

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**Washington, D.C. 20202-5335**

**APPLICATION FOR GRANTS**  
**UNDER THE**

**Education Stabilization Fund-Rethink K-12 Education Models (ESF-REM)**

**CFDA # 84.425B**

**PR/Award # S425B200032**

**Grants.gov Tracking#: GRANT13154514**

OMB No. , Expiration Date:

Closing Date: Jun 29, 2020

PR/Award # S425B200032

## **\*\*Table of Contents\*\***

<b>Form</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>1. Application for Federal Assistance SF-424</b>	e3
<b>2. Standard Budget Sheet (ED 524)</b>	e6
<b>3. Disclosure Of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL)</b>	e8
<b>4. ED GEPA427 Form</b>	e9
<i>Attachment - 1 (1241-GEPA 427)</i>	e10
<b>5. Grants.gov Lobbying Form</b>	e11
<b>6. Dept of Education Supplemental Information for SF-424</b>	e12
<b>7. ED Abstract Narrative Form</b>	e13
<i>Attachment - 1 (1234-Abstract)</i>	e14
<b>8. Project Narrative Form</b>	e15
<i>Attachment - 1 (1239-Project Narrative - ALSDE Microgrants)</i>	e16
<b>9. Other Narrative Form</b>	e38
<i>Attachment - 1 (1235-Governor's letter of support)</i>	e39
<i>Attachment - 2 (1236-Appendix 2 - Job Description)</i>	e40
<i>Attachment - 3 (1237-Appendix 3 - IDC Rate Agreement_Signed)</i>	e42
<i>Attachment - 4 (1238-Appendix 5 - Assurance that Applicant will participate in an evaluation)</i>	e46
<b>10. Budget Narrative Form</b>	e47
<i>Attachment - 1 (1240-Budget Narrative)</i>	e48

This application was generated using the PDF functionality. The PDF functionality automatically numbers the pages in this application. Some pages/sections of this application may contain 2 sets of page numbers, one set created by the applicant and the other set created by e-Application's PDF functionality. Page numbers created by the e-Application PDF functionality will be preceded by the letter e (for example, e1, e2, e3, etc.).

**Application for Federal Assistance SF-424**

* 1. Type of Submission: <input type="checkbox"/> Preapplication <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Application <input type="checkbox"/> Changed/Corrected Application	* 2. Type of Application: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Continuation <input type="checkbox"/> Revision	* If Revision, select appropriate letter(s): <input type="text"/> * Other (Specify): <input type="text"/>
--	--	--

* 3. Date Received: <input type="text" value="06/29/2020"/>	4. Applicant Identifier: <input type="text"/>
--	--

5a. Federal Entity Identifier: <input type="text"/>	5b. Federal Award Identifier: <input type="text"/>
--	---

**State Use Only:**

6. Date Received by State: <input type="text"/>	7. State Application Identifier: <input type="text"/>
---	---

**8. APPLICANT INFORMATION:**

* a. Legal Name: <input type="text" value="Alabama State Department of Education"/>	
* b. Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN): <input type="text" value="██████████-██████████"/>	* c. Organizational DUNS: <input type="text" value="██████████"/>

**d. Address:**

* Street1:	<input type="text" value="P. O. Box 302101"/>
Street2:	<input type="text" value="50 North Union Street"/>
* City:	<input type="text" value="Montgomery"/>
County/Parish:	<input type="text" value="Choose State..."/>
* State:	<input type="text" value="AL: Alabama"/>
Province:	<input type="text"/>
* Country:	<input type="text" value="USA: UNITED STATES"/>
* Zip / Postal Code:	<input type="text" value="36130-2101"/>

**e. Organizational Unit:**

Department Name: <input type="text"/>	Division Name: <input type="text"/>
--	--

**f. Name and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving this application:**

Prefix: <input type="text" value="Dr."/>	* First Name: <input type="text" value="Susan"/>
Middle Name: <input type="text"/>	
* Last Name: <input type="text" value="McKim"/>	
Suffix: <input type="text"/>	

Title: <input type="text" value="Innovation Zone Coordinator"/>
---

Organizational Affiliation: <input type="text" value="Alabama State Department of Education"/>
---

* Telephone Number: <input type="text" value="██████████"/>	Fax Number: <input type="text"/>
---	----------------------------------

* Email: <input type="text" value="██████████"/>
--

**Application for Federal Assistance SF-424**

**\* 9. Type of Applicant 1: Select Applicant Type:**

A: State Government

Type of Applicant 2: Select Applicant Type:

Type of Applicant 3: Select Applicant Type:

\* Other (specify):

**\* 10. Name of Federal Agency:**

Department of Education

**11. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:**

84.425

CFDA Title:

Education Stabilization Fund

**\* 12. Funding Opportunity Number:**

ED-GRANTS-050120-001

\* Title:

Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE): Education Stabilization Fund-Rethink K-12 Education Models (ESF-REM) Discretionary Grant Program CFDA Number 84.425B

**13. Competition Identification Number:**

84-425B2020-1

Title:

Education Stabilization Fund-Rethink K-12 Education Models (ESF-REM) Discretionary Grant Program

**14. Areas Affected by Project (Cities, Counties, States, etc.):**

Add Attachment

Delete Attachment

View Attachment

**\* 15. Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project:**

ALSDE Virtual School and Digital Content Microgrants Program

Attach supporting documents as specified in agency instructions.

Add Attachments

Delete Attachments

View Attachments

**Application for Federal Assistance SF-424**

**16. Congressional Districts Of:**

\* a. Applicant

\* b. Program/Project

Attach an additional list of Program/Project Congressional Districts if needed.

Add Attachment

Delete Attachment

View Attachment

**17. Proposed Project:**

\* a. Start Date:

\* b. End Date:

**18. Estimated Funding (\$):**

\* a. Federal

\* b. Applicant

\* c. State

\* d. Local

\* e. Other

\* f. Program Income

\* g. TOTAL



**\* 19. Is Application Subject to Review By State Under Executive Order 12372 Process?**

a. This application was made available to the State under the Executive Order 12372 Process for review on

b. Program is subject to E.O. 12372 but has not been selected by the State for review.

c. Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.

**\* 20. Is the Applicant Delinquent On Any Federal Debt? (If "Yes," provide explanation in attachment.)**

Yes  No

If "Yes", provide explanation and attach

Add Attachment

Delete Attachment

View Attachment

**21. \*By signing this application, I certify (1) to the statements contained in the list of certifications\*\* and (2) that the statements herein are true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I also provide the required assurances\*\* and agree to comply with any resulting terms if I accept an award. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. (U.S. Code, Title 218, Section 1001)**

\*\* I AGREE

\*\* The list of certifications and assurances, or an internet site where you may obtain this list, is contained in the announcement or agency specific instructions.

**Authorized Representative:**

Prefix:

\* First Name:

Middle Name:

\* Last Name:

Suffix:

\* Title:

\* Telephone Number:

Fax Number:

\* Email:

\* Signature of Authorized Representative:

\* Date Signed:

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
BUDGET INFORMATION  
NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS**

OMB Number: 1894-0008  
Expiration Date: 08/31/2020

Name of Institution/Organization

Alabama State Department of Education

Applicants requesting funding for only one year should complete the column under "Project Year 1." Applicants requesting funding for multi-year grants should complete all applicable columns. Please read all instructions before completing form.

**SECTION A - BUDGET SUMMARY  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FUNDS**

Budget Categories	Project Year 1 (a)	Project Year 2 (b)	Project Year 3 (c)	Project Year 4 (d)	Project Year 5 (e)	Total (f)
1. Personnel						
2. Fringe Benefits						
3. Travel	0.00	0.00	0.00			0.00
4. Equipment	0.00	0.00	0.00			0.00
5. Supplies	0.00	0.00	0.00			0.00
6. Contractual	1,750,000.00	250,000.00	250,000.00			2,250,000.00
7. Construction	0.00	0.00	0.00			0.00
8. Other	4,000,000.00	4,000,000.00	4,000,000.00			12,000,000.00
9. Total Direct Costs (lines 1-8)						
10. Indirect Costs*						
11. Training Stipends	0.00	0.00	0.00			0.00
12. Total Costs (lines 9-11)						

**\*Indirect Cost Information (To Be Completed by Your Business Office):**

If you are requesting reimbursement for indirect costs on line 10, please answer the following questions:

(1) Do you have an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement approved by the Federal government?  Yes  No

(2) If yes, please provide the following information:

Period Covered by the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement: From:  To:  (mm/dd/yyyy)

Approving Federal agency:  ED  Other (please specify):

The Indirect Cost Rate is  %.

