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Authority: Pub. L. 107-279, Title III—National Assessment of Educational Progress § 301.

Lisa M. Stooksberry,
Deputy Executive Director, National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB), U.S. Department of Education.

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Applications for New Awards; Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (State Grants)

AGENCY: Office of Postsecondary Education, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Education (Department) is issuing a notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year (FY) 2019 for the Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) State Grants, Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number 84.334S. This notice relates to the approved information collection under OMB control number 1840-0821, Application for GEAR UP State Grants.

DATES:

Applications Available: July 8, 2019. *Deadline for Transmittal of Applications:* August 7, 2019.

ADDRESSES: For the addresses for obtaining and submitting an application, please refer to our Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the **Federal Register** on February 13, 2019 (83 FR 6003), and available at www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2019-02-13/pdf/2019-02206.pdf.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Craig Pooler, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW,

Room 278-64, Washington, DC 20202-6450. Telephone: (202) 453-6195. Email: Craig.Pooler@ed.gov.

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) or a text telephone (TTY), call the Federal Relay Service (FRS), toll-free, at 1-800-877-8339.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The GEAR UP program is a discretionary grant program that encourages eligible entities to provide support, and maintain a commitment to eligible low-income students, including students with disabilities, to assist the students in obtaining a secondary school diploma (or its recognized equivalent) and to prepare for and succeed in postsecondary education. Under the GEAR UP program, the Department awards grants to two types of entities: (1) States and (2) eligible partnerships.

In this notice, the Department invites applications for State grants only. Required services under the GEAR UP program are specified in sections 404D(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA) (20 U.S.C. 1070a-24(a)), and permissible services under the GEAR UP program are specified in section 404D(b) and (c) of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1070a-24(b) and (c)). Grantee activities must include providing financial aid information for postsecondary education, encouraging enrollment in rigorous and challenging coursework in order to reduce the need for remediation at the postsecondary level, implementing activities to improve the number of participating students who obtain a secondary school diploma and who complete applications for and enroll in a program of postsecondary education, and providing scholarships as specified in section 404E of the HEA. Additional permissible activities for State grantees are specified in sections 404D(b) and (c) of the HEA.

Background: On March 2, 2018, the Secretary published in the **Federal Register** the Secretary's Final Supplemental Priorities and Definitions for Discretionary Grant Programs (83 FR 9096) (Supplemental Priorities). In order to advance the Secretary's priorities, this competition contains a competitive preference priority that focuses on improving student achievement or other educational outcomes in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM), including computer science. In addition, consistent with the Administration's interest in allocating funding to evidence-based practices,

this competition includes a competitive preference priority that encourages applicants to propose strategies that are supported by promising evidence.

Priorities: This notice contains three competitive preference priorities and one invitational priority. Competitive Preference Priority 1 is from the Supplemental Priorities. In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(ii) and (iv), Competitive Preference Priority 2 is from section 404A(b)(3) of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1070a-21(b)(3)) and the GEAR UP program regulations (34 CFR 694.19). Competitive Preference Priority 3 is from 34 CFR 75.226.

Competitive Preference Priorities: For FY 2019 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, these priorities are competitive preference priorities. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i), we award up to an additional two points to an application, depending on how well the application meets each of these competitive preference priorities, for a maximum of six additional points.

These priorities are:

Competitive Preference Priority 1—Promoting STEM Education, With a Particular Focus on Computer Science (Up to two points).

Projects designed to improve student achievement or other educational outcomes in science, technology, engineering, math, or computer science (as defined in this notice). These projects must address creating or expanding partnerships between schools, local educational agencies, State educational agencies, businesses, not-for-profit organizations, or institutions of higher education (IHEs) to give students access to internships, apprenticeships, or other work-based learning experiences in STEM fields, including computer science.

Competitive Preference Priority 2 (Up to two points).

