this program, will not receive competitive preference under this priority. For applications submitted by ESAs, each LEA to be served by the grant must not have received funding under this program directly, or as the lead agency, or as a partner in a

consortium application, in order for the ESA to be eligible under this priority; however the ESA itself may have received a previous grant.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS:

1. Implementation of the National Incident Management System -- Applicants must agree to implement their grant in a manner consistent with the implementation of the NIMS in their communities. Applicants must include in their applications an assurance that they have met, or will complete, all current NIMS requirements by the end of the grant period.

Because DHS' determination of NIMS requirements may change from year to year, applicants must refer to the most recent list of NIMS requirements published by DHS when submitting their applications. In any notice inviting applications, the Department will provide applicants with information necessary to access the most recent DHS list of NIMS requirements.

Note: An LEA's NIMS compliance must be achieved in close coordination with the local government and with recognition of the first responder capabilities held by the LEA and the local government. As LEAs are not traditional response organizations, first responder services will typically be provided to LEAs by local fire and rescue departments, emergency medical service providers, and law enforcement agencies. This traditional relationship must be acknowledged in achieving NIMS compliance in an integrated NIMS compliance plan for the local government and the LEA. LEA participation in the NIMS preparedness program of the local government is essential to ensure that first responder services are delivered to schools in a timely and effective manner. Additional information about NIMS implementation is available at <http://www.fema.gov/emergency/nims/index.shtm>.

2. Infectious Disease Plan -- To be considered for a grant award, applicants must agree to develop a written plan designed to prepare the LEA for a possible infectious disease outbreak, such as pandemic influenza. Plans must address the four phases of crisis planning (Mitigation/Prevention, Preparedness, Response, and Recovery) and include a plan for disease surveillance (systematic collection and analysis of

data that lead to action being taken to prevent and control a disease), school closure decision-making, business continuity (processes and procedures established to ensure that essential functions can continue during and after a disaster), and continuation of educational services.

Executive Order 12866

This notice of final priorities and application requirements has been reviewed in accordance with Executive Order 12866. Under the terms of the order, we have assessed the potential costs and benefits of this regulatory action.

The potential costs associated with the notice of final priorities are those resulting from statutory requirements and those we have determined as necessary for administering this program effectively and efficiently.

In assessing the potential costs and benefits--both quantitative and qualitative--of this notice of final priorities and application requirements, we have determined that the benefits of the final priorities and application requirements justify the costs.

We have also determined that this regulatory action does not unduly interfere with State, local, and tribal governments in the exercise of their governmental functions.

We summarized the costs and benefits in the notice of proposed priorities and application requirements.

Intergovernmental Review

This program is subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. One of the objectives of the Executive order is to foster an intergovernmental partnership and a strengthened federalism. The Executive order relies on processes developed by State and local governments for coordination and review of proposed Federal financial assistance.

This document provides early notification of our specific plans and actions for this program.

Electronic Access to This Document: You may view this document, as well as all other documents of this Department published in the Federal Register, in text or Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) on the Internet at the following site:

www.ed.gov/news/fedregister

To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at this site. If you have questions about using PDF, call the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO), toll free, at 1-888-293-6498; or in the Washington, DC, area at (202) 512-1530.

Note: The official version of this document is the document published in the Federal Register. Free Internet access to the official edition of the Federal Register and the Code of Federal Regulations is available on GPO Access at: www.gpoaccess.gov/nara/index.html

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number 84.184.E-Emergency Response and Crisis Management Grant program)

PROGRAM AUTHORITY: 20 U.S.C. 7131.

Dated: May 8, 2006

Deborah A. Price,
Assistant Deputy Secretary for Safe and Drug-Free
Schools.

Notice Inviting Applications
Federal Register Publish Date—January 8, 2008

4000-01-U

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools

Overview Information

Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools

Notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year (FY) 2008.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 84.184E.

Dates:

Applications Available: January 8, 2008

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: February 19, 2008.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: April 18, 2008.

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools (REMS) grants support efforts by local educational agencies (LEAs) to improve and strengthen their school emergency management plans, including by training school personnel and students in emergency management procedures; communicating with parents about emergency plans and procedures; and coordinating with local law enforcement, public safety, public health, and mental health agencies.

Note: The REMS program was formerly known as the "Emergency Response and Crisis Management" grant program. As indicated elsewhere in this notice, the priorities and other application requirements used for this competition are from notices that were published in the Federal Register when the program operated under the name "Emergency Response and Crisis Management." While the substance of those

priorities and requirements remain the same, some references in the priorities and requirements have been changed in order to be consistent with the new name of the program and the terminology used in the emergency management field.

Priorities: This competition includes one absolute priority and two competitive preference priorities. The absolute priority is from (1) the notice of final priority and other application requirements for this program, published in the Federal Register on June 21, 2005 (70 FR 35652), and the competitive preference priorities and application requirements are from (2) the notice of final priorities published in the Federal Register on May 11, 2006 (71 FR 27576).

Absolute Priority: For FY 2008 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applicants from this competition, this priority is an absolute priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3) we consider only applications that meet this priority.

This priority is:

Improvement and Strengthening of School Emergency Management Plans.

This priority supports LEA projects to improve and strengthen emergency management plans, at the district and school-building level, addressing the four phases of emergency management: Prevention-Mitigation, Preparedness, Response, and Recovery. Plans must include: (1) Training for school personnel and students in emergency management procedures; (2) Coordination with local law enforcement, public safety, public health, and mental health agencies; and (3) A method for communicating school emergency management policies and reunification procedures to parents and guardians.

Competitive Preference Priorities: For FY 2008 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applicants from this competition, these priorities are competitive preference priorities. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i) we award an additional 10 points to an application that meets Priority 1 and we award an additional 5 points to an application that meets Priority

2. Applications that qualify for both Priorities 1 and 2 will receive points only under Priority 1.

These priorities are:

Priority 1--Competitive Preference Priority for LEAs That Have Not Previously Received a Grant

Under the REMS Program (CFDA 84.184E) and Are Located in an Urban Areas Security Initiative Jurisdiction.

Under this priority, we give a competitive preference to applications from LEAs that (1) have not yet received a grant under this program (CFDA 84.184E) and (2) are located in whole or in part within Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) jurisdictions, as determined by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). An applicant must meet both of these criteria in order to receive the competitive preference. Under a consortium application, all members of the LEA consortium need to meet both criteria to be eligible for the preference. Applications submitted by educational service agencies (ESAs) are eligible under this priority if each LEA to be served by the grant is located within a UASI jurisdiction and has not received funding under this program directly, or as the lead agency or other partner in a consortium; however the ESA itself may have received a previous grant.

Because DHS' determination of UASI jurisdictions may change from year to year, applicants under this priority must refer to the most recent list of UASI jurisdictions published by DHS before submitting their applications to determine if they will receive a competitive preference under this priority.

