

State Tribal Education Partnership (STEP) Pre-App. Webinar

Media Duration: 1:33:08

[[00:03:32]] - [Isabelle] Good afternoon everyone and welcome, my name is Isabelle Little and I will be serving as the technical leader for this event. I wanted to take a moment to review the technical parameters of the platform. When you entered the room you will have been prompted to participate in meeting audio, via either dial out, dial in or using voice over IP. If you chose to use the dial out function or voice over IP you are all set. However, if you chose to dial into our trumpet line I'd like to request that you follow the instructions that are up in the top right corner of your screen. This will allow you to connect your identity to the phone number that you called into. To do that, please click on the phone icon that is in the top right corner of the screen, you will be prompted to connect your audio. Choose the option to dial into the conference line and then scroll down to the bottom of that screen and you will be given a code. Please type that code into your phone and your identity will be connected to the audio provider. We'd very much appreciate if you would take the moment to do that. [[00:04:36]] We will have several breaks for questions throughout this presentation. Please note that for the time being all participants are muted, at least until the end of the presentation when we will open it up to live questions. We encourage you to use the chat box on the right hand side of the screen to ask us questions throughout the presentation and we will get to them if we are able. Any remaining questions will be answered after the presentation is over. If you experience any audio or video difficulties while the presentation is ongoing, please try logging out and back in to the presentation, that usually fixes most problems. At this time I would like to turn it over to Joyce Silverton the Director of the Office of Indian Education. Thank you.

[[00:05:19]] - [Joyce] Good afternoon everybody, welcome to the pre-application webinar for that State Tribal Education Partnership. We have a variety of slides available this afternoon to walk you through, instructions for the application process. We're really glad to have such a good turn out, thank you for joining us. This is a program that is offered under the Office of the Elementary Secondary

Education, Office of Indian Education. With that, I'll turn this over to begin with the outline of the agenda to Shahla Ortega.

[[00:05:56]] - [Shahla] Hi, my name is Shahla Ortega I'm with the US Department of Education, Office of Indian Education. I too, would like to welcome you to our pre-application technical assistance webinar for the new STEP. Today's webinar is designed to provide an overview of the new STEP competition and to go over the application submission process as Joyce mentioned. There will be an opportunity at the end of the presentation to ask questions so you're not limited to the chat box. At the end, we'll open it up so you can ask questions. Next slide. [[00:06:32]] As you can see on the agenda, we're going to be covering a whole host of topics. We'll be looking at the priorities, program and application requirements, application formats and submission and then go to your questions. Next slide and I'd like to turn it over to Bill Mendoza.

- [Bill] Thank you everybody, my name is Bill Mendoza and I'm the Executive Director for the White House Initiative on American Indian and Alaskan Native Education and I too, would like to echo Joyce and Shahla's sentiments for being able to bring this opportunity to Indian country. Today I know we're talking about the State Tribal Education Partnership grant, but we also know that folks are interested in the Native Youth Community Projects, those grants were announced just the other day. This exciting opportunity is but a part of some of the other activities that we have been engaged in from the White House Initiative to the Department of Education and of course as we work to collaborate with the Department of Interior and the Bureau of Indian Education. This includes our most recent Native Student Environment Listening Tour as well as our consultation policy which we are really focused on and so we appreciate those of you who have turned out to provide feedback and comments on that important piece of policy on the listening tour side. Again, we are calling upon communities to elevate these concerns and issues and challenges. If you know someone who is affected in this way, we are encouraging utilization of the Office of Civil Rights Enforcement process. Please consider that as a mechanism and there will be more news to come around efforts that we are trying to put in place to react to what we've heard from native youths across the country when we did that nine city, seven state listening tour. [[00:08:26]] Also before us is the Elementary and Secondary Education Re-offer Admission and we have some really key areas that we need to have folks

aware of and informed about as Congress considers that important piece of legislation. One is an area within native languages where it is consistent with education policy, now, to look at a program within the department of education that supports native languages within schools. This has been an area of effort from Senator Testor to other key members in Congress. There's been amendments to this effect within ESEA. Another area that I know has been a priority among tribal leaders and educators has been consultation between states and tribes for more effective mechanisms for consultations. There's a provision there for that. And then, we're also looking to these foundational programs around strengthening tribal capacity and as well as state and tribal collaboration like the Native Youths Community Project and the State Tribal Education Partnership to become permanent areas that Indian education can be delivered. The importance of this program was really rooted in creating the activity and capacity building within state and tribal relationships that more effectively address the opportunities as well as the challenging outcomes that we see among American Indian and Alaskan Native students. It was really rooted in the idea that there were not only barriers, but real capacity challenges to advancing this work and how can the department ultimately, through our responsibility, work to incentivize those activities and provide support to those states and tribes that are engaging in this work.

