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March 31, 2017

GUIDANCE MEMORANDUM #17-09

TO: School District Superintendents

FROM: Steve Canavero, Ph.D.
           Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: Guidance on ESSA Evidence-Based Requirements: 2017 -2018 Title I School
           Improvement, Section 1003(a) Grant Application

In March 2017, the Nevada Department of Education (NDE or Department) hosted two events where school and district leaders had an opportunity to meet pre-approved external service providers with program interventions that meet the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) evidence-based requirements. The Department's intent then, as it is now, is to support district and school leaders in aligning the evidence-based requirements in ESSA and partners meeting the articulated standard with school and student need.

This memorandum aims to provide guidance to district and school leaders focused on the ESSA levels of evidence so district and school leaders can: 1) strengthen their capacity to identify evidence-based interventions for school improvement; and 2) understand the expectations for 1003(a) application submissions and submit strong applications. The first section of this memorandum provides an overview of the process, reiterating key points highlighted in an earlier 1003(a) memorandum entitled, "ESSA Evidence-Based Strategic Planning Pilot: Title I School Improvement, Section 1003(a) Grant Application," from Deputy Superintendent Brett Barley dated March 6, 2017. This section also provides a scenario in which a school application will be reviewed and funded in Priority 1. The second section of this memorandum provides guidance on the ESSA levels of evidence, while the final section provides guidance on how to complete a strong and competitive application. Much of this information has been shared previously with district and school leaders who reached out for support and assistance following the release of the 1003(a) application on March 15, 2017.

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All submitted 1003(a) applications from school sites and districts should be in alignment with the guidance provided in this document.

<u>Overview</u>

As stated in the March 6 memorandum from Deputy Superintendent Brett Barley, Nevada will be implementing the new federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) over the next year, and the Department will not fund any intervention, strategy, or intervention that that does not meet the three ESSA levels of evidence required for 1003(a) funding: Strong, Moderate, or Promising. ESSA requires states, districts, and schools to take a new evidence-based approach to school improvement. This year, the Department streamlined the application and aligned it to Nevada's Strategic Plan and ESSA Plan's big bets around school leadership development, data informed decision-making, and support for low performing schools, with the intention of strategically strengthening alignment in school improvement efforts between NDE, districts, and schools.

The Department also shared the 1003(a) Application Funding Priority for this competitive grant process in the same aforementioned memorandum. The funding priorities are Priority 1, 2, or 3, depending on the application's alignment with system-level coherence, as described in the State Plans. (See Appendix A for the funding priorities.)

<u>If districts and schools select to apply in Priority 1 funding for the 1003(a) application process, here are the steps they would need to take to demonstrate ESSA Evidence Requirements:</u>

1. Partner with one or two pre-approved vendors on the NDE School Improvement Partner List (see Appendix B), based on school needs for school leadership development and/or data informed decision-making. Program interventions from these pre-approved partners have already been rigorously vetted to ensure they meet the ESSA evidence requirements. Furthermore, the pre-approved vendors provide programs and services in alignment with state priorities (i.e., school leadership and data informed decision-making).

   <u>Please indicate to the NDE Office of Student and School Supports (OSSS) the pre-approved vendor your team selects to partner with by 5 pm on Friday, April 7, 2017</u>. Send an email to Seng-Dao Yang Keo at skeo@doe.nv.gov. This will help the OSSS team facilitate the creation and coordination of cohorts. This is a core strategy for many of the pre-approved vendors and other high-quality, evidence-based service providers, so as to strengthen system-level coherence and alignment, a key feature of high performing education systems.

2. If there are other school needs, identify external service provider(s) and rigorously vet the program intervention, strategy, or activity to ensure it meets ESSA evidence requirements. In general, this means finding multiple rigorous, high-quality studies that clearly demonstrate that the program intervention has a statistically significant positive effect on student achievement and learning. These studies must be from reputable third-party evaluators (not internal organizational data). In the 1003(a) application, district and school leaders must then summarize the findings, cite the studies, fully reference the studies in APA or MLA in a References section created by the district and school in an Appendix, and share the district process for vetting the intervention. Detailed guidance is

provided in this memorandum to further elaborate on this process. Districts and school leaders should follow the guidance provided in this memorandum to demonstrate that their selected interventions, strategies, or activities meet the rigorous ESSA evidence-based requirements. Moreover, the Department recommends strategically narrowing the scope and number of interventions for which a school selects to seek 1003(a) funding, so the school's strategic plan and focus are clear to the cross-functional application review team.

Illustrative Scenarios

To illustrate the type of school application for 1003(a) funds that would be reviewed and funded within the Priority 1 level, the Department has created a scenario, Scenario 1, to help district and school leaders better understand the application review process. Different scenarios have been created to help district and school leaders better understand the 1003(a) application review process. (Please see Appendix C for four additional scenarios, followed by a brief explanation of how each application in the five scenarios will be reviewed and funded, in order of priority.)

