

integrated English literacy and civics education services to immigrants and other limited English proficient populations. For FY 2002, \$70 million was appropriated for this purpose.

Under these programs States distribute funds to local providers through a competitive process. Eligible providers include: local educational agencies, community-based organizations, volunteer literacy organizations, correctional education agencies, institutions of higher education, libraries, public housing authorities, and other public or private nonprofit agencies.

The statutory authorization for this program expires on September 30, 2003. In order to contribute in a timely manner to congressional reauthorization discussions, we are beginning a review of this program. To ensure public participation in our review and decision-making, we invite public comment on these issues.

You may obtain an electronic copy of the Act on the Internet at the following site: <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OVAE/CTE/legis.html>.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain a copy of the Act in an alternative format (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) on request to the contact number listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

Key Issues for Public Comment

Comments are encouraged on the following priority issues.

1. *Narrowing the Achievement Gap.* The 1992 National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAALS) indicated that approximately 90 million adults were reading at levels that were insufficient to allow them to participate fully in the economy and obtain new skills necessary for success. In 2002, an updated version of NAALS will be conducted, which will likely indicate that tens of millions of Americans continue to live with low literacy. Yet programs funded under the Act currently serve only about 2.7 million individuals each year. This disparity between available resources and need is likely to persist for the foreseeable future.

- How can we improve the targeting of Federal resources on effective programs that will produce the greatest return on the Federal investment?

- What are the features of effective adult education and literacy programs that should be given higher priority for Federal resources?

- How can we improve the performance of adult education programs, increasing their success only

in not increasing the number of completers but also in generating more rapid knowledge and skill gains?

- How can we improve the array of services available to support adult learners who are currently not accessing learning through the present system?

- Can non-traditional service providers be better integrated into a multi-faceted delivery system? What changes would promote the delivery of high-quality, accountable services by community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, and businesses?

- How should our national program funds be targeted to help States close the achievement gap?

2. *Increasing Accountability for Student Performance.* The Act established a State accountability system that holds States and other grant recipients accountable for meeting annual, agreed-upon levels of performance on a set of "core indicators" specified in the statute. Do these core indicators measure student performance and demonstrate the impact of the Federal investment well? How could data be reported differently to enhance their meaning to the public, to students, and to policymakers?

3. *Coordination with Federal Employment and Training Programs.* Title I of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) created a one-stop delivery system that links multiple Federal education and training programs in order to make these services more accessible to the public, to reduce duplication of services, and to facilitate coordinated planning across programs. Adult education and literacy programs supported by the Act are "mandatory partners" that are required to participate in the one-stop delivery system. They are also represented on local workforce investment boards that govern the one-stop system in local areas.

- Have the one-stop delivery system's goals of improving public access to adult education services, improving academic achievement, reducing duplication, and facilitating coordination been achieved in local areas? What changes are needed to promote the further attainment of these goals? How have memoranda of understanding [MOUs] among the delivery system's partners worked to benefit adult education participants?

- States negotiate annual levels of performance for WIA Title I employment programs for a set of "core indicators" that one similar to those established under the Act. Placement in employment, for example, is measured for both WIA Title I and the Act. Should these indicators be measured consistently across these programs and

others, using the same population and other definitions? If so, how should this common employment measure be constructed and what definitions should be used? Are there other indicators (e.g., educational attainment) for which there should also be common measurement approaches and definitions?

- Have WIA incentive grants helped States look at ways to promote student achievement across programs and help close the achievement gap?

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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.

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Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 9201, *et seq.*

Dated: September 19, 2002.

Carol D'Amico,

Assistant Secretary, Office of Vocational and Adult Education.

[FR Doc. 02-24250 Filed 9-23-02; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Office of Vocational and Adult Education; Reauthorization of Federal Support for Vocational and Technical Education Programs

AGENCY: Office of Vocational and Adult Education, U.S. Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice of public meetings and request for comment on the reauthorization of Federal support for vocational and technical education programs.

