

4000-01-U

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Office of Innovation and Improvement

Overview Information

Charter Schools Program (CSP) Grants for National Leadership
Activities

Notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year
(FY) 2010.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number:

84.282N

Dates:

Applications Available: [INSERT DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE
FEDERAL REGISTER].

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: [INSERT DATE 45
DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: [INSERT DATE 105
DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The purpose of the CSP is to increase
national understanding of the charter school model and to
expand the number of high-quality charter schools available
to students across the Nation by providing financial
assistance for the planning, program design, and initial

implementation of charter schools, and to evaluate the effects of charter schools, including their effects on students, student academic achievement, staff, and parents. Section 5205 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, (ESEA) (20 U.S.C. 7221d), authorizes the Secretary to award grants under the CSP to carry out national activities.

For FY 2010, the Department is holding a grant competition for national activities projects listed in section 5205(a) of the ESEA. Grants for national activities projects under the CSP are highly competitive. Applicants should make a well-reasoned and compelling case for the national significance of the problems or issues that will be the subject of the proposed project and of the approach the project would take to addressing those problems or issues. Priority: This notice includes one invitational priority. Under this competition we are particularly interested in applications that address the following priority.

Invitational Priority: For FY 2010 this priority is an invitational priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(1), we do not give an application that meets an invitational priority a competitive or absolute preference over other applications.

This priority is:

High-Quality Charter Schools in Urban or Rural Areas.

The Secretary is particularly interested in projects designed to enhance and expand a State's capacity to support high-quality charter schools in one or more geographic areas, particularly urban and rural areas, in which a large proportion or number of public schools have been identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring under Title I, Part A of the ESEA. A project meeting this priority should be based on research evidence and demonstrate effective practices through one or more of the following types of activities: (1) the dissemination of information on the implementation of school turnaround and restart models (as described in the Notice of Final Requirements for the School Improvement Grants published in the Federal Register on December 10, 2009 (74 FR 65618) (SIG Notice)) in charter schools and information on best practices for turning around a State's persistently lowest-achieving schools under Title I (also as identified by the State under the SIG notice);(2) opening new charter schools in the vicinity of schools closed as a consequence of a local educational agency (LEA) implementing a restructuring plan under section 1116(b)(8) of the ESEA, or schools identified as persistently lowest-achieving, provided this is done in coordination with the local educational agency

(LEA); (3) the identification and replication of high-performing charter schools in “high-need communities”, as this term is defined in section 2151(e)(9)(B) of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. 6651(e)(9)(B)); (4) the creation and dissemination of models for high-quality authorizing practices that hold charter schools accountable for increasing student achievement and that provide for their closure if they do not raise achievement; (5) activities that improve the academic performance of African-American students, Hispanic students, students with disabilities, English learners, or children from low-income families; (6) recruitment, training, ongoing professional development, and retention of highly qualified teachers, including highly qualified mid-career professionals and recent college graduates who have not majored in education, as teachers in “high-need” charter schools (charter schools meeting the definition of a high-need school in section 2304(d)(3) of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. 6674(d)(3))); or (7) increasing public or private funding options for charter school facilities and access to existing public school buildings.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 7221-7221j.

Applicable Regulations: The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 74, 75, 76, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 84, 85, 86, 97, 98, and 99.

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 79 apply to all applicants except federally recognized Indian tribes.

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 86 apply only to institutions of higher education.

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 99 apply only to an educational agency or institution.

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Discretionary grants.

Estimated Available Funds: The FY 2010 appropriation for the Charter Schools Program is \$256,031,000, of which an estimated \$3,500,000 will be used for this competition.

Contingent upon the availability of funds and the quality of the applications received, we may make additional awards later in FY 2010 and in FY 2011 from the list of unfunded applications from this competition.

Estimated Range of Awards: \$250,000-\$750,000 per year.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$500,000 per year.

Estimated Number of Awards: 5-7.

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

Project Period: Up to three years.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants: State educational agencies (SEAs) and local educational agencies (LEAs) in States with

a State statute specifically authorizing the establishment of charter schools; and public and private non-profit organizations, including non-profit charter management organizations. Eligible applicants may also apply as a group or consortium.

2. Cost-Sharing or Matching: This competition does not involve cost sharing or matching.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package:

Richard Payton, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 4W225, Washington, DC 20202-5970.

Telephone: (202) 453-7698 or by e-mail:

richard.payton@ed.gov.

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

Individuals with disabilities can obtain a copy of the application package in an accessible format (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) by contacting the program contact person listed in this section.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission:

Requirements concerning the content of an application, together with the forms you must submit, are in the application package for this competition.

Page Limit: The application narrative (Part III of the application) is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application. The Secretary strongly encourages applicants to limit Part III to the equivalent of no more than 50 pages, using the following standards:

- A "page" is 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.

