

May 18, 2011

RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENTS ON GEAR UP INFORMATION COLLECTIONS
Notice of Submission for OMB Review (Federal Register Mar. 30, 2011)

1. **Comment**: Multiple commenters recommended that the Department allow GEAR UP applicants to single-space charts, tables, quotations and footnotes to allow for a more focused and complete narrative.

Discussion: The Department agrees with this recommendation and will allow single-space titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, captions, and all text in charts, tables, figures and graphs.

2. **Comment**: One commenter wanted clarity on which model State applicants may choose in providing services.

Discussion: State applicants may elect to provide services to participating students via the cohort model, the priority student model, the public housing model or a combination of both.

Change: None.

3. **Comment**: One commenter wanted clarity on how grantees were to track that former GEAR UP students were on track to graduate college.

Discussion: GEAR UP grantees who are awarded a seven year grant must provide services to students in their first year of attendance at an institution of higher education. Grantees will

be required to report to the Department the academic progress of those students through course completion and grades attained.

Changes: None.

4. Comment: One commenter wanted clarity on if students who obtain a high school diploma and postsecondary degree simultaneously through a dual-enrollment program could be counted as immediately enrolling in postsecondary education.

Discussion: The GEAR UP program would recognize a student who obtains a high school diploma and a postsecondary degree simultaneously through a dual-enrollment program as immediately enrolling in postsecondary education.

Changes: None.

5. Comment: Two commenters noted that the application states seven GPRA measures however there are ten.

Discussion: The Department agrees with this comment and will make this change.

6. Comment: One commenter suggested the Department change the language in three competitive preference priorities. The commenter stated the competitive preference priorities as written shift focus away from the original intent of the GEAR UP program model.

Discussion: The GEAR UP program plans to use three competitive preference priorities from the Department's notice of final supplemental priorities and definitions for discretionary grant

programs which was published in the Federal Register on December 15, 2010. The supplemental priorities are final and the language cannot be changed. Further the Department does not agree that the priorities shift focus away from the original intent of the GEAR UP program model. The priorities in fact, are designed to increase student success through programs such as GEAR UP.

Changes: None.

7. Comment: Two commenters requested the Department increase the deadline for transmittal of applications to 60 days given that the selection criteria have expanded since previous competitions. The commenter also requests the Department increase the page limit from 40 to 50 pages.

Discussion: While the Department notes that the proposed GEAR UP application package has added one additional selection criteria that wasn't used in prior application packages, the Department does not agree with the commenter that this merits an increase in the deadline for transmittal of applications. The Department has decided to increase the page limits to 45 pages to provide applicants with enough space to respond to the additional selection criteria.

8. Comment: One commenter suggested the Department revise the language of the first competitive preference priority in the state application package.

Discussion: The first competitive preference priority in the state application package is statutory and the Department does not have the authority to change the language.

9. Comment: One commenter suggested the Secretary decrease the maximum state award to increase the number of states that can participate in the program.

Discussion: The Secretary has established the maximum state award for this competition at \$5 million. The increased maximum award allows GEAR UP state applicants to develop projects which are aligned with key reform initiatives aimed at improving elementary and secondary education.

Changes: None.

10. Comment: One commenter wanted clarity regarding the requirement that GEAR UP grantees must provide services to students served under a previous GEAR UP grant.

Discussion: A State or Partnership receiving a GEAR UP grant on or after August 14, 2008, the grant ends before all students who received GEAR UP services under the grant have completed the twelfth grade, and the grantee receives a new award in a subsequent GEAR UP competition, the grantee must continue to provide services to all students who received GEAR UP services under the initial grant and remain enrolled in secondary schools until they complete the twelfth grade.

Changes: None.

11. Comment: One commenter suggested the Department add “and” to the Cohort or Priority language in the state application. The commenter also suggested the Department add “must” continue to serve students through the student’s first year of attendance at an institution of higher education.

Discussion: The Department agrees with both suggestions and will make the suggested changes.

12. Comment: One commenter wanted clarity regarding the scholarship waiver request for states being included in the 40 page narrative.

Discussion: State applicants should include their request for a scholarship waiver as part of the Governor’s designation letter. The scholarship waiver is not included in the 45 page narrative.

13. Comment: One commenter wanted clarity on the correct font size to be used since there is conflicting language in the state application package.

Discussion: Applicants must use a font that is either 12-point or larger or no smaller than 10 pitch (characters per inch). We will revise the application for consistency.