We give priority to an eligible applicant for a State GEAR UP grant that has: (a) Carried out a successful State GEAR UP grant prior to August 14, 2008, determined on the basis of data (including outcomes data) submitted by the applicant as part of its annual and final performance reports from prior GEAR UP State grants administered by the applicant and the applicant's history of compliance with applicable statutory and regulatory requirements; and (b) a prior demonstrated commitment to early intervention leading to college access through collaboration and replication of successful strategies.

Competitive Preference Priority 3 (Up to two points).

Applications supported by evidence that meets the definition of “promising evidence” in 34 CFR 77.1(c).

Note 1: To address the priority, for up to two authorized activities, an applicant may submit one study or What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) publication that it believes supports the implementation of the proposed activity and that meets the promising evidence standard. Non-Federal peer reviewers will evaluate studies cited by the applicants to determine if they meet the requirements for promising evidence, as well as whether they are sufficiently aligned with (relevant to) the proposed activity. Applicants will be awarded one point for each activity supported by a relevant citation that meets the promising evidence standard, for a maximum number of two points.

Cited studies may include both those already listed in the Department’s WWC Database of Individual Studies (see <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/StudyFindings>) and those that have not yet been reviewed by the WWC. Studies listed in the WWC Database of Individual Studies do not necessarily satisfy any or all of the criteria needed to meet the promising evidence standard. Therefore, it is important that applicants themselves ascertain the suitability of the study for the evidence priority. Any proposed studies must be cited in the section of the application that addresses Competitive Preference Priority 3.

Note 2: As they consider the activities, they propose to implement in their GEAR UP projects and how to respond to this competitive preference priority, we encourage applicants to review research related to authorized GEAR UP activities to identify evidence that meets the promising evidence standard.

For State grantees, required GEAR UP services are specified in sections 404D(a) of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1070a–24(a)), and permissible services under the GEAR UP program are specified in section 404D(b) and (c) of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1070a–24(b) and (c)).

Invitational Priority: For FY 2019 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, this priority is an invitational priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(1), we do not give an application that meets this invitational priority a competitive or absolute preference over other applications.

This priority is:

Spurring Investment in Qualified Opportunity Zones.

Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate one or more of the following:

(a) The area in which the applicant proposes to serve individuals or otherwise provide services overlaps with a Qualified Opportunity Zone, as designated by the Secretary of the Treasury under section 1400Z–1 of the

Internal Revenue Code, as amended by the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (Pub. L. 115–97). An applicant must—

(i) Provide the census tract number of the Qualified Opportunity Zone(s) in which it proposes to serve individuals or otherwise provide services; and

(ii) Describe how the applicant will serve individuals or otherwise provide services in the Qualified Opportunity Zone(s).

(b) The applicant is located in a Qualified Opportunity Zone. The applicant must provide the census tract number of the Qualified Opportunity Zone in which it is located. If the applicant has multiple locations, or if the applicant’s location overlaps with a Qualified Opportunity Zone, the applicant must demonstrate that its proximity to a Qualified Opportunity Zone is critical to the proposed project.

(c) The applicant has received, or will receive by 30 days after being awarded a grant, financial assistance from a Qualified Opportunity Fund under section 1400Z–2 of the Internal Revenue Code, as amended by the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, for the acquisition, construction, or renovation of real or other tangible property directly related to its proposed project. An applicant must—

(i) Identify the Qualified Opportunity Fund from which it has received or will receive financial assistance; and

(ii) Describe how the applicant will use the financial assistance for its proposed project.

Definitions: These definitions are from the Supplemental Priorities and 34 CFR 77.1(c).

Computer science means the study of computers and algorithmic processes and includes the study of computing principles and theories, computational thinking, computer hardware, software design, coding, analytics, and computer applications.

Computer science often includes computer programming or coding as a tool to create software, including applications, games, websites, and tools to manage or manipulate data; or development and management of computer hardware and the other electronics related to sharing, securing, and using digital information.

In addition to coding, the expanding field of computer science emphasizes computational thinking and interdisciplinary problem-solving to equip students with the skills and abilities necessary to apply computation in our digital world.

Computer science does not include using a computer for everyday activities, such as browsing the internet; use of tools like word processing,

spreadsheets, or presentation software; or using computers in the study and exploration of unrelated subjects.