[[00:10:28]] Across the country from areas in New Mexico as well as Idaho and Oregon and Oklahoma we see these six tribes who have current grantees under the State Tribal Education Partnership really doing some important work. Whether it's looking at data sharing or number of data sharing initiatives that are happening within these grants. Tribal professional development for teachers in school districts as well as for the State Education Agency staff. Cultural competence, Native language, history and culture, providing mechanisms for teachers in terms of alternate certification for Native languages has been a key area. And certainly that critical parent engagement piece that we know tribes play a tremendous role in kind of bringing a diversity of programming to ensure that parents and families are more effectively engaged in schools. One of the more expansive areas that we see some of the grantees working in is development and integration of national standards within state academic standards. I just wanted to highlight a few of these key components of the current STEP grantees for consideration of those who are pursuing this grant into the future. Next slide, please. The other key kind of consideration is what are the differences between the STEP grants and the native

youths community projects? We have developed a comparison of the two grants. I won't go through this in detail, but I'll let Joyce kind of get into the specifics about STEP. [[00:12:20]] If you just have any questions about the general structure of both grants this is what these sessions are designed for. We also want to hear from you today on what additional information we need to be considering as we move forward with these technical assistance efforts. There will be future opportunities like this to have more deeper conversations into both of these grant opportunities. If you have questions to this please let this serve as a kick-off to us being able to have more developed conversations as we move along in this process. We heard throughout consultation that this technical assistance component was essential to developing not only quality applications for the grant but also to better serve these clients throughout their implementation and the delivery of their services. I just want to close with thanking everybody for their participation and look forward to the the dialog that we have. Joyce. Thank you.

[[00:13:21]] - [Joyce] Thank you Bill. That was a very quick summary of a lot of activity that's been going on within the department. I'd also like to introduce Joy Silvern who is joining us from the seventh floor today and I'll have her say a few words to the group as well.

- [Joy] I'll be very brief, thank you for your time. My name is Joy Silvern, I'm the Deputy Chief of Staff and this has been a huge priority for Secretary Duncan throughout his time here and I think we're very happy to see additional concrete opportunities to support the work that you all are doing. We look forward not only to providing an overview of the STEP program today, but hearing from you what you need as we move forward to make sure that you are successful and have any information and support that will help in the application process and beyond. Thank you very much.

[[00:14:20]] - [Joyce] Thank you Joy. We have two programs that are coming out at such a close interval to each other that we felt like it was important for you to have a little bit of background about both of them. The chart that was on your slide number four gives you some additional information. We recognize that tribes are going to be looking at these two and trying to determine what is the best fit for them. And so, as that continues forward we will be available for questions. I'd like

to turn this back over to Shahla Ortega and she'll walk us through the STEP program.

- [Shahla] Thank you Joyce, thank you all. If you could move back to the slide that says "STEP Program Purpose." Okay, great. Thank you so much. Here I just want to share with you some of the significant changes. Actually, it was mentioned earlier that there were some changes made to the new STEP program. However, with all the changes we made, the purpose of this program still remains the same and those are: A) Promote increased collaboration between TEA and the FEAs and LEAs that serve students from affected tribes and B) Build the capacity of TEAs to conduct certain administrative functions under certain ESEA formula grant programs for eligible schools as determined by the TEA, SEA and LEA. Here I have a note that says if you want to know more about capacity building, there are frequently asked questions that we have included in the application package. If you go to the FAQ number three, you'll be able to read more about this piece.

[[00:16:16]] By the way, throughout this presentation I may use acronyms and I apologize for not spelling all of them out. But if any of you are not familiar with any of these acronyms just type in the chat box the acronym that you heard and we'll come back and spell it out for you. Thank you. The next slide. The net slide shows you the program overview for eligible applicants. It's a quick snapshot of what the program includes, who's eligible to apply, how much money is available; and this is STEP now, I don't want you to get confused over STEP and NYCP. How much money is available to make rewards, funding range and so on. Next slide. As you recall, I mentioned there were some changes made to the STEP program to make it function better. One of the changes that was made was in the absolute priority area. We now have two absolute priorities and one is that applicants must be an established TEA, we'll get to that in a minute. And two, applicants must be a TEA with limited prior experience. [[00:17:45]] Here, if an applicant doesn't meet priority number one, they're automatically in priority number two. There are no additional points that are given to any of these two priorities. Next slide. [[00:18:00]] Here is how the established TEA is defined. An established TEA is a TEA that has A) previously received a STEP grant or B) has an existing prior relationship with an SEA or LEA as evidenced by a prior written agreement between the TEA and SEA or LEA and meets two or more of the following criteria: One being has an existing tribal education code. Another is

administered at least one education code, for example, a tribal operated pre-school or after school program within the past five years. Or has administered at least one federal, local or private grant within the past five years. Next slide. [[00:19:09]]