Scenario 1:

- School in a rural district
- Partners with two pre-approved vendors on the School Improvement Partner List, one focused on school leadership development and the other focused on data informed decision-making
- A member of a rural district consortium
- A senior level district leader, school improvement and/or Title I coordinator, grants staff member, and school leader attended the Vendor Showcase in Reno or Las Vegas (March 14-15)
- Voluntarily agrees to a performance compact

Reviewer Number:	Date:
Applicant: School A (SCENARIO 1)	**Total Points Awarded:**

Description	Points Possible	Points Earned	Running Total
Summary of School Needs and Root Causes **EXCEEDS STANDARDS**	10	10	10
Paired with state-approved School Improvement Partner **YES, TWO**	15	15	25
Alignment with one or both priorities: ☐ School Leadership Development **ALIGNS TO BOTH AND** ☐ Data Driven Decision-Making **HAS A ROBUST PLAN**	20	20	45
Commitment to school improvement and measurable, timely, and attainable goals **EXCEEDS STANDARDS (STRONG COMMITMENT AND GOOD EXPLANATION OF GOALS)**	10	8	53
Evidence-based interventions that meet the ESSA evidence requirements **STRONGLY ALIGNED**	15	15	68
Expected outcomes for students **EXCEEDS STANDARD**	5	5	73
Ongoing assessment of progress **EXCEEDS STANDARDS (STRONG AND THOROUGH, BUT NOT EXCELLENT)**	5	4	77
Capacity and sustaining continuous improvement **EXCEEDS STANDARDS (STRONG NARRATIVE AROUND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP**	10	8	85

Description	Points Possible	Points Earned	Running Total
CAPACITY AND STRONG PLAN TO SUSTAIN CONTINOUS IMPROVEMENT, BUT NOT EXCELLENT)			
LEA support for implementation, ongoing monitoring, and evaluation of intervention effectiveness **EXCEEDS STANDARD**	5	5	90
Strategic use of funding sources to support school goals and improve student outcomes **EXCEEDS STANDARD**	5	5	95
Budget Summary and Budget Narrative (ePAGE)	*	*	*
Certification, Assurances, SPP, and SPP addendum (ePAGE)	*	*	*

*Required, but not scored

BONUS POINTS

Description	Points Possible	Points Earned	Running Total
NDE Vendor Showcase participation (2 points each) ☐ Site level leadership member(s) ☐ LEA / Senior Leadership ☐ Title I and/or School Improvement staff ☐ Grants Department staff ☐ Charter School Board Members	10	8	103
Consortium Participation (8 pts.) ☐ Rural ☐ Charter	8	8	111
Rising Star Voluntary Performance Compact (8 pts.)	8	8	119

Please note that the school profiled in Scenario 1 will be reviewed and funded in Priority 1. This means that the NDE cross-functional 1003(a) application review committee will review and fund all school applications in Priority 1 first. After this, applications in Priority 2 will be reviewed and funded, and applications in Priority 3 will then be reviewed and funded—pending availability of funding. In addition, the review committee may decide to partially fund application funding requests.

Guidance on the ESSA Levels of Evidence

ESSA requires all school improvement interventions, strategies, and activities funded through 1003(a) to meet specific evidence requirements and demonstrate a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes. The Nevada Department of Education will not fund any intervention, strategy, or activity that does not meet the rigorous ESSA evidence requirements.

Table 1 below summarizes the ESSA levels of evidence for 1003(a).

Table 1: ESSA Levels of Evidence for 1003(a)

Evidence Level	Evidence-Based	Evidence
1 - STRONG EVIDENCE	Based on at least 1 well-designed and well-implemented experimental study	Demonstrate a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes
2 - MODERATE EVIDENCE	Based on at least 1 well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental study	Demonstrate a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes
3 - PROMISING EVIDENCE	Based on at least 1 well-designed and well-implemented correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias	Demonstrate a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes

ESSA evidence standards only require a single study with a statistically significant positive effect, and the law specifies that studies must be well-designed and well-implemented. It is the responsibility of the district and school submitting a 1003(a) application to ensure that weak or flawed studies are not accepted as the one study qualifying a program for any of the ESSA evidence levels (i.e., Strong, Moderate, or Promising). Citing a weak or flawed study to support proposed interventions, strategies, and/or activities may disqualify a 1003(a) application from being funded. District and school leaders should consult with internal and external trained researchers to help them identify weak and flawed studies. Moreover, in alignment with best practices in education research and policy, district and school leaders must search and examine multiple rigorous studies on a targeted intervention to determine whether or not it meets ESSA evidence levels, as opposed to only reviewing a single study.

Resources and Strategies

District and school leaders can utilize multiple resources to help them determine whether or not an intervention, strategy, or activity meets the Strong, Moderate, or Promising evidence requirements for 1003(a), based on rigorous studies from a reputable third-party evaluator.

The NDE recommends any of the following strategies.

1. Search professional educational research journals and websites of reputable organizations for studies to help your team identify a range of evidence-based interventions. They include:

   What Works Clearinghouse: http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/
   ERIC: http://www.eric.ed.gov/
   JSTOR: http://www.jstor.org/action/showAdvancedSearch
   Google Scholar: www.google.com/scholar
   Institute of Education Services: http://ies.ed.gov

   In a rigorous research study, your team can find critical and relevant information in a few sections. The Methodology section provides an explanation of the research design. The Findings section presents the research findings of the study (e.g., if the intervention had a positive statistically significant effect on student achievement). Further conversation about the findings can be found in the Discussion or Implication section, and the Summary section briefly covers all of this information.