Note: The Governor of each State has designated a State Administrative Agency (SAA) as the entity responsible for applying for, and administering, funds under the DHS Grant Program (which includes the UASI program). The SAA is also responsible for defining the geographic borders for jurisdictions included in the UASI program. Guidance on jurisdiction definitions can be found at:

http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/odp/grants_hsgp.htm

Priority 2--Competitive Preference Priority for LEAs That Have Not Previously Received a Grant

Under the REMS Program (CFDA 84.184E).

Under this priority, we give competitive preference to applications from LEAs that have not

previously received a grant under this program (CFDA 84.184E). Applicants (other than ESAs) that have received funding under this program directly, or as the lead agency or other partner in a consortium application under this program, will not receive competitive preference under this priority. For applications submitted by ESAs, each LEA to be served by the grant must not have received funding under this program directly, or as the lead agency, or other partner in a consortium application, in order for the ESA to be eligible under this priority; however the ESA itself may have received a previous grant.

Other Application Requirements: Applicants under this competition must meet the requirements in this section. Requirements (1), (2), and (4) are from the notice of final priority and other application requirements for this program, published in the Federal Register on June 21, 2005 (70 FR 35652), and requirements (3) and (5) are from the notice of final priorities and application requirements published in the Federal Register on May 11, 2006 (71 FR 27576).

1. Partner Agreements. To be considered for a grant award, an applicant must include in its application an agreement that details the participation of each of the following five community-based partners: law enforcement, public safety, public health, mental health, and the head of the applicant's local government (for example, the mayor, city manager, or county executive). The agreement must include a description of each partner's roles and responsibilities in improving and strengthening emergency management plans at the district and school-building level, a description of each partner's commitment to the continuation and continuous improvement of emergency management plans at the district and school-building level, and an authorized signature representing the LEA and each partner acknowledging the agreement. If one or more of the five partners listed is not present in the applicant's community, or cannot feasibly participate, the agreement must explain the absence of each missing partner. To be considered eligible for funding; however, an application must include a signed agreement between the LEA, a law enforcement partner, and at least one of the other required partners (public safety, public health, mental health, or head of local government).

Applications that fail to include the required agreement, including information on partners' roles and responsibilities and on their commitment to continuation and continuous improvement (with signatures and explanations for missing signatures as specified above), will not be read.

Although this program requires partnerships with other parties, administrative direction and fiscal control for the project must remain with the LEA.

2. Coordination with State or Local Homeland Security Plan. All emergency management plans must be coordinated with the Homeland Security Plan of the State or locality in which the LEA is located. All States submitted such a plan to the Department of Homeland Security on January 30, 2004. To ensure that emergency services are coordinated, and to avoid duplication of effort within States and localities, applicants must include in their applications an assurance that the LEA will coordinate with, and follow, the requirements of its State or local Homeland Security Plan for emergency services and initiatives.

3. Implementation of the National Incident Management System (NIMS). Applicants must agree to implement their grant in a manner consistent with the implementation of the NIMS in their communities. Applicants must include in their applications an assurance that they have met, or will complete, all current NIMS requirements by the end of the grant period.

Because DHS' determination of NIMS requirements may change from year to year, applicants must refer to the most recent list of NIMS requirements published by DHS when submitting their applications. In any notice inviting applications, the Department will provide applicants with information necessary to access the most recent DHS list of NIMS requirements. Information about the FY 2007 NIMS requirements for tribal governments and local jurisdictions, including LEAs, may be found at:

http://www.fema.gov/pdf/emergency/nims/imp_mtrx_tribal.pdf

Note: An LEA's NIMS compliance must be achieved in close coordination with the local government and with recognition of the first-responder capabilities held by the LEA and the local government. As LEAs are not traditional response organizations, first-responder services will typically be provided to LEAs by local

fire and rescue departments, emergency medical service providers, and law enforcement agencies. This traditional relationship must be acknowledged in achieving NIMS compliance in an integrated NIMS compliance plan for the local government and the LEA. LEA participation in the NIMS preparedness program of the local government is essential to ensure that first-responder services are delivered to schools in a timely and effective manner. Additional information about NIMS implementation is available at: http://www.fema.gov/emergency/nims/nims_compliance.shtm

4. Individuals with Disabilities. The applicant's plan must demonstrate that the applicant has taken into consideration the communication, transportation, and medical needs of individuals with disabilities within the school district.

5. Infectious Disease Plan. To be considered for a grant award, applicants must agree to develop a written plan designed to prepare the LEA for a possible infectious disease outbreak, such as pandemic influenza. Plans must address the four phases of emergency management (Mitigation-Prevention, Preparedness, Response, and Recovery) and include a plan for disease surveillance (systematic collection and analysis of data that lead to action being taken to prevent and control a disease), school closure decision-making, business continuity (processes and procedures established to ensure that essential functions can continue during and after a disaster), and continuation of educational services.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 7131.

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 75, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 84, 85, 97, 98, 99, and 299. (b) The notice of final priority and other application requirements published in the Federal Register on June 21, 2005 (70 FR 35652). (c) The notice of final priorities and application requirements published in the Federal Register on May 11, 2006 (71 FR 27576). (d) The notice of final eligibility requirement for the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools discretionary grant programs published in the Federal Register on December 4, 2006 (71 FR 70369).

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 79 apply to all applicants except federally recognized Indian tribes.

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Discretionary grants.

Estimated Available Funds: \$24,000,000.

Contingent upon the availability of funds and the quality of applications, we may make additional awards later in FY 2008 and in FY 2009 and subsequent years from the list of unfunded applicants from this competition.

Estimated Range of Awards: \$100,000 - \$500,000.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$100,000 for small districts (1-20 school facilities); \$250,000 for medium-sized districts (21-75 school facilities); and \$500,000 for large districts (76 or more school facilities).

Estimated Number of Awards: 96.

Note: The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

Project Period: Up to 18 months.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants: LEAs, including charter schools that are considered LEAs under State law, that do not currently have an active grant under the REMS program. For the purpose of this eligibility requirement, a grant is considered active until the end of the grant's project or funding period, including any extensions of those periods that extend the grantee's authority to obligate funds. This eligibility requirement is from the notice of final eligibility requirement published in the Federal Register on December 4, 2006 (71 FR 70369).

2. Cost Sharing or Matching: This competition does not require cost sharing or matching.

3. Other:

(a) Equitable Participation by Private School Children and Teachers.

Section 9501 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA), requires that

state educational agencies (SEAs), LEAs, or other entities receiving funds under the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act provide for the equitable participation of private school children, their teachers, and other educational personnel in private schools located in areas served by the grant recipient. In order to ensure that grant program activities address the needs of private school children, LEAs must engage in timely and meaningful consultation with private school officials during the design and development of the program. This consultation must take place before any decision is made that affects the opportunities of eligible private school children, teachers, and other educational personnel to participate.

In order to ensure equitable participation of private school children, teachers, and other educational personnel, an LEA must consult with private school officials on such issues as: hazards/vulnerabilities unique to private schools in the LEA's service area, training needs, and existing emergency management plans and resources already available at private schools.