Let me just back track a little bit, can we go back to the definition for just a minute? Actually go back one more to the priorities. Sorry. We're backtracking to priorities, I just want to highlight something that was brought to my attention. If I list this out this is something you need to know that if applicants don't meet priority one, they're automatically in priority two. I just want to make sure that was stated clearly. Let's move on to the requirements slide. There is one requirement in this that is the preliminary agreement that has to be signed by the TEA, SEA and LEA. And included with the application, this is very important, you're going to be hearing me say this several times at least because it's a very important part of your application package. And if it's not included, then you will be ineligible.

[[00:20:19]] The preliminary agreement includes an extensive list of elements that must be addressed in the signed agreement and there is a list of those, we'll get into it in a minute. Also, it must be signed by the TEA, SEA and the participating LEA. I don't know how many of you know, but the pilot program that was launched in 2012 did not require the participating LEA's to be a signed partner in the preliminary agreement and letters of support were accepted in lieu of that. But this time we want all three parties to sign the preliminary agreement and letters of support will not be accepted in lieu of a signed agreement. I just want to make sure that's stated clearly. [[00:21:12]] If you plan to apply make sure that one, you submit a signed preliminary agreement with the application and two, the agreement addresses all the elements as listed in the notice inviting application. That's very important that those elements are addressed. If you don't submit this preliminary agreement with your application as I said earlier, your application will be considered ineligible. You cannot substitute letters of support, as I said earlier, in lieu of the signed agreement. Then what we're going to have in the next few slides are a list of requirements for your preliminary agreement. But know this, that this is an overview basically. For a full list and description of these elements in the preliminary agreement, please use the application package. Next slide. [[00:22:14]]

Eligible school. [[00:22:18]] Eligible school. This is another area that was basically expanded. Again in the pilot program, the schools that were eligible to be included were limited to public schools on a reservation. But in this new STEP, that was expanded to include public schools, public charter schools and BIE funded tribal

controlled schools. So there is a wider range of schools that could be included, but they have to be public schools just to be sure. [[00:23:01]] For projects that include one or more BIE funded tribally-controlled schools the applicant here must also include in their application evidence that it submitted a copy of the application to BIE. Now what do we mean by evidence? It could be an email that was sent to BIE with the application that says, "Here we are submitting this." A copy of that email could be then uploaded, attached to your application in the grants folder, that's sufficient for us. All schools included in the project also must receive services or funds for the specific ESEA formula grant programs selected by the applicant. That's very important, they must be receiving funds. For example, if you select Title 2 ESEA Formula Grant program for your proposed project, the schools you select must receive services or funds for title two. [[00:24:18]] If you need more information, by the way, STEP FAQ is a very good document go to and under FAQ Number 23 you'll see more information on that. For BIE funded schools there is more information on their STEP FAQs 22 through 25. Next slide. Okay, ESEA Programs. [[00:24:51]] ESEA Programs. Again there is more information under FAQ number five in the STEP FAQ portion of your application package that talks about what these programs are, what programs could be included. There is a list of them. As you see here it is listed from A through H. From A through G are the programs that were also listed under the pilot program in 2012 so there's nothing new there. What's new there is H and that is the Indian Education Formula Grant Program. It's a Title Seven part A program where funds go directly to LEA. That was one of the changes that was made to the new step program to allow it to include the Title Seven program when applying. [[00:25:51]] However, if you choose . . . there is a note on this slide and I just want to make sure you see the note, that if you choose the Indian Education Formula Grant Program that you must also select one more from the list that you see on this from A to G. So you can't select Indian Education Formula Grant Program by itself, it has to be accompanied by one more from A to G. [[00:26:23]] Now here if you have any questions you can type it into your little chat box. We're going to continue. . . we're going to continue with the slides. Are there questions?

[[00:26:41]] - [Joyce] The first question is will the individuals with disabilities act formula grant be included in the competition?

- Let's go back to the slide that says requirements ESEA programs. Those are the programs you can choose from. If it's not on that list in the application package they cannot be included.

[[00:27:14]] - [Joyce] Are there any other questions, if there are could you please type them in at this point?