Demonstrates a rationale means a key project component included in the project’s logic model is informed by research or evaluation findings that suggest the project component is likely to improve relevant outcomes.

Experimental study means a study that is designed to compare outcomes between two groups of individuals (such as students) that are otherwise equivalent except for their assignment to either a treatment group receiving a project component or a control group that does not. Randomized controlled trials, regression discontinuity design studies, and single-case design studies are the specific types of experimental studies that, depending on their design and implementation (e.g., sample attrition in randomized controlled trials and regression discontinuity design studies), can meet What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) standards without reservations as described in the WWC Handbook:

(i) A randomized controlled trial employs random assignment of, for example, students, teachers, classrooms, or schools to receive the project component being evaluated (the treatment group) or not to receive the project component (the control group).

(ii) A regression discontinuity design study assigns the project component being evaluated using a measured variable (e.g., assigning students reading below a cutoff score to tutoring or developmental education classes) and controls for that variable in the analysis of outcomes.

(iii) A single-case design study uses observations of a single case (e.g., a student eligible for a behavioral intervention) over time in the absence and presence of a controlled treatment manipulation to determine whether the outcome is systematically related to the treatment.

Logic model (also referred to as a theory of action) means a framework that identifies key project components of the proposed project (i.e., the active “ingredients” that are hypothesized to be critical to achieving the relevant outcomes) and describes the theoretical and operational relationships among the key project components and relevant outcomes.

Project component means an activity, strategy, intervention, process, product, practice, or policy included in a project. Evidence may pertain to an individual project component or to a combination of project components (e.g., training teachers on instructional practices for

English learners and follow-on coaching for these teachers).

Promising evidence means that there is evidence of the effectiveness of a key project component in improving a relevant outcome, based on a relevant finding from one of the following:

(i) A practice guide prepared by WWC reporting a “strong evidence base” or “moderate evidence base” for the corresponding practice guide recommendation;

(ii) An intervention report prepared by the WWC reporting a “positive effect” or “potentially positive effect” on a relevant outcome with no reporting of a “negative effect” or “potentially negative effect” on a relevant outcome; or

(iii) A single study assessed by the Department, as appropriate, that—

(A) Is an experimental study, a quasi-experimental design study, or a well-designed and well-implemented correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias (e.g., a study using regression methods to account for differences between a treatment group and a comparison group); and

(B) Includes at least one statistically significant and positive (*i.e.*, favorable) effect on a relevant outcome.

Quasi-experimental design study means a study using a design that attempts to approximate an experimental study by identifying a comparison group that is similar to the treatment group in important respects. This type of study, depending on design and implementation (e.g., establishment of baseline equivalence of the groups being compared), can meet WWC standards with reservations, but cannot meet WWC standards without reservations, as described in the WWC Handbook.

Relevant outcome means the student outcome(s) or other outcome(s) the key project component is designed to improve, consistent with the specific goals of the program.

What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (WWC Handbook) means the standards and procedures set forth in the WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook, Version 3.0 or Version 2.1 (incorporated by reference, see 34 CFR 77.2). Study findings eligible for review under WWC standards can meet WWC standards without reservations, meet WWC standards with reservations, or not meet WWC standards. WWC practice guides and intervention reports include findings from systematic reviews of evidence as described in the Handbook documentation.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070a–21–1070a–28.

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 75, 77, 79, 81, 82, 84, 97, 98, and 99. (b) The Office of Management and Budget Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3485. (c) The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3474. (d) The regulations for this program in 34 CFR part 694.

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Discretionary grants. *Estimated Available Funds:* The

Department of Education Appropriations Act, 2019 provided \$360,000,000 for the GEAR UP program for FY 2019, of which we intend to use an estimated \$28,276,000 for new GEAR UP State awards.

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

Estimated Range of Awards: \$2,500,000–\$5,000,000.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$3,535,000.