(b) Maintenance of Effort.

Section 9521 of the ESEA permits LEAs to receive a grant only if the SEA finds that the combined fiscal effort per student or the aggregate expenditures of the LEA and the State with respect to the provision of free public education by the LEA for the preceding fiscal year was not less than 90 percent of the combined fiscal effort or aggregate expenditures for the second preceding fiscal year.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package:

You can obtain an application package via the Internet or from the Education Publications Center (ED Pubs). To obtain a copy via the Internet, use the following address:

<http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/grantapps/index.html> To obtain a copy from ED Pubs, write, fax, or call the following: Education Publications Center, P.O. Box 1398, Jessup, MD 20794-1398. Telephone, toll

free: 1-877-433-7827. FAX: (301) 470-1244. If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), call, toll free: 1-877-576-7734.

You can contact ED Pubs at its Web site, also: www.ed.gov/pubs/edpubs.html or at its e-mail address: edpubs@inet.ed.gov

If you request an application from ED Pubs, be sure to identify this competition as follows: CFDA number 84.184E.

Individuals with disabilities can obtain a copy of the application package in an alternative format (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) by contacting the person listed under Alternative Format in section VIII of this notice.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission:

Requirements concerning the content of an application, together with the forms you must submit, are in the application package for this competition.

3. Submission Dates and Times:

Applications Available: January 8, 2008

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: February 19, 2008.

Applications for grants under this competition may be submitted electronically using the Grants.gov Apply site (Grants.gov), or in paper format by mail or hand delivery. For information (including dates and times) about how to submit your application electronically, or in paper format by mail or hand delivery, please refer to section IV. 6. Other Submission Requirements in this notice.

We do not consider an application that does not comply with the deadline requirements.

Individuals with disabilities who need an accommodation or auxiliary aid in connection with the application process should contact the person listed under For Further Information Contact in section VII in this notice. If the Department provides an accommodation or auxiliary aid to an individual with a disability

in connection with the application process, the individual's application remains subject to all other requirements and limitations in this notice.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: April 18, 2008.

4. Intergovernmental Review: This competition is subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. Information about Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs under Executive Order 12372 is in the application package for this competition.

5. Funding Restrictions: We reference regulations outlining funding restrictions in the Applicable Regulations section in this notice.

6. Other Submission Requirements: Applications for grants under this competition may be submitted electronically or in paper format by mail or hand delivery.

a. Electronic Submission of Applications.

To comply with the President's Management Agenda, we are participating as a partner in the Governmentwide Grants.gov Apply site. The Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools grant competition, CFDA Number 84.184E, is included in this project. We request your participation in Grants.gov.

If you choose to submit your application electronically, you must use the Governmentwide Grants.gov Apply site at <http://www.Grants.gov>. Through this site, you will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it offline, and then upload and submit your application. You may not e-mail an electronic copy of a grant application to us.

You may access the electronic grant application for the Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools grant competition at <http://www.Grants.gov>. You must search for the downloadable application package for this competition by the CFDA number. Do not include the CFDA number's alpha suffix in your search (e.g., search for 84.184, not 84.184E).

Please note the following:

- Your participation in Grants.gov is voluntary.
- When you enter the Grants.gov site, you will find information about submitting an application electronically through the site, as well as the hours of operation.
- Applications received by Grants.gov are date and time stamped. Your application must be fully uploaded and submitted and must be date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system no later than 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. Except as otherwise noted in this section, we will not consider your application if it is date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system later than 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. When we retrieve your application from Grants.gov, we will notify you if we are rejecting your application because it was date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system after 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date.
- The amount of time it can take to upload an application will vary depending on a variety of factors, including the size of the application and the speed of your Internet connection. Therefore, we strongly recommend that you do not wait until the application deadline date to begin the submission process through Grants.gov.
- You should review and follow the Education Submission Procedures for submitting an application through Grants.gov that are included in the application package for this competition to ensure that you submit your application in a timely manner to the Grants.gov system. You can also find the Education Submission Procedures pertaining to Grants.gov at <http://e-Grants.ed.gov/help/GrantsgovSubmissionProcedures.pdf>
- To submit your application via Grants.gov, you must complete all steps in the Grants.gov registration process (see http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp). These steps include (1) registering your organization, a multi-part process that includes registration with the Central Contractor Registry (CCR); (2) registering yourself as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR); and (3) getting authorized as an AOR by your organization. Details on these steps are outlined in the Grants.gov

3-Step Registration Guide (see <http://www.grants.gov/section910/Grants.govRegistrationBrochure.pdf>).

You also must provide on your application the same D-U-N-S Number used with this registration. Please note that the registration process may take five or more business days to complete, and you must have completed all registration steps to allow you to submit successfully an application via Grants.gov. In addition you will need to update your CCR registration on an annual basis. This may take three or more business days to complete.

- You will not receive additional point value because you submit your application in electronic format, nor will we penalize you if you submit your application in paper format.

- If you submit your application electronically, you must submit all documents electronically, including all information you typically provide on the following forms: Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424), the Department of Education Supplemental Information for SF 424, Budget Information--Non-Construction Programs (ED 524), and all necessary assurances and certifications. Please note that two of these forms--the SF 424 and the Department of Education Supplemental Information for SF 424--have replaced the ED 424 (Application for Federal Education Assistance).

- If you submit your application electronically, you must attach any narrative sections of your application as files in a .DOC (document), .RTF (rich text), or .PDF (Portable Document) format. If you upload a file type other than the three file types specified in this paragraph or submit a password-protected file, we will not review that material.

- Your electronic application must comply with any page-limit requirements described in this notice.

- After you electronically submit your application, you will receive from Grants.gov an automatic notification of receipt that contains a Grants.gov tracking number. (This notification indicates receipt by Grants.gov only, not receipt by the Department). The Department then will retrieve your application from Grants.gov and send a second notification to you by e-mail. This second notification indicates that the

Department has received your application and has assigned your application a PR/Award number (an ED-specified identifying number unique to your application).

- We may request that you provide us original signatures on forms at a later date.

Application Deadline Date Extension in Case of Technical Issues with the Grants.gov System: If you are experiencing problems submitting your application through Grants.gov, please contact the Grants.gov Support Desk, toll free, at 1-800-518-4726. You must obtain a Grants.gov Support Desk Case Number and must keep a record of it.

If you are prevented from electronically submitting your application on the application deadline date because of technical problems with the Grants.gov system, we will grant you an extension until 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, the following business day to enable you to transmit your application electronically or by hand delivery. You also may mail your application by following the mailing instructions described elsewhere in this notice.

If you submit an application after 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date, please contact the person listed under For Further Information Contact in section VII in this 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 application if we can confirm that a technical problem occurred with the Grants.gov system and that that problem affected your ability to submit your application by 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. The Department will contact you after a determination is made on whether your application will be accepted.