(3) If this is your first Federal grant, and you do not have an approved indirect cost rate agreement, are not a State, Local government or Indian Tribe, and are not funded under a training rate program or a restricted rate program, do you want to use the de minimis rate of 10% of MTDC?  Yes  No If yes, you must comply with the requirements of 2 CFR § 200.414(f).

(4) If you do not have an approved indirect cost rate agreement, do you want to use the temporary rate of 10% of budgeted salaries and wages?  
 Yes  No If yes, you must submit a proposed indirect cost rate agreement within 90 days after the date your grant is awarded, as required by 34 CFR § 75.560.

(5) For Restricted Rate Programs (check one) -- Are you using a restricted indirect cost rate that:

Is included in your approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement? Or,  Complies with 34 CFR 76.564(c)(2)? The Restricted Indirect Cost Rate is  %.  
PR/Award # S425B200032

Name of Institution/Organization Alabama State Department of Education	Applicants requesting funding for only one year should complete the column under "Project Year 1." Applicants requesting funding for multi-year grants should complete all applicable columns. Please read all instructions before completing form.	
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**SECTION B - BUDGET SUMMARY  
NON-FEDERAL FUNDS**

Budget Categories	Project Year 1 (a)	Project Year 2 (b)	Project Year 3 (c)	Project Year 4 (d)	Project Year 5 (e)	Total (f)
1. Personnel	100,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00			300,000.00
2. Fringe Benefits	30,000.00	30,000.00	30,000.00			90,000.00
3. Travel	0.00	0.00	0.00			0.00
4. Equipment	0.00	0.00	0.00			0.00
5. Supplies	0.00	0.00	0.00			0.00
6. Contractual	1,750,000.00	250,000.00	250,000.00			2,250,000.00
7. Construction	0.00	0.00	0.00			0.00
8. Other	4,000,000.00	4,000,000.00	4,000,000.00			12,000,000.00
9. Total Direct Costs (lines 1-8)	5,880,000.00	4,380,000.00	4,380,000.00			14,640,000.00
10. Indirect Costs	120,000.00	120,000.00	120,000.00			360,000.00
11. Training Stipends	0.00	0.00	0.00			0.00
12. Total Costs (lines 9-11)	6,000,000.00	4,500,000.00	4,500,000.00			15,000,000.00

**SECTION C - BUDGET NARRATIVE (see instructions)**

ED 524

# DISCLOSURE OF LOBBYING ACTIVITIES

Complete this form to disclose lobbying activities pursuant to 31 U.S.C.1352

OMB Number: 4040-0013  
Expiration Date: 02/28/2022

<b>1. * Type of Federal Action:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> a. contract <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> b. grant <input type="checkbox"/> c. cooperative agreement <input type="checkbox"/> d. loan <input type="checkbox"/> e. loan guarantee <input type="checkbox"/> f. loan insurance	<b>2. * Status of Federal Action:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> a. bid/offer/application <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> b. initial award <input type="checkbox"/> c. post-award	<b>3. * Report Type:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> a. initial filing <input type="checkbox"/> b. material change
--	--	--

**4. Name and Address of Reporting Entity:**

Prime     SubAwardee

\* Name: Alabama State Department of Education

\* Street 1: PO BOX 302101    \* Street 2: 50 North Union Street

\* City: Montgomery    \* State: AL: Alabama    \* Zip: 36130

Congressional District, if known: AL-002

**5. If Reporting Entity in No.4 is Subawardee, Enter Name and Address of Prime:**

<b>6. * Federal Department/Agency:</b> Department of Education	<b>7. * Federal Program Name/Description:</b> Education Stabilization Fund
	CFDA Number, if applicable: 84.425

<b>8. Federal Action Number, if known:</b> NA	<b>9. Award Amount, if known:</b> \$
--	---

**10. a. Name and Address of Lobbying Registrant:**

Prefix:    \* First Name: NA    Middle Name:    \* Last Name: NA    Suffix:    \* Street 1: NA    \* Street 2:    \* City: NA    \* State:    \* Zip:   

**b. Individual Performing Services** (including address if different from No. 10a)

Prefix:    \* First Name: NA    Middle Name:    \* Last Name: NA    Suffix:    \* Street 1: NA    \* Street 2:    \* City: NA    \* State:    \* Zip:   

**11.** Information requested through this form is authorized by title 31 U.S.C. section 1352. This disclosure of lobbying activities is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed by the tier above when the transaction was made or entered into. This disclosure is required pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1352. This information will be reported to the Congress semi-annually and will be available for public inspection. Any person who fails to file the required disclosure shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

\* Signature: [Redacted]

\* Name: Prefix:    \* First Name: sUSAN    Middle Name:    \* Last Name: McKim    Suffix:    \* Title: Innovation Zone Coordinator    \* Telephone No.: [Redacted]    \* Date: 06/29/2020

**Federal Use Only:** Authorized for Local Reproduction Standard Form - LLL (Rev. 7-97)

**NOTICE TO ALL APPLICANTS**

OMB Number: 1894-0005  
Expiration Date: 04/30/2020

The purpose of this enclosure is to inform you about a new provision in the Department of Education's General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) that applies to applicants for new grant awards under Department programs. This provision is Section 427 of GEPA, enacted as part of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Public Law (P.L.) 103-382).

**To Whom Does This Provision Apply?**

Section 427 of GEPA affects applicants for new grant awards under this program. **ALL APPLICANTS FOR NEW AWARDS MUST INCLUDE INFORMATION IN THEIR APPLICATIONS TO ADDRESS THIS NEW PROVISION IN ORDER TO RECEIVE FUNDING UNDER THIS PROGRAM.**

(If this program is a State-formula grant program, a State needs to provide this description only for projects or activities that it carries out with funds reserved for State-level uses. In addition, local school districts or other eligible applicants that apply to the State for funding need to provide this description in their applications to the State for funding. The State would be responsible for ensuring that the school district or other local entity has submitted a sufficient section 427 statement as described below.)

**What Does This Provision Require?**

Section 427 requires each applicant for funds (other than an individual person) to include in its application a description of the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally-assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. This provision allows applicants discretion in developing the required description. The statute highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age. Based on local circumstances, you should determine whether these or other barriers may prevent your students, teachers, etc. from such access or participation in, the Federally-funded project or activity. The description in your application of steps to be taken to overcome these barriers need not be lengthy; you may provide a clear and succinct description of how you plan to address those barriers that are applicable to your circumstances. In addition, the information may be provided in a single narrative, or, if appropriate, may

be discussed in connection with related topics in the application.

Section 427 is not intended to duplicate the requirements of civil rights statutes, but rather to ensure that, in designing their projects, applicants for Federal funds address equity concerns that may affect the ability of certain potential beneficiaries to fully participate in the project and to achieve to high standards. Consistent with program requirements and its approved application, an applicant may use the Federal funds awarded to it to eliminate barriers it identifies.

**What are Examples of How an Applicant Might Satisfy the Requirement of This Provision?**

The following examples may help illustrate how an applicant may comply with Section 427.

- (1) An applicant that proposes to carry out an adult literacy project serving, among others, adults with limited English proficiency, might describe in its application how it intends to distribute a brochure about the proposed project to such potential participants in their native language.
- (2) An applicant that proposes to develop instructional materials for classroom use might describe how it will make the materials available on audio tape or in braille for students who are blind.
- (3) An applicant that proposes to carry out a model science program for secondary students and is concerned that girls may be less likely than boys to enroll in the course, might indicate how it intends to conduct "outreach" efforts to girls, to encourage their enrollment.
- (4) An applicant that proposes a project to increase school safety might describe the special efforts it will take to address concern of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students, and efforts to reach out to and involve the families of LGBT students.