Maximum Award: We will not make an award for a State grant exceeding \$5,000,000 for a single budget period of 12 months. Additionally, no funding will be awarded for increases in budget after the first 12-month budget period. As described in 34 CFR 694.1, the Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education may change the maximum amount through a notice published in the **Federal Register**.

Estimated Number of Awards: 8.

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

Project Period: Either 72 months or 84 months.

Note: An applicant that wishes to seek funding for a seventh project year (*i.e.*, for a project period of 84 months), in order to provide project services to GEAR UP students through their first year of attendance at an IHE, must propose to do so in the application provided in response to this notice.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants: States (as defined in section 103(20) of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1003(20)), which includes the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the

District of Columbia, Guam, American Samoa, the United States Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the Freely Associated States. Per Congressional direction in the Explanatory Statement to the Department of Education Appropriations Act, 2019 (Pub. L. 115–245), only States without an active State GEAR UP grant, or States that have an active State GEAR UP grant that is scheduled to end prior to October 1, 2019, are eligible to receive a new State GEAR UP award in this competition.

2.a. Cost Sharing or Matching: Section 404C(b)(1) of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1070a–23(b)(1)) requires grantees under this program to provide from State, local, institutional, or private funds, not less than 50 percent of the cost of the program (or one dollar of non-Federal funds for every one dollar of Federal funds awarded), which may be provided in cash or in-kind. The provision also specifies that the match may be accrued over the full duration of the grant award period, except that the grantee must make substantial progress towards meeting the matching requirement in each year of the grant award period.

Section 404C(c) of the HEA provides that in-kind contributions may include (1) the amount of the financial assistance obligated under GEAR UP to students from State, local, institutional, or private funds, (2) the amount of tuition, fees, room or board waived or reduced for recipients of financial assistance under GEAR UP, (3) the amount expended on documented, targeted, long-term mentoring and counseling provided by volunteers or paid staff of non-school organizations, including businesses, religious organizations, community groups, postsecondary educational institutions, nonprofit and philanthropic organizations, and other organizations, and (4) equipment and supplies, cash contributions from non-Federal sources, transportation expenses, in-kind or discounted program services, indirect costs, and facility usage.

Grantees must include a budget detailing the source of the matching funds and must provide an outline of the types of matching contributions for at least the first year of the grant in their grant applications. Consistent with 2 CFR 200.306(b), any matching funds must be an allowable use of funds consistent with the GEAR UP program requirements and the cost principles detailed in subpart E of 2 CFR part 200, and not included as a contribution for any other Federal award.

b. Supplement-Not-Supplant: This program involves supplement, not supplant funding requirements. Under

section 404B(e) of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1070a–22(e)), grant funds awarded under this program must be used to supplement, and not supplant, other Federal, State, and local funds that would otherwise be expended to carry out activities assisted under this program.

3. General Application Requirements: All applicants must meet the following application requirements in order to be considered for funding. The application requirements are from section 404C(a) of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1070a–23(a)).

In order for an eligible entity to qualify for a grant under the GEAR UP program, the eligible entity shall submit to the Secretary an application for carrying out a GEAR UP program that—

(a) Describes the activities for which assistance under this program is sought, including how the eligible entity will carry out the required activities described in section 404D(a) of the HEA;

(b) Describes, in the case of an eligible entity described in section 404A(c)(1) of the HEA, how the eligible entity will meet the requirements of section 404E of the HEA;

(c) Provides assurances that adequate administrative and support staff will be responsible for coordinating the activities described in section 404D of the HEA;

(d) Provides assurances that activities assisted under this program will not displace an employee or eliminate a position at a school assisted under this program, including a partial displacement such as a reduction in hours, wages, or employment benefits;

(e) Describes, in the case of an eligible entity described in section 404A(c)(1) of the HEA that chooses to use a cohort approach, how the eligible entity will define the cohorts of the students served by the eligible entity pursuant to section 404B(d) of the HEA, and how the eligible entity will serve the cohorts through grade 12, including—

(i) How vacancies in the program under this program will be filled; and

(ii) How the eligible entity will serve students attending different secondary schools;

(f) Describes how the eligible entity will coordinate programs under this program with other existing Federal, State, or local programs to avoid duplication and maximize the number of students served;

(g) Provides such additional assurances as the Secretary determines necessary to ensure compliance with the requirements of this program;

(h) Provides information about the activities that will be carried out by the eligible entity to support systemic

changes from which future cohorts of students will benefit; and

(i) Describes the sources of matching funds that will enable the eligible entity to meet the matching requirement described in section 404C(b).