Note: The extensions to which we refer in this section apply only to the unavailability of, or technical problems with, the Grants.gov system. We will not grant you an extension if you failed to fully register to submit your application to Grants.gov before the application deadline date and time or if the technical problem you experienced is unrelated to the Grants.gov system.

- b. Submission of Paper Applications by Mail.

If you submit your application in paper format by mail (through the U.S. Postal Service or a commercial carrier), you must mail the original and two copies of your application, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the applicable following address:

By mail through the U.S. Postal Service:

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.184E)
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

or

By mail through a commercial carrier:

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center, Stop 4260
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.184E)
7100 Old Landover Road
Landover, MD 20785-1506

Regardless of which address you use, you must show proof of mailing consisting of one of the following:

- (1) A legibly dated U.S. Postal Service postmark.
- (2) A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the U.S. Postal Service.
- (3) A dated shipping label, invoice, or receipt from a commercial carrier.
- (4) Any other proof of mailing acceptable to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.

If you mail your application through the U.S. Postal Service, we do not accept either of the following as proof of mailing:

- (1) A private metered postmark.
- (2) A mail receipt that is not dated by the U.S. Postal Service.

If your application is postmarked after the application deadline date, we will not consider your application.

Note: The U.S. Postal Service does not uniformly provide a dated postmark. Before relying on this method, you should check with your local post office.

c. Submission of Paper Applications by Hand Delivery.

If you submit your application in paper format by hand delivery, you (or a courier service) must deliver the original and two copies of your application by hand, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the following address:

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.184E)
550 12th Street, SW.
Room 7041, Potomac Center Plaza
Washington, DC 20202-4260

The Application Control Center accepts hand deliveries daily between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, except Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal holidays.

Note for Mail or Hand Delivery of Paper Applications: If you mail or hand deliver your application to the Department--

(1) You must indicate on the envelope and--if not provided by the Department--in Item 11 of the SF 424 the CFDA number, including suffix letter, if any, of the competition under which you are submitting your application; and

(2) The Application Control Center will mail to you a notification of receipt of your grant application. If you do not receive this notification within 15 business days from the application deadline date, you should call the U.S. Department of Education Application Control Center at (202) 245-6288.

V. Application Review Information

Selection Criteria: The selection criteria for this competition are from 34 CFR 75.210 and are listed in the application package.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. Award Notices: If your application is successful, we notify your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators and send you a Grant Award Notification (GAN). We may notify you informally, also. If your application is not evaluated or not selected for funding, we notify you.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements: We identify administrative and national policy requirements in the application package and reference these and other requirements in the Applicable Regulations section in this notice.

We reference the regulations outlining the terms and conditions of an award in the Applicable Regulations section in this notice and include these and other specific conditions in the GAN. The GAN also incorporates your approved application as part of your binding commitments under the grant.

3. Reporting: At the end of your project period, you must submit a final performance report, including financial information, as directed by the Secretary. You must also submit an interim report nine months after the award date. This report should provide the most current performance and financial expenditure information as specified by the Secretary in 34 CFR 75.118. The Secretary may also require more frequent performance reports in accordance with 34 CFR 75.720(c). For specific requirements on reporting, please go to <http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>

4. Performance Measures: We have identified the following key Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA) performance measures for assessing the effectiveness of the REMS grant program: (1) The percentage of REMS grant sites that demonstrate they have increased the number of hazards addressed by the improved school emergency management plan as compared to the baseline plan; (2) The percentage of REMS grant sites that demonstrate improved knowledge of school emergency management policies and procedures, district emergency policies and procedures, or both, by school staff with responsibility for emergency management functions; and (3) The percentage of REMS grant sites that have a plan for, and commitment to, the sustainability and continuous improvement of the school

emergency management plan by the district and community partners beyond the period of Federal financial assistance.

These GPRA measures constitute the Department's indicators of success for this program. Applicants for a grant under this program are advised to give careful consideration to these measures in designing their proposed project, including considering how data for the measures will be collected. Grantees will be required to collect and report, in their interim and final performance reports, data on about their progress with regard to these measures.

VII. Agency Contact

For Further Information Contact: Sara Strizzi, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW., room 3E320, Washington, DC 20202-6450. Telephone: (303) 346-0924 or by email: sara.strizzi@ed.gov

If you use a TDD, call the FRS, toll free, at 1-800-877-8339.

VIII. Other Information

Alternative Format: Individuals with disabilities can obtain this document and a copy of the application package in an alternative format (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) on request to the program contact person listed under For Further Information Contact in section VII in this notice.

Electronic Access to This Document: You can view this document, as well as all other documents of this Department published in the Federal Register, in text or Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) on the Internet at the following site: www.ed.gov/news/fedregister

To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at this site. If you have questions about using PDF, call the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO), toll free, at 1-888-293-6498; or in the Washington, DC, area at (202) 512-1530.

Note: The official version of this document is the document published in the Federal Register. Free Internet access to the official edition of the Federal Register and the Code of Federal Regulations is available on GPO Access at: www.gpoaccess.gov/nara/index.html

Dated:

Deborah A. Price,
Assistant Deputy Secretary for
Safe and Drug-Free Schools.

Authorizing Legislation – No Child Left Behind Act of 2001

Subpart 2-National Programs

SEC. 4121. FEDERAL ACTIVITIES.

(a) Program Authorized-From funds made available to carry out this subpart under section 4003(2), the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, and the Attorney General, shall carry out programs to prevent the illegal use of drugs and violence among, and promote safety and discipline for, students. The Secretary shall carry out such programs directly, or through grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements with public and private entities and individuals, or through agreements with other Federal agencies, and shall coordinate such programs with other appropriate Federal activities. Such programs may include-

- 1) the development and demonstration of innovative strategies for the training of school personnel, parents, and members of the community for drug and violence prevention activities based on State and local needs;
- 2) the development, demonstration, scientifically based evaluation, and dissemination of innovative and high quality drug and violence prevention programs and activities, based on State and local needs, which may include-
 - a) alternative education models, either established within a school or separate and apart from an existing school, that are designed to promote drug and violence prevention, reduce disruptive behavior, reduce the need for repeat suspensions and expulsions, enable students to meet challenging State academic standards, and enable students to return to the regular classroom as soon as possible;
 - b) community service and service-learning projects, designed to rebuild safe and health neighborhoods and increase students' sense of individual responsibility
 - c) video-based projects developed by noncommercial telecommunications entities that provide young people with models for conflict resolution and responsible decision-making; and
 - d) child abuse education and prevention programs for elementary and secondary students;
- 3) the provision of information on drug abuse education and prevention to the Secretary of Health and Human Services for dissemination;
- 4) the provision of information on violence prevention and education and school safety to the Department of Justice for dissemination;
- 5) technical assistance to chief executive officers, State agencies, local educational agencies, and other recipients of funding under this part to build capacity to develop and implement high-quality, effective drug and violence prevention programs consistent with the principles of effectiveness in section 4115(a);
- 6) assistance to school systems that have particularly severe drug and violence problems, including hiring drug prevention and school safety coordinators, or assistance to support appropriate response efforts to crisis situations;
- 7) the development of education and training programs, curricula, instructional materials, and professional training and development for preventing and reducing the incidence of crimes and conflicts motivated by hate in localities most directly affected by hate crimes;
- 8) activities in communities designated as empowerment zones or enterprise communities that will connect schools to community-wide efforts to reduce drug and violence problems; and
- 9) other activities in accordance with the purpose of this part, based on State and local needs.