We recognize that many applicants may already be implementing effective steps to ensure equity of access and participation in their grant programs, and we appreciate your cooperation in responding to the requirements of this provision.

**Estimated Burden Statement for GEPA Requirements**

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1.5 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefit (Public Law 103-382). Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20210-4537 or email [redacted] and reference the OMB Control Number 1894-0005.

**Optional - You may attach 1 file to this page.**

1241-GEPA 427.pdf	Add Attachment	Delete Attachment	View Attachment
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## GEPA 427 Requirement

The ALSDE acknowledges that there are six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation in any study: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age. Because the proposed project will prioritize applicants based on poverty level and need for special education services, steps are already being taken to ensure that equitable access is available for all since poverty and disability cross all barrier categories.

**Barrier:** English language learners are at a disadvantage in accessing computer science activities.

**Solution:** All students, including English language learners, will be included selection of microgrants. Federal funds will be utilized and Alabama Reading Initiative specialists will provide additional instruction and assistance as needed to ensure that all English language learners have equal access to benefit from the program.

## CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

### Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

### Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

<b>* APPLICANT'S ORGANIZATION</b>	
Alabama State Department of Education	
<b>* PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE</b>	
Prefix: Dr.	* First Name: Susan Middle Name:
* Last Name: McKim	Suffix:
* Title: Innovation Zone Coordinator	
<b>* SIGNATURE:</b> Susan McKim	<b>* DATE:</b> 06/29/2020

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION  
FOR THE SF-424**

**1. Project Director:**

Prefix: Dr.	First Name: Susan	Middle Name:	Last Name: McKim	Suffix:
----------------	----------------------	--------------	---------------------	---------

Address:

Street1:	PO BOX 302101
Street2:	50 North Union Street
City:	Montgomery
County:	Choose State...
State:	AL: Alabama
Zip Code:	36130-2101
Country:	USA: UNITED STATES

Phone Number (give area code)	Fax Number (give area code)
	

Email Address:



**2. Novice Applicant:**

Are you a novice applicant as defined in the regulations in 34 CFR 75.225 (and included in the definitions page in the attached instructions)?

- Yes  No  Not applicable to this program

**3. Human Subjects Research:**

a. Are any research activities involving human subjects planned at any time during the proposed Project Period?

- Yes  No

b. Are ALL the research activities proposed designated to be exempt from the regulations?

- Yes Provide Exemption(s) #:  1  2  3  4  5  6

No Provide Assurance #, if available:

c. If applicable, please attach your "Exempt Research" or "Nonexempt Research" narrative to this form as indicated in the definitions page in the attached instructions.

	Add Attachment	Delete Attachment	View Attachment
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## Abstract

The abstract narrative must not exceed one page and should use language that will be understood by a range of audiences. For all projects, include the project title (if applicable), goals, expected outcomes and contributions for research, policy, practice, etc. Include population to be served, as appropriate. For research applications, also include the following:

- Theoretical and conceptual background of the study (i.e., prior research that this investigation builds upon and that provides a compelling rationale for this study)
- Research issues, hypotheses and questions being addressed
- Study design including a brief description of the sample including sample size, methods, principals dependent, independent, and control variables, and the approach to data analysis.

[Note: For a non-electronic submission, include the name and address of your organization and the name, phone number and e-mail address of the contact person for this project.]

---

## You may now Close the Form

**You have attached 1 file to this page, no more files may be added. To add a different file, you must first delete the existing file.**

\* Attachment:

## **ABSTRACT**

School closures across Alabama have impacted over 820,000 public and private school students as a result of the devastating effects of COVID-19. To mitigate any negative impact of school closures on academic performance and student outcomes, the Alabama State Department of Education will provide a comprehensive statewide K-12 virtual school for the students in Alabama as an option for students not returning to the traditional classroom or in a blended model as outlined in the ALSDE Roadmap to Successful Reopening for 2020-2021.

The ALSDE understands that not all students have access to required resources to fully implement remote learning and proposes to provide microgrants to parents, as needed, internet access and hotspots, access to dual enrollment, access to remote learning options, and services for students requiring special services like speech and occupational therapy or tutoring with a priority given to the most disadvantaged students and students attending failing schools. The ALSDE Statewide Virtual School and Digital Content Microgrant Program will include a custom software solution to accept microgrant applications, parental feedback, and maintain account information.

## Project Narrative File(s)

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\* **Mandatory Project Narrative File Filename:**

[Add Mandatory Project Narrative File](#)

[Delete Mandatory Project Narrative File](#)

[View Mandatory Project Narrative File](#)

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To add more Project Narrative File attachments, please use the attachment buttons below.

[Add Optional Project Narrative File](#)

[Delete Optional Project Narrative File](#)

[View Optional Project Narrative File](#)

## REQUIREMENTS and TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	2
SELECTION CRITERIA	2
A. State’s Coronavirus Burden	3
B. Quality Of Project Services And Project Plan	4
C. Quality Of The Management Plan And Adequacy Of Resources	8
APPROACH TO ABSOLUTE PRIORITY ONE	13
STATE NEEDS ASSESSMENT	15
STATE ASSETS AND COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS	17
State’s Response To Immediate Needs	17
Barriers To Immediate Needs Response	17
REQUIRED PERFORMANCE MEASURES	18
DATA ASSURANCES	22
GOVERNOR’S LETTER OF SUPPORT	22

## ABSTRACT

School closures across Alabama have impacted over 820,000 public and private school students as a result of the devastating effects of COVID-19. To mitigate any negative impact of school closures on academic performance and student outcomes, the Alabama State Department of Education will provide a comprehensive statewide K-12 virtual school for the students in Alabama as an option for students not returning to the traditional classroom or in a blended model as outlined in the ALSDE Roadmap to Successful Reopening for 2020-2021.

The ALSDE understands that not all students have access to required resources to fully implement remote learning and proposes to provide microgrants to parents, as needed, internet access and hotspots, access to dual enrollment, access to remote learning options, and services for students requiring special services like speech and occupational therapy or tutoring with a priority given to the most disadvantaged students and students attending failing schools. The ALSDE Statewide Virtual School and Digital Content Microgrant Program will include a custom software solution to accept microgrant applications, parental feedback, and maintain account information.

## SELECTION CRITERIA

### A. STATE'S CORONAVIRUS BURDEN

Alabama presents a high coronavirus burden of 81<sup>st</sup> to 100<sup>th</sup> percentile based on four equally weighted factors. As demonstrated in the 2010 U.S. Census Data, Alabama is considered an urban state with 59 percent of the population living in urban settings and 41 percent living in a rural area. The U.S. Census Bureau determined that cities with 2,500 or more residents are considered urban even though 95.64 percent of the land area in Alabama considered rural. The data suggests that 34.07 percent of students in Alabama are attending schools in Rural Local Educational Agencies (LEAs).

This data does not fully represent that 16.5 percent of the population is without access to broadband services. Alabama Broadband Accessibility Fund addresses the need to establish service in unserved areas of the state, which will improve access to the Statewide Virtual School for students living in rural areas.

Alabama is a high poverty state with a rate of 16.9 percent, more than three points higher than the national average of 13.4 percent. Data also reveals that 22.37 percent of students ages 5-17 are living in poverty representing the 5<sup>th</sup> highest level of poverty for students in the nation.

As of the date of the COVID-19 Cases Per Capita report displayed on the coronavirus burden by State on April 25, 2020, Alabama's confirmed cases per capita was 1.05. However, as of the date of this submission, the number of confirmed cases in Alabama has risen exponentially with over 31,000 cases labeling Alabama as the nation's second highest per capita between June 8- June 14 as reported by the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH). ADPH also confirmed nearly 900 deaths to date in the state.

Alabama is currently under an amended Safer at Home Order until July 3, 2020 with limitations for Phase 3 of the reopening plan including limitations for school sponsored activities. The Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE), in consultation Alabama Department of Public Health established guidelines for LEAs to ensure the health and safety of their students and staff. The plans for the reopening will continue to evolve in response to the current coronavirus situation.