2. Utilize **An LEA Guide** for Identifying Evidence-Based Interventions for School Improvement, developed by the Florida Center for Reading Research (FCRR), Florida State University.

District and school leaders can use this guide to help them evaluate the evidence base for interventions and determine relevant interventions that have strong evidence and meet the unique needs of schools. The guide recommends that school and district leaders use the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) website, in addition to other resources, to quickly examine the intervention's rating and findings. Table 2 summarizes guidance to facilitate this process (note that FCRR released two complementary guides, one for the SEA and another for the LEA and schools).

Table 2: Summary of Guide for Identifying Evidence-Based Interventions[1]

ESSA Evidence Level	Using WWC	Key Things to Look For
Strong	In an experimental design study, "the Department of Education considers a study to be well-designed and implemented if it meets WWC standards without reservations" (14).	- Corresponds roughly to meeting WWC standards "without reservations" - Experimental or treatment group (and the possible addition of a comparison group) - Control group that does not receive the treatment - Groups formed by random assignment or a discontinuity - Low attrition - The absence of a confound
Moderate	In a quasi-experimental design study, "a study that meets WWC standards with reservation qualifies as moderate evidence" (16).	- Corresponds roughly to meeting WWC standards "with reservations" - Experimental or treatment group (and the possible addition of a comparison group) - Control group - Establishing or failing to establish baseline equivalence - No random assignment
Promising	"Correlational studies are considered promising evidence because there is no way to assign causality to the results" (18).	- Only one study group (no separate treatment and control groups) - Terms such as "relationship," "covariate," and "predictor" - Presence of statistical controls

The **What Works Clearinghouse**, developed by the Institute of Education Sciences (IES), is a user-friendly database organized by topic and content area to locate studies on specific intervention types to meet ESSA standards. Search for the specific program intervention on WWC; if the WWC has reviewed a study for that program intervention, and then examine the "Review Details" and "Findings" tabs to determine whether interventions meet the ESSA evidence levels. In the "Findings" tab, your team will want to confirm that there is at least

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[1] Lee, L., Hughes, J., Smith, K., & Foorman, B. (2016, November 29). *An SEA Guide for Identifying Evidence-Based Interventions for School Improvement.* Retrieved from Link: http://fcrr.org/documents/essa/essa_guide_sea.pdf.

one statistically significant positive effect found. The Department recommends examining the studies on WWC because some studies will be counted as "meeting standards without reservations" even though there are flaws in the study, such as very small sample sizes.

3. Utilize **Evidence for ESSA,** a website developed by the Center for Research and Reform in Education at Johns Hopkins University School of Education, to identify programs and practices that meet the ESSA evidence standards.

   District and school leaders can search for elementary and middle/high school mathematics and reading programs on the website, which identifies the evidence level (i.e., Strong, Moderate, or Promising) for each program. The website also includes brief program descriptions, cost information, and programs that have been successful with specific populations (e.g., English learners, special education, urban, and rural).

4. If your school or district is considering school leadership interventions, please review the recently released **RAND report** on school leadership interventions under ESSA, which categorizes a number of program interventions by ESSA evidence tiers and discusses their effectiveness.

5. Reach out to experts for support in evaluating research. Experts can include federally funded organizations, such as the West Comprehensive Center WestEd, and university partners with faculty and centers with expertise in these areas. Your team might also consider reaching out to the external service providers for assistance in collecting the research evidence to support the claim that their program intervention meets ESSA evidence-based requirements. If this is the case, please note that the Department of Education will not accept internal organizational data as meeting ESSA evidence levels; and will only consider independent and rigorous research studies conducted by reputable researchers that examine program impact.

Please note that many of these resources were provided in Appendix C in the 1003(a) application when the application was released on March 15, 2017. Other valuable resources are included in Appendix C in the 1003(a) application. The Office of Student and School Supports (OSSS) has also shared much of this information via email and through phone conversations with district and school leaders who have reached out for assistance. The OSSS team encourages school and district leaders to reach out.

Effect Size and P-Values

The Department of Education strongly encourages district and school leaders to choose school improvement strategies that are the most effective and have the strongest positive impact on student achievement, which can be identified by strong effect sizes. Effect sizes are widely accepted figures indicating the impact a program intervention, strategy, or activity has made on student achievement and learning. Effect sizes of +0.2 to 0.5 are generally considered to be "small," whereas effect sizes of +0.5 to 0.8 are considered to be "medium" and anything over +0.8 is considered "large." Larger effect sizes indicate larger impacts. If there are multiple rigorous studies of one program intervention, your team should average all of the qualifying studies of the program, not just use the effect size in those studies that indicate the program meets the ESSA evidence levels of Strong, Moderate, or Promising.

Applications must indicate the p-value to determine the statistical significance of the program's results. The p-value is between 0 and 1. A small p-value is less than or equal to 0.05 and indicates strong evidence against the null hypothesis. This means that the program intervention is statistically significant. A large p-value is greater than 0.05 and indicates weak evidence against the null hypothesis, which means that the program intervention is not statistically significant.

The Department strongly recommends that district and school leaders choose interventions that have strongest statistical significance and effect sizes. Statistical significance and effect sizes must be included in the application when discussing findings, when available.