SUMMARY: The Assistant Secretary announces a series of public meetings and invites comments from the public regarding the reauthorization of programs under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1998 (the Act) and related issues, including Federal support for secondary school reform.

Public Meetings

Dates, Time, and Addresses: We will hold public meetings according to the following schedule:

1. Date: October 15, 2002, Time: 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Location: Sheraton Nashua Hotel, Wentworth Ballroom, 11 Tara Boulevard, Nashua, NH 03062. Phone: (603) 888-9970. Fax: (603) 891-4179.

Hotel Information: A limited number of rooms has been reserved at the Sheraton Nashua Hotel located at 11 Tara Boulevard, Nashua, NH 03062. To make your reservations, please call 603-888-9970 and refer to "OVAE Public Meeting." The room rate is \$96.12 (tax inclusive) for the reserved rooms on a first-come, first-served basis. Check-in time is 3 p.m., and check-out time is 12 p.m.

2. Date: October 25, 2002, Time: 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Location: College of The Canyons, 26455 Rockwell Canyon Road, Santa Clarita, CA 91355. Phone: (661) 259-7800. Fax: (661) 259-8302.

Hotel Information: A limited number of rooms has been reserved at the Hyatt Valencia Hotel located at 24500 Town Center Drive, Valencia, CA 91355. To make your reservations, please call 1-800-233-1234 and refer to "OVAE Public Meeting." The room rate is \$108.90 (tax inclusive) for the reserved rooms on a first-come, first-served basis. Check-in time is 3 p.m., and check out time is 12 p.m.

Participants: Those who wish to present comments on the reauthorization of Federal support for vocational and technical education programs and related issues at one of the public meetings must reserve time on the agenda for that meeting by contacting the individuals identified under *Reservations and Additional Meeting Information*. Reservations for presenting comments will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.

Participants will be allowed approximately 3 to 5 minutes to present their comments, depending upon the number of individuals who reserve time on the agenda. At the meeting, participants also are encouraged to submit two written copies of their comments. Persons interested in making comments are encouraged to address the issues and questions discussed under **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

Reservations and Additional Meeting Information: Individuals who intend to present comments at one of the public meetings must make reservations by contacting Gerri Anderson, Conference Manager, 1010 Wayne Ave, Suite 300, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910 (voice)

1(888) 589-4366; (fax) (301) 589-4122; (Federal Information Relay Service) 1-800-877-8339; (e-mail) ganderson@dbconsultinggroup.com.

Assistance to Individuals With Disabilities at the Public Meetings

The meeting rooms and proceedings will be accessible to individuals with disabilities. In addition, when making reservations, anyone presenting comments at or attending a meeting who needs special accommodations, such as sign language interpreters, Braille materials, and communication access real-time transcription, should inform the previously listed individual of his or her specific accessibility needs. You should make requests for accommodations at least 10 working days prior to the scheduled meeting date. Although we will attempt to meet a request we receive after that date, we may not be able to make available the requested auxiliary aid or service because of insufficient time to arrange it.

Request for Written Comments

In addition to soliciting comments during the public meetings, we invite the public to submit written comments on the reauthorization of Federal support for vocational and technical education programs, as well as related issues, including secondary school reform. We are particularly interested in comments that address the issues and questions described under **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

DATES: Submit comments on or before October 31, 2002.

ADDRESSES: Written comments should be addressed to Gerry Anderson, Conference Manager, 1010 Wayne Ave, Suite 300, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910.

1. *E-Mail.* We encourage you to e-mail your comments to the following address:

ganderson@dbconsultinggroup.com.

