



## UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

March 16, 2021

### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Lindsay Abate  
Office of Management and Budget Desk Officer

**FROM:** Andrew Brake  
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education Information  
Collection Coordinator

**RE:** Emergency request for Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) approval  
regarding the Safer Schools and Campuses Best Practices  
Clearinghouse (Clearinghouse)

Pursuant to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) procedures established at 5 CFR 1320, the U.S. Department of Education (Department) requests that the following collection of information, submissions to the Safer Schools and Campuses Best Practices Clearinghouse (Clearinghouse), be processed in accordance with section 1320.13 Emergency Processing.

On March 9, 2021, the Department will invite schools, local educational (LEAs), early childhood centers, State educational agencies (SEAs), and institutions of higher education to submit lessons learned and best practices to support the safe reopening of schools, the mental well-being of students and educators, and the learning of all students and particularly those students that may already have been struggling to keep up academically with their peers and have been further negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, the Department is requesting emergency clearance and OMB approval in order to collect lessons learned and best practices, from the educational community, from early childhood through postsecondary institutions as soon as possible.

On January 21, 2021 the President issued Executive Order (E.O.) 14000 to assist members of the educational community in each State in safely reopening schools for face-to-face instruction and ensuring schools remain open. E.O. 14000 directs the Department to make widely available and easily accessible a variety of resources from the field and Federal agencies and technical assistance to support their dissemination and use. The hub for these resources will be the Clearinghouse described in E.O. 14000. The Department's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) will lead development and implementation of the Clearinghouse in partnership with other ED offices and relevant Federal agencies.

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*The Department of Education's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.*

At the heart of the Clearinghouse will be collections of lessons learned and best practices from schools, districts, States, and institutions of higher education from across the country.

The Clearinghouse will include resources that target the needs of students and educators in each of three grade spans: early childhood, K-12, and postsecondary and address three general topics:

- Physical Health and Safety: School and campus approaches to implement mitigation strategies and prepare and sustain in-person operations safely.
- Mental Well-Being: School and campus strategies to address trauma and other enhanced mental health needs among students, educators, and other staff.
- Student Support Services: School and campus strategies to holistically support students, including through parent/student engagement, high-quality instruction, partnerships with community-based organizations, and access to food and other basic needs.

In order to quickly categorize, review, and approve submissions for inclusion in the Clearinghouse, the Department would like to request that voluntary submissions include the following information: (1) contact information, (2) topic, (3) target grade level, (4) whether there is an equity focus/historically underserved populations focus, (5) what makes it a best practice (e.g., it is based on local data, research, Federal guidance), and (6) a summary of the impact.

Given the urgency in supporting the educational community as the 2020-21 school year comes to an end, as some schools and LEAs seek to implement summer learning programs, and as the start of the 2021-22 school year will come soon, the Department is unable to consult with the public prior to seeking submissions for this voluntary collection to inform the Clearinghouse. We estimate that submitting a lesson learned or best practice will take one and ½ hours. The Department requests approval of this submission by March 8, 2021 to extend through September 2021. Given the inability to seek public comment during such a short timeframe for this emergency collection, the Department will also provide 60-day language as part of the notice in the *Federal Register* seeking public comment for the regular information collection.