4. Subgrantees: A grantee under this competition may not award subgrants to entities to directly carry out project activities described in its application.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Application Submission

Instructions: Applicants are required to follow the Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the **Federal Register** on February 13, 2019 (83 FR 6003), and available at www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2019-02-13/pdf/2019-02206.pdf, which contain requirements and information on how to submit an application.

2. Intergovernmental Review: This program is subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. However, under 34 CFR 79.8(a), we waive intergovernmental review in order to make awards by the end of FY 2019.

3. Funding Restrictions: We specify unallowable costs in subpart E of 2 CFR part 200. We reference regulations outlining funding restrictions in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice.

Under HEA section 404E(b)(1), a State must use not less than 25 percent and not more than 50 percent of the grant funds for GEAR UP project activities described in HEA section 404D,¹ with the remainder of grant funds spent on scholarships to eligible GEAR UP students described in HEA section 404E. However, HEA section 404E(b)(2) permits the Secretary to allow a State to use more than 50 percent of grant funds received under this program for GEAR UP project activities described in HEA section 404D if the State demonstrates that it has another means of providing eligible GEAR UP students with the financial assistance described in HEA section 404E and describes such means in the State's application.

4. Recommended Page Limit and Format: The application narrative is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to assess your application. There is no page limit for the application narrative; however, we recommend no more than 50 pages, and that you present your

information clearly and concisely. Include your complete response to the selection criteria, the invitational priority, and Competitive Preference Priority 1 in the application narrative. Include your complete response to Competitive Preference Priority 2 on the Project Profile Form, which can be found in the information collection under OMB control number 1840–0821. Include your response to Competitive Preference Priority 3 on the Evidence Form (OMB 1894–0001), which can also be found in the information collection under OMB control number 1840–0821.

Note: Applications that do not follow the formatting recommendations will not be penalized.

We recommend the following standards:

- A “page” is 8.5” x 11”, on one side only, with 1” margins.
- Double-space all text in the application narrative and single-space titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions.
- Use a 12-point font.
- Use an easily readable font such as Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial.

Other requirements concerning the content of an application, together with the forms you must submit, are in the application package for this program.

V. Application Review Information

1. Selection Criteria: The selection criteria for this competition are from 34 CFR 75.210 and section 404D(a) of the HEA.

a. Need for the project (15 points).

(i) The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project.

(ii) In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

(A) The magnitude or severity of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project (up to 8 points); and

(B) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses (up to 7 points).

b. Quality of project design (25 points).

(i) The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project.

(ii) In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

(A) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable (up to 10 points); and

¹ Excluding the provision of funds for postsecondary scholarships required by HEA section 404D(a)(4).

(B) The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale (as defined in this notice)(up to 15).

c. Quality of project services (15 points).

(i) The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project.

(ii) In determining the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project, the Secretary considers the quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability (up to 5 points).

(iii) In addition, the Secretary considers:

(A) The extent to which the project services are likely to provide comprehensive mentoring, outreach, and supportive services to students, including the following activities: information regarding financial aid for postsecondary education to participating students, encouraging student enrollment in rigorous and challenging curricula and coursework in order to reduce the need for remedial coursework at the postsecondary level, and improving the number of participating students who obtain a secondary school diploma and complete applications for and enroll in a program of postsecondary education (up to 5 points); and

(B) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project involve the collaboration of appropriate partners for maximizing the effectiveness of project services (up to 5 points).

d. Quality of project personnel (10 points).

(i) The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project.

(ii) In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability (up to 2 points).

