OMB Supporting Statement for Proposed Data Collection
Part A. Justification

State Survey on Activities Supported Under
Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants (Title IV, Part A)

2/19/19

1. **Importance of Collecting the Information**

   The study will examine the early implementation of Student Support and Academic Enrichment (SSAE) grants, a new state-administered grant program created through the 2016 *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)*. This program has the goal of improving student academic achievement by increasing the capacity of states, school districts, schools, and local communities to:

   1) provide all students with access to a well-rounded education (Section 4107);
   2) improve school conditions for student learning (Section 4108); and
   3) improve the use of technology in order to improve the academic achievement and digital literacy of all students (Section 4109).

   Within these three broad areas, the statute outlines a large number of potential activities that states and school districts can support, and the Department of Education has little information about the extent to which states and school districts are using SSAE funds for the wide range of permissible activities. To provide an early look at how SSAE funds are being used, this study will conduct a survey of all states in Spring 2019 to obtain information about the types of activities that states and school districts are supporting with SSAE Fiscal Year (FY) 18 funds during the 2018-19 school year.

   Background on the SSAE Program

   The SSAE merges the priorities outlined in a number of previous programs authorized under the *No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)* into a single program. The SSAE provides formula grants to states, which must suballocate at least 95 percent of their funds to school districts. Districts that receive a grant of $30,000 or more (about one-third of grantees) must conduct a comprehensive needs assessment to support decision-making about the uses of these funds. Districts may form a consortium with other surrounding school districts in their state to jointly carry out activities funded through their SSAE grants. Districts must prioritize the distribution of SSAE funds to certain types of high-need schools listed in Section 4106(e)(2)(A).

   As noted above, the statute outlines a large number of potential activities that states and school districts can support with SSAE funds (see Table 1). School districts that receive grants of $30,000 or more must use at least 20% of their funds to support activities under Section 4107, at least 20% for activities under Section 4108, and "a portion" of the funds for activities under Section 4109; districts that receive grants below this threshold have the flexibility to use the funds for just one of the three areas, if they wish.

Table 1
Overview of Examples of Allowable SSAE Uses of Funds

Well-Rounded Educational Opportunities (ESEA section 4107)	Safe and Healthy Students (ESEA section 4108)	Effective Use of Technology (ESEA section 4109)
• Improving access to foreign language instruction, arts, and music education • Supporting college and career counseling, including providing information on opportunities for financial aid through the early FAFSA • Providing programming to improve instruction and student engagement in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), including computer science, and increasing access to these subjects for underrepresented groups • Promoting access to accelerated learning opportunities including Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) programs, dual or concurrent enrollment programs and early college high schools • Strengthening instruction in American history, civics, economics, geography, government education, and environmental education	• Promoting community and parent involvement in schools • Providing school-based mental health services and counseling • Promoting supportive school climates to reduce the use of exclusionary discipline and promoting supportive school discipline • Establishing or improving dropout prevention • Supporting re-entry programs and transition services for justice-involved youth • Implementing programs that support a healthy, active lifestyle (nutritional and physical education) • Implementing systems and practices to prevent bullying and harassment • Developing relationship building skills to help improve safety through the recognition and prevention of coercion, violence, or abuse • Establishing community partnerships	• Supporting high-quality professional development for educators, school leaders, and administrators to personalize learning and improve academic achievement • Building technological capacity and infrastructure • Carrying out innovative blended learning projects • Providing students in rural, remote, and underserved areas with the resources to benefit from high-quality digital learning opportunities • Delivering specialized or rigorous academic courses and curricula using technology, including digital learning technologies and assistive technology

Source: U.S. Department of Education (2016), *Non-Regulatory Guidance: Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants*. Note that this table provides examples of allowable activities and is not an exhaustive list.

Purpose and Design of This Study

This study is intended to provide an initial overview of how states and school districts are using SSAE FY18 funds during the 2018-19 school year, based on a survey of state education agency (SEA) officials responsible for overseeing this program. The study will address the following questions:

- How are states using funds SSAE reserved at the state level to support school districts in meeting the program's three main purposes – well-rounded education, safe and healthy students, and improving the use of technology?

- How are school districts using their SSAE grants? To what extent are they using the funds for each of the three main purposes? What types of services and activities are they supporting under each of these areas?

Future studies may examine these questions in more depth, potentially including by conducting a survey of school districts. The current survey is intended to provide preliminary information within a short timeframe by relying on state officials' knowledge of their subgrantees as well as their knowledge about state-level activities. We believe that SEAs will have some knowledge about how their school districts are using SSAE funds because school districts must submit an application to their SEA that describes how they will use SSAE for activities related to Sections 4107, 4108, and 4109, their program objectives and intended outcomes, how they will evaluate the effectiveness of those activities, and any partnerships with other organizations for implementing those activities. [Section 4106(e)(1)]

The state survey will be administered to all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico in Spring 2019 to obtain information about the types of activities that states and school districts are supporting with SSAE funds.

2. **Purposes and Uses of the Data**

The purpose of this data collection is to provide near-term information about the types of activities that states and school districts are supporting with SSAE funds during the 2018-19 school year. Findings from the survey will be used to respond to congressional and other inquiries about how SSAE funds are being used and to assist the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education in determining the topics that would be most useful for technical assistance and program monitoring. The findings may also help to inform future studies that examine the implementation of this program in greater depth.

3. **Improved Information Technology**

The state survey will be administered through a Web-based platform to streamline the response process. A paper version of the survey will be available for those that would prefer not to respond by web. Staff will be trained to complete the survey over the telephone if a respondent would prefer that mode instead of web or paper.

4. **Efforts to Identify Duplication**

We have not identified any studies of the SSAE grant at the federal level. We have identified two small external surveys that asked states about whether they planned to distribute funds on a competitive or formula basis (only permitted in FY17) and when they planned to distribute funds to school districts. However, these studies did not provide information about the types of activities that states and school districts are supporting with SSAE funds.

5. **Methods Used to Minimize Burden on Small Entities**

No small entities are included in this data collection.

6. **Consequences of Not Collecting the Information**

SSAE grants were funded at $1.1 billion in FY18, a substantial increase from the $400 million funding level in FY17, making it the third largest program under the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act*. If we do not collect this information, the Department would not have information to respond to

congressional inquiries about how funds are being used for this major new federal education program.

7. **Special Circumstances**

None of the special circumstances listed apply to this data collection.

8. **Consultations Outside the Agency**

The U.S. Department of Education piloted the survey instrument with four state educational agency officials and received thirteen comments from the public based on the 60 day notice; the feedback from these sources informed the revised survey being published with the 30 day notice for public comment.

9. **Payments or Gifts to Respondents**

No payment or gifts to respondents will be made.

10. **Assurance of Confidentiality**

Responses to this survey will be used to prepare a report that summarizes findings in an aggregate manner across states. In addition, some factual information from the survey may be reported on a state-by-state basis. We will not provide information that identifies the specific respondents to anyone outside the study team, except as required by law.

11. **Sensitive Questions**

This survey does not contain any questions of a sensitive nature.

12. **Estimated Response Burden**

We estimate that the hour burden on respondents will total 17 hours. In monetary terms, the estimated cost of this burden amounts to a total of $3,120.

Table 2
Estimate of Burden Hours and Monetary Cost

Number of Respondents	Average Number of Hours Per Respondent	Total Burden Hours	Average Hourly Rate	Estimated Monetary Cost of Burden	Average Monetary Cost Per Respondent
17	**1**	**17**	$60	$1,020	$60

13. **Estimates of Annualized Respondent Capital and Maintenance Costs**

This is a one-time data collection, and there are no respondent capital and start-up costs, nor operation and maintenance costs.

14. Estimated Annualized Cost to the Federal Government

The total cost to the federal government for this one-time data collection is estimated to be a maximum of $100,000. This amount represents the budgeted cost for our contractor, the American Institutes for Research, to collect, compile, and analyze the data, and to produce a final report .

15. Changes in Burden

This study is a new information collection request. This results in a program change increase in burden and responses of 17 responses and 17 hours respectively.

16. Study Schedule and Publication Plans

The data collected under this study will be summarized in a report that presents an analysis of the data in narrative and tabular form. We anticipate that a final report will be completed by December 2019. Table 3 provides a schedule for completion of the data collection and report.

Table 3
Study Timeline

Begin data collection	April 2019
End data collection	June 2019
Data tabulations	July 2019
First draft of final report	August 2019
Completion of final report	December 2019

17. Display Expiration Date for OMB Approval

The data collection form will display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection.

18. Exceptions to Certification Statement

Not applicable. There are no exceptions requested.