[[00:27:27]] - [Shahla] If there are no more questions we're going to continue, time is of essence and I don't want to hold things up, but you're always welcome to type it into the chat box. We're going to move on to. . . We're going to move on to the slide that says application submission procedures. Very good. Folks, the deadline for this grant program, that's STEP, [[00:27:58]] the deadline for submission in grants.gov for the new STEP program is June 15th, remember that deadline. [[00:28:08]] My suggestion to you is submit early, don't wait until the 15th to submit your application and please follow the instructions in grants.gov. Very important that you follow the instruction in grants.gov when you're applying or submitting or uploading your application into grants.gov. If you need help with the submission process, please contact grants.gov help desk or support desk rather at 1-800-518-4726. By the way I did try this number and it works and they're very diligent about responding. [[00:28:50]] There is a menu that you can go in and pick what your questions are and divide it into parts and choose where you need to go and it will connect you to a real person. Grants.gov also may have scheduled maintenance outages. This is very important to note because it may affect the way you submit your application, when you submit your application, whether you thought you submitted your application, it went through or not. To avoid running into these scheduled outages, at any time, when you're submitting your application please first check grants.gov to find out ahead of time when these outages may occur. One more thing I want to highlight and it's very important, we accept applications that have been successfully submitted through grants.gov. We do not accept applications that are emailed to us. Do not email your application, we won't accept them. Next slide. [[00:30:03]] Again we're still on the application submission procedure. We strongly encourage that you make sure that the format of your project narrative and everything that's in the application package conforms with pdf because that's how you have to submit your application. Everything has to be pdf formatted. Make sure that if you work in Word, which you may, if you want to cut and paste from Word into pdf, make sure it's not the Word version that's

being uploaded. The version you're uploading, whether it's your files or project narratives and so on that all formatted versions are pdf ready. [[00:30:52]] This is very important because if you don't, it won't accept. If you don't, you may not be eligible; if you have any questions on and of this in terms of application submission into grants.gov, how to format and so on, please contact grants.gov support desk at 1-800-518-4726. Okay, next. [[00:31:25]] Application submission procedure continues and on this slide it says here, I just want to highlight something; that grants.gov will not accept an application that includes two or more files that have the same file name, just make sure that that's not the case. That system doesn't accept it, make sure that if you have files that they have different names and that your electronic applications must comply with any page limit requirement that's described in this application package. We'll get to that in a few minutes but there is a page limit on your project narrative. [[00:32:08]] Again, if you have any problem, experiencing any problems or issues don't wait until you're done with the application. Go right to grants.gov at the help desk, the support desk and ask for help. By the way, when you do call the support desk they'll issue a case number to you. make sure you keep that case number, that's your ticket, so to speak. That's if you call and you recorded the problem that you experienced with grants.gov. This is very important because at some point, you may have to refer back to that number and it makes it easier for them to locate what your problem was. Next slide. [[00:32:54]] Here was have the application format and I tried to pull together the things that you need to look at when it comes to the application format. Regarding the content and format of your application, you still need to follow the instructions for organizing it. You need to organize your application as described in the electronic application submission checklist in the application package. Be mindful of how you put your application together, all that information together. Use the electronic application submission checklist to make sure you have put things where they need to be. There is a 50 page, page limit on your project narrative. However, and the 50 page limit is double spaced using font 12 basically. But this is the good news. This limit doesn't include the cover sheet, project abstract which could be up to two pages, don't go over two pages for your project abstract. Budget narrative, required forms, resumes, appendices. So the 50 page refers to the project narrative, not to the things I just mentioned. Here we want to see if you have any questions so far?

[[00:34:16]] - [Joyce] I see a question from Bill Vaughn. Hi Bill, good to have you on the call today. There was a request to find out if they all had to be on the same document. We're trying to confer a little bit and get ready for answering your question. But we thought if there were any variations or a different document. No, we would not want different documents. If it is the identical document and you were trying to circulate it to different places to get those different signatures, that could be done.

- [Shahla] If that doesn't cover your question, you can type in more questions as follow up. [[00:35:28]] So let's move on to the selection criteria. [[00:35:34]] Here is the selection criteria for this program. Some of you may be new and don't know what selection criteria, what does it mean basically? These are selective facets that we use to describe if a project is viable. That's all it means, we have to have some measure that says this project is viable and this is how we tend to. . . what we use to measure. [[00:36:05]] The selective factors also help you figure out, you the applicant, figure out how to plan your project management. It's like a road map for you, put this here, put this there. This is how you bring it together, this is how you respond to this question and that question. These next few slides are going to be highlights of these selection criteria and what we look for in a proposed project. As you can see on this slide, what I did was I put the selection criteria that correspond to this program. That includes need for project, quality of project design, adequacy of resources, quality of the management plan, quality of the project personnel, quality of the project evaluation, all of which adds up to 100 points. Next slide. [[00:37:03]] Need for project. As some of you may know, you probably thought your project narrative was describing why you need this project to begin with, that's basically the purpose of need for the project is so that it gives you a place to explain all that. As it says here, the information we're looking for is the golden objective in the preliminary agreement. That's what you may want to talk about including the capacity building, activities and addressing identified educational needs of the Indian students that are served in the public schools you are including. So that's that and it has five points. Next slide. [[00:37:59]] Project design. As you can see, it has four components and we strongly encourage you to respond to the components that are here. You are not required to if you don't want to, but keep in mind that if you decide not to respond to one or more of these components that that may affect the way external reviewers who are going to review your application

may assign points to it. So it may affect the points that you may get in this or any other section under the selection criteria part. These are the components and you want to make sure you go through them and see how much information you want to provide and do the best you can to provide as much as you can here.

[[00:38:55]] As you can see, each component has an assigned point, the first one has five, second one 10 points, third one 10 points and the fourth one 10 points. Adequacy of resources, next slide; here it talks about the TEA and, again, preliminary agreement and the relationship with either SEA or LEA that would enhance the likelihood of the project's success. So this basically tells you what have you done, what are you doing, what you will be doing that improves; it links it back to basically the purpose of this program. [[00:39:43]] This is your place to talk about what resources there are within your local environment that would address this issue and it has five points. Quality of management plan, how are you going to manage this program? What are the elements that you need to know in order to provide us with the information needed to show that there is a management plan and this is how you're going to do it. That you're going to ensure that there is feedback, continuous feedback and continuous improvement of the project that you propose to carry on. [[00:40:22]] That diversity of perspectives are being brought to bear in your local environment where you are including those of parents, teachers, the business community and a variety of disciplinary and professional fields. These are important to mention because it basically signals to us how viable your project is. Take all the time you need to read this section to see how you can relate to it and basically put your best effort out there. [[00:41:02]] However, when you're covering this portion, remember there is a note here on the slide that when you're addressing the third element of quality of management plan; that's when you talk about the diversity of perspectives. You may also want to consider describing the environment of the SEA and LEA in the project in addition to the input of other affected groups, that's if it applies. Next slide? Quality of Project Personnel. Again you have several components each one with the points; the first two have five points each and the last one also five points. This project personnel basically talks about whether you have a project director, how much experience they have, what kind of professional development services and so forth are provided and so on and so forth. Next slide. [[00:42:10]] Project personnel continued, there are a couple of notes under the project personnel that continue in the next couple of slides. This slide, actually. The note that is in here is basically a

regulatory note that talks about the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistant Act and what it requires. That in addressing the sub-element of the quality of project personnel in this section that you, as an applicant, may want to consider including the context of the training or PD among your three entities, that's your TEA, your SEA and your LEA. [[00:42:56]] It includes an example, for example the SEA or LEA can provide training to the TEA staff as well as federal grants administration consent and in turn the TEA could provide training to SEA and LEA staff as far as cultural competency is concerned. So there is a give and take, a two way street there so that one side doesn't train the other. It's like both TEA, SEA, LEA, they're all training each other. Quality of project evaluation. And here. . . Having a strong evaluation is very very important. The evaluation is about each year of the project, a strong evaluation plan should be included with the application plan and should be used to show how the project is being developed from the beginning to the end of the grant project. [[00:44:01]] The plan should also include benchmarks to monitor progress. This is very important both for us and for you and for each project objective, roles and outcomes. It has to include some kind of assessment that shows how you reached your evaluation, methodology that you're going to be using, how you do it. More specifically, the plan should also identify the individual organizations that have agreed to serve as evaluators. [[00:44:34]] So if you have one it would be good if you identify it. However, that's not always possible and it may be one of those cases where you have to, if you're awarded, you have to hire an evaluator later. That's fine, too. But it would be a good idea to think about what it is you're looking for in an evaluator and speak to that and also what you expect to have in your evaluation as a plan.

- [Bill] Just want to remind folks that if you have a question that's relevant to the section feel free to type it into the chat box for anybody who's joined since.

- [Joyce] We'd like to stop for a moment. We've got a couple of things we need to confer on. We'll be back up in just a moment. [[00:45:26]] [pause] [[00:46:26]] -

[Shahla] Thank you folks we're back again, back to the quality of project evaluation, this is the last slide on that before you can ask or type in questions. Again, to continue this section here is what I'd like to share with you, you want to use the evaluation as a tool to gauge progress throughout the process and this is how we look at it. Develop a time-line for data collection and so on and so forth. For example, if the objective is to provide professional training for teachers, staff

etc. but you don't know where to start, one of the ways you could. . . and this this is just an example, it doesn't say you have to do it. . . is maybe do a pre-post kind of test to gauge the level of expertise and the need for professional development.

