



March 28, 2017

The Honorable Senator Richard Devlin, Co-Chair
The Honorable Representative Nancy Nathanson, Co-Chair
Joint Committee on Ways and Means
900 Court Street NE
H-178 State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301-4048

Dear Co-Chairpersons:

Nature of Request

The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) respectfully requests approval to apply for a federal grant from the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) for the Education Innovation and Research (EIR) “Early-phase” Grant (CDFA 84.411C).

Agency Action

The USDOE Office of Innovation and Improvement is soliciting applications for EIR Grants to fund innovations that tackle persistent challenges in student learning and have the potential to improve K-12 education for high-need students (e.g., students identified as having disabilities, learning English as a second language, performing below grade level).

The EIR grants are separated into three types: “Early-phase” grants, “Mid-phase” grants, and “Expansion” grants. These grants differ in terms of the level of prior evidence of effectiveness required for consideration for funding, the expectations regarding the kind of evidence and information funded projects should produce, the level of scale funded projects should reach, and, consequently, the amount of funding available to support each type of project. About 25 percent of EIR grant funds will support rural areas of states.

The “Early-phase” grants provide funding to support the development, iteration, implementation, and feasibility testing of practices that are expected to be novel and significantly relative to others that are underway nationally. These grants are not intended to simply implement established practices in additional locations or address needs that are unique to one particular context. The goal is determine whether and in what ways relatively newer practices can improve student achievement for high-need students.

ODE is requesting approval to apply for an “Early-phase” grant that if awarded, will enable the department, in collaboration with the University of Kansas SWIFT (Schoolwide Integrated Framework for Transformation), to focus on refining and testing a robust and flexible data integration and analysis tool (SWIFT Data Wall) coupled with a proven data-informed decision making process (Team-Initiated Problem Solving). This innovation is expected to foster a culture of using a positive, proactive approach to data-based instructional and behavioral support decisions that will lead to improved student academic and behavior outcomes, especially for high-need students.

ODE and the Redmond School District have participated in a pilot study of the proposed innovation, and if funded, would partner with the SWIFT Education Center at the University of Kansas in the refining process. This partnership would then develop evidence for the innovation through an efficacy study involving approximately 30 high-need, rural schools in Oregon.

The grant allows for \$4,000,000 over a five-year period, with allowable funding for costs associated with grant administration, project oversight and communication with partners. The grant will require an in-kind match of 10 percent, which can be met through the SWIFT scale-up work already occurring in districts currently collaborating with the University of Kansas. The grant application will be due no later than April 13, 2017.

Agency Request

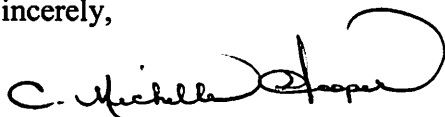
Approve the Oregon Department of Education to apply for a federal grant of up to \$4,000,000 from the U.S. Department of Education for the Education Innovation and Research (EIR) “Early-phase” Grant.

Legislation Affected

None

Thank you for considering the approval of this request.

Sincerely,



C. Michelle Hooper
Chief of Staff