Guidance for Completing Strong Applications

In this section, the Department will provide guidance to help schools and districts complete strong applications in a clear and consistent manner, so they can effectively demonstrate to the NDE 1003(a) application review committee that the identified interventions, strategies, and activities in the application meet the ESSA evidence requirements (i.e., Strong, Moderate, and Promising) eligible for 1003(a) funding.

Pre-Approved School Improvement Partner List
As a part of their Request For Qualification (RFQ) application, the pre-approved external service providers submitted rigorous studies that found their program/intervention had a statistically significant positive effect on student achievement. A cross-functional NDE team examined and verified these studies, in addition to looking at other studies on the program intervention to confirm program effectiveness. The NDE team then compared the findings with ESSA evidence requirements and, from there, determined whether or not the program intervention met ESSA evidence requirements. In summary, the cross-functional NDE team actually went through the entire process for every program intervention that was submitted by external service providers in the RFQ process—and that is the expectation for districts and schools seeking 1003(a) funding. To assist district and school leaders in identifying highly effective, evidence-based interventions, the NDE team conducted an RFQ process and created a pre-approved list of external service providers whose programs meet the ESSA evidence-based requirements of Strong, Moderate, or Promising. This list is the School Improvement Partner List released in March 2017 (see Appendix B).

If schools choose to partner with one of the pre-approved vendors on the School Improvement Partner List, the school and district do not need to demonstrate that this intervention meets the rigorous ESSA evidence requirements. The Department has already completed this work to assist districts and schools in this process. In the 1003(a) application, schools and districts only need to identify which external service provider(s) they are partnering with from the School Improvement Partner List. Partnering with any one of the pre-approved vendors will ensure that a school's 1003(a) application is in the highest priority level for funding during the review process. If a school decides to request funding for any additional intervention, strategy, or activity in the same 1003(a) application, the school and district will need to demonstrate that the addition intervention, strategy, or activity meet the rigorous ESSA evidence requirements (see below for further information).

Specific Program Interventions (e.g., WestEd, Relay GSE, etc.)

Many schools and districts across the state have on-going partnerships with external service providers that are not on the pre-approved School Improvement Partner List. These partnerships and programs can still be funded through 1003(a) funds, so long as the school and district clearly demonstrate that the program intervention meets the rigorous ESSA evidence requirements for 1003(a) funding (i.e., Strong, Moderate, or Promising).

To do this, school and district leaders must first find multiple, rigorous, high quality studies that examine the impact of that specific program intervention. These multiple studies must be from reputable third-party evaluators (not internal organizational data). Then, school and district leaders must determine whether or not the findings indicate that the intervention has a statistically significant positive effect on student achievement and meets the ESSA evidence requirements. (Use the guidance above to help with this process.) The Department encourages district and school leaders to seek support from the external service providers; high quality, evidence-based external service providers should be able to easily share rigorous third-party studies on their program intervention that demonstrates their intervention meets ESSA evidence requirements.

If the intervention clearly meets the Strong, Moderate, or Promising ESSA evidence levels, school and district leaders <u>must summarize the finding for the program in the 1003(a) application, cite the studies, and share the district process for vetting the intervention</u>. The summary of the findings should include statistical significance and effect sizes. School and district leaders must create a Reference page in the application's Appendices section. Studies used as evidence to demonstrate that interventions meet ESSA evidence requirements must be fully referenced in APA or MLA format in the References section in an Appendix.

If an intervention does not meet the ESSA evidence levels, the Department of Education cannot and will not fund it through 1003(a) funds, so school and district leaders must identify a different program intervention in the application.

District- and School-led Strategies, Interventions, and Activities (e.g., coaching)

The Department will prioritize evidence-based interventions, strategies, and activities that have been evaluated by reputable third-party evaluators and have been found to have a statistically significant positive effect on student achievement. Programs from external service providers on the state pre-approved list meet these evidence-based requirements. A district and school staff member, who has not been evaluated as part of a rigorous research study on the intervention, does not qualify as an evidence-based intervention.

If a school seeks to use a district- or school-led intervention, such as a staff member hired to be a coach, then the two following steps must be addressed in the application for each district- or school-led intervention.

- **Step 1**
  Find rigorous, high quality studies that examine the effectiveness of that specific intervention, strategy, or activity (e.g., coaching). The Department recommends using FCRR's **An LEA Guide** for Identifying Evidence-Based Interventions for School Improvement, which highlights several strategies and provides the ESSA evidence level

the strategy meets. It also summarizes the body of research to support the ESSA evidence level and references the relevant studies.

In the 1003(a) application, identify the strategy, summarize the findings (including statistical significance and effect size), cite the studies, and share the district process, if the district helped to vet the strategy. Studies should be fully referenced in APA or MLA format in the References section in an Appendix.

Please note that general strategies (e.g., coaching) may meet ESSA evidence-based requirements, but district- or school-led interventions, strategies, and activities do not automatically meet these requirements because they have not been evaluated in rigorous high-quality studies. As such, there is uncertainty as to whether or not the district- or school-led interventions, strategies, or activities are implemented effectively and with fidelity over time, or in the context that the research was conducted. Essentially, it is unclear whether or not these district- or school-led interventions, strategies, or activities have a positive effect on student achievement and learning.