(b) Peer Review-The Secretary shall use a peer review process in reviewing applications for funds under this section.

IV. General Application Instructions and Information

Preparing the Application

A completed application for assistance under this competition consists of two parts: a detailed narrative description of the proposed project and budget, and all forms and assurances that must be submitted in order to receive a grant. An application under this program should address the specific needs of the applicant and propose activities specifically designed to meet those needs. We strongly discourage applicants from using “form” applications or proposals that address general rather than specific local needs. Identical or substantially similar applications are not responsive to the scoring criteria.

A panel of non-federal readers with experience in school emergency management will review each eligible application submitted by the deadline. The panel will award points ranging from 0 to 100 to each application depending on how well the selection criteria are addressed. Be sure you provide a comprehensive response to each factor under each selection criterion. Applications that fail to do so will be read, but our experience suggests they may not score well enough to be funded.

After applications have been scored on a scale of 0-100 by external readers, Federal staff will assign all appropriate competitive preference points.

If you apply via Grants.gov, you will use the following Grants.gov narrative forms:

- ❑ ED Abstract Form
- ❑ Project Narrative Attachment Form
- ❑ Other Attachments Form
- ❑ Budget Narrative Attachment Form

The **ED Abstract Form** is where you will attach your program abstract.

The **Project Narrative Attachment Form** is where you will attach the narrative sections addressing the selection criteria that will be used to evaluate applications submitted for this grant competition.

The **Other Attachments Form** is where you will attach proposal appendices, such as curriculum vitae of key personnel, letters of commitment, and samples of evaluation instruments. In addition, all signed partner agreements and assurance forms should be included as well. The Grants.gov system will allow applicants to attach as many as 10 separate appendices in this section.

The **Budget Narrative Attachment Form** is where you will attach a detailed line item budget and any supplemental budget information.

All applicants (Grants.gov and paper format) should adhere to the following formatting guidelines:

- ❑ Use 1-inch margins. If you submit your application in paper format by mail or hand delivery, your application must be printed on 8 ½" by 11" paper.
- ❑ Use consistent font no smaller than 12-point type throughout your document. You may use boldface type, underlining, and italics; however, do not use colored text.
- ❑ For the project narrative, your application should consist of the number and text of each selection criterion followed by the narrative. The text of the selection criterion, if included, does not count against any page limitation.
- ❑ Place a page number at the bottom right of each page beginning with 1, and number your pages consecutively throughout your document, beginning with the Abstract and ending with the Appendices. **Note:** Do not paginate any of the forms.

If you submit your proposal via Grants.gov, you will use your own word-processing software to complete the application for this grant competition.

D-U-N-S Number Instructions

All applicants must obtain and use a D-U-N-S Number, and all applicants applying through Grants.gov must register with Grants.gov. The D-U-N-S Number used on the application must be the same number that the applicant's organization used to register with Grants.gov. If the numbers are not the same, Grants.gov will reject the application.

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

You can obtain a D-U-N-S Number at no charge by calling (800) 333-0505 or by completing the D-U-N-S Number Request Form, available online at www.dnb.com/US/duns_update/index.html. Dun & Bradstreet, a global information provider, has assigned D-U-N-S Numbers to more than 43 million companies worldwide. Customer service is available on Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (Eastern time) at (888) 814-1435.

Organizing the Application

- 1. Application for Federal Assistance (SF Form 424):** Use the Application for Federal Assistance and the Department of Education Supplemental Information for SF 424. The SF Form 424 is the title page of your application. Be sure that Item 11 identifies the CFDA Number for this grant competition: 84.184E and the title as Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools.

If you submit your proposal for this grant competition via Grants.gov, please complete the SF 424 (Application for Federal Assistance) first. Grants.gov will insert the correct CFDA and program name automatically where needed.

If you submit your proposal in paper format by mail or hand delivery, you will need to insert the correct CFDA number and program name where requested.

2. **Abstract:** Include a concise, one-page, double-spaced abstract following the Table of Contents. This is a key element and should include a brief narrative describing the project goals and objectives and the intended outcomes of the project. Clearly mark this page with the applicant's name as shown in Item 1 of the SF 424. If you submit your application via Grants.gov, attach this document to the **ED Abstract Form**.
3. **Project Narrative:** This section should be no more than 25 double-spaced typewritten pages. The narrative must contain evidence that the applicant meets the absolute priority and should contain and follow in sequence the information requested for each selection criteria. Applicants should ensure that the narrative addresses all of the application requirements listed in Section II and that the narrative is easy to read and logically developed in accordance with the selection criteria. The narrative should include a Table of Contents with page references. The Table of Contents does not count against any page limitations. If you submit your application via Grants.gov, attach this document to the **Project Narrative Attachment Form**.
4. **Budget Narrative:** Use the Budget Information Form (ED Form 524) provided in the required forms section of this application package to prepare a budget for the project. **The budget should be shown in one column, as the grant covers a single 18-month budget period.**

You must include a detailed budget narrative that supports and explains the information provided in ED Form 524. Use the same budget categories as those on ED Form 524 and explain the basis used to estimate costs for all budget categories, and how the cost items relate to the proposed project's goals, objectives, and activities. All expenditures must be necessary to carry out the goals and objectives of the project, reasonable for the scope and complexity of the project, and allowable under the terms and conditions of the grant and in accordance with government cost principles.

The Budget Information Form and accompanying narrative should provide enough detail for ED staff to easily understand how costs were determined and if the budget is commensurate with the scope of the project. A sample budget narrative is available at http://www.ed.gov/admins/grants/apply/techassist/resource_pg8.html. If you submit your application via Grants.gov, attach this document to the **Budget Narrative Attachment Form**.

For this grant competition, you may charge indirect costs using the unrestricted rate negotiated with your cognizant Federal agency (e.g., Department of Education, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of the Interior). Be sure to include evidence of a federally negotiated indirect cost rate (ex, copy of an indirect cost rate agreement with your State) or by your State Education Agency. If you budget for contractual services, please note that indirect costs may only be applied to the first \$25,000 of each contract.

If you claim indirect costs in the budget for your project and do not have a negotiated rate with the federal government, you have 90 days from the time you transmit your application to submit the necessary paperwork to the Department to receive a negotiated indirect cost rate. For more information about indirect cost rates, please visit: www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/intro.html

5. **Appendices:** If you submit your application via Grants.gov, the **Other Attachments Form** is where you will attach proposal appendices that you may choose to submit in support of the applicant's capacity and preparation to undertake the proposed project, such as curriculum vitae of key personnel, letters of commitment, and samples of evaluation instruments. The Grants.gov system will allow applicants to attach as many as 10 separate appendices in this section. If you have more than 10 appendices in your application, we suggest combining several of them as one appendix and then upload them to the Other Attachments Form.