[[00:47:21]] That's very important. It helps you design your professional training if that's what you want to do. Also, as many of you know, you have to have buy-in from anyone you deal with. To encourage staff participation, you may provide professional development, that doesn't mean they're going to take it or be interested but if you want to have buy-in try to time these tests in a way that strengthens staff participation. Those are just some of the things I picked up over the years and I wanted to share that with you.

[[00:48:00]] - [Joyce] We see a question that was talking about the number of times that people have been disconnected. We greatly sympathize, we don't know what the reason is for that and thank you very much for your persistence in coming back.

[[00:48:25]] - [Shahla] Thank you Joyce. This is Shahla, I'm back again. To wrap up the project evaluation, someone who kindly brought it to my attention to repeat this. I think I did that before. I want to just take a few seconds and talk about your project narrative and how important it is for you to be as thorough as possible in your project narrative to address those selection criteria. Those components that we included, address those the best you can because it can affect the points you get from those external reviewers. The more complete you are, the more thorough you are, the more chances are that the reviewer will be able to then give points where they can and that way it actually works better for you if that's the case. [[00:49:24]] If you need to have another pair of eyes to look at your project narrative before you're done, before you submit it, please do so. This is something that I have learned. Using myself as an example here, when I do something I like to have someone who doesn't like what I do to look at what I have done so they can criticize me. Of course I have developed a very thick skin to take that kind of. . . I find it very constructive to listen to those who have something to say. That's very important to keep in mind when you're doing your project narrative, when you're putting your application package together to make sure that you're not shortchanging yourself. That concludes the selection criteria portion, now we have the questions [[00:50:18]] We're flagging questions if you have any questions

about any of the areas that I just covered, please add in your chat box. Do they have any?

- [Joyce] No.

- [Shahla] Okay. Seems like there are no questions, so I'm just gonna continue.

- [Joyce] Looks like there are a couple questions.

- [Shahla] Oh, okay. I'll wait. [[00:50:37]] [pause] [[00:51:47]] - [Shahla] That's a very good question, I'm going to turn to our legal staff to respond to that. Could you respond to that Sharon? [[00:52:00]] - [Sharon] This is a circumstance that happens to only a few tribes so if you do have that situation, please contact the office and we'll try to help you work through that. Easier it's probably simpler to do a single state, but that doesn't mean that's your only answer, it's kind of up to you.

- [Shahla] And what we can do. . . this is Shahla, I'm back. We're going to talk more with our legal staff and see if there is more we can say and put it out there so you know about it. Next question?

[[00:52:39]] - [Joy] While folks are typing in more questions I know we've thrown a lot of information at you today. Our goal today was to make sure you have the nuts and bolts of this program. We know it is very dense, but there are going to be future opportunities and future technical assistance where you can get more tailored help and we'll continue to answer your questions. I just want to make sure that people know this was an overview and it will be the first in a series of opportunities to get help on your application. [[00:53:19]] [pause] [[00:53:31]] Hi folks I just wanted to go back to the question about multiple SEA's. I think that this is a situation where you want to think about how big the project is and being realistic. While it might be nice to include as many people as many people as you can and we definitely encourage that, we also want you to be realistic in planning the project so that you're able to reach your goals and have a successful project.

[[00:54:01]] - [Joyce] There are some additional questions here and one question is, "Will funding go through the SEA and is this the only role of the SEA?"

- [Shahla] No, the funding flow does not go through SEA because it's the Tribal Education Agency that will be the primary applicant and/or if awarded the primary grantee.

- [Joyce] The formula grants that you'd be choosing to work with and on, those funds would go and stay with either the SEA or the LEA however.

[[00:54:35]] - [Shahla] We just want to make sure that you understand the distinction between the discretionary grant program we're covering today which is STEP and the ESCA formula grant program that you will be piggy-backing on or coupling with, so to speak, to include in your STEP program project. There is a very clear distinction between how funds are used with respect to the discretionary program that we're covering today versus the formula program that you're including. Those formula program funds do not come directly to you, they are to the LEA through the SEA. But this program, the discretionary program, the funds come directly to you as the applicant and hopefully the awardee. You being the Tribal Education Agency designated by your tribe.

- [Joyce] There's another question for some clarification. If we use an identical document to get the LEA signature, can we attach that to the preliminary agreement to the OSDE?

- [Sharon] OSDE. I wonder if that's Oklahoma State or Ohio. . . Oklahoma State Department of Education.

[[00:56:04]] - [Shahla] The signed agreement that we are talking about is the preliminary agreement and that's a very specific agreement. That's the agreement that must be signed by the TEA, that's the applicant, the SEA and the participating LEA or LEAs. I am not sure what you mean when you say identical, we're not looking for identical.