- Double space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative, including titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs.

- Use a font that is either 12 point or larger or no smaller than 10 pitch (characters per inch).

- Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial. An application submitted in any other font (including Times Roman or Arial Narrow) will not be accepted.

The page limit does not apply to Part I, the cover sheet; Part II, the budget section, including the narrative budget justification; Part IV, the assurances and certifications; or the one-page abstract, the resumes, the bibliography, or the letters of support. However, the page

limit does apply to all of the application narrative section (Part III).

3. Submission Dates and Times:

Applications Available: [INSERT DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Applications for grants under this program must be submitted electronically using the Electronic Grant Application System (e-Application) accessible through the Department's e-Grants site. For information (including dates and times) about how to submit your application electronically, or in paper format by mail or hand delivery if you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, please refer to section IV. 6. Other Submission Requirements of this notice.

We do not consider an application that does not comply with the deadline requirements.

Individuals with disabilities who need an accommodation or auxiliary aid in connection with the application process should contact the person listed under For Further Information Contact in section VII of this notice. If the Department provides an accommodation or auxiliary aid to an individual with a disability in connection with the

application process, the individual's application remains subject to all other requirements and limitations in this notice.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: [INSERT DATE 105 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

4. Intergovernmental Review: This program is subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. Information about Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs under Executive Order 12372 is in the application package for this program.

5. Funding Restrictions: An eligible applicant receiving a grant under this program may use the grant funds only for--

(a) Access to Federal Funds. Disseminating information to charter schools about Federal funds they are eligible to receive and other Federal programs in which they may be eligible to participate; and providing assistance to charter schools in applying for Federal education funds that are allocated by formula.

(b) Research. Conducting evaluations or studies on the impact of charter schools on student academic achievement and other issues concerning charter schools, such as teacher qualifications and retention, and the demographic makeup (e.g., age, race, gender, disability,

English learners, and previous public school enrollment) of charter school students.

(c) Technical Assistance and Planning. Assisting States and charter school developers with all aspects of planning, design, and implementing a charter school. Some areas in which newly created charter schools face challenges include program design, curriculum development, defining the school's mission, hiring staff, drafting charter applications, student recruitment and admissions, public relations and community involvement, governance, acquiring equipment and services, budget and finances, facilities, assessment and accountability, parental involvement, serving students with disabilities and English learners, and collaborating with other entities to provide high-quality instruction and services.

(d) Best or Promising Practices. Disseminating information on best or promising practices in charter schools to other public schools, including charter schools.

(e) Facilities. Collecting and disseminating information about programs and financial resources available to charter schools for facilities, including information about successful programs and how charter schools can access private capital.

(f) Quality Authorizing. Providing technical assistance to authorized public chartering agencies in order to increase the number of high-performing charter schools, including assisting authorized public chartering agencies in designing rigorous application processes; developing strong accountability and evaluation systems; building or enhancing capacity to authorize, monitor, and hold accountable charter schools; and closing persistently low-performing charter schools.

(g) School Improvement. Assisting LEAs in the planning and startup of charter schools as a means of implementing school turnaround or restart intervention models, or both, in persistently low-performing schools in order to increase student achievement, decrease the achievement gaps across student subgroups, and increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers.

Award Basis. In determining whether to approve a grant award and the amount of such award, the Department will consider, among other things, the amount of any carryover funds the applicant has under an existing CSP grant and the applicant's performance and use of funds under a previous or existing award under any Department program (34 CFR 75.217(d)(ii) and 75.233(b)).

We reference additional regulations outlining funding restrictions in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice.

6. Other Submission Requirements. Applications for grants under this program must be submitted electronically unless you qualify for an exception to this requirement in accordance with the instructions in this section.

a. Electronic Submission of Applications.

Applications for grants under the Charter School Programs--CFDA number 84.282N--must be submitted electronically using e-Application, accessible through the Department's e-Grants Web site at: <http://e-grants.ed.gov>.

We will reject your application if you submit it in paper format unless, as described elsewhere in this section, you qualify for one of the exceptions to the electronic submission requirement and submit, no later than two weeks before the application deadline date, a written statement to the Department that you qualify for one of these exceptions. Further information regarding calculation of the date that is two weeks before the application deadline date is provided later in this section under Exception to Electronic Submission Requirement.

While completing your electronic application, you will be entering data online that will be saved into a database.

You may not e-mail an electronic copy of a grant application to us.

Please note the following:

- You must complete the electronic submission of your grant application by 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. E-Application will not accept an application for this program after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date.

Therefore, we strongly recommend that you do not wait until the application deadline date to begin the application process.