## B. QUALITY OF PROJECT SERVICES AND PROJECT PLAN

### PROJECT SERVICES

The ALSDE Virtual School and Digital Content Microgrants Program will expand access to educational services with a priority to serve disadvantaged students in Alabama to include students requiring services in special needs, students living in high poverty, and students in the Black Belt region of Alabama. The project services included in ALSDE Virtual School and Digital Content Microgrants Program will provide internet access or hotspots, online or other special education services, and dual enrollment opportunities to students that have little or no access due to location, income level, or individuals or families disproportionately vulnerable to COVID-19.

ALSDE Virtual School and Digital Content Microgrants Program's overarching goals are to mitigate the negative impacts of the coronavirus on the academic success of students in Alabama with an emphasis on traditionally underrepresented students. This goal will be supported through three major objectives and corresponding action items that will provide educational opportunities offered to students through microgrants to parents for services necessary to promote the remote learning objectives. Funding for this project will ensure more

students in Alabama will continue to achieve target educational goals in despite the continued threat of COVID-19.

**Objective 1: Increase equitable remote learning opportunities**

The ALSDE Virtual School and Digital Content Microgrants Program will target disadvantaged students to include those enrolled in public, private and homeschool, students enrolled in failing schools, students with special needs, and students living in high poverty in Alabama. Over sixteen percent of the population in Alabama are without broadband access and over twenty-two percent of students in K-12 live in poverty. Many of these students live in rural Alabama where internet access, broadband or cellular data is scarce with a disproportionate number living in the Black Belt. Funding from this grant will enable the ALSDE Virtual School and Digital Content Microgrants Program to provide pivotal internet access or hotspots to approximately 2,000 K-12 student households each year of the program, moving the status bar of internet as a luxury to internet as an everyday necessity in the disadvantaged pockets in Alabama.

**Objective 2: Ensure continuity of instruction and services to special needs students**

Special services will be provided with live, online special education related services including speech-language therapy, occupational therapy, behavioral interventions and mental health services, assessments, and early childhood services through a teletherapy platform. Although special need services remain the responsibility of the LEA, the option to parents will expand the LEA, private school, and homeschooler capacity to serve all students with IEPs or behavioral and mental health needs.

**Objective 3: Encourage advanced learning during the coronavirus crisis through dual enrollment opportunities**

The ALSDE Virtual School and Digital Content Microgrants Program will promote dual enrollment opportunities with a priority for disadvantaged students and students in failing schools. Dual enrollment classes in Alabama universities, colleges, and community colleges will prepare students for their first year in post-secondary education. A study by Community College Research Center at Columbia University's Teachers College and the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center (September 2017) states, “88 percent of dual-enrollment students who took community college courses in high school continued in college after high school, and most achieved a degree or transferred within six years,” giving students a jump start on their college career or workforce certification.

## PROJECT PLAN

The ALSDE Virtual School and Digital Content Microgrants Program will reside in the Office of Evaluation, Accountability and Support (OEAS), a division of the Alabama State Department of Education. Its purpose is to ensure accountability in all statewide programs, charter and virtual schools, education technology, compliance monitoring, and assessment. At the same time, the division supports the work of LEAs and systems through the prevention and support section of the division. The division is also responsible for analyzing the data that results in the production of annual report cards for each LEA and school system. The OEAS will hire a Project Director to oversee the project implementation, coordinate with software and project management contractors, and serve as the primary contact for all Federal reporting requirements of Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE). The Project Director will be tasked with outreach to promote the project to LEAs, private schools and homeschooling associations ensuring the target population receives notification of the available opportunity.

This outreach will include the development of outreach training for school counselors and social workers. The Project Director will manage service provider negotiations and make final determination for adding new service providers. Additionally, the Project Director serves as the point of contact for escalation issues not resolved by the project management team.

#### APPLICATION AND ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT

ALSDE Virtual School and Digital Content Microgrants Program is initiated through an application process. Applicants can apply for the microgrant through an online portal or a traditional paper application. Eligibility will be determined using the same household income information as is required for the National School Lunch Program, questions regarding other resources available the household, and current school enrollment. Applications, both paper and online, will include a list of available services and service providers, tools to help parents select the most appropriate service, and an option for parents to request service providers not listed.

The OEAS division will select secure cloud hosted Software as a Service (SaaS) provider from responses to a request for proposals which will be submitted upon award. The SaaS solution will support the administration and management of the ALSDE Virtual School and Digital Content Microgrants Program. Although paper microgrant applications will be available to applicants throughout the program, microgrant applicants will have the ability to securely apply online. The online experience for parents will offer the ability to link multiple students in the household and provide visibility to the microgrant account. Parents will have the ability to provide feedback, make requests, and ask questions. Multilingual options will be available to support the needs of parent when English is their second language.

The SaaS provider will create real time access to program management data, applications, reports, and financials for ALSDE. The estimated time for custom portal design, setup and launch including training for administrators is projected at 30 days from the contract start date.

Project management services will be acquired through an RFP announcement. The firm receiving the contract will commit to work closely with the SaaS provider to ensure a seamless experience for parents and maintain strict compliance with the requirements of the grant terms and conditions. Project management will include managing the voucher system for microgrant recipients, payments made to service providers on behalf of microgrant recipients and managing the parent feedback channel. Additional tasks include administering parent surveys and assisting the Project Director with grant management and reporting.

## C. QUALITY OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN AND ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES

### ADEQUACY OF MANAGEMENT PLAN

The ALSDE Statewide Virtual School and Digital Content Microgrant Program is designed to ensure it will achieve its three key objectives on time and within budget supported by corresponding action items: 1) develop and deploy a custom software platform to manage family microgrants; 2) train LEA staff to help parents apply for microgrants and promote program to families; and 3) increase access to ALSDE's Virtual School and related Digital Content resources via microgrants that cover costs for the highest need Alabama students.

The ALSDE will hire a dedicated Project Director to oversee this program, who will be responsible for managing vendors, ensuring the effective implementation of the microgrant program, and for federal compliance and reporting requirements. The ALSDE will

procure a software vendor to develop a custom platform to process microgrant applications and manage accounts. The Project Director will be supported by a project management firm that will be largely responsible for day to day activities. The project management firm will be procured using a competitive RFP process and will have the following responsibilities. The firm will work with the software vendor to manage the portal for parent applications, online account information, and a feedback portal. The management firm will manage the parent applications entered directly online, while collecting and entering paper applications manually. They will manage the voucher system and online accounts, including working with vendors on behalf of parents who request services that can include: internet access or cell phone companies, special education programs, and dual enrollment from AL universities and colleges. Importantly, the platform will include collecting feedback from families that will be used to make continuous improvements, such as tweaks to the software to make it more user-friendly or adding additional vendor options to ensure maximum accessibility for families. The project management firm will be responsible for responding to all parent special requests or concerns within 30 days of receipt. And lastly, the firm will work with the Project Director to collect all required data and complete reports as required by the U.S. Department of Education.

Our timeline demonstrates how we will achieve these objectives over the grant period.

## TIMELINE

Activity	Responsible Party	Timeline
Select software solution for microgrant platform; select project management provider; hire Project Director	ALSDE Office of Student Learning	August 2020

Microgrant platform developed. <i>MILESTONE: deploy software for families</i>	Project Director working with software company	September 2020
Train school staff, including Counselors and Social Workers, to help apply for microgrants and manage accounts. <i>MILESTONE: staff prepared to help families apply for microgrants and manage accounts</i>	Project Director, software company, and project management provider	September 2020 and ongoing
Promote program to LEAs, private schools, and homeschool associations	Project management company	September 2020 and ongoing
Accept applications for microgrants, with priority given to students with special needs, eligible for National School Lunch program (high poverty), or who are enrolled in failing schools.	Project Director, project management company, supported by school staff who directly assist families with applying	Applications open Sept of each year and continue until funds are expended
Begin services for students, including access to internet hotspots, dual enrollment, special education services like speech and occupational therapy, tutoring, and access to ALSDE Virtual School. <i>MILESTONE: AL students have greater access to remote learning resources critical for their academic achievement and growth.</i>	Project Director, project management company, supported by school staff who directly assist families with managing accounts and accessing services	October of each year; services begin as soon as application is approved and funding is available

Collect feedback from parents about user experience with platform and quality of services; use feedback to implement continuous improvements to project.	Project management company	Collected continually; compiled and analyzed in spring of each year
Collect performance data from LEAs, private schools, and homeschool students.	Project Director, project management company	Spring of each year
Annual evaluation and complete required reports to ED	Project Director, project management company	Summer of each year

**USE OF FUNDS WILL ADEQUATELY SUPPORT THE PROPOSED PROJECT**

The ALSDE has budgeted funds to support the project sufficiently, with a focus on maximizing the amount going directly to public and non-public school students via microgrants. In accordance with the requirements for Absolute Priority 1, a full 80% of grant funds (\$12 million) will be dedicated to microgrants. In year 1, \$1.5 million will be used to develop and deploy the software platform for microgrant applications and accounts, which is reasonable and necessary given it is a brand-new custom solution for the ALSDE. Funds for the Project Director and project management company who will oversee and implement all project activities comprise 7.6% of funds, while we have greatly minimized indirect costs at only a 2.4% rate.

