

## SUPPORTING STATEMENT

### Information Collection for the Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education Grant Program (TEACH Grant Program)

#### TEACH Grant Program Service Obligation Certification and Suspension Request Forms

##### A. Justification

**1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection. Attach a hard copy of the appropriate section of each statute and regulation mandating or authorizing the collection of information, or you may provide a valid URL link or paste the applicable section<sup>1</sup>. Specify the review type of the collection (new, revision, extension, reinstatement with change, reinstatement without change). If revised, briefly specify the changes. If a rulemaking is involved, make note of the sections or changed sections, if applicable.**

The College Cost Reduction and Access Act (Public Law 110-84) (the CCRAA) established the Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant Program under Part A of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (the HEA). The regulations governing the TEACH Grant Program are in 34 CFR 686.

The TEACH Grant Program provides grants of up to \$4,000 per year to undergraduate and graduate students who are completing, or who intend to complete, coursework necessary to begin a career in teaching. In exchange for receiving a TEACH Grant, a grant recipient must agree to complete a teaching service obligation and must regularly provide documentation of his or her progress toward satisfying the service obligation. If a grant recipient fails to complete the service obligation or does not meet requirements for documenting the service obligation, the TEACH Grants that the individual received are converted to a Direct Unsubsidized Loan that must be repaid, with interest charged from the date of each TEACH Grant disbursement.

The TEACH Grant Program was included for review in the Negotiated Rulemaking which took place in early 2019. The review occurred, in part, in response to a report by the Government Accountability Office which found concerns with the conversion rates of the TEACH Grants to Direct Unsubsidized Loans. Additionally, a report conducted for the Department by the American Institutes for Research identified multiple factors for the conversion of the TEACH Grants to loans including a lack of understanding of the service obligation and of the need for annual certification of qualifying teaching or intent to satisfy the service obligation by a specified deadline. Addressing the concerns raised by these studies, the Department and negotiators developed proposed amendments to simplify the current TEACH Grant regulations to improve program understanding to reduce grant-to-loan conversions, as well as to update, strengthen, and clarify other areas of the TEACH Grant Program regulations.

The proposed regulations would simplify the program requirements to make it easier for TEACH Grant recipients to document their progress toward satisfying the service obligation and expand

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<sup>1</sup> Please limit pasted text to no longer than 3 paragraphs.

the conditions under which a TEACH Grant recipient may receive a temporary suspension of the period for completing the teaching service obligation.

The Department is requesting approval of a new information collection for the TEACH Grant Certification of Completed Teaching (Certification) and five Service Obligation Suspension Requests (Suspension Requests) included with this submission. The Military Service Suspension Request also serves as the means by which a TEACH Grant recipient may request a full or partial discharge of the service obligation based on extended military service. The Certification and Suspension Requests reflect the regulatory provisions as proposed in 34 CFR 686.40, 686.41 and 686.42.

**2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for a new collection, indicate the actual use the agency has made of the information received from the current collection.**

The Department will use the information collected on the Certification to track the progress of successful completion of the service obligation by a TEACH Grant recipient. The Department will use the information collected on the Suspension Request forms to determine eligibility of a TEACH Grant recipient to receive a suspension or military service discharge under the terms of the TEACH Grant Agreement to Serve and Repay.

**3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or forms of information technology, e.g. permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision of adopting this means of collection. Also describe any consideration given to using technology to reduce burden.**

The collection of information does not involve the use of technological processes such as electronic submissions. Because the Certification and some of the Suspension Request forms require the TEACH Grant recipient to obtain a certification from an authorized official or attach supporting documentation, the United States Postal Service or an alternative mail delivery service currently provide the only practical means for a borrower to submit these forms. However, we will explore options for allowing electronic submission of Suspension Requests that do not require a certification from an authorized official or additional supporting documentation.

**4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in Item 2 above**

There is no information available from other sources that can be used for the purposes described in Item 2.

**5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities, describe any methods used to minimize burden. A small entity may be (1) a small business which is deemed to be one that is independently owned and operated and that is not dominant in its field of operation; (2) a small organization that is any not-for-profit enterprise that is independently owned and operated and is not dominant in its field; or (3) a small**

**government jurisdiction, which is a government of a city, county, town, township, school district, or special district with a population of less than 50,000.**

No small businesses are affected by this information collection.