(iii) In addition, the Secretary considers:

(A) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator (up to 4 points); and

(B) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key personnel (up to 4 points).

e. Quality of the management plan (10 points).

(i) The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project.

(ii) In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

(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 (up to 4 points);

(B) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project (up to 2 points);

(C) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project (up to 2 points); and

(D) 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, recipients or beneficiaries of services, or others, as appropriate (up to 2 points).

f. Quality of the project evaluation (10 points).

(i) The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project.

(ii) In determining the quality of the project evaluation, the Secretary considers:

(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 (up to 4 points);

(B) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes (up to 4 points); and

(C) The extent to which the evaluation will provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings (up to 2 points).

g. Adequacy of resources (15 points).

(i) The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project.

(ii) In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

(A) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project (up to 5 points);

(B) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served and to the anticipated results and benefits (up to 5 points); and

(C) The potential for continued support of the project after Federal funding ends, including, as appropriate, the demonstrated commitment of appropriate entities to such support (up to 5 points).

2. Review and Selection Process: We remind potential applicants that in reviewing applications in any discretionary grant competition, the Secretary may consider, under 34 CFR 75.217(d)(3), the past performance of the applicant in carrying out a previous award, such as the applicant's use of funds, achievement of project objectives, and compliance with grant conditions. The Secretary may also consider whether the applicant failed to submit a timely performance report or submitted a report of unacceptable quality.

In addition, in making a competitive grant award, the Secretary requires various assurances including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

For this competition, a panel of non-Federal reviewers will review each application in accordance with the selection criteria in 34 CFR 75.217(d)(3), as required by 20 U.S.C. 1070-a23(d). The individual scores of the reviewers will be added and the sum divided by the number of reviewers to determine the peer review score received in the review process.

If there are insufficient funds for all applications with the same total scores, the Secretary will, to the extent practicable, consider the distribution of grant awards based on the geographic distribution of such grant awards and the distribution between urban and rural applicants for the GEAR UP program consistent with 20 U.S.C. 1070a-22(a)(3).

3. Risk Assessment and Specific Conditions: Consistent with 2 CFR 200.205, before awarding grants under this competition the Department conducts a review of the risks posed by applicants. Under 2 CFR 3474.10, the Secretary may impose specific conditions and, in appropriate circumstances, high-risk conditions on a grant if the applicant or grantee is not financially stable; has a history of unsatisfactory performance; has a financial or other management system that does not meet the standards in 2 CFR part 200, subpart D; has not

fulfilled the conditions of a prior grant; or is otherwise not responsible.

4. Integrity and Performance System: If you are selected under this competition to receive an award that over the course of the project period may exceed the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$250,000), under 2 CFR 200.205(a)(2) we must make a judgment about your integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards—that is, the risk posed by you as an applicant—before we make an award. In doing so, we must consider any information about you that is in the integrity and performance system (currently referred to as the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)), accessible through the System for Award Management. You may review and comment on any information about yourself that a Federal agency previously entered and that is currently in FAPIIS.

Please note that, if the total value of your currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from the Federal Government exceeds \$10,000,000, the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 200, Appendix XII, require you to report certain integrity information to FAPIIS semiannually. Please review the requirements in 2 CFR part 200, Appendix XII, if this grant plus all the other Federal funds you receive exceed \$10,000,000.

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), or we may send you an email containing a link to access an electronic version of your GAN. We may notify you informally, also.

If your application is not evaluated or not selected for funding, we will 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 of this notice.

We reference the regulations outlining the terms and conditions of an award in the *Applicable Regulations* section of 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. Open Licensing Requirements: Unless an exception applies, if you are awarded a grant under this competition, you will be required to openly license

to the public grant deliverables created in whole, or in part, with Department grant funds. When the deliverable consists of modifications to pre-existing works, the license extends only to those modifications that can be separately identified and only to the extent that open licensing is permitted under the terms of any licenses or other legal restrictions on the use of pre-existing works. Additionally, a grantee or subgrantee that is awarded competitive grant funds must have a plan to disseminate these public grant deliverables. This dissemination plan can be developed and submitted after your application has been reviewed and selected for funding. For additional information on the open licensing requirements please refer to 2 CFR 3474.20(c).