If you submit your application in paper format via mail or hand delivery, information provided in this section includes forms and other material required by ED in order for an application to be eligible for funding as well as any other information that applicants may choose to submit in support of their capacity and preparation to undertake the proposed project.

The following items are **not** part of the appendices and may not be included:

- Budget or program narrative information that the applicant wishes to have reviewed as part of its response to one or more scoring criteria—all such information must be included in the narrative portion of the application
- Videotapes, CD-ROMS, photographs, or floppy discs—they will not be reviewed and we will not return them.

This section **must** include the following:

- GEPA 427, Equitable Access to and Participation in Federally Assisted Programs
- Letter of Transmittal to State Single Point of Contact (if your state participates)
- Proof of federally negotiated indirect cost rate (if you are claiming indirect costs)
- Program-Specific Assurance (see page 101)

- Competitive Preference Qualification Assurance (see pages 63-64)
- Partner agreements (see pages 65-68)

This section **may** include the following:

- Other information the applicant wishes to include in support of its capacity, experience, and readiness to undertake the proposed project, including:
- Resumes of key personnel. If personnel have yet to be hired for this proposed project, include a narrative description of expected staff qualifications.
- Letters of commitment that reflect each person's awareness of their role in the proposed project. Each letter should indicate a willingness to put forth the necessary time and effort to make the project work efficiently and effectively.
- Relevant prior grant experience.

6. Assurances and Certifications: If you submit your application electronically, you must complete all forms posted on Grants.gov.

If you submit your application in paper format via mail or hand delivery, you **must** fill out, have signed by the person authorized to sign for the district, and submit the following forms:

- Assurances, Non-Construction Programs (Standard Form 424B)
- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (Standard Form LLL)
- Grants.gov Lobbying Form

Electronic versions of the Standard Form 424B and the Standard Form LLL can be downloaded via the following Web site:

<http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>

An electronic version of the Grants.gov Lobbying Form can be downloaded via the following Web site:

http://apply.grants.gov/apply/forms/sample/GG_LobbyingForm-V1.1.pdf

Application Preparation Checklist

1. First steps (So, you think you'd like to apply for the grant...)

- Read the entire application package and accompanying Federal Register notice to **determine if the program is a good fit** for you--
- Ask: Am I mostly interested in this grant to purchase equipment and supplies?
Am I interested in improving and enhancing the emergency management plans within the district and at each school site?

If you answer no to the first question and yes to the second question, this grant may be a good fit for you.

- Review **eligibility** requirements. Are you a:
 - Local Educational Agency (LEA); or
 - Education Service Agency (ESA)

 - Are you a current ERCM or REMS grantee?

HINT: Definitions of each of these entities are found on page 9.

If you fall into one of the two eligible groups noted above (LEA or ESA) and are NOT a current ERCM or REMS grantees, you are eligible to apply!

2. Second steps (You are eligible for the grant and it is a good fit for you...)

- Do you want to apply by electronic submission through Grants.gov?

If so, you will need to:

- Obtain a DUNS number (see page 91 for more information)
- Register in the CCR
- Register as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR)
- Get authorized as an AOR by your organization
- Follow all appropriate steps for uploading a grant application to Grants.gov

HINT: This process may take several days to weeks. Begin early!

3. Working on the application

- Identify the required community partners for your project and begin identifying what their roles and responsibilities will be on the grant.
- Review the selection criteria and notes sections.
- Ensure that the narrative addresses the selection criteria and the Absolute Priority and the other grant requirements.

- Review your evaluation section:
 - ___ Do you address the three required GPRA measures in your evaluation section?
 - ___ Have you identified program-specific objectives for your project?
 - ___ Are you including plans to build a long-term evaluation strategy?
 - ___ If you are hiring an external evaluator (which is NOT required), have you delineated a potential scope of work?
- Review your abstract to ensure that it is 1-page, double-spaced and briefly describes your program in a narrative format.
- Organize your application by following the sequence of information requested on page 111. All pages should be number consecutively to make review and evaluation easier. Applications should be double-spaced and printed on one side of the paper.

4. Creating a budget and budget narrative

- Complete budget form ED524 detailing your budget. Please put your total expenditures for the 18-month budget period in the column marked “Project Year 1.”
- If you are not submitting electronically, please double-check ALL budget figures to ensure accuracy.
- Complete a budget narrative that fully details the costs listed on the ED524.
 - ___ Present breakdown of costs by the budget categories on the ED524.
 - ___ Provide as much detail as possible.
 - ___ Ensure that the justification clearly links the expenses listed with the project’s goals and objectives.
 - ___ Provide the percent of time commitment for the Project Director even if these expenses are being paid with other funding sources.

For additional guidance on preparing a budget narrative, please see http://www.ed.gov/admins/grants/apply/techassist/resource_pg8.html.

- Ensure that all expenses are both reasonable and allowable.
- Determine your negotiated, unrestricted indirect cost rate.
- Provide proof of your negotiated, unrestricted indirect cost rate with your application.

5. Completing assurances, forms, and certifications

- ❑ Working collaboratively with your community partners, clearly identify and outline each partner's roles and responsibilities. You may wish to use the sample partner agreements on pages 104-107.
- ❑ Obtain signatures of Authorized Official of the LEA and representatives of each community partner on the written partner agreements.

NOTE: For consortium applications, each LEA to be served by the grant must submit a complete set of partner agreements with appropriate signatures from their own Authorized Representative and the five required community partners.

- ❑ Determine if the district is eligible for Competitive Preference Priority 1 or Competitive Preference Priority 2. (Additional information is available on page 29)
 - If the district is eligible for one of the Competitive Preferences, complete the relevant Competitive Preference form and have it signed by the Authorized Representative.
 - If the application is serving more than one LEA, list each LEA to be served by the grant in the space provided.
- ❑ Obtain the signature of your Authorized Representative for the Program-Specific Assurance (p. 101).
- ❑ Obtain the signature of your Authorized Representative for all required forms (SF 424, SF 424B, Assurance Non-Construction Programs, SF LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities, and Certification Regarding Lobbying).
- ❑ Ensure that the Application for Federal Education Assistance (ED Form 424) has been completed according to the instructions and includes the nine-digit D-U-N-S Number and Tax Identification Number.

6. Finalizing other issues

- ❑ Include the percentage of time the project director will be working on this project. This may be included in the budget narrative or added to the ED Supplement to the 424.
- ❑ Include the required GEPA 427 statement (more information is found on page 108).
 - Ensure that there is sufficient detail regarding specific barriers for your community and how those barriers will be addressed.

- Ensure that the GEPA 427 statement does more than affirm your Equal Employment Opportunity statement.
- As required by EO 12372, notify your State Single Point of Contact about this application if required (more information can be found on page 108). A copy of the applicant's letter on letterhead should be included with the application.
- If submitting by hard copy, include one original, two copies, and one additional voluntary copy (unbound) of the application.