**COST EFFECTIVNESS RELATED TO PROJECT OBJECTIVES**

The ALSDE Statewide Virtual School and Digital Content Microgrant Program is requesting \$15 million for the three-year project, a cost that is necessary and reasonable to ensure ongoing instruction for our highest need students. Considering the devastating impact of the

ongoing COVID-19 pandemic that requires our public and non-public schools to rethink how instruction is delivered in order to accommodate public health guidelines for social distancing, this investment by the U.S. Department of Education is very reasonable. Over 820,000 AL students have been impacted, and the ALSDE's microgrants will support those with the greatest needs – students with special needs, who are high poverty, or who attend failing schools – to access high-quality remote learning resources including ALSDE Virtual School, dual enrollment with Alabama institutions of higher education, and special education services including tutoring. With our goal of reaching 2,000 to 6,000 students over the course of the project, the potential significance of the proposed project is to ensure these highest need students are able to continue learning and achieving even in the face of a pandemic.

The project design includes developing a custom software solution for management microgrant applications and accounts; this is a large part of the costs in year 1 (\$1.5 million), which is necessary for achieving corresponding action item 1 to deploy a microgrant platform. Funds supporting project management are necessary to implement the project, including to train school partners to help families access the platform and to manage applications and accounts with vendors; as such, funds for project management costs will ensure achieving corresponding action item 2 to train staff. And most importantly, 80% of the funds will go directly toward microgrants that expand access to remote learning for the highest need students in Alabama, thus achieving corresponding action item 3.

**COST EFFECTIVNESS RELATED THE RESULTS AND BENEFITS OF NUMBER  
OF PERSONS SERVED**

The ALSDE anticipates reaching between 2,000 and 6,000 students with microgrants over the course of the project. At the upper end of this range, that amounts to \$2,500 per student. This is highly reasonable considering the wealth of benefits afforded by the project, including providing remote access to learning resources for students who currently lack internet – in Alabama, this rate is high relative to other states, at 16.5% of the population. For our students without this critical resource, remote learning is impossible and with the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, it is of utmost importance that we ensure access for our public and non-public school students. Alabama has the fourth-highest rate of students living in poverty among all 50 states, again demonstrating that our project can have outsize benefits relative to the cost considering the high need in Alabama for funding to support high quality remote learning opportunities.

#### APPROACH TO ABSOLUTE PRIORITY ONE

The ALSDE Statewide Virtual School and Digital Content Microgrant Program proposes to provide parent microgrants to increase equitable remote learning opportunities through the selection of service providers. A comprehensive list of services providers offering services for internet access and hotspots, online special needs services, and dual enrollment options will be available in the application portal and through the paper application. Parents will suggest additional providers through the online and paper feedback tool. Tools to help parents select services will be available in the online portal and paper application. Final determination of eligible service providers will be made by ALSDE. Payments to service providers will be submitted directly from ALSDE.

All students will have access to remote learning through the ALSDE Statewide Virtual School made available to the LEAs and the ACCESS program. With grant funding, ALSDE

proposes to additional services for remote learning; dual enrollment and special education services. Parent microgrants will be provided through an application process to cover the cost of concurrent and dual enrollment in Alabama's post secondary institutions. School counselors will be available to guide students selecting courses and career pathways. Online special education and related services including therapies will be offered to students currently served under a valid IEP and under the direction the LEA where the student is currently enrolled. LEAs will remain the primary facilitator of support services per the Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) and under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

ALSDE also proposes to use grant funds to provide parent microgrants for internet access or hotspots to support remote learning.

The online application/ account information portal will allow parents to provide feedback and make requests. Feedback will be monitored by the program management team. The program management team will respond or forward to the Project Director accordingly. A written response will be provided to the parent within 30 days.

ALSDE commits to outreach efforts to ensure equitable access to the parent microgrants through the use of school counselors and social workers and communication with LEAs, private schools and homeschool associations. Online PD will be developed to train school social workers and/or counselors on the program.

Priority will be given to the most disadvantaged students and those enrolled in failing schools. Information collected in the application process will be used to make this determination. Should microgrants be available after fulfilling the needs of disadvantaged students and those enrolled in failing schools, priority of need will be determined by need based

on income. Income guidelines will come from the NSLP application. Parents must apply annually.

ALSDE commits to a minimum of 80% of grants funds to directly support parent microgrants. The microgrant program expects to provide approximately 2000 grants annually. This number can increase depending on the services selected and the number of students in one household. Microgrants are estimated to range from \$600- \$2,500 per household per year based on the number of services selected and the number of students in the household.

## STATE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

When school reopens in Alabama in August, the expectations are high for options that fit all learning needs. While many students will return to traditional school, those who are immunocompromised as well as those who are fearful of returning will need learning opportunities that take advantage of distance learning. Therefore, approaches to equitable learning in Alabama will include hybrid and fully online courses along with services and alternate opportunities such as dual enrollment. The state has also set up program opportunities for students that include ACCESS, SchoolsPLP, and the Florida Virtual School. Other services such as credit recovery and remedial coursework are also included as offerings online, services that have been growing over the past several years in school districts where teacher units are fewer than needed.

Lack of quality and cost-effective internet services and hardware have made these online efforts difficult to proliferate in high poverty areas such as the Alabama Black Belt. LEA's have been able to find creative measures to temporarily bridge the gap, but real equity and sustainability lies with equipping the learners. By providing grants to families for school

technology, the outcomes begin with continued student learning and extend well past the student into the family. Families without internet service or devices lack the information needed to take advantage of educational opportunities for their students. Technological equity is one of the most important barriers to overcome for success in today's world, and in Alabama, a looming characteristic of a disadvantage student in one that does not have easy access to technology and ultimately the information that comes from connectivity.

The grants that would be provided to families of disadvantaged students regardless of school choice would provide access to the most vulnerable. Students would have the necessary resources to continue quality learning from home while at the same time be afforded opportunities such as dual enrollment that offers focused study on career pathways. For parents of special needs students, interruption in service means two steps back for their children. Students who need remediation or credit recovery are at a special risk, as they are already behind and discouraged. As the state of Alabama seeks to reopen safely, be it in a building or in the homes of individual students, these micro-grants for households puts the choices in the hands of the learner and family, enabling them to make the best decisions possible like many of the middle and upper class families with more resources.

## STATE ASSETS AND COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS

### STATE'S RESPONSE TO IMMEDIATE NEEDS

The Alabama State Department of Education announced the Roadmap to Reopening late June, providing recommendations for schools in the state that would be reopening to students, but also provided parents the choice to select the best learning options for their students as the health and well-being of the student population takes center stage. Choices for learning options will include traditional learning as well as distance learning and a blended approach where students would be able to combine the two.

The ALSDE is in the process of putting several distance learning options for students together such as ACCESS, the state's virtual learning program. It is also investing in the programs Florida Virtual School and SchoolsPLP which will give LEAs the opportunity to offer choices to students and parents that allow for building a personalized learning experience. Furthermore, services offered through distance learning would encompass all learners from the at-risk student with remedial and credit recovery courses to accelerated students ready for dual enrollment moving forwards toward post-secondary certificates and degree programs.

