

§ 1320.13 Emergency processing.

An agency head or the Senior Official, or their designee, may request OMB to authorize emergency processing of submissions of collections of information.

(a) Any such request shall be accompanied by a written determination that:

(1) The collection of information:

(i) Is needed prior to the expiration of time periods established under this Part; and

(ii) Is essential to the mission of the agency; and

(2) The agency cannot reasonably comply with the normal clearance procedures under this part because:

(i) Public harm is reasonably likely to result if normal clearance procedures are followed;

(ii) An unanticipated event has occurred; or

(iii) The use of normal clearance procedures is reasonably likely to prevent or disrupt the collection of information or is reasonably likely to cause a statutory or court ordered deadline to be missed.

(b) The agency shall state the time period within which OMB should approve or disapprove the collection of information.

1. Request for emergency processing of submission of collection of information, rationale, and requested OMB approval time period.

The NASA-sponsored Classroom of the Future (COTF) housed at the Center for Educational Technologies® at Wheeling Jesuit University in Wheeling, WV, petitions that OMB authorize emergency processing of the COTF submission for the NASA-sponsored Classroom of the Future's Study of Learning in Games collection of information. The use of normal clearance procedures would prevent collection of information for collections 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 because of the dates of the COTF-contractual period of performance (October 2006-June 2007). This year's Study of Learning in Games is a deliverable that was assigned and must be completed within this period of performance. (There is a possible extension through Sept. 30, 2007, for the final report.) To meet the June 2007 deadline, the collection of contact information must begin in April 2007. The *Selene* game will be playtested in April (Data Collection 5. Experimental Games Usability Testing) and the experiment will be conducted in May (Data Collection 7. Experimental Games Assessment). Therefore, the agency cannot reasonable comply with normal clearance procedures and requests approval or disapproval of this data collection by March 20, 2007. Continued COTF funding is contingent upon timely completion of deliverables. COTF's future NASA funding, and therefore the viability of the organization, is contingent upon meeting its deliverable timeline. COTF's failure to complete thee deliverables will impact NASA education's progress toward its PAR and PART measures. Furthermore, COTF has begun to establish NASA Education's presence within the educational gaming arena. Ability to maintain a significant presence for NASA education within the serious games, academic, and commercial communities as a source

of innovative and powerful utilization of gaming technologies and datamining requires that the NASA-sponsored Classroom of the Future study and publish findings about the application of game-based technologies toward learning and assessment. NASA education requires this gaming research to maintain the games portion of its portfolio.

2. Documentation supporting how the collection of the data is essential to the mission of the NASA agency:

NASA’s founding legislation, the Space Act of 1958, directs the agency to expand human knowledge of Earth and space phenomena and to preserve the role of the United States as a leader in aeronautics, space science, and technology. High achievement in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education is essential to the accomplishment of NASA’s mission. The Strategic Management of Human Capital initiative under the President’s Management Agenda requires agencies to “build, sustain, and effectively deploy the skilled, knowledgeable, diverse, and high-performing workforce needed” to meet agency core competencies. NASA’s education investments will contribute to the agency’s human capital needs.

All of NASA’s education efforts are part of an integrated agencywide approach to human capital management. Within the NASA Strategic Plan, education is identified as a cross-cutting function that supports all of the agency’s strategic goals and objectives. NASA delivers a comprehensive agency education portfolio—a collection of investments and strategies, such as research and development, managed to further common goals—implemented by the Office of Education, the NASA mission directorates, and the NASA centers. Through the portfolio NASA contributes to our nation’s efforts in achieving excellence in STEM education. Three outcomes serve to align all agency education activities:

- **Outcome 1: Strengthen NASA and the nation’s future workforce**—NASA will identify and develop the critical skills and capabilities needed to achieve the Vision for Space Exploration. To help meet this demand, NASA will continue contributing to the development of the nation’s future STEM workforce through a diverse portfolio of education initiatives that target America’s students at all levels, especially those in traditionally underserved and underrepresented communities.
- **Outcome 2: Attract and retain students in STEM disciplines**—To compete effectively for the minds, imaginations, and career ambitions of America’s young people, NASA will focus on engaging and retaining students in STEM education programs to encourage their pursuit of educational disciplines critical to NASA’s future engineering, scientific, and technical missions.
- **Outcome 3: Engage Americans in NASA’s mission**—NASA will build strategic partnerships and linkages between STEM formal and informal education providers. Through hands-on, interactive, educational activities, NASA will engage students, educators, families, the general public, and all agency stakeholders to increase Americans’ science and technology literacy.

As the United States begins the second century of flight, the nation must maintain its commitment to excellence in STEM education to ensure that the next generation of

Americans can accept the full measure of their roles and responsibilities in shaping the future.

This initiative fills the NASA cross-cutting objective. Activities associated with these COTF collections will provide NASA Education research-based insights into educational game development. These game data collections will be used to support the three outcomes—1, 2 and 3—informing NASA’s investment in development of videogames to support increased STEM literacy and pipeline achievement. If the project does not progress as scheduled through the support of emergency processing: (a) NASA education will not have these results available to support this year’s reporting; (b) NASA will not be able to move forward on research-based game development in support of objectives 1, 2, and 3; and CET/COTF will not meet its contracted deliverables. This could impact COTF’s future receipt of NASA funding and the financial viability of the CET/COTF organization.