

February 8, 2001

To Whom It May Concern:

I will answer some of the questions that you have compiled to assist in accomplishing your goal. All of my answers are geared toward the USDE, since I work for a major school district in the country.

1. Which application and reporting forms are unduly repetitive and burdensome?

I find that most of the department's applications are quite burdensome. Specifically, the school districts across the country are witnessing a shortage of teachers and administrators which leaves the existing staff with an over abundance of responsibilities and making it quite difficult to apply for needed federal funds to increase student achievement. Additionally, the schools that need the support of grants often times are the schools that have the least amount of resources to spend time in completing the, often intimidating and burdensome applications. Often time the technical workshops provided by the USDE program officers deliver conflicting information or are just delivering "guesswork" messages.

Furthermore, the notification of a particular grant program and the turn around time needed to submit the application is often a disadvantage to those working in the school district. For instance, last year the Smaller Learning Communities Implementation grant (CFDA 84.215L) was announced during the month of May, with a short turnaround time. Now, the time that most high schools are bringing the school year to a close, as well as dealing with graduations (since this program focus was high schools). Schools that may have wanted to apply the time factor was a big obstacle for many.

Suggestions: The applications need to have less questions and more site visits by USDE program officers to prospective grantees to see what will actually be the reality of the prospective program or have the prospective grantees to do a presentation to the USDE, via satellite or onsite.

2. How do you obtain copies of the necessary forms? Are they available on the Internet, or are they provided in materials from the Federal agencies, such as a funding notice or handbook?

Copies of the necessary forms are obtained through the Internet as well as through the federal register and weekly newsletters.

3. What electronic processing systems do you already utilize when dealing with your Federal grants? What technologies do you need?

Currently, grant applications that are processed through the National Science Foundation are processed electronically through FastLane.

I hope that some of my responses have been helpful and that serious consideration will be given when revising the granting making process Remember, the more roadblocks that we create, when we even try to simplify, to disseminate program funds the more those in need are left out or go unserved.

Your attention to this matter is greatly appreciated.