2. *Facsimile.* You may submit comments by facsimile at (301) 589-4122. If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf, you may call (202) 205-5538.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain a copy of this notice in an alternative format (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) on request to the contact person listed in the previous paragraph. *Availability of Copies of the Act:* You may obtain an electronic copy of the Act on the Internet at the following site: <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OVAE/CTE/legis.html>.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain a copy of the Act in an

alternative format (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) on request to the contact number listed in the previous paragraph.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Act authorizes Federal support to improve secondary and postsecondary vocational and technical education programs. The Act includes seven programs, with more than \$1.3 billion in funding for Fiscal Year 2002. The funded programs are: the Vocational and Technical Education State Grants; Tech-Prep Education State Grants; National Activities, including a national research center; the Native American Vocational and Technical Education program; the Tribally-Controlled Postsecondary Vocational and Technical Institutions program; America's Career Resource Network grants to States; and the Tech-Prep Demonstration program.

The statutory authorization for these programs expires on September 30, 2004. In order to contribute in a timely manner to congressional reauthorization discussions, we are beginning a review of these programs, as well as related issues, including secondary school reform. To ensure public participation in our review and decision-making, we invite public comment on these issues.

Key Issues for Public Comment

Comments are encouraged on the following priority issues.

1. Narrowing the Achievement Gap

Since the release of *A Nation At Risk* in 1983, little if any, improvement has been made in the performance of our nation's high school students. By all accounts, improvements have not been substantial enough so that every student is prepared for a successful future. In fact, data show that by the end of the 1980s, progress stopped cold and, through the 1990s, achievement gaps have remained stable or widened. A number of trends indicate that we may still be a "nation at risk" of not preparing our students for their future.

Scores by 12th graders on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) remain disturbingly low. As of 1998, only 40 percent of 12th graders were able to read at or above a proficient level and just 22 percent were able to write at or above a proficient level. Only 16 percent of 12th grade students in 2000 scored at or above a proficient level in math and 18 percent scored at or above a proficient level in science. Despite a substantial decrease in achievement gaps between 1970 and 1999, white students still consistently outperform peers of other racial and ethnic backgrounds in every subject area. In fact, by 1999, on average, 17-

year-old African-American and Hispanic students had skills in English, mathematics, and science skills comparable to those of 13-year-old White students. Achievement gaps also exist among students who pursue different programs of study. As of 1994, vocational concentrators lagged behind other students in English, math, and science achievement.

On January 8, 2002, President George W. Bush signed into law the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, the most sweeping reform of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) since it was enacted in 1965. Its provisions include increased accountability for States, school districts, and schools; greater choice for parents and students, particularly those attending low-performing schools; more flexibility for States and local educational agencies in the use of Federal education dollars; and a stronger emphasis on reading, especially for our youngest children.

Although No Child Left Behind applies to both elementary and secondary students, it places primary and much-needed emphasis on the 28 million public school students enrolled in kindergarten through 8th grade. Follow-up action that builds on No Child Left Behind may be needed to improve the achievement of the nation's high school students.

- Is there a need for additional or separate Federal action to address the achievement gap among secondary school students?
- Is there a need for additional or separate Federal action to address the achievement gap among non-baccalaureate postsecondary students?
- How should Federal support for vocational and technical education programs be aligned with Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and other elementary and secondary education programs?
- The current array of Federal programs that impact high schools and their students, may or may not represent a coherent Federal high school policy.
- What policies and programmatic elements would an effective, coherent Federal strategy to promote high school transformation include?
- How would existing vocational and technical education be modified to support this Federal strategy?
- Nearly one-third of college freshman take remedial math courses, and over one-quarter take remedial English. In some states, estimates of students requiring college remediation are nearly 50 percent. What can be done to assure that every student is prepared for postsecondary education, without the need for remediation?

2. Focusing on What Works

The Federal investment in vocational and technical education comprises about seven percent of the total amount spent nationally on vocational and technical education.

- How can these limited resources be targeted to maximize the return on the Federal investment?
- What are the features of effective secondary vocational and technical education programs that should be given higher priority for Federal resources?
- What are the features of effective postsecondary vocational and technical education programs that should be given higher priority for Federal resources?
- How should our national program funds be targeted to help close the achievement gap between high and low performing students, including factors that are based on gender, ethnicity, economic status and disability?

