



Memorandum

To: Rachel Potter, Education Desk Officer, Office of Management and Budget
From: Sandi Jacobs, Reading First, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education *S Jacobs*
Date: June 5, 2006
Re: Revisions to Collection Package 1810-0666 Reading First Annual Performance Report

Collection 1810-0666, the annual performance report for the Reading First State Grant program, is scheduled to expire on December 31, 2006. The program plans to continue to use the same instrument as its program report and is therefore submitting it for clearance once again.

Several changes have been made to the original performance report. No additional questions have been added, but several have been removed, thus lowering the overall burden hours for this collection. The specific changes and the reasons for them are as follows:

1. Rate of Referral for Special Education Services – This question has been removed.

The annual program performance report originally directed States to provide the rate of referral for special education services of students in schools participating in Reading First. Few States had a mechanism in place to collect this information from local educational agencies, and even fewer were able to distinguish which referrals were related to reading difficulties. State interpretations of "referral" were also quite varied. Some States counted all students considered for placement; others counted only those students for whom services were recommended; and still others counted only those students that ultimately received special education services. Since States were struggling to collect these data and the collected data was of limited use because of the inclusion of other special education categories and the variety of definitions in use, the Department concluded that an evaluation study would be a more appropriate means to address this topic. The Policy and Program Studies Service has initiated this study.

2. Use of Funds – Questions related to specific expenditures have been removed.

The annual program performance report originally directed States to provide the amount of funds that had been subgranted to participating local educational agencies, as well as the amounts that had been retained for State use in the areas of professional development; technical assistance; and administration and reporting. However, since Reading First funds remain available for a 27-month period, States have as many as three years of funding available during a given reporting period. In light of this, the amounts States were reporting in response to these questions were difficult to interpret. It was determined expenditures would be more meaningfully assessed through State audits.

3. Changes in Eligibility of Local Educational Agencies – The wording of this question has been modified slightly.

The question originally asked only if eligibility had changed from the State's original approved plan. It now also asks if eligibility has changed from what was previously reported. Since Reading First eligibility is used to determine eligibility for Early Reading First grants, we have

clarified the question to ensure that we are collecting the most accurate and current eligibility information.

4. Introduction and Instructions – These sections have been updated.

The original introduction included references to activities that had not yet occurred. Minor changes have been made to update the language used. The instructions have also been updated to reflect the web-based collection system now in use.

These changes lower the overall burden hours for this collection. Through the elimination of questions that were better addressed through other mechanisms and the development of a web-based reporting system, we believe we have made this an even more efficient collection. If you have any questions, please contact Sandi Jacobs at (202) 260-0998.

Thank you.