4. Reporting: (a) If you apply for a grant under this competition, you must ensure that you have in place the necessary processes and systems to comply with the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 170 should you receive funding under the competition. This does not apply if you have an exception under 2 CFR 170.110(b).

(b) At the end of your project period, you must submit a final performance report, including financial information, as directed by the Secretary. If you receive a multiyear award, you must submit an annual performance report that provides the most current performance and financial expenditure information as directed by the Secretary under 34 CFR 75.118. The Secretary may also require more frequent performance reports under 34 CFR 75.720(c). For specific requirements on reporting, please go to www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html.

(c) Under 34 CFR 75.250(b), the Secretary may provide a grantee with additional funding for data collection analysis and reporting. In this case the Secretary establishes a data collection period.

5. Performance Measures: The objectives of the GEAR UP program are (1) to increase the academic performance and preparation for postsecondary education of participating students; (2) to increase the rate of high school graduation and participation in postsecondary education of participating students; and (3) to increase education expectations for participating students and increase student and family knowledge of postsecondary education options, preparation, and financing.

The effectiveness of this program depends on the rate at which program participants complete high school and

enroll in and complete a postsecondary education. Under the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA), we developed the following performance measures to track progress toward achieving the program's goals:

1. The percentage of GEAR UP students who pass Pre-Algebra or its equivalent by the end of eighth grade.

2. The percentage of GEAR UP students who pass Algebra 1 or its equivalent by the end of ninth grade.

3. The percentage of GEAR UP students who graduate from high school.

4. The percentage of GEAR UP students who complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

5. The percentage of GEAR UP students and former GEAR UP students who are enrolled at an IHE.

6. The percentage of GEAR UP students who place into college-level math and English without need for remediation.

7. The percentage of current GEAR UP students and former GEAR UP students who enrolled at an IHE and persisted to the second year of postsecondary education at the initial or a subsequent IHE.

In addition, to assess the efficiency of the program, we track the average cost, in Federal funds, of achieving a successful outcome, where success is defined as enrollment in a program of undergraduate instruction at an IHE of GEAR UP students immediately after high school graduation. These performance measures constitute GEAR UP's indicators of the success of the program. Accordingly, we require that applicants include these performance measures in conceptualizing the design, implementation, and evaluation of their proposed projects.

6. Continuation Awards: In making a continuation award under 34 CFR 75.253, the Secretary considers, among other things: whether a grantee has made substantial progress in achieving the goals and objectives of the project; whether the grantee has expended funds in a manner that is consistent with its approved application and budget; and, if the Secretary has established performance measurement requirements, the performance targets in the grantee's approved application.

In making a continuation grant, the Secretary also considers whether the grantee is operating in compliance with the assurances in its approved application, including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

VII. Other Information

Accessible Format: Individuals with disabilities can obtain this document and a copy of the application package in an accessible format (e.g., braille, large print, audiotape, or compact disc) on request to one of the program contact persons listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

Electronic Access to This Document: The official version of this document is the document published in the **Federal Register**. You may access the official edition of the **Federal Register** and the Code of Federal Regulations via www.govinfo.gov. At this site you can view this document, as well as all other documents of this Department published in the **Federal Register**, in text or Portable Document Format (PDF). To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at the site.

You may also access documents of the Department published in the **Federal Register** by using the article search feature at www.federalregister.gov. Specifically, through the advanced search feature at this site, you can limit your search to documents published by the Department.

Diane Auer Jones,

Principal Deputy Under Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2019-14370 Filed 7-5-19; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

[EERE-2019-BT-PET-0019]

Energy Efficiency Program for Industrial Equipment: Petition of North Carolina Advanced Energy Corporation Efficiency Verification Services for Classification as a Nationally Recognized Certification Program for Electric Motors and Small Electric Motors

AGENCY: Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Department of Energy.

ACTION: Notice of petition and request for public comments.