Deadline Date: Applications must be submitted, postmarked, or hand delivered by February 19, 2008.

7. What happens next?

- If you submit your application in hard copy, you should receive a postcard from ED's Application Control Center acknowledging receipt of your application and giving you its assigned P/R Award Number in approximately two weeks (depending on the volume of applications). If you submit your application electronically through Grants.Gov, you will receive an email acknowledgement with the P/R Award Number. Please refer to this number if you need to contact us about your application.
- OSDFS staff will screen each application to ensure that all program eligibility requirements are met and all forms are included.
- If your application is deemed ineligible for review, you will receive notification from OSDFS.
- Your application will be assigned to a three-person panel of expert reviewers who will evaluate and score your proposal according to the selection criteria in this application package. Your application will receive a score from 0 to 110 depending upon how well you respond to the requirements of the selection criteria and if you are eligible to receive competitive preference priority points.
- A grant award document will be sent to applicants whose proposals score within the funding range no later than September 30, 2008.
- Unsuccessful applicants will receive a notification letter following notification of recipients.
- Both successful and unsuccessful applicants will receive copies of the peer review comments.

8. Do you still have questions?

- ❑ Please review the entire application package, particularly the Frequently Asked Questions section and the Federal Register notice.
- ❑ If your questions are not addressed, please contact the competition manager, Sara Strizzi at (303) 346-0924 or sara.strizzi@ed.gov. Please be patient, as we receive a high volume of inquiries during the competition.

Forms and Instructions

- Program-Specific Assurance
- Competitive Preference Qualification Assurance: Priority 1
- Competitive Preference Qualification Assurance: Priority 2
- Partner Agreements
- Application for Federal Assistance (Standard Form 424)
- Department of Education Supplemental Form for the Standard Form 424
- Department of Education Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs (ED Form 524)
- Assurances – Non-Construction Programs (Standard Form 424B)
- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (Standard Form LLL)
- Grants.gov Lobbying Form

Program-Specific Assurance

If you are submitting an electronic application, you must print out the form below, complete, and either upload all signed forms to the Other Attachments Form or fax it (along with the ED 424 and other forms) to the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools at (202) 205-5722 or (202) 260-7767 within (3) working days of submitting your electronic application. You must indicate your PR/Award number in the upper right corner of the form.

As the duly authorized representative, I certify that the LEA:

1. Has contacted the State and/or local emergency management agency and will coordinate emergency management efforts with the State and/or local Homeland Security Plan;
2. Will work with community partners to complete all Fiscal Year 2007 National Incident Management System (NIMS) requirements by the end of the grant period;
3. Will work to develop emergency management plans that address the needs of students and staff with special needs;
4. Will develop a written infectious disease plan that includes pandemic influenza; and
5. Will provide for the equitable participation of private school children, their teachers, and other educational personnel in private schools located in areas to be served by the proposed project.

Signature of Authorized Representative

Title

Applicant Organization

Date Submitted

Competitive Preference Qualification Assurance: Priority 1

If you are submitting an electronic application, you must print out the form below, complete, and either upload all signed forms to the Other Attachments Form or fax it (along with the ED 424 and other forms) to the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools at (202) 205-5722 or (202) 260-7767 within (3) working days of submitting your electronic application. You must indicate your PR/Award number in the upper right corner of the form.

Competitive Preference Priority 1: Under this priority, we give a 10-point competitive preference to applications from LEAs that (1) have not yet received a grant under this program (CFDA 84.184E) and (2) are located in whole or in part within Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) jurisdictions, as determined by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. An applicant must meet both criteria to be eligible for this preference. Under a consortium application, all members of the LEA consortium need to meet both criteria to be eligible for the preference. Applications submitted by educational service agencies (ESAs) are eligible for the competitive preference if each LEA to be served by the grant meets both criteria.

As the duly authorized representative, I certify that all LEAs to be served under the grant meet the following conditions:

All LEAs are located within the Urban Areas Security Initiative Jurisdiction of:

City, State

None of the LEAs to be served by the grant have previously received funding under the ERCM program either as the lead LEA or as a part of a consortium of LEAs.

Please list the name and location (city and State) of all LEAs to be served by the grant:

Signature of Authorized Representative

Title

Applicant Organization

Date Submitted

Competitive Preference Qualification Assurance: Priority 2

If you are submitting an electronic application, you must print out the form below, complete, and either upload all signed forms to the Other Attachments Form or fax it (along with the ED 424 and other forms) to the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools at (202) 205-5722 or (202) 260-7767 within (3) working days of submitting your electronic application. You must indicate your PR/Award number in the upper right corner of the form.

Priority 2: Under this priority, we give a 5-point competitive preference to applications from LEAs that have not previously received a grant under this program (84.184E). Applicants (other than educational service agencies, or ESAs) that have receive funding under this program directly, or as the lead agency or as a partner in a consortium application under this program are not eligible for this priority. For applications submitted by ESAs, each LEA to be served by the grant must not have received funding under this program directly, or as the lead agency or as a partner in a consortium application, in order for the ESA to be eligible for this priority.

As the duly authorized representative, I certify that all LEAs to be served under the grant meet the following condition:

None of the LEAs to be served by the grant have previously received funding under the ERCM program either as the lead LEA or as a part of a consortium of LEAs.

Please list the name and location (city and State) of all LEAs to be served by the grant:

Signature of Authorized Representative

Title

Applicant Organization

Date Submitted

Partner Agreements

To be considered for an Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools grant award, **all local educational agencies (eligible applicants) receiving services through this grant** must include signatures from *at least two of the five partners listed*, along with details of the roles and responsibilities of each partner in the improvement of the plan and a reflection of each partner’s commitment to sustainability and continuous improvement of the plan. We have provided the following pages to help LEAs obtain the necessary signatures.

Applicants may choose another format to obtain necessary signatures and descriptions of roles. **However, to be considered, applicants MUST have at least two partner signatures, one of which must be the local law enforcement agency—AND in every space where a signature is missing, an explanation must be provided for why a signature could not be included.**

Providing only signatures does NOT meet the requirements for this grant competition. In addition to providing signatures, each partner must detail its specific role and responsibility in the strengthening and improving of the emergency management plan and its commitment to sustainability and continuous improvement of the plan as it relates to the proposed REMS project.

Applications that do not provide both 1) at least two of the five signatures and 2) also include a description of each partner’s roles and responsibilities will NOT BE READ.

If you are submitting an electronic application, you must print out the form below, complete, and either upload all signed forms to the Other Attachments Form or fax it (along with the ED 424 and other forms) to the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools at (202) 205-5722 or (202) 260-7767 within (3) working days of submitting your electronic application. You must indicate your PR/Award number in the upper right corner of the form.

NOTE: For consortium applications, each LEA to be served by the grant must submit a complete set of partner agreements with appropriate signatures from their own Authorized Representative and the five required community partners.