It is the responsibility of the district and school to demonstrate that any district- or school-led intervention (e.g., staff member who has been hired to implement an intervention) has a strong likelihood to make a positive impact on student achievement. Step 2 addresses this.

- **Step 2**
  School and district leaders must address three main points in the 1003(a) application, should they seek to use 1003(a) funds to support a school- or district-led intervention. The three main points are broadly categorized in the rubric as "capacity" and "continuous improvement." This is worth 10 points on the rubric. The review committee will not approve funding for any school- or district- led intervention, strategy, or activity that fails to address the three main points below.

  - **School leadership capacity**
    What is the training and past performance of the individual(s) leading the intervention? Past performance should be directly related to the specific identified strategy (e.g., address the coaching performance of a coach). Responses should address the capacity of school leadership to effectively implement an intervention, strategy, or activity, and to do so with fidelity over time.

  - **Structures**
    What structures have been put in place within the school to support effective implementation over time of the intervention, strategy, or activity? For example, school leadership may have strategically changed the schedule of the school day to ensure that teachers have dedicated time to consistently meet with coaches. Leadership may have also clearly defined expectations and deliverables associated with coaching time. Furthermore, school leaders may have created a dedicated and rich learning space for collaboration between teachers and coaches. Any structures that have been intentionally and strategically put in place to support the intervention's success should be noted.

- o **Impact**

   What are the measurable outcomes of the intervention? What is the impact on student achievement and learning? Applications should highlight proficiency and growth data over time, as well as high school graduation data, to demonstrate outcomes associated with the identified intervention, strategy, or activity. What is the data and evidence to suggest that the school- or district-led intervention and the person identified to lead the intervention have a positive impact on the population served? How has this been measured, and how will this be measured moving forward?

   If district and school leaders are unable to demonstrate that proposed district- or school-led interventions, strategies, or activities meet these requirements and would like to partner with a pre-approved vendor on the NDE School Improvement Partner List to build capacity and demonstrate strong student outcomes, that would be acceptable.

   For interventions, strategies, and activities that are not district- or school-led, school and district leaders can use the same following three main points above as a guide for meeting the "Exceeds Standard" category in the rubric, under the "Capacity" and Continuous Improvement" section.

Pages
In response to valuable district and school feedback, the page limit for the application has been extended from 7-pages to 10-pages to accommodate the requirement for demonstrating that interventions, strategies, and activities meet ESSA evidence levels of Strong, Moderate, or Promising.

Rolling Reviews for Feedback
The Office of Student and School Supports (OSSS) will conduct a round of rolling reviews of applications to support district and school leaders so they can complete strong applications. This means that schools are invited to submit a completed application prior to the final application deadline of April 21, 2017, for early NDE review and feedback. Thus, school and district leaders have an opportunity to revise their application before the final application deadline on April 21.

If school and district leaders are interested in submitting an application for the rolling review process, they must email completed applications in Word format to Karen Gordon (kgordon@doe.nv.gov) and Maria Sauter (msauter@does.nv.gov) by **noon on Wednesday, April 12, 2017**. The OSSS team encourages district and school leaders to submit completed applications earlier to provide time for a meaningful review. Please expect a one week turnaround for the review of the application. Drafts submitted on Wednesday, April 12, will be returned at the latest to school and district leaders by COB Wednesday, April 19, 2017. All rolling reviews will be completed by the NDE cross-functional review team by April 19.

Please note that the OSSS team cannot review draft, incomplete or partial applications or separate individual parts of an application, given limited time and resources. Moreover, for the rolling review period, the OSSS team will only review completed applications once, and this will be a holistic review, so it will not include a numeric total from the rubric. Again, this provides districts and schools with an opportunity to revise their applications prior to final submission on April 21. In addition, while we aim to provide valuable support and technical assistance to

districts and schools throughout this process, we cannot provide specific language for the applications, in fairness and transparency to other districts and schools in this process. Instead, the OSSS team will make ourselves available all month long for questions via email and on the phone; host webinars and provide additional tools and resources (e.g., a FAQs page for this application); and provide detailed guidance in memorandums such as this one.

Application Submission Deadline

All final applications are due to the Department on or before April 21, 2017 by 5:00 pm PST. Ideally, district and school leaders will take advantage of the various supports made available by the Department, including the opportunity for feedback during the rolling review period. Final funding decisions (i.e., Notification of Award Status) will be communicated to districts and school leaders on or before May 12, 2017.

Webinars

The NDE Office of Student and School Support will host two webinars next week.

Meeting ESSA Evidence-Based Requirements for the 1003(a) Application

Date and time: Monday, April 3, from 3:00 - 4:30 pm PST

Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.
GoToMeeting Link: https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/861287093
First GoToMeeting? Try a test session: Test: http://help.citrix.com/getready

You can also dial in using your phone.
United States: +1 (646) 749-3122
Access Code: 861-287-093

- **Assisting Vendors/External Service Providers to Support Schools and Districts in the 1003(a) Application Process**

    Date and time: Thursday, April 6, from 11:00 am - 12:00 pm PST

    Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.
    https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/426570949
    First GoToMeeting? Try a test session: Test: http://help.citrix.com/getready

    You can also dial in using your phone.
    United States: +1 (312) 757-3121
    Access Code: 426-570-949

Each webinar will be recorded and posted on ePAGE Resources. The OSSS team will communicate with district and school leaders regarding any future webinars on the 1003(a) process.