- The hours of operation of the e-Grants Web site are 6:00 a.m. Monday until 7:00 p.m. Wednesday; and 6:00 a.m. Thursday until 8:00 p.m. Sunday, Washington, DC time. Please note that, because of maintenance, the system is unavailable between 8:00 p.m. on Sundays and 6:00 a.m. on Mondays, and between 7:00 p.m. on Wednesdays and 6:00 a.m. on Thursdays, Washington, DC time. Any modifications to these hours are posted on the e-Grants Web site.

- You will not receive additional point value because you submit your application in electronic format, nor will we penalize you if you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, as described elsewhere in this section, and submit your application in paper format.

- You must submit all documents electronically, including all information you typically provide on the following forms: the Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424), the Department of Education Supplemental Information for SF 424, Budget Information--Non-Construction Programs (ED 524), and all necessary assurances and certifications. You must attach any narrative sections of your application as files in a .DOC (document), .RTF (rich text), or .PDF (Portable Document) format. If you upload a file type other than the three file types specified in this paragraph or submit a password protected file, we will not review that material.

- Your electronic application must comply with any page limit requirements described in this notice.

- Prior to submitting your electronic application, you may wish to print a copy of it for your records.

- After you electronically submit your application, you will receive an automatic acknowledgment that will include a PR/Award number (an identifying number unique to your application).

- Within three working days after submitting your electronic application, fax a signed copy of the SF 424 to the Application Control Center after following these steps:

- (1) Print SF 424 from e-Application.

(2) The applicant's Authorizing Representative must sign this form.

(3) Place the PR/Award number in the upper right hand corner of the hard-copy signature page of the SF 424.

(4) Fax the signed SF 424 to the Application Control Center at (202) 245-6272.

- We may request that you provide us original signatures on other forms at a later date.

Application Deadline Date Extension in Case of e-Application

Unavailability: If you are prevented from electronically submitting your application on the application deadline date because e-Application is unavailable, we will grant you an extension of one business day to enable you to transmit your application electronically, by mail, or by hand delivery.

We will grant this extension if--

(1) You are a registered user of e-Application and you have initiated an electronic application for this competition; and

(2) (a) E-Application is unavailable for 60 minutes or more between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date; or

(b) E-Application is unavailable for any period of time between 3:30 p.m. and 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date.

We must acknowledge and confirm these periods of unavailability before granting you an extension. To request this extension or to confirm our acknowledgment of any system unavailability, you may contact either (1) the person listed elsewhere in this notice under For Further Information Contact (see VII. Agency Contact) or (2) the e-Grants help desk at 1-888-336-8930. If e-Application is unavailable due to technical problems with the system and, therefore, the application deadline is extended, an e-mail will be sent to all registered users who have initiated an e-Application. Extensions referred to in this section apply only to the unavailability of e-Application.

Exception to Electronic Submission Requirement: You qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, and may submit your application in paper format, if you are unable to submit an application through e-Application because--

- You do not have access to the Internet; or
- You do not have the capacity to upload large documents to e-Application;

and

- No later than two weeks before the application deadline date (14 calendar days or, if the fourteenth calendar day before the application deadline date falls on a

Federal holiday, the next business day following the Federal holiday), you mail or fax a written statement to the Department, explaining which of the two grounds for an exception prevents you from using the Internet to submit your application. If you mail your written statement to the Department, it must be postmarked no later than two weeks before the application deadline date. If you fax your written statement to the Department, we must receive the faxed statement no later than two weeks before the application deadline date.

Address and mail or fax your statement to: Dean Kern, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 4W231, Washington, DC 20202-5970. FAX: (202) 205-5630.

Your paper application must be submitted in accordance with the mail or hand delivery instructions described in this notice.

b. Submission of Paper Applications by Mail.

If you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, you may mail (through the U.S. Postal Service or a commercial carrier) your application to the Department. You must mail the original and two copies of your application, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the following address:

U.S. Department of Education

Application Control Center
Attention: CFDA Number 84.282N
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

You must show proof of mailing consisting of one of the following:

- (1) A legibly dated U.S. Postal Service postmark.
- (2) A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the U.S. Postal Service.
- (3) A dated shipping label, invoice, or receipt from a commercial carrier.
- (4) Any other proof of mailing acceptable to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.

If you mail your application through the U.S. Postal Service, we do not accept either of the following as proof of mailing:

- (1) A private metered postmark.
- (2) A mail receipt that is not dated by the U.S. Postal Service.

If your application is postmarked after the application deadline date, we will not consider your application.

Note: The U.S. Postal Service does not uniformly provide a dated postmark. Before relying on this method, you should check with your local post office.

c. Submission of Paper Applications by Hand Delivery.