### BARRIERS TO IMMEDIATE NEEDS RESPONSE

Despite the gains Alabama has made towards connectivity across the state, the remote and rural areas have been grossly overlooked. In the state, internet access is considered by much of the population as a luxury instead of a necessity of life today. Many high school students depend on the nearest McDonald's or Jack's to provide adequate internet for assignments via digital textbooks as their families lack the luxury of internet service, let alone quality service.

Up until the past several years, schools with low funding rates acquired quality computer equipment in small increments, but even then, they did not have the capacity to grow the broadband network to meet future demands. Rural schools are working toward a one-to-one initiative with devices such as Chromebooks in an attempt to equip their high school students for the future of the workplace while elementary students work with tablets which are designed for use with specific applications, yet they still lag behind the advances of the urban schools that bring in a higher level of funding.

#### REQUIRED PERFORMANCE MEASURES

ALSDE Virtual School and Digital Content Microgrants Program will meet the required performance measures established by the U.S. Department of Education and expand access to remote learning options that lead to improvements in student outcomes. The program is projected to serve between 1,600- 2,000 students, pending the number of services required and available funding, in each year of the program with a focus on disadvantaged students and student enrolled in failing schools. This is established by conservatively assuming a minimum of one student served per family receiving a microgrant, although it is likely that a number of families will have two or more students benefit. This information will be extracted from the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) online program portal each quarter and reported based on the quarterly submission requirements established by the program.

ALSDE anticipates a high level of parents will report satisfaction with the remote learning options made available by the program. This will be established through parent surveys in the online portal which parents will be requested to complete after a minimum of three months' program service. This online survey will be available as needed in the parents' native

language to promote completion and will be analyzed throughout the year and included in year-end program reporting. The project goal is to have at least 90% of parents involved in services complete this survey each year.

The program will offer parents and students three different types of remote learning services which will include internet access and hotspots, access to special needs to services, and dual enrollment. Each of these will be documented in the online portal established and included in grant reports compiled and submitted to the U.S. Department of Education.

As well as the required performance measures above, the ALSDE Virtual School and Digital Content Microgrants Program will also include the following additional performance measures to assess success in supporting students and parents while meeting program requirements. The program will assess **completion rate of courses attempted by students served**. For this measure, there is currently no accurate baseline measure available, as Alabama students will be participating for the first time in the upcoming school year. Baseline data for this measure will be established at the end of the first project year. At this point, the goal for Year 2 will be to demonstrate improvement of 10% based on the first-year baseline, with an additional 10% improvement in Year 3 based on the final Year 2 results. ALSDE believes this to be ambitious yet achievable measure that will be met at the end of each project year. It is particularly ambitious given that before March 2019 and the COVID-19 crisis, practically no Alabama students relied on remote learning as their primary form of instruction. It is achievable due to greater availability of educational technology provided to families, with the individual assistance in troubleshooting issues provided online and over the telephone. This is further supported by the teacher supported professional development provided by ALSDE to enhance teacher effectiveness in providing online learning for students as described earlier.

The completion rate will be collected using the actual number of students completing virtual courses. This information will be a part of the ALSDE iNow system currently in place, which has a proven record for many years in accurately compiling student information for use at the Local Education Agency (LEA), system, and state levels. This completion rate information beginning in Year 1 will become part of the report card created for each Alabama school and system in the state. This information is shared statewide, as part of education data analysis by school, district, and state administrators as well as school board members and state legislators.

Our second performance measure is: **Improved academic achievement through the remote learning offered to students via microgrants.** As microgrants will enhance access to remote learning opportunities, this is an accurate measure of the proposed project that is also consistent with the program performance measure #3 related to remote learning. ALSDE will use our state's system and school report cards to measure progress, which track indicators like academic achievement, academic growth, graduation, college/career readiness, and proficiency. ALSDE will use the academic achievement indicator for this project, which is based on the percentage of proficient students in reading/English and math in tested grades on Scantron, Alabama Alternate Assessment, and the ACT. The baseline data for this measure is 66.15 statewide for 2018-19. This baseline is valid, as this data and data collection system has been used by ALSDE since 2014 for school accountability and has a proven record of accurately compiling student information for use at the LEA, system, and state levels to assess student performance. Moreover, it uses validated assessments of academic performance like the ACT.

The target for this performance measure for the first year of the program is for all student to perform at an equivalent level of the baseline for the prior academic year. Our target is ambitious, considering the current circumstances with COVID-19 where instruction is occurring

at home with varying levels of parent/guardian support and supervision, compared to normal instruction in person led by a credentialed teacher. As our remote learning microgrants are intended to promote continued, meaningful improvement in academics for our students, we meet the definition in the NIA. In addition, Alabama's rate of academic achievement slightly decreased from the previous year (66.38 in 2017-18), further demonstrating that our target is ambitious. Our target is also achievable based on our project plan that dramatically expands access to high-quality remote learning opportunities for high-need Alabama students using microgrants for families. We anticipate that we will meet the performance target in each year of the grant as the goal is to promote continued growth of students in all education models; traditional, blended, or remote.

ALSDE will use the iNow system for data collection, which has accurately compiled valid and reliable student data. Data for this performance measure is collected annually using standardized test results, which is then compiled into system and school report cards. In addition, ALSDE will extract data from the ALSDE Virtual School and Digital Content Microgrants Program software solution and combine with data reported in the iNow system. This is meaningful, as it will measure the *impact* of the project beyond just the numbers served. ALSDE has a strong track record of collecting, analyzing, and reporting this data, and routinely makes accountability reports available to the public, including parents/families, school board members, legislators, and the broader community. We are committed to reporting data to the US Dept. of Education on the required reporting schedule.

ALSDE's Office of Evaluation and Innovation, led by Assistant State Superintendent, Angela Martin, is responsible for overseeing student assessments and

accountability. It is highly experienced and staffed with qualified researchers that ensure ALSDE has sufficient capacity to collect, analyze, and report on project performance data.

#### DATA ASSURANCES

The ALSDE commits to the Secretary to provide data for evaluations the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) of the U.S. Department of Education as required for Federal evaluations. Further, the ALSDE assures dedicated resources to implement common performance measures, data elements, and/or data definitions set by the OESE.

#### GOVERNOR'S LETTER OF SUPPORT

Alabama Governor Kay Ivey fully supports the ALSDE Virtual School and Digital Content Microgrants Program, especially as it relates to increased broadband access for the students in Alabama. Governor Ivey's letter of support is appropriately attached in the required appendices.

## Other Attachment File(s)

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OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR



STATE CAPITOL  
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36130

KAY IVEY  
GOVERNOR

(334) 242-7100  
FAX: (334) 242-3282

## STATE OF ALABAMA

May 28, 2020

Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Ave. SW  
Washington, DC 20210-4537

Dear Secretary DeVos:

The Alabama State Department of Education is applying for the "Rethink K-12 Education Models" grant made available by the U.S. Department of Education to increase connectivity and to support the creation of virtual learning platforms. As Governor, President of the Alabama State Board of Education, and a former teacher, I write in support of Alabama's application.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to have an unprecedented effect on the State of Alabama and our entire nation. Alabamians have moved from record low unemployment to financial difficulties beyond their control. While our educators have done a commendable job filling the education gap created by this virus, we have many unique challenges ahead. As a rural state, Alabama lacks crucial broadband connectivity and capacity in many locations. To address this issue and to meet the needs of students during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important to target funding and resources in the areas of remote learning and distance education in our state.

The Alabama State Department of Education's plan includes creating a statewide virtual learning platform for all students that will fill the educational gap and provide a reliable conduit for every student in the future.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of Alabama's application.

