

#### **IV. RURAL EDUCATION INITIATIVES – *No Child left Behind Act of 2001*** (Sections 6201 through 6234)

##### **What are the Rural Education Initiatives?**

Part B of Title VI of the reauthorized ESEA contains three separate Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP) initiatives that are designed to help rural districts that lack the personnel and resources to compete effectively for Federal competitive grants and that receive grant allocations in amounts that are too small to be effective in meeting their intended purposes. The three initiatives – the Alternative Uses of Funds Authority; the Small, Rural School Grant Program; and the Rural and Low-Income School Program – are summarized separately below.

#### **1. ALTERNATIVE USES OF FUNDS AUTHORITY -- Section 6211**

##### **What is the REAP Alternative Uses of Funds Authority?**

The REAP Alternative Uses of Funds Authority is a flexibility provision that allows eligible local educational agencies (LEAs) to combine “applicable funding” (which is defined as funding provided under subpart 2 and section 2412(a)(2)(A) of Title II, section 4114, and Part A of Title V) and use the applicable funding to carry out local activities under one or more of the following Federal programs:

- Part A of Title I (Improving the Academic Achievement of Disadvantaged Children)
- Part A of Title II (Teacher and Principal Training and Recruiting)
- Part D of Title II (Enhancing Education Through Technology)
- Title III (Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students)
- Part A of Title IV (Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities)
- Part B of Title IV (21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers)
- Part A of Title V (Innovative Programs)

Under the section 6211 Alternative Uses of Funds Authority, for example, an eligible LEA could use funds under the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities program for activities authorized under the Title II technology program. Section 6211 does not provide LEAs with additional funding; rather, it gives them greater flexibility in using applicable funding.

##### **What LEAs are eligible to take advantage of the flexibility offered under the REAP Alternative Uses of Funds Authority?**

LEAs that meet the following conditions are eligible to take advantage of the flexibility offered under the REAP Alternative Uses of Funds Authority:

- The total number of students in average daily attendance in the schools served by the LEA is fewer than 600, or each county in which a school served by the

LEA is located has a population density of fewer than 10 persons per square mile;  
and

All schools served by the LEA have a school locale code of 7 or 8, unless the LEA's request for a waiver of the locale code requirement is granted. The Secretary may grant the waiver if the LEA demonstrates, with the concurrence of the SEA, that the LEA is located in an area defined as rural by a governmental agency of the State. (The locale codes of schools are listed on the website of the Department's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) at <http://www.nces.ed.gov>.)

### **What steps must an eligible LEA take to use the REAP Alternative Uses of Funds flexibility?**

An eligible LEA simply notifies its SEA, by a date established by the SEA, of its intention to use the "applicable funding" in accordance with the Alternative Uses of Funds Authority.

### **What accountability requirements apply to participating LEAs?**

Participating LEAs must administer an assessment that is consistent with section 1111(b)(3) of Title I. After the third year that an LEA participates in the program, and on the basis on the results of the assessments, the State must determine whether the LEA has made adequate yearly progress. Only those LEAs that have made adequate yearly progress may continue to participate. Those LEAs that failed to make adequate yearly progress may continue to participate only if they use the applicable funding to carry out the requirements of section 1116 (Title I school improvement provisions).

## **2. SMALL, RURAL SCHOOL GRANT PROGRAM – Section 6212**

### **What is the Small, Rural School Grant Program?**

The Small, Rural School Grant Program is a program that authorizes the Secretary to award formula grants directly to eligible LEAs (i.e., those LEAs eligible under the alternative uses of funds program described above) to carry out activities authorized under one or more of the following federal programs:

Part A of Title I (Improving the Academic Achievement of Disadvantaged Children)

Part A of Title II (Teacher and Principal Training and Recruiting)

Part D of Title II (Enhancing Education Through Technology)

Title III (Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students)

Part A of Title IV (Safe and Drug-Free Schools)

Part B of Title IV (21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers)

Part A of Title V (Innovative Programs)

(NOTE: This is the same list of programs as the list under Alternative Uses of Funds Authority.)

