



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

January 20, 2022

MEMORANDUM

TO: Lindsay Abate
Office of Management and Budget Desk Officer

FROM: Gaby Watts
Senior Director, Student Service

RE: Emergency request for Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) approval

Pursuant to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) procedures established at 5 CFR 1320, the U.S. Department of Education (the Department) requests that the following collection of information, Supplemental Support under the American Rescue Plan (SSARP) Application, be processed in accordance with section 1320.13 Emergency Processing. The Department has determined that this information must be collected prior to the expiration of time periods established under Part 1320, and that this information is essential to the Department's ability to effectively issue grant awards under the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) to address the disruptions posed by the Novel (new) Coronavirus ("2019-nCoV").

Section 2003 of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) allocates funds for institutions of higher education (IHEs) that the Secretary determines have the greatest unmet needs related to the coronavirus. This collection includes 1) a certification and agreement and 2) a profile form that will be used by institutions applying for discretionary grant funding under this section.

In designing and implementing this program, the Department seeks to be responsive to rapidly changing conditions caused by the omicron variant and to support the evolving needs of American higher education during this difficult time. The unanticipated arrival of this new, highly contagious variant has created further challenges for IHEs and their students that have already spent nearly two years coping with the effects of the pandemic. The Department seeks to quickly make this funding available to assist those institutions that have experienced the greatest economic and educational disruptions caused by 2019-nCoV. Therefore, we are requesting emergency approval in order to expedite the announcement of the application period for these funds. If this emergency collection is not approved, the Department will be unable to announce the availability of this funding, review applications, and issue awards in a timely manner.

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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.

Given the short timeframe, the Department is unable to consult with the public prior to issuing the forms. However, the Department has ample experience designing other similar forms in a way that is clear and minimizes burden. We estimate that the application will require 3 hours per applicant to complete.

The Department is requesting an emergency clearance from OMB by January 25, 2022 and will publish an emergency notice with a 30 day comment period as required by 5 CFR 1320.8(d) to solicit public comments on the regular information collection.