Sincerely,



Governor

<b>Job Title:</b>	Education Program Specialist / Microgrant Project Director
<b>Location:</b>	Gordon Persons Building, Montgomery, Alabama
<b>Program/Unit:</b>	Professional Learning
<b>Description of Duties:</b>	<p>The Education Program Specialist position oversees the ALSDE Parent Microgrant Program activities including district level support, program development, and public relations. The Specialist serves as a liaison with internal and external partners and represents the ALSDE Parent Microgrant Program on national and state level committees, as applicable.</p> <p>Duties include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Provides technical assistance to public and private school systems and homeschool associations for seamless interaction of parent participants in the ALSDE Parent Microgrant Program</li> <li>· Responsible for planning and overseeing administrative processes for full project implementation</li> <li>· Responsible for coordinating with contractors ensuring proper rollout of all microgrant program.</li> <li>· Monitors compliance and progress of grant recipients' program through evaluations and reviews reports from third party project management team.</li> <li>· Interprets state and federal laws, regulations, instructions and policies for local, state, and federal agencies and allied organizations</li> <li>· Analyzes technical data to help monitor the programs</li> <li>· Evaluates programs using required data and tools to verify compliance</li> <li>· Completes special projects and other duties as assigned</li> <li>· Displays a high level of effort and commitment to the vision/mission of the Alabama State Department of Education and State School Superintendent in all interactions and job performance</li> </ul>
<b>Minimum Qualifications:</b>	Bachelor's degree with a minimum of two years' experience in grant administration.
<b>Preferred Qualifications:</b>	<p>Preference will be given to applicants who, in addition to meeting the minimum qualifications, possess one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience with federal grant reporting</li> </ul>
<b>Essential Job Functions:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent project management skills with experience in managing and supervising administrative projects</li> <li>• Possess excellent organizational skills</li> </ul>

- Strong command over written and verbal communication
- Excellent interpersonal and presentation skills
- Good understanding of the organization's overall business and its objectives
- Ability to work within a team
- Ability to prioritize work, meet deadlines and produce quality results on time with attention to detail.
- Proficient in using computers with related knowledge of software programs and Internet



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

September 28, 2018

Dr. Eric Mackey  
State Superintendent of Education  
Alabama Department of Education  
Gordon Persons Building, P.O. Box 302101  
Montgomery, AL 36130-2101

Reference: Agreement No. 2018-129

Dear Dr. Mackey:

The original and one copy of the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement are enclosed. These documents reflect an understanding reached by your organization and the U.S. Department of Education. The rates agreed upon should be used for computing indirect cost grants, contracts and applications funded by this Department and other Federal Agencies.

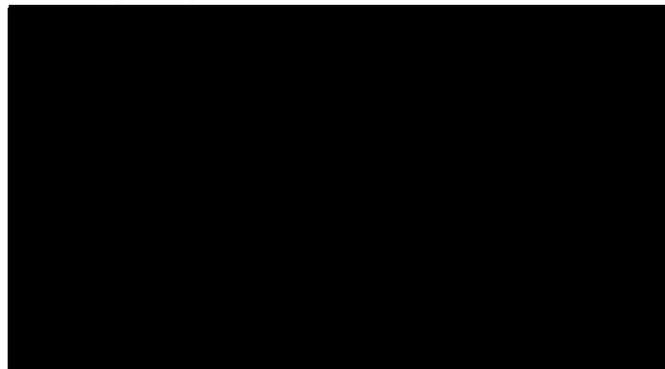
After reviewing the Rate Agreement, please confirm acceptance by having the original signed by a duly authorized representative of your organization and returned within thirty (30) calendar days from the date of this letter to:

U.S. Department of Education  
OCFO / FIO / ICG  
Attention: Frances Outland, Rm. 6059  
550 12th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-4450

The enclosed copy of this agreement should be retained for your files. If there are any questions, please contact Vivian Crouch at (202) 245-8295 or [vivian.crouch@ed.gov](mailto:vivian.crouch@ed.gov).

The next indirect cost rate proposal based on actual data for the year ending September 30, 2018 is due by March 31, 2019. This proposal should be sent to the above address.

Enclosures



550 12th St. S.W., WASHINGTON, DC 20202  
[www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov)

*The Department of Education's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.*

PR/Award # S425B200032

Page e42

INDIRECT COST RATE AGREEMENT  
STATE EDUCATION AGENCY

**Organization:**

Alabama Department of Education  
Gordon Persons Building, P.O. Box 302101  
Montgomery, AL 36130-2101

**Date:** September 28, 2018

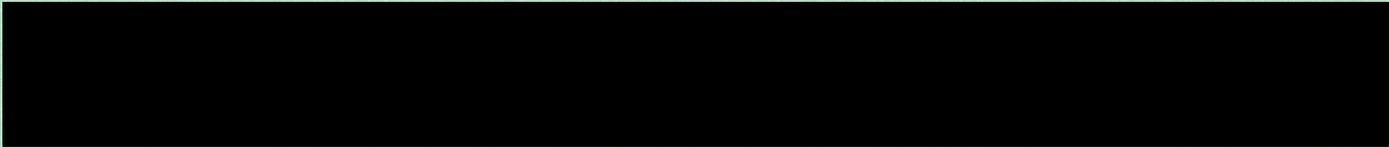
**Agreement No.** 2018-129

**Filing Reference:** This replaces previous Agreement No. [REDACTED]  
Dated: 12/20/2017

The approved indirect cost rates herein are for use on grants, contracts, and other agreements with the Federal Government. The rates are subject to the conditions included in Section II of this Agreement and regulations issued by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards under 2 CFR 200.

**Section I - Rates and Bases**

<u>Type</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>Base</u>	<u>Applicable To</u>
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Distribution Base:

MTDC Modified Total Direct Cost - Total direct costs excluding equipment, capital expenditures, participant support costs, pass-through funds and the portion of each subaward (subcontract or subgrant) above \$25,000 (each award; each year).

Applicable To:

Unrestricted Unrestricted rates apply to programs that do not require a restricted rate per 34 CFR 75.563 and 34 CFR 76.563.

Restricted Restricted rates apply to programs that require a restricted rate per 34 CFR 75.563 and 34 CFR 76.563.

Disability Determination For use on Disability Determination Programs.

Treatment of Fringe Benefits:

Fringe benefits applicable to direct salaries and wages are treated as direct costs. Pursuant to 2 CFR 200.431, (b), (3), Paragraph (i), unused leave costs for all employees are allowable in the year of payment. The treatment of unused leave costs should be allocated as an indirect cost except for those employee salaries designated as a direct cost for the restricted rate calculation.

Capitalization Policy: Items of equipment are capitalized and depreciated if the initial acquisition cost is equal to or greater than \$5,000.

## Section II – Particulars

Limitations: Application of the rates contained in this Agreement is subject to all statutory or administrative limitations on the use of funds, and payments of costs hereunder are subject to the availability of appropriations applicable to a given grant or contract. Acceptance of the rates agreed to herein is predicated on the following conditions: (A) that no costs other than those incurred by the Organization were included in the indirect cost pools as finally accepted, and that such costs are legal obligations of the Organization and allowable under the governing cost principles; (B) the same costs that have been treated as indirect costs are not claimed as direct costs; (C) that similar types of information which are provided by the Organization, and which were used as a basis for acceptance of rates agreed to herein, are not subsequently found to be materially incomplete or inaccurate; and (D) that similar types of costs have been accorded consistent accounting treatment.

Accounting Changes: The rates contained in this agreement are based on the organizational structure and the accounting systems in effect at the time the proposal was submitted. Changes in organizational structure or changes in the method of accounting for costs which affect the amount of reimbursement resulting from use of the rates in this agreement, require the prior approval of the responsible negotiation agency. Failure to obtain such approval may result in subsequent audit disallowance.

Provisional/Final/Predetermined Rates: A proposal to establish a final rate must be submitted. The awarding office should be notified if the final rate is different from the provisional rate so that appropriate adjustments to billings and charges may be made. Predetermined rates are not subject to adjustment.

Fixed Rate: The negotiated fixed rate is based on an estimate of the costs that will be incurred during the period to which the rate applies. When the actual costs for such period have been determined, an adjustment will be made to a subsequent rate calculation to compensate for the difference between the costs used to establish the fixed rate and the actual costs.

Notification to Other Federal Agencies: Copies of this document may be provided to other Federal agencies as a means of notifying them of the agreement contained herein.

Audit: All costs (direct and indirect, federal and non-federal) are subject to audit. Adjustments to amounts resulting from audit of the cost allocation plan or indirect cost rate proposal upon which the negotiation of this agreement was based may be compensated for in a subsequent negotiation.