3. Increasing Accountability for Student Performance

The Act established a State accountability system that holds States accountable for meeting annual, agreed-upon levels of performance on a set of "core indicators" specified in the statute. Each State has discretion to determine how it will measure each of the indicators.

- While the Act's accountability system has heightened attention on student achievement, completion, and other outcomes, some contend that the system is needlessly complex and does not generate straightforward, easily understandable information about student, program, and State performance. How can this accountability system be simplified and improved?
- The law uses a single set of indicators to measure the effectiveness of both secondary and postsecondary programs. However, some of the indicators, such as attainment of State-established academic proficiencies, are not readily applicable to postsecondary education. What indicators are most appropriate and useful for measuring the effectiveness of postsecondary vocational and technical education programs? To what types of students should they apply? For example, should non-credit students be included in the accountability system?

4. Coordination With Federal Employment and Training Programs

Title I of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) created a one-stop delivery system that links multiple Federal

education and training programs in order to make these services more accessible to the public, to reduce duplication of services, and to facilitate coordinated planning across programs. Postsecondary vocational and technical education programs supported by the Act are "mandatory partners" that are required to participate in the one-stop delivery system. They are also represented on local workforce investment boards that govern the one-stop system in local areas.

- Have the one-stop delivery system's goals of improving public access to postsecondary vocational and technical education, reducing duplication, and facilitating coordination been achieved in local areas? What changes are needed to promote the further attainment of these goals? How have memoranda of understanding [MOUs] worked to benefit the postsecondary vocational and technical education participant?
- States negotiate annual levels of performance for WIA Title I employment programs for a set of "core indicators" that are similar to that established under the Act. Placement in employment, for example, is measured for both WIA Title I and the Act. Should these indicators be measured consistently across these programs and others, using the same population and other definitions? How should this common employment measure be constructed and what definitions should be used? Are there other indicators [e.g., educational attainment] for which there should also be common measurement approaches and definitions?
- Have WIA incentive grants helped States look at ways to promote student achievement across programs and help close the achievement gap?

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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: <http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/index.html>.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 2301, *et seq.*

Dated: September 19, 2002.

Carol D'Amico,

Assistant Secretary for Vocational and Adult Education.

[FR Doc. 02-24251 Filed 9-23-02; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Office of Science Financial Assistance Program Notice 03-03; Enhanced Research Capabilities at DOE X-ray and Neutron Facilities

AGENCY: Department of Energy.

ACTION: Notice inviting grant applications.

SUMMARY: The Office of Basic Energy Sciences (BES) of the Office of Science (SC), U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), hereby announces its interest in receiving grant applications for new capabilities or for upgrading existing research capabilities for innovative fundamental research at DOE-supported synchrotron light sources and neutron sources. Such instrumentation should employ state-of-the-art technology so that the photon and neutron beams are utilized more effectively. Applications for the development of new capabilities, as well as upgrading of existing capabilities are encouraged.

DATES: Potential applicants are required to submit a brief preapplication. All preapplications, referencing Program Notice 03-03, should be received by November 12, 2002. A response to the preapplications encouraging or discouraging a formal application will be communicated to the applicant within approximately thirty days of receipt. To permit timely consideration for awards in Fiscal Year 2003, formal applications submitted in response to this notice must be received by January 28, 2003.

ADDRESSES: All preapplications, referencing Program Notice 03-03, should be sent to Dr. Helen M. Kerch, Office of Basic Energy Sciences, Division of Materials Sciences, ER-132/Germantown Building, Office of Science, U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20585-1290.