[[00:56:33]] - [Joyce] We just mentioned it a moment ago it was an answer to an earlier question. The intent with that is if you have 12 signatures of entities together but you can't use a different document, it would need to be the identical document and the signatures would be in different places on that document. That was what we were trying to do our problem solving with you, it isn't that we want to have different documents for any other purpose.

- [Joy] The STEP project would be a partnership between the TEA, LEA and SEA. So it's one project and all of those parties would have to agree to the role that everyone would be doing and therefore it would have to be one agreement that they're signing on to.

[[00:57:37]] - [Joyce] The person is unclear about the minimum of one SEA grant program requirement for application to STEP. The formula grant programs under the Department of Education they are identified in the earlier slides are all statutory programs. Those programs are funded either directly to the state and then dispersed to the LEA or in a couple of occasions they're dispersed directly to the LEA. So those are the programs that can be interacted with by the TEA. And that's on agreement with the state education agency and the local education unit that you are working with as well. So it's oversight those functions of what the state would do with those funds were the state continuing to be directly involved with them. The changes do not affect the reporting or the financial flow.

[[00:58:43]] - [Shahla] If I could add something to that, thank you Joyce. That is the purpose of including the ESEA formula grant program was so that you can engage and. . . remember through this program you can take on certain functions, SEA-type functions. If those programs are not included then taking on certain SEA-type functions may become less clear but through those programs they are more well-defined. So that's one way you can connect to what are those SEA-type functions that I'm interested as a TEA to take on. Maybe there are LEA-type functions you're interested to take on. Either way, it flows from those ESEA formula grant programs that are funded through the state. And so, by including that, it enhances your chances of tapping into many more SEA-type functions or LEA-type functions to take on.

[[00:59:54]] - [Joyce] There was an additional clarification from one of the participants who wanted it to be clarified that they are a multiple state consortium. Based upon working with tribes that have multiple bands that cross state lines and not that they're different tribes. I think that was understood by the responder?

[[01:00:22]] - [Shahla] I'm not quite sure. Maybe we can table that question and come back to it later if you don't mind so we can get a clear response. Do you have anymore?

- [Joyce] Can a university or college become involved in a STEP agreement as an extension of a SEA to assist in professional development, capacity building and/or specialized educator training?

[[01:00:53]] - [Shahla] You used the term agreement. I just want to make sure that when you use the term agreement you're not referring to the preliminary agreement. They do not play any role. The only role that any entity plays are the three entities we included and that is the TEA, SEA and the LEA, participating LEA. Now, if your question is and I'm just guessing here; can you tap into university or higher education entity to provide professional training and so forth? That's goes to your project narrative, how you want to develop the plan you're proposing to carry out, whether you have budget for it. I'll get to the budget in a few minutes and maybe that will be more clear. There is a way for you to tap into that resource or source if you're interested in terms of your contractual section to provide professional training. It sounds like we're done with the questions in this section. Let's move on to. . . I have slide number 30. I don't know what you have. On top it says, Tips: Project Narrative, Priorities, Requirements.

[[01:02:20]] In this slide what I tired to do was give examples basically. We're not telling you this is what you should do, but these are just some tips about how to get started when you're developing your project narrative. These are some of the issues that you may want to think about when developing your project narrative. And keep in mind there is much more you can cover than what you see here. For example, try to explain the SEA-type, LEA-type function. Remember we talked about that earlier, that you as a TEA or applicant in this case would like to perform as it relates to the enhancement of TEA capacity to administer those formula grant programs functions you're interested in. [[01:03:08]] Describe the impact of the TEA's performance and it's connection to students academic outcome. The reason I included that as an example is that the Department of Education, actually one of it's goals that we all adhere to is whatever program is funded through the department is done to improve the student academic outcome. So, see how you can relate that in the way you develop your project narrative, you may want to kind of tap into that. There are many more examples that we can talk about but those are just a few. Next. Now I'm going to cover the budget a little bit. [[01:04:03]] Your STEP budget and budget narrative should, and pay attention to this, provide an itemized budget breakdown for each year of the project. This is very important. Use the

budget grant categories as shown in ED form 524. Please do not invent your own budget categories, use those budgets: personnel, fringe, travel, supplies and so on and so forth. There is a list. Stick to that list and develop your budget accordingly. Clearly explain how these funds will be used so that it shows that you have a plan. Indicate the total amount of funds that will be expended as shown in ED 524 form. [[01:04:54]] Don't leave that to us to guess, you want to tell us how much it is you're asking. Include required travel costs. Like I said, provide an itemized budget for each year of the project, indirect costs is another. Check all budget figures for consistency. So that's your responsibility to make sure the budget you are proposing adds up, so to speak. Indirect costs are allowable. For indirect costs, as most of you know, your cognizant agency is the US Department of Interior, that's the cognizant agency. It's through the Department of Interior that you negotiate a rate agreement. However if you don't want to have an indirect cost rate, if you don't have one with the Department of Interior, you are welcome to contact us for further guidance. That's all I can say about the indirect cost rate now. [[01:06:01]] I have to basically very carefully read this to you. Please pay attention. In accordance with the department grant policy, the Department of Education staff will perform a cost analysis of each recommended project to ensure that costs related to the activities and objectives of the project are reasonable, allowable and allocable. I will get to that what it means later. We also reserve the right to delete or reduce costs from the budget during this review. Make sure that your budget includes travel funds for attending all required meetings during the annual project directors meeting in Washington D.C. each year of the grant. [[01:06:52]] If you're planning, for example, to include contractual expenses; remember one of you were asking earlier about how to tap into universities for professional development activities and so forth? That would typically come under contractual. If you're planning to include contractual expenses in your budget, please make sure that indirect costs are applied to the first \$25,000 of each sub-contract for each year of the project. This is very important because it can affect the total awarded amount if you get to that point. Make sure that you read the necessary OMB regulations and follow that for cost principle. Next slide. I was asked to repeat this and I don't know what this is. Contractual? [[01:08:00]] When you charge indirect costs on a grant and you have contractals included, and say your contractual amount adds up to \$100,000, you can only charge indirect cost to the first \$25,000 of that \$100,000 and that's what should be included in your total costs for that year and that goes

each year of the grant. You cannot charge indirect costs on the \$400,000 that you propose to spend on contractual, just remember that, only the first \$25,000.

[[01:08:50]] Next slide, more tips. As you can see, this presentation is full of tips. Your budget, earlier I mentioned, it should be reasonable, allowable and allocable. Here I have included the links where you can find what reasonable means, what allowable means in the 2 CFR 200 which is the revised or new regulations that was published in 2014, December 2014.

- [Joy] For those of you that have received ED grants before and are familiar with what were called the OMB circulars, all of those have been compiled into the 2 CFR Part 200 regulations. For the STEP grant, the old OMB circulars won't apply, 2 CFR Part 200 will.

- [Shahla] To add to that, they actually made some improvements in terms of how you can find out about certain things. It has an FAQ about the cost and support link that you can go to and read and see if it applies to the situation you're thinking about. [[01:10:09]] Again, reasonable means costs that would be prudent and generally recognized as ordinary and necessary for the grant; that part hasn't changed. Allowable are costs that are identified, again, by OMB cost principle 2 CFR Part 200 and also those are costs that are not prohibited by state or local law. If you're in a state where a certain cost is prohibited but under federal law that may be moot or not apply, your state law says it's prohibited so we have to take that into consideration. Allocable means that it's chargeable to this grant and it's not an indirect cost to be shared among programs and projects. I just want to give you a few examples of unallowable costs without getting deep into it. [[01:11:08]] The examples most of you are familiar with are: incentives, prizes and entertainment. Next slide. [[01:11:18]] Again more tips about your budget and submission. Before you submit, and I can't emphasize how important this is, read the application package in its entirety including the notice inviting application. Structure your narrative according to the selection criteria and here's. . . I just want to ask something. Again, I'm sharing this with you that when you're responding to selection criteria and you're in the needs section and you're thinking about what narrative you want to develop under quality of management plan, do your best not to mix the two. Each section has its section and that's where you need to. . . However, your application will be read in its entirety but where you put the information and how you respond to it can affect the points you earn from the

external reviewers. [[01:12:20]] Be clear, precise and specific in your language. Don't assume that your reader knows what you're talking about. Try to be more specific and give as much information as possible. If you use acronyms like I did today, be wiser than I am and spell it out. Don't assume that your reader knows what those acronyms are about. Read the frequently asked questions section in this application package. Very important. We work very hard to include questions and responses to those questions in that FAQ and I think that you'll be able to take advantage of it, take a few minutes and read through those questions. Be judicious in your use of charts and graphics and tables and other graphics. [[01:13:13]] Charts, tables and graphics may not add more to your point. If there is a point to be made, you want to make sure that if you're including charts and graphics that you follow it up by describing it clearly, explaining it, don't leave it to the reader to decipher what you meant by a chart or graphic. You need to include language in it that says what you meant. Make sure your budget provides detailed descriptions about planned expenditures. This is very important, remember I told you that we will review the budget and we're looking at all those things to see how your budget adds up, how it connects to the program project that you're proposing to carry out. Make sure that the two of them link very closely and directly. [[01:14:02]] Link