Reimbursement Ceilings/Limitations on Rates: Awards that include ceiling provisions and statutory/regulatory requirements on indirect cost rates or reimbursement amounts are subject to the stipulations in the grant or contract agreements. If a ceiling is higher than the negotiated rate in Section I of this agreement, the negotiated rate will be used to determine the maximum allowable indirect cost.

**Section III - Special Remarks**

Alternative Reimbursement Methods: If any federal programs are reimbursing indirect costs by a methodology other than the approved rates in this agreement, such costs should be credited to the programs and the approved rates should be used to identify the maximum amount of indirect costs allocable.

Submission of Proposals: New indirect cost proposals are necessary to obtain approved indirect cost rates for future fiscal years. **The next indirect cost rate proposal is due six months prior to the expiration dates of the rates in this agreement.**

**Section IV – Approvals**

For the State Education Agency:

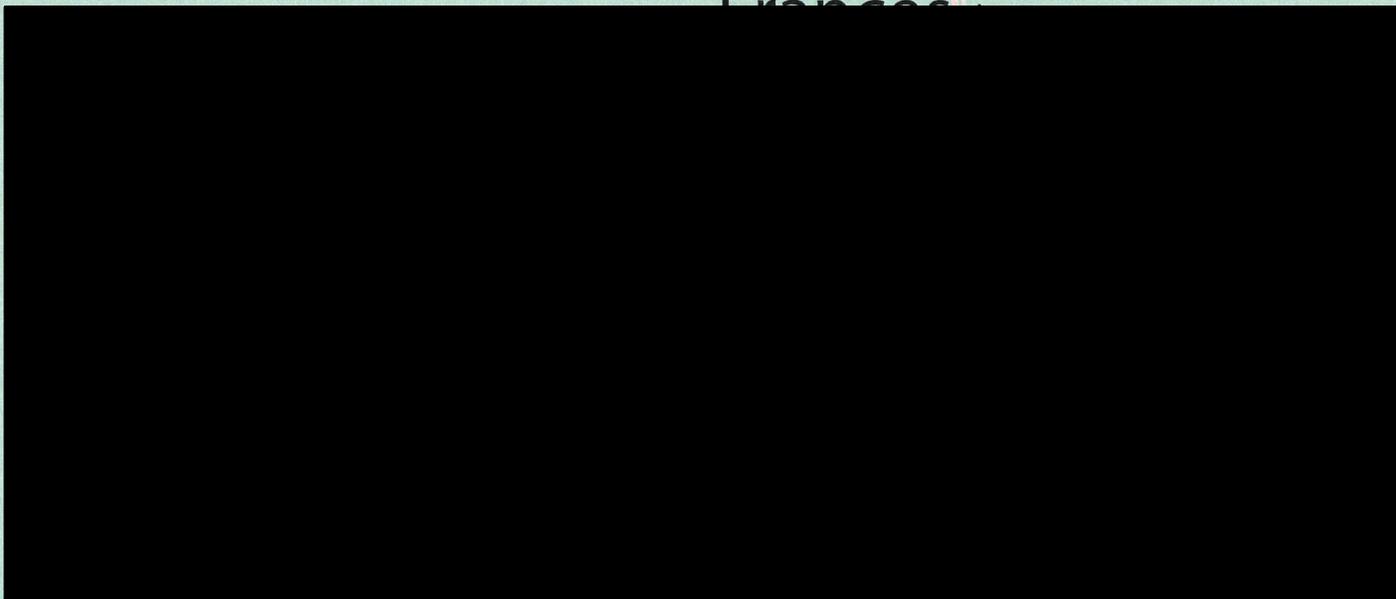
Alabama Department of Education  
Gordon Persons Building, P.O. Box 302101  
Montgomery, AL 36130-2101

For the Federal Government:

U.S. Department of Education  
OCFO / FIO / ICG  
550 12th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-4450

Digitally signed

Francis



## **Appendix 5**

### **Assurance that Applicant will participate in evaluation**

The ALSDE commits to the Secretary to provide data for evaluations to the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) of the U.S. Department of Education as required for Federal evaluations. Further, the ALSDE assures dedicated resources to implement common performance measures, data elements, and/or data definitions set by the OESE.

## Budget Narrative File(s)

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\* **Mandatory Budget Narrative Filename:**

[Add Mandatory Budget Narrative](#)

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To add more Budget Narrative attachments, please use the attachment buttons below.

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**BUDGET NARRATIVE**

Budget Categories	Project Year 1	Project Year 2	Project Year 3	Project Total
1. Personnel				
2. Fringe Benefits				
3. Travel				
4. Equipment	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
5. Supplies	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
6. Contractual	\$1,750,000.00	\$250,000.00	\$250,000.00	\$2,250,000.00
7. Construction	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
8. Other	\$4,000,000.00	\$4,000,000.00	\$4,000,000.00	\$12,000,000.00
9. Total Direct Costs				
10. Indirect Costs				
11. Training Stipends				
12. Total Costs				

1. **Personnel-** All personnel costs based on current published rates and policies for Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE)

The Project Director will be responsible for coordinating with the software vendor, project management team, LEAs, private schools, and homeschooling associations. The Project Director will have final authority over eligibility, requests for services, and additions of services and service providers. The Project Director will devote 100% of his/her time to the project and will report to the Tony Thacker, Ed.D., Assistant State Superintendent of Education, ALSDE’s Office of Evaluation and Innovation. The Federal share of the Project Director salary for each year of the project is \$100,000.

**The total federal share of Personnel costs for Project Year 1-3 is** [REDACTED]

2. **Fringe Benefits** All fringe benefits based on current ALSDE rates for each salary/personnel rate.

- Project Director \$ [REDACTED] per year

The Federal share of the Project Director Fringe Benefits for each year of the project is \$ [REDACTED].

**The total federal share of Fringe Benefits costs for Project Year 1-3 is \$ [REDACTED]**

**3. Travel- N/A**

**4. Equipment- N/A**

**5. Supplies- N/A**

**6. Contractual-** All contractual costs based on published ALSDE policies and procedures.

The ALSDE will contract with a software service (SAAS) provider to provide the application and account information portal interface for parents applying for microgrants. The SAAS solution will manage the data required for quarterly and annually reporting for USDOE OESE compliance. The Federal share of the SAAS solution is \$1,475,000.00 and includes development and licensing for the three-year project.

A project management firm will be hired to manage the user interface including the parent application, parent account information, and parent feedback data extracted from the SAAS provider application ensuring data accuracy and reporting. The project management firm will be responsible for all vendor transactions and parent correspondence. The project management firm will report to the Project Director. The Federal share of the project management firm is \$250,000.00 for each year of the project for a total project management cost of \$750,000.00.

Year 1: \$1,750,000.00

Year 2: \$250,000.00

Year 3: \$250,000.00

**The total federal share of Contractual costs for Project Year 1-3 is \$2,250,000.00**

**7. Construction- N/A**

**8. Other- Microgrant Costs**

Microgrant costs can includes internet access and hotspots, special needs services, and/or dual enrollment. Parents are required to apply for services annually with preference going to disadvantaged students and students in failing schools. Protocols are in place to ensure equitable access. This application ensures a minimum of 80% of the grant fund request will be applied to microgrants to parents. Costs for services per household can range from \$600- \$2,500 annually depending on the services requested.

Year 1: \$4,000,000.00

Year 2: \$4,000,000.00

Year 3: \$4,000,000.00

**The total federal share of Other- Microgrant costs for Project Year 1-3 is \$** [REDACTED]

**9. Total Direct Costs**

Year 1: \$5,880,000.00

Year 2: \$4,380,000.00

Year 3: \$4,380,000.00

**The total federal share of Total Direct costs for Project Year 1-3 is \$** [REDACTED]

**10. Indirect Costs**

Year 1: \$120,000.00

Year 2: \$120,000.00

Year 3: \$120,000.00

**The total federal share of Indirect Direct costs for Project Year 1-3 is \$** [REDACTED]

**11. Training Stipends- N/A**

**12. Total Costs**

Year 1: \$6,000,000.00

Year 2: \$4,500,000.00

Year 3: \$4,500,000.00

**The total federal share of Total costs for Project Year 1-3 is \$** 