After receiving notification from DOE concerning successful preapplications, applicants may prepare formal applications. We encourage you to submit formal applications in response to this solicitation electronically through DOE's Industry Interactive Procurement System (IIPS) at: <http://e-center.doe.gov/>. IIPS provides for the posting of solicitations and receipt of applications in a paperless environment

via the Internet. Applications must be submitted through IIPS in PDF format by an authorized institutional business official. Questions regarding the operation of IIPS may be e-mailed to the IIPS Help Desk at: HelpDesk@e-center.doe.gov or you may call the help desk at (800) 683-0751. Further information on the use of IIPS by the Office of Science is available at: <http://www.sc.doe.gov/production/grants/grants.html>.

If you are unable to submit the application through IIPS, formal applications may be sent to: U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Science, Grants and Contracts Division, SC-64/Germantown Building, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20585-1290, ATTN: Program Notice 03-03.

When submitting applications by U.S. Postal Service Express Mail, any commercial mail delivery service, or when hand carried by the applicant, the following address must be used: U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Science, Grants and Contracts Division, SC-64, 19901 Germantown Road, Germantown, MD 20874-1290, ATTN: Program Notice 03-03.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Helen M. Kerch, Office of Basic Energy Sciences, Division of Materials Sciences, ER-132/Germantown Building, Office of Science, U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20585-1290. Telephone: (301) 903-2346; Fax: (301) 903-9513; e-mail: helen.kerch@science.doe.gov. The full text of Program Notice 03-03 is available via the Internet using the following Web address: <http://www.sc.doe.gov/production/grants/grants.html>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: X-ray and neutron scattering are powerful tools used to investigate the fundamental properties of materials. BES is the major supporter of x-ray and neutron science in the United States and has pioneered the development of virtually all of the instruments and techniques used at these facilities for research in materials sciences, surface science, condensed matter physics, atomic and molecular physics, chemical dynamics, x-ray microscopy, tomography, femtosecond phenomena, interfacial/environmental, and geophysics studies. Within the physical sciences, BES remains the dominant federal supporter of beamline development and instrument fabrication providing as much as 85% of the federal support for these activities. Major instruments at the synchrotron light

sources and the neutron sources have a lifetime of 7-10 years after which the instruments may undergo major upgrades or be retired. Thus, after a facility is fully instrumented, about 10-15% of the instruments must be upgraded or replaced each year to keep the facility at the forefront of science.

The National User Facilities supported by the Office of Basic Energy Sciences are the Spallation Neutron Source (SNS) (currently under construction), National Synchrotron Light Source (NSLS), High Flux Isotope Reactor (HFIR), Intense Pulsed Neutron Source (IPNS), Stanford Synchrotron Radiation Laboratory (SSRL), Advanced Light Source (ALS), Advanced Photon Source (APS), and Los Alamos Neutron Scattering Center (LANSCE). These facilities have the capabilities of extreme flux, or brightness, to make certain experiments possible, which couldn't be done otherwise. The Department's intention for this program is to support fundamental research, which will include the upgrade and/or development of new instrumentation for general user beamlines at the Department's National User Facilities. The ability to conduct innovative fundamental research should be emphasized in each application. Grant applications are encouraged from the fields of solid-state physics, materials chemistry, metals and ceramics, chemical sciences, geosciences, and environmental sciences for energy-relevant research which make use of the DOE-supported user facilities. Instrumentation appropriate for consideration would include, but not be limited to, the following: beamline optics and transport guides, monochromators of much greater resolution, more efficient detectors to reduce the background noise, sample environments that afford control of temperature, pressure and magnetic field, electronics and data processing equipment to enable investigators to carry out new or more difficult experiments and/or more experiments in the same amount of time.

Program Funding

It is anticipated that approximately \$7,292,000 will be available for awards during FY 2003 to support instrument upgrades, instrument replacements, and new instrumentation at the x-ray and neutron scattering facilities, contingent upon the availability of appropriated funds. These funds will be competed among both academic and laboratory institutions, and the resulting instruments and beamlines will be made available to the entire U.S. scientific research community. Multiyear