If you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, you (or a courier service) may deliver your paper application to the Department by hand. You must deliver the original and two copies of your application, by hand, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the following address:

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center
Attention: CFDA Number 84.282N
550 12th Street, SW.
Room 7041, Potomac Center Plaza
Washington, DC 20202-4260

The Application Control Center accepts hand deliveries daily between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, except Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal holidays.

Note for Mail or Hand Delivery of Paper Applications: If you mail or hand deliver your application to the Department--

(1) You must indicate on the envelope and--if not provided by the Department--in Item 11 of the SF 424 the CFDA number, including suffix letter, if any, of the competition under which you are submitting your application; and

(2) The Application Control Center will mail to you a notification of receipt of your grant application. If you do not receive this grant notification within 15 business

days from the application deadline date, you should call the U.S. Department of Education Application Control Center at (202) 245-6288.

V. Application Review Information

Selection Criteria. The selection criteria for this competition are in 34 CFR 75.210 and are as follows.

In evaluating an application, the Secretary considers the following criteria:

(i) Need for project (20 points). The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers 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.

(ii) Significance (20 points). The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers-

(1) The national significance of the proposed project.

(2) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population.

(3) The likely utility of the products (such as information, materials, processes, or techniques) that will result from the proposed project, including the potential for their being used effectively in a variety of other settings.

(iii) Quality of the project design (20 points). The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers-

(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

(2) The extent to which the design for implementing and evaluating the proposed project will result in information to guide possible replication of project activities or strategies, including information about the effectiveness of the approach or strategies employed by the project.

(3) The extent to which the proposed project is designed to build capacity and yield results that will extend beyond the period of Federal financial assistance.

(iv) Quality of project services (20 points). The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project. 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 applicants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In addition, the Secretary considers--

(1) The extent to which the services provided reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice.

(2) The likelihood that the services to be provided by the proposed project will lead to improvements in the achievement of students as measured against rigorous academic standards.

(v) Quality of project personnel (20 points). The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of the 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. In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors--

(1) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator.

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of project consultants or subcontractors.

(vi) Quality of the management plan (20 points). The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers 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.

(vii) Quality of the project evaluation (20 points). The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers 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.

Note: A strong evaluation plan should be included in the application narrative and should be used, as appropriate, to shape the development of the project from the beginning of the grant period. The plan should include benchmarks to monitor progress toward specific project objectives and also outcome measures to assess the impact on teaching and

learning or other important outcomes for project participants. More specifically, the plan should identify the individual and/or organization that has agreed to serve as evaluator for the project and describe the qualifications of that evaluator. The plan should describe the evaluation design, indicating: (1) what types of data will be collected; (2) when various types of data will be collected; (3) what methods will be used; (4) what instruments will be developed and when; (5) how the data will be analyzed; (6) when reports of results and outcomes will be available; and (7) how the applicant will use the information collected through the evaluation to monitor progress of the funded project and to provide accountability information both about success at the initial site and about effective strategies for replication in other settings. Applicants are encouraged to devote an appropriate level of resources to project evaluation.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. Award Notices: If your application is successful, we will notify your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators and send you a Grant Award Notification (GAN). We may also notify you informally, also.

If your application is not evaluated or not selected for funding, we 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. Reporting: 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 multi-year award, you must submit an annual performance report that provides the most current performance and financial expenditure information as directed by the Secretary in 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.

4. Performance Measures: The goal of the CSP is to support the creation and development of a large number of high-quality charter schools that are free from State or

local rules that inhibit flexible operation, are held accountable for enabling students to reach challenging State performance standards, and are open to all students. The Secretary has two performance indicators to measure progress toward this goal: (1) the number of charter schools in operation around the Nation, and (2) the percentage of charter school students who are achieving at or above the proficient level on State examinations in mathematics and reading/language arts. Additionally, the Secretary has established the following measure to examine the efficiency of the CSP: Federal cost per student in implementing a successful school (defined as a school in operation for three or more consecutive years).

All grantees will be expected, as applicable, to submit an annual performance report documenting their contribution in assisting the Department in meeting these performance measures.

VII. Agency Contact

For Further Information Contact: Richard Payton, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 4W225, Washington, DC 20202-5970. Telephone: (202) 453-7698 or by e-mail: richard.payton@ed.gov.

If you use a TDD, call the FRS, toll free, at 1-800-877-8339.

VIII. 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 computer diskette) on request to the program contact person listed under For Further Information Contact in Section VII of this notice.

Electronic Access to This Document: You can view this document, as well as all other documents of this Department published in the Federal Register, in text or Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) on the Internet at the following site: www.ed.gov/news/fedregister. To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at this site.

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: www.gpoaccess.gov/nara/index.html.

Dated:

James H. Shelton, III
Assistant Deputy Secretary
for Innovation and Improvement.