Frequently Asked Questions

An ongoing list of questions from district and school leaders and answers from the NDE cross-functional team have been posted on ePAGE regarding ESSA evidence requirements, formatting,

1003(a) application submission, and other related topics. Please refer to this resource for quick answers to many common questions.

Consortium

The Department is in the process of completing a guide for those wishing to apply as a consortium. Please continue to contact Kevin Marie Laxalt, klaxalt@doe.nv.gov, if you have questions regarding interest in joining a charter school consortium or a rural district consortium for the 1003(a) application process.

The Department of Education recognizes the many changes in effect regarding the 1003(a) process and new ESSA evidence requirements, which can be a challenge for district and school leaders seeking to dramatically improve student outcomes. The NDE team understands and recognizes these challenges, and our cross-functional teams are committed to providing differentiated support that sets schools and districts up for success. Please know that our team is collaborating with multiple national education experts, consisting of leading researchers, policymakers, and practitioners, who are helping us to develop this process to ensure that the Department is aligned with evidence-based practices and best practices from the highest performing systems for the 1003(a) process. This includes supporting districts and schools to ensure the interventions they select meet the ESSA evidence levels and drive strong student outcomes.

The Department is thankful for partnerships across the state and welcomes strong collaboration with district and school leaders. Please reach out to Seng-Dao Yang Keo, Director of the Office of Student and School Supports, via email (skeo@doe.nv.gov) or phone (775-687-9145), or to members of the OSSS team should you have any questions about the 1003(a) application process (see Appendix D).

Warmest regards,

Steve Canavero, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Public Instruction

Appendix A

1003(a) Application Funding Priority

Priority	Consideration	Alignments
Priority 1	Receives full consideration	1. Alignment with NDE priorities: • School leadership • Data informed decision-making 2. Partner with an external provider from the NDE state-approved School Improvement Partner List (see Appendix A) 3. Meets ESSA evidence requirements (i.e., Strong, Moderate, or Promising)
Priority 2	Receives strong consideration	1. Alignment with NDE priorities: • School leadership • Data informed decision-making 2. School improvement interventions, strategies, or activities that meet ESSA evidence requirements (i.e., Strong, Moderate, or Promising)
Priority 3	Receives moderate consideration	School improvement interventions, strategies, or activities that meet ESSA evidence requirements (i.e., Strong, Moderate, or Promising)
No Priority	Not reviewed or considered for funding	School improvement interventions, strategies, or activities that do **NOT** meet ESSA evidence requirements (i.e., Strong, Moderate, or Promising)

Appendix B

School Improvement Program List (SIPL)

Service Provider	School Leadership Development	Data Informed Decision-Making	Contact in RFQ	Email Address
Academy of Urban School Leadership (AUSL)	X	X	Tre Childress	tchildress@auslchicago.org
Achievement Network (ANet)	X	X	Brett Shiel	bshiel@achievementnetwork.org
Blueprint Schools Network	X		Matthew Spengler	mspengler@blueprintschools.org
Community Training and Assistance Center, Inc. (CTAC)	X	X	William J. Slotnik	bslotnik@ctacusa.com
Criterion Educational LLC / National Institute for School Leadership (NISL)	X	X	Josh Tucker	jtucker@nisl.org
Pearson	X	X	Karin Ekanger	Karin.ekanger@pearson.com
New Classrooms Innovation Partners		X	Theresa Poprac	tpoprac@newclassrooms.org
New Leaders	X		Claudia Alfaro	calfaro@newleaders.org
NYC Leadership Academy (NYCLA)	X		Mary Jo Dunnington	MDunnington@nycleadershipacademy.org
Partners in School Innovation	X	X	Derek Mitchell	derekm@partnersinschools.org
School Empowerment Network	X		Alexander Shub	Alex.Shub@schoolempowermentnetwork.org
Social Policy Research Associates (SPR)		X	Sukey Leshnick	sukey@spra.com
TNTP	X		Dottie Smith	Dottie.Smith@tntp.org
University of Virginia Darden/Curry Partnership for Leaders in Education (UVA)	X	X	William Robinson	RobinsonW@darden.virginia.edu

Appendix C

Scenario 2:

- School partners with one pre-approved vendor on the School Improvement Partner List focused on school leadership development
- Partners with an external service provider that focuses on data informed decision-making and meets ESSA evidence requirements (not on the pre-approved list)
    - Following the guidance in this memo, the school application included clear and strong evidence that effectively demonstrates this program intervention meets the ESSA evidence level of Moderate.
- School leader attended the Vendor Showcase in Reno or Las Vegas (March 14-15)