SUMMARY: This notice announces receipt of a petition from North Carolina Advanced Energy Corporation Efficiency Verification Services seeking classification as a nationally recognized certification program. The petition, which appears at the end of this notice, includes documentation to help substantiate company's position that its certification program for electric motors and small electric motors satisfies the evaluation criteria for classification as a

nationally recognized certification program. This notice summarizes the substantive aspects of these documents and requests public comments on the merits of the petition.

DATES: DOE will accept comments, data, and information with respect to the Advanced Energy Petition until August 7, 2019.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments, identified by docket number "EERE-2019-BT-PET-0019," by any of the following methods:

Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.

Email: AdvEnergyElecMotorsPet2019PET0019@ee.doe.gov Include the docket number and/or RIN in the subject line of the message.

Postal Mail: Appliance and Equipment Standards Program, U.S. Department of Energy, Building Technologies Office, Mailstop EE-5B, 1000 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20585-0121. Telephone: (202) 287-1445. If possible, please submit all items on a compact disc ("CD"), in which case it is not necessary to include printed copies.

No telefacsimiles (faxes) will be accepted. For detailed instructions on submitting written comments and additional information on the rulemaking process, see section V of this document (Public Participation).

Hand Delivery/Courier: Appliance and Equipment Standards Program, U.S. Department of Energy, Building Technologies Office, 950 L'Enfant Plaza SW, Suite 600, Washington, DC 20024. Telephone: (202) 287-1445. If possible, please submit all items on a CD, in which case it is not necessary to include printed copies.

Docket: For access to the docket to review the background documents relevant to this matter, you may visit the U.S. Department of Energy, 950 L'Enfant Plaza SW, Washington, DC 20024; (202) 586-2945, between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. Please call Ms. Brenda Edwards at the above telephone number for additional information.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Jeremy Dommu, U.S. Department of Energy, Building Technologies Program, EE-5B, 1000 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20585-0121. Telephone: (202) 586-9870. Email: Jeremy.Dommu@ee.doe.gov.

Mr. Michael Kido, U.S. Department of Energy, Office of the General Counsel, GC-33, 1000 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20585-0103. Telephone: (202) 586-8145. Email: Michael.Kido@hq.doe.gov.

For further information on how to submit a comment, review other public comments and the docket, or to request a public meeting, contact the Appliance and Equipment Standards Program staff at (202) 287-1445 or by email: ApplianceStandardsQuestions@ee.doe.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background and Authority

Part C of Title III of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act contains energy conservation requirements for, among other things, electric motors and small electric motors, including test procedures, energy efficiency standards, and compliance certification requirements. 42 U.S.C. 6311-6316.¹ Section 345(c) of EPCA directs the Secretary of Energy to require manufacturers of electric motors "to certify through an independent testing or certification program nationally recognized in the United States, that [each electric motor subject to EPCA efficiency standards] meets the applicable standard." 42 U.S.C. 6316(c). The United States Department of Energy ("DOE" or, in context, "the Department") codified this requirement at 10 CFR 431.17(a)(5). DOE also established certain compliance testing requirements for manufacturers of small electric motors. 77 FR 26608 (May 4, 2012) Manufacturers of small electric motors have the option of self-certifying the efficiency of their small electric motor using a certification program nationally recognized in the U.S to certify the efficiency of these motors. (10 CFR 431.445) DOE developed a regulatory process for the recognition, and withdrawal of recognition, for certification programs nationally recognized in the U.S. The criteria and procedures for national recognition of an energy efficiency certification program for electric motors are codified at 10 CFR 431.20—10 CFR 431.21 for electric motors and at 10 CFR 431.447—10 CFR 431.448 for small electric motors. Each step of the process and evaluation criteria are discussed below.

For a certification program to be classified by DOE as being nationally recognized in the United States for the testing and certification of electric motors and small electric motors, the organization operating the program must submit a petition to the Department requesting such classification, in accordance with aforementioned sections.

¹ For editorial reasons, upon codification in the U.S. Code, Part C was re-designated Part A-1.