

DATE: June 11, 2007

TO: Nicole Cafarella
Desk Officer, U.S. Department of Education
OMB

FROM: James F. Manning
Acting Assistant Secretary
Office for Postsecondary Education

SUBJECT: Emergency Clearance for Student Achievement and Institutional
Performance Pilot Program

The U.S. Department of Education requests an emergency clearance for the applications package for the new competition, the Student Achievement and Institutional Performance Pilot Program.

The Student Achievement and Institutional Performance Pilot Program will be administered by the U.S. Department of Education's Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), Office of Postsecondary Education. The Student Achievement and Institutional Performance Pilot Program will provide grants to support the formation of at least one consortium of institutions of higher education, associations, non-profit organizations, and/or states, to design methods and implement mechanisms to systematically measure, assess and report student achievement and institutional performance at the postsecondary level.

The application package now being submitted for OMB approval is critical to conducting the competition in the current fiscal year. To accommodate a starting date of September 28, 2007, a 30-day OMB clearance process is necessary. This will allow the first Student Achievement and Institutional Performance Pilot Program competition to be announced by mid-July 2007, with a deadline for receipt of proposals by mid-August 2007. This will allow review by independent experts and selection of an award by September 28, 2007.

We seek your serious consideration for an emergency clearance of the Student Achievement and Institutional Performance Pilot Program, which will help the Federal government meet several of the goals and challenges set forth by the Academic Competitiveness Council.