Required Signature of the Authorized Representative for the LEA

Below is the signature of the Authorized Representative for the LEA:

Signature: _____ Title: _____

Partner Agreement 1: Local Law Enforcement

Below is a signature representing our community-based law enforcement agency (i.e. local police, sheriff’s office whose jurisdiction covers a majority of the schools in the district) and reflecting that partner’s commitment to sustainability and continuous improvement of the plan:

Signature:_____ Title:_____

Description of roles and responsibilities in the strengthening and improving of the plan:

We are unable to include this signature for the following reason(s):

Partner Agreement 2: Local Public Safety Agency

Below is a signature representing our local community-based public safety agency (i.e. Emergency Management Services or Fire Department) and reflecting that partner’s commitment to sustainability and continuous improvement of the plan:

Signature:_____ Title:_____

Description of roles and responsibilities in the strengthening and improving of the plan:

We are unable to include this signature for the following reason(s):

Partner Agreement 3: Local Public Health Agency

Below is a signature representing our local community-based public health agency and reflecting that partner’s commitment to sustainability and continuous improvement of the plan:

Signature: _____ Title: _____

Description of roles and responsibilities in the strengthening and improving of the plan:

We are unable to include this signature for the following reason(s):

Partner Agreement 4: Local Mental Health Agency

Below is a signature representing our local community-based mental health agency and reflecting that partner’s commitment to sustainability and continuous improvement of the plan:

Signature: _____ Title: _____

Description of Roles and Responsibilities in the strengthening and improving of the plan:

We are unable to include this signature for the following reason(s):

Partner Agreement 5: Head of Local Government

Below is a signature of the head of our local government (i.e. the county executive, the mayor, the county manager, head of the town council) and reflecting that partner's commitment to sustainability and continuous improvement of the plan:

Signature: _____ Title: _____

Description of Roles and Responsibilities in the strengthening and improving of the plan:

We are unable to include this signature for the following reason(s):

Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs

This grant competition is subject to the requirements of Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR Part 79. One of the objectives of the Executive Order is to foster an intergovernmental partnership and a strengthened federalism. The Executive Order relies on processes developed by State and local governments for coordination and review of proposed federal financial assistance.

Applicants must contact the appropriate State Single Point of Contact to find out about, and to comply with, the State's process under Executive Order 12372. Applicants proposing to perform activities in more than one State should immediately contact the Single Point of Contact for each of those States and follow the procedure established in each State under the Executive Order. The name and address of each State Single Point of Contact is listed below. *Note: A copy of the applicant's letter to the State Single Point of Contact must be included with the application.*

To view a list of States that participate in the intergovernmental review process, visit www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/spoc.html.

In States that have not established a process or chosen a program for review, State, area-wide, regional, and local entities may submit comments directly to the Department.

Any State process recommendation and other comments submitted by a State Single Point of Contact and any comments from State, area-wide, regional, and local entities must be received by April 18, 2008, at the following address: The Secretary, EO 12372—CFDA #84.184E, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Room 7W300, Washington, DC 20202-0124. Recommendations or comments may be hand-delivered until 4:30 p.m. (Eastern Time) on April 18, 2008. Please do not send applications to this address.

States that are not listed have chosen not to participate in the intergovernmental review process, and therefore do not have a State Single Point of Contact. If you are located within one of these States, you are exempt from this requirement.

General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) Section 427

Section 427 of GEPA affects applicants for new discretionary grant awards under this program. All applicants for new awards must include information in their applications to address this provision, summarized below, in order to receive funding under this program.

Section 427 requires each applicant for funds (other than an individual person) to include in its application a description of the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its federally-assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs.

This section allows applicants discretion in developing the required description. The statute highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation that you may address: *gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age*. Based on local circumstances, you can determine whether these or other barriers may prevent your students, teachers, or others from equitable access or participation. Your description need not be lengthy; you may provide a clear and succinct description of how you plan to address those barriers that are applicable to your circumstances. In addition, the information may be provided in a single narrative, or, if appropriate, may be discussed in connection with related topics in the application.

NOTE: A general statement of an applicant’s nondiscriminatory hiring policy is not sufficient to meet this requirement. Applicants must identify potential barriers and explain steps they will take to overcome these barriers.

Section 427 is not intended to duplicate the requirements of civil rights statutes, but rather to ensure that, in designing their projects, applicants for federal funds address equity concerns that may affect the ability of certain potential beneficiaries to fully participate in the project and to achieve to high standards. Consistent with program requirements and its approved application, an applicant may use the federal funds awarded to eliminate barriers it identifies.

Examples

The following examples help illustrate how an applicant may comply with section 427.

1. An applicant that proposes to carry out an adult literacy project serving, among others, adults with limited English proficiency, might describe in its application how it intends to distribute a brochure about the proposed project to such potential participants in their native language.
2. An applicant that proposes to develop instructional materials for classroom use might describe how it will make the materials available on audiotape or in Braille for students who are blind.
3. An applicant that proposes to carry out a model science program for secondary students and is concerned that girls may be less likely than boys to enroll in the course might indicate how it tends to conduct “outreach” efforts to girls to encourage their enrollment.

We recognize that many applicants may already be implementing effective steps to ensure equity of access and participation in their grant programs, and we appreciate your cooperation in responding to the requirements of this provision.

Estimated Public Reporting Burden

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for the GEPA 427 is OMB No. 1890-0007. The time required to complete GEPA 427 is estimated to average 1.5 hours per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data sources, gather and maintain 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, DC 20202-4651. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-6450.

Application Submission Checklist

Application for Federal Assistance (SF Form 424) is completed according to the instructions and includes the nine-digit D-U-N-S Number and Tax Identification Number.

All required forms are signed in black or blue ink and dated by an authorized official and the signed original is included with your submission.

One signed original and two copies of the application, including all required forms and appendices plus one voluntarily submitted additional copy, are included. All copies are unbound and each page is consecutively numbered.

Deadline Date: **February 19, 2008**. See Sections I and IV of this application package for complete application transmittal instructions and general application instructions and information.

EACH COPY OF THE APPLICATION MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- Application for Federal Assistance (SF Form 424)
- Department of Education Supplemental Information Form for the SF 424
- Project Abstract (one page maximum)
- Project Narrative (up to 25 pages double-spaced)
- Program-Specific Assurance (see page 101)
- Competitive Preference Qualification Assurance, if applicable (see pages 102-103).
- Partner Agreements (see pages 104-107).
- All applications must include the required forms, assurances, and certifications, including:
 - Budget Information Form (ED Form 524) and detailed budget narrative
 - Assurances, Non-Construction Programs (ED Form 424B)
 - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (Standard Form–LLL)
NOTE: The Authorized Representative must sign this form even if it is not applicable to the applicant
 - Grants.gov Lobbying Form
- Narrative response to GEPA 427
- Copy of letter to State Single Point of Contact
- Proof of federally negotiated indirect cost rate (if claiming indirect costs)