Description	Points Possible	Points Earned	Running Total
Summary of School Needs and Root Causes **EXCEEDS STANDARD**	10	10	10
Paired with state-approved School Improvement Partner **YES, ONE**	15	15	25
Alignment with one or both priorities: ☐ School Leadership Development **ALIGNS TO BOTH AND HAS A ROBUST PLAN** ☐ Data Driven Decision-Making	20	20	45
Commitment to school improvement and measurable, timely, and attainable goals **EXCEEDS STANDARDS (STRONG COMMITMENT AND GOOD EXPLANATION OF GOALS)**	10	8	53
Evidence-based interventions that meet the ESSA evidence requirements **STRONGLY ALIGNED**	15	15	68
Expected outcomes for students **EXCEEDS STANDARD (AMBITIOUS OUTCOMES, WITH METRICS AND BENCHMARKS)**	5	5	73
Ongoing assessment of progress **EXCEEDS STANDARDS (EXCELLENT AND THOROUGH)**	5	5	78
Capacity and sustaining continuous improvement **EXCEEDS STANDARDS (EXCELLENT SCHOOL LEADERSHIP CAPACITY AND EXCELLENT PLAN TO SUSTAIN CONTINOUS IMPROVEMENT)**	10	10	88
LEA support for implementation, ongoing monitoring, and evaluation of intervention effectiveness **EXCEEDS STANDARD**	5	5	93
Strategic use of funding sources to support school goals and improve student outcomes **EXCEEDS STANDARD**	5	5	98
Budget Summary and Budget Narrative (ePAGE)	*	*	*
Certification, Assurances, SPP, and SPP addendum (ePAGE)	*	*	*

*Required, but not scored

BONUS POINTS

Description	Points Possible	Points Earned	Running Total
NDE Vendor Showcase participation (2 points each) ☐ Site level leadership member(s) ☐ LEA / Senior Leadership ☐ Title I and/or School Improvement staff ☐ Grants Department staff ☐ Charter School Board Members	10	2	100
Consortium Participation (8 pts.) ☐ Rural ☐ Charter	8	0	100
Rising Star Voluntary Performance Compact (8 pts.)	8	0	100

Scenario 3:

- School partners with an external service provider that focuses on data informed decision-making and meets ESSA evidence requirements (not on the pre-approved list)
  - Following the guidance in this memo, the school application included clear and strong evidence that effectively demonstrates this program intervention meets the ESSA evidence level of Moderate.
- A senior level district leader and school improvement and Title I coordinator attended the Vendor Showcase in Reno or Las Vegas (March 14-15).
- Voluntarily agrees to a performance compact

Description	Points Possible	Points Earned	Running Total
Summary of School Needs and Root Causes **EXCEEDS STANDARD**	10	10	10
Paired with state-approved School Improvement Partner **NO**	15	0	0
Alignment with one or both priorities: ☐ School Leadership Development **ALIGNS TO ONE AND HAS A ROBUST PLAN** ☐ Data Driven Decision-Making	20	16	26
Commitment to school improvement and measurable, timely, and attainable goals **EXCEEDS STANDARDS (STRONG COMMITMENT AND GOOD EXPLANATION OF GOALS)**	10	8	34
Evidence-based interventions that meet the ESSA evidence requirements **STRONGLY ALIGNED**	15	15	49
Expected outcomes for students **MEETS STANDARD (REASONABLE OUTCOMES, WITH METRICS AND BENCHMARKS)**	5	3	52
Ongoing assessment of progress **EXCEEDS STANDARDS (EXCELLENT AND THOROUGH)**	5	5	57
Capacity and sustaining continuous improvement **EXCEEDS STANDARDS (STRONG NARRATIVE AROUND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP CAPACITY AND STRONG PLAN TO SUSTAIN CONTINOUS IMPROVEMENT, BUT NOT EXCELLENT)**	10	8	65
LEA support for implementation, ongoing monitoring, and evaluation of intervention effectiveness **EXCEEDS STANDARD**	5	5	70
Strategic use of funding sources to support school goals and improve student outcomes **EXCEEDS STANDARD**	5	5	75
Budget Summary and Budget Narrative (ePAGE)	*	*	*
Certification, Assurances, SPP, and SPP addendum (ePAGE)	*	*	*

*Required, but not scored.

BONUS POINTS

Description	Points Possible	Points Earned	Running Total
NDE Vendor Showcase participation (2 points each) ☐ Site level leadership member(s) ☐ LEA / Senior Leadership ☐ Title I and/or School Improvement staff ☐ Grants Department staff ☐ Charter School Board Members	10	4	79
Consortium Participation (8 pts.) ☐ Rural ☐ Charter	8	0	79
Rising Star Voluntary Performance Compact (8 pts.)	8	8	87

Scenario 4:

- School hiring a data coach to work with teacher teams in analysis of grade-level data (this is a school-led intervention or strategy, specifically "coaching")
  - Following the guidance in this memo, the school application included clear and strong evidence that effectively meets the requirements under Step 1 and 2 in the "District- and School-led Strategies, Interventions, and Activities" section
- A senior level district leader, school improvement and/or Title I coordinator, grants staff member, and school leader attended the Vendor Showcase in Reno or Las Vegas (March 14-15)