**6. Describe the consequences to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.**

A TEACH Grant recipient must complete a Certification or Suspension form to show they have completed a year of qualifying teaching or that they meet the eligibility requirements to receive a temporary suspension of the service obligation period. If a recipient did not complete the proper form, he or she could not receive the benefit allowed under the TEACH Grant regulations.

**7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner:**

- **Requiring respondents to report information to the agency more often than quarterly;**
- **Requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it;**
- **Requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document;**
- **Requiring respondents to retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records for more than three years;**
- **In connection with a statistical survey, that is not designed to produce valid and reliable results than can be generalized to the universe of study;**
- **Requiring the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB;**
- **That includes a pledge of confidentiality that is not supported by authority established in statute or regulation, that is not supported by disclosure and data security policies that are consistent with the pledge, or that unnecessarily impedes sharing of data with other agencies for compatible confidential use; or**
- **Requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secrets, or other confidential information unless the agency can demonstrate that it has instituted procedures to protect the information's confidentiality to the extent permitted by law.**

The collection of this information will be conducted in a manner that does not involve any of the above conditions.

**8. As applicable, state that the Department has published the 60 and 30 Federal Register notices as required by 5 CFR 1320.8(d), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB. Summarize public comments received in response to that notice and describe actions taken by the agency in response to these comments. Specifically address comments received on cost and hour burden.**

**Describe efforts to consult with persons outside the agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instruction and record keeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.**

**Consultation with representatives of those from whom information is to be obtained or those who must compile records should occur at least once every 3 years – even if the collection of information activity is the same as in prior periods. There may be circumstances that may preclude consultation in a specific situation. These circumstances should be explained.**

These forms reflect the terms and conditions of the TEACH Grant Program as set forth in 34 CFR 686. The regulations governing the TEACH Grant Program were developed through negotiated rulemaking which include the changes to the currently approved Agreement as attached to this clearance package. This clearance will run concurrently with the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

**9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees with meaningful justification.**

No payments or gifts will be provided to respondents.

**10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy. If personally identifiable information (PII) is being collected, a Privacy Act statement should be included on the instrument. Please provide a citation for the Systems of Record Notice and the date a Privacy Impact Assessment was completed as indicated on the IC Data Form. A confidentiality statement with a legal citation that authorizes the pledge of confidentiality should be provided.<sup>2</sup> If the collection is subject to the Privacy Act, the Privacy Act statement is deemed sufficient with respect to confidentiality. If there is no expectation of confidentiality, simply state that the Department makes no pledge about the confidentiality of the data.**

The Certification and Suspension forms include a Privacy Act Notice that (1) informs the applicant of the statutory authority for the information collection, (2) explains that disclosure of the information is voluntary, but is required in order to determine the applicant's eligibility to receive a TEACH Grant, and (3) identifies the third parties to whom the information may be disclosed, and explains the circumstances under which such disclosures may occur.

**11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private. The justification should include the reasons why the agency considers the questions necessary, the specific uses to be made of the information, the explanation to be given to**

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<sup>2</sup> Requests for this information are in accordance with the following ED and OMB policies: Privacy Act of 1974, OMB Circular A-108 – Privacy Act Implementation – Guidelines and Responsibilities, OMB Circular A-130 Appendix I – Federal Agency Responsibilities for Maintaining Records About Individuals, OMB M-03-22 – OMB Guidance for Implementing the Privacy Provisions of the E-Government Act of 2002, OMB M-06-15 – Safeguarding Personally Identifiable Information, OM:6-104 – Privacy Act of 1974 (Collection, Use and Protection of Personally Identifiable Information)

**persons from whom the information is requested, and any steps to be taken to obtain their consent.**

The Certification and Suspension forms do not require a borrower to provide any information that would be considered sensitive.