### **How much funding will an eligible LEA receive?**

The Secretary will determine an eligible LEA's grant amount pursuant to the formula in section 6212(b). The amount will range from \$20,000 to \$60,000, less the amount of "applicable funding" (which is defined as funding provided under subpart 2 and section 2412(a)(2)(A) of Title II, section 4114, and Part A of Title V) that the LEA received during the preceding year. The Secretary will ratably reduce LEA awards if insufficient funds are available to pay the full amounts LEAs are eligible to receive.

### **What steps must an LEA take in order to receive its grant award?**

The legislation requires LEAs seeking funding to submit to the Secretary, not later than March 1 of each year, their average daily attendance (ADA) calculations (as determined under section 6231). The Secretary is requesting that LEAs submit the ADA data first to their SEA, and that SEAs submit the ADA data to the Department, not later than March 1, on behalf of all eligible LEAs in the State.

### **What accountability requirements apply to LEAs participating in the Small, Rural School Grant Program?**

The accountability requirements described above with respect to the Alternative Uses of Funds Authority -- in which participating LEAs must administer assessments consistent with section 1113(b)(3) of Title I and States must determine whether LEAs have made adequate yearly progress -- also apply to the Small, Rural School Grant Program.

## **3. RURAL AND LOW-INCOME SCHOOL PROGRAM – Sections 6221 through Section 6224**

### **What is the Rural and Low-Income School Program?**

Designed to address the needs of rural, low-income schools, this program is one in which the Secretary awards formula grants to SEAs, which in turn award subgrants to eligible LEAs either competitively or on a formula basis. (There are special rules, described below, that apply if an SEA chooses not to participate in the program.)

### **How much funding will be allotted to each SEA?**

An SEA's allotment will be determined on the basis of the number of students in average daily attendance served by eligible LEAs in the State compared to the number of all such students served by eligible LEAs in all States.

### **Does the Secretary reserve funds for the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and the outlying areas?**

Yes. One-half of one percent of the funds appropriated for this program will be reserved to make awards to elementary or secondary schools operated or supported by BIA; one half of one percent will be used to make awards to the outlying areas.

**What LEAs are eligible to participate in the Rural and Low-Income School Program?**

An LEA is eligible to receive a grant under this program if –

20 percent or more of the children ages 5 through 17 served by the LEA are from families with incomes below the poverty line;

All of the schools served by the LEA have a school locale code of 6, 7, or 8 (The locale codes of schools are listed on the website of the Department's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) at <http://www.nces.ed.gov>); and

The LEA is not eligible to receive a Small, Rural School Grant under section 6212.

**How does an SEA award funds to eligible LEAs?**

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An SEA awards funds to eligible LEAs either competitively or by formula. The formula requirements are set forth in section 6221(b)(2).

**For what purposes may the grant funds be used?**

Funds under this program may be used for –

Teacher recruitment and retention

Teacher professional development

Educational technology as described in Part D of Title II

Parental involvement activities

Activities authorized under Part A of Title IV (Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities)

Activities authorized under Part A of Title I (Improving the Academic Support Division Achievement of Disadvantaged Children)

Activities authorized under Title III (Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students)

**What if an SEA chooses not to participate in the program?**

If an SEA chooses not to participate in the program, the Secretary may use the SEA's allotment to award grants directly to eligible LEAs in that State either competitively or by formula for the purposes defined above. (Eligible LEAs in non-participating States are referred to as "specially qualified agencies" in the legislation.)

**When must ADA data for eligible LEAs be submitted to the Department?**

In order that the Secretary can calculate the amount of each State's allotment on a timely basis, the legislation requires that ADA data for eligible LEAs be submitted to the Department not later than March 1 of each year. The Secretary is requesting that SEAs

submit the ADA data to the Department, not later than March 1, on behalf of eligible LEAs in the State.

**What accountability requirements apply to districts participating in the Rural and Low-Income School Program?**

The accountability requirements in section 6224(d) and (e) apply to districts participating in this program. These requirements -- in which participating LEAs must administer assessments consistent with section 1113(b)(3) of Title I and States (or the Secretary, in the case of specially qualified agencies) must determine whether LEAs have made adequate yearly progress -- are similar to those applicable to districts participating in the Alternative Uses of Funds Authority and the Small, Rural School Grant Program.