Description	Points Possible	Points Earned	Running Total
Summary of School Needs and Root Causes **EXCEEDS STANDARD (STRONG, BUT NOT EXCELLENT)**	10	8	8
Paired with state-approved School Improvement Partner **NO**	15	0	8
Alignment with one or both priorities: ☐ School Leadership Development ☐ Data Driven Decision-Making **ALIGNS TO ONE AND HAS A ROBUST PLAN**	20	16	24
Commitment to school improvement and measurable, timely, and attainable goals **EXCEEDS STANDARDS (STRONG COMMITMENT AND GOOD EXPLANATION OF GOALS)**	10	8	32
Evidence-based interventions that meet the ESSA evidence requirements **ADEQUATELY ALIGNED**	15	10	42
Expected outcomes for students **EXCEEDS STANDARD (AMBITIOUS OUTCOMES, WITH METRICS AND BENCHMARKS)**	5	5	47
Ongoing assessment of progress **EXCEEDS STANDARDS (EXCELLENT AND THOROUGH)**	5	5	52
Capacity and sustaining continuous improvement **EXCEEDS STANDARDS (EXCELLENT SCHOOL LEADERSHIP CAPACITY AND EXCELLENT PLAN TO SUSTAIN CONTINOUS IMPROVEMENT)**	10	10	62
LEA support for implementation, ongoing monitoring, and evaluation of intervention effectiveness **EXCEEDS STANDARD**	5	5	67
Strategic use of funding sources to support school goals and improve student outcomes **EXCEEDS STANDARD**	5	5	72
Budget Summary and Budget Narrative (ePAGE)	*	*	*
Certification, Assurances, SPP, and SPP addendum (ePAGE)	*	*	*

*Required, but not scored.

BONUS POINTS

Description	Points Possible	Points Earned	Running Total
NDE Vendor Showcase participation (2 points each) ☐ Site level leadership member(s) ☐ LEA / Senior Leadership ☐ Title I and/or School Improvement staff ☐ Grants Department staff ☐ Charter School Board Members	10	8	80
Consortium Participation (8 pts.) ☐ Rural ☐ Charter	8	0	80
Rising Star Voluntary Performance Compact (8 pts.)	8	0	80

Scenario 5:

- School adopting a new math intervention program
  - Following the guidance in this memo, the school application included clear and strong evidence that effectively meets the requirements under Step 1 and 2 in the "District- and School-led Strategies, Interventions, and Activities" section.
  - While intervention programs can be connected to data driven decision-making strategies, or even school leadership development, this school does not use data informed decision-making as a key strategy to drive student outcomes. As such, the school application does not align with either state priority.
- A senior level district leader, grants staff member, and school leader attended the Vendor Showcase in Reno or Las Vegas (March 14-15)

Description	Points Possible	Points Earned	Running Total
Summary of School Needs and Root Causes **EXCEEDS STANDARD**	10	10	10
Paired with state-approved School Improvement Partner **NO**	15	0	10
Alignment with one or both priorities: ☐ School Leadership Development ☐ Data Driven Decision-Making **DOES NOT ALIGN**	20	0	10
Commitment to school improvement and measurable, timely, and attainable goals **EXCEEDS STANDARDS (STRONG COMMITMENT AND STRONG EXPLANATION OF RIGOROUS, MEASURABLE, TIMELY, AND ATTAINABLE GOALS)**	10	10	20
Evidence-based interventions that meet the ESSA evidence requirements **ADEQUATELY ALIGNED**	15	10	30
Expected outcomes for students **EXCEEDS STANDARD (AMBITIOUS OUTCOMES, WITH METRICS AND BENCHMARKS)**	5	5	35
Ongoing assessment of progress **EXCEEDS STANDARDS (EXCELLENT AND THOROUGH)**	5	5	40
Capacity and sustaining continuous improvement **EXCEEDS STANDARDS (EXCELLENT SCHOOL LEADERSHIP CAPACITY AND EXCELLENT PLAN TO SUSTAIN CONTINOUS IMPROVEMENT)**	10	10	50
LEA support for implementation, ongoing monitoring, and evaluation of intervention effectiveness **EXCEEDS STANDARD**	5	5	55
Strategic use of funding sources to support school goals and improve student outcomes **EXCEEDS STANDARD**	5	5	60
Budget Summary and Budget Narrative (ePAGE)	*	*	*
Certification, Assurances, SPP, and SPP addendum (ePAGE)	*	*	*

*Required, but not scored.

BONUS POINTS

Description	Points Possible	Points Earned	Running Total
NDE Vendor Showcase participation (2 points each) ☑ Site level leadership member(s) ☑ LEA / Senior Leadership ☐ Title I and/or School Improvement staff ☑ Grants Department staff ☐ Charter School Board Members	10	6	66
Consortium Participation (8 pts.) ☐ Rural ☐ Charter	8	0	66
Rising Star Voluntary Performance Compact (8 pts.)	8	0	66

For Scenarios #1-5 briefly described in the memorandum and in the appendix above, the Department of Education cross-functional team reviewing 1003(a) applications will review and fund applications in the following order.

Funding Priority	Scenario	Description
Funding Priority 1	1 & 2	These will be given first priority for review and funding.
Funding Priority 2	3 & 4	These will be reviewed and considered for funding after all Priority 1 applications have been reviewed and awarded funds, pending available funding.
Funding Priority 3	5	These will be considered for funding after Priority 1 and 2 applications are reviewed, pending available funding.

Appendix D

Please reach out to any of the following NDE OSSS team members for more information about the 1003(a) application process.

Technical Assistance on 1003(a)

Name	Email Address	Phone Number
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ePAGE Assistance on 1003(a)

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Vendor Showcase

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Rural District Consortium and Charter Consortium

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