**12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information. The statement should :**

- **Indicate the number of respondents by affected public type (federal government, individuals or households, private sector – businesses or other for-profit, private sector – not-for-profit institutions, farms, state, local or tribal governments), frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated, including identification of burden type: recordkeeping, reporting or third party disclosure. All narrative should be included in item 12. Unless directed to do so, agencies should not conduct special surveys to obtain information on which to base hour burden estimates. Consultation with a sample (fewer than 10) of potential respondents is desirable. If the hour burden on respondents is expected to vary widely because of differences in activity, size, or complexity, show the range of estimated hour burden, and explain the reasons for the variance. Generally, estimates should not include burden hours for customary and usual business practices.**
- **If this request for approval covers more than one form, provide separate hour burden estimates for each form and aggregate the hour burdens in the ROCIS IC Burden Analysis Table. (The table should at minimum include Respondent types, IC activity, Respondent and Responses, Hours/Response, and Total Hours).**
- **Provide estimates of annualized cost to respondents of the hour burdens for collections of information, identifying and using appropriate wage rate categories. The cost of contracting out or paying outside parties for information collection activities should not be included here. Instead, this cost should be included in Item 14.**

Section 686.40 – Documenting the service obligation.

The proposed regulations would clarify the requirements regarding the documentation of completion of the teaching service obligation in the TEACH Grant Program and how it is reported.

We believe that the proposed changes to the required service obligation would require a new certification form. During the 2018 calendar year, Department records indicate we received documentation for 52,989 grantees regarding yearly service obligation completion. We estimate that to meet the requirements of §686.40 each respondent would need 20 minutes (.33 hours) to complete the certification form.

We estimate the total burden of 17,486 hours (52,989 x .33 hours) under OMB Control Number 1845-NEW1.

Entity	Respondent	Responses	Time to Respond	Burden Hours
Individual	52,989	52,989	.33 hours	17,486
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>52,989</b>	<b>52,989</b>		<b>17,486</b>

Section 686.41 – Periods of suspension.

The proposed regulations would add new conditions under which a TEACH Grant recipient may receive a temporary suspension of the period for completing the service obligation.

We believe that the proposed new conditions to receive a temporary suspension of the period for completing the service obligation would require a new temporary suspension form.

During the 2018 calendar year, Department records indicate we received documentation supporting suspension of 589 grantees for enrollment to complete licensure requirements. We estimate that to meet the requirements in proposed §686.41(a)(1)(ii), each respondent would need 20 minutes (.33 hours) to complete the certification form. We estimate the total burden of 194 hours (589 x .33 hours).

During the 2018 calendar year, Department records indicate we received documentation supporting suspension of 334 grantees for qualifying leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993. We estimate that to meet the requirements in proposed §686.41(a)(1)(iii), each respondent would need 20 minutes (.33 hours) to complete the certification form. We estimate the total burden of 110 hours (334 x .33 hours).

During the 2018 calendar year, Department records indicate we received documentation supporting suspension of 24 grantees for call to military service. We estimate that to meet the requirements in proposed §686.41(a)(1)(iv), each respondent would need 20 minutes (.33 hours) to complete the certification form. We estimate the total burden of 8 hours (24 x .33 hours).

We anticipate that we would receive documentation supporting suspension of 25 grantees based on military orders for the grantee's spouse. We estimate that to meet the requirements in proposed §686.41(a)(1)(v), each respondent would need 20 minutes (.33 hours) to complete the certification form. We estimate the total burden of 8 hours (25 x .33 hours).

We anticipate that we would receive documentation supporting suspension of 500 grantees based on residing or being employed in a federally declared major disaster area. We estimate that to meet the requirements in proposed §686.41(a)(1)(vi), each respondent would need 20 minutes (.33 hours) to complete the certification form. We estimate the total burden of 165 hours (500 x .33 hours).

We estimate the total burden of 485 hours (1,472 x .33 hours) under OMB Control Number 1845-NEW1.

Entity	Respondent	Responses	Time to Respond	Burden Hours
Individual (a)(1)(ii)	589	589	.33 hours	194
Individual (a)(1)(iii)	334	334	.33 hours	110
Individual (a)(1)(iv)	24	24	.33 hours	8
Individual (a)(1)(v)	25	25	.33 hours	8
Individual (a)(1)(vi)	500	500	.33 hours	165
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,472</b>	<b>1,472</b>		<b>485</b>

Section 686.42 – Discharge of agreement to serve or repay.

The proposed regulations would revise the language for conditions under which a TEACH Grant recipient may discharge an agreement to serve or repay based on military service.

During the 2018 calendar year, Department records indicate we received documentation supporting suspension of 10 grantees for discharge due to an extended call to military service. We estimate that to meet the requirements in proposed §686.42(c), each respondent would need 20 minutes (.33 hours) to complete the new certification form also used for military service suspension.

We estimate the total burden of 3 hours (10 x .33 hours) under OMB Control Number 1845-NEW1.

Entity	Respondent	Responses	Time to Respond	Burden Hours
Individual	10	10	.33 hours	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>		<b>3</b>

**Total for information collection 1845-NEW1:**

Entity	Respondent	Responses	Burden Hours
Individual	54,471	54,471	17,974
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>54,471</b>	<b>54,471</b>	<b>17,974</b>

**13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information. (Do not include the cost of any hour burden shown in Items 12 and 14.)**

- **The cost estimate should be split into two components: (a) a total capital and start-up cost component (annualized over its expected useful life); and (b) a total operation and maintenance and purchase of services component. The estimates**

**should take into account costs associated with generating, maintaining, and disclosing or providing the information. Include descriptions of methods used to estimate major cost factors including system and technology acquisition, expected useful life of capital equipment, the discount rate(s), and the time period over which costs will be incurred. Capital and start-up costs include, among other items, preparations for collecting information such as purchasing computers and software; monitoring, sampling, drilling and testing equipment; and acquiring and maintaining record storage facilities.**

- **If cost estimates are expected to vary widely, agencies should present ranges of cost burdens and explain the reasons for the variance. The cost of contracting out information collection services should be a part of this cost burden estimate. In developing cost burden estimates, agencies may consult with a sample of respondents (fewer than 10), utilize the 60-day pre-OMB submission public comment process and use existing economic or regulatory impact analysis associated with the rulemaking containing the information collection, as appropriate.**
- **Generally, estimates should not include purchases of equipment or services, or portions thereof, made: (1) prior to October 1, 1995, (2) to achieve regulatory compliance with requirements not associated with the information collection, (3) for reasons other than to provide information or keep records for the government, or (4) as part of customary and usual business or private practices. Also, these estimates should not include the hourly costs (i.e., the monetization of the hours) captured above in Item 12**

Total Annualized Capital/Startup Cost:	0
Total Annual Costs (O&M):	0
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Total Annualized Costs Requested:	0

There are no capital/startup costs to respondents, nor are there any annual costs to respondents associated with operating or maintaining systems or purchasing services.

**14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government. Also, provide a description of the method used to estimate cost, which should include quantification of hours, operational expenses (such as equipment, overhead, printing, and support staff), and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information. Agencies also may aggregate cost estimates from Items 12, 13, and 14 in a single table.**

There is no significant annualized cost to the federal government. The Department's contract with its TEACH Grant servicer is not based on a fee-for-service model; rather, the Department pays the servicer based on performance metrics. The government incurs no additional costs merely as a result of this information collection.



**15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments. Generally, adjustments in burden result from re-estimating burden and/or from economic phenomenon outside of an agency's control (e.g., correcting a burden estimate or an organic increase in the size of the reporting universe). Program changes result from a deliberate action that materially changes a collection of information and generally are result of new statute or an agency action (e.g., changing a form, revising regulations, redefining the respondent universe, etc.). Burden changes should be disaggregated by type of change (i.e., adjustment, program change due to new statute, and/or program change due to agency discretion), type of collection (new, revision, extension, reinstatement with change, reinstatement without change) and include totals for changes in burden hours, responses and costs (if applicable).**

The Department is requesting a program change due to new regulatory requirements. This new collection is estimated at a burden of 17,974 hours for 54,471 respondents and responses.

**16. For collections of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication. Address any complex analytical techniques that will be used. Provide the time schedule for the entire project, including beginning and ending dates of the collection of information, completion of report, publication dates, and other actions.**

The results of this information collection will not be published.

**17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.**

The Department is not seeking this approval.

**18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in the Certification of Paperwork Reduction Act.**

The Department is not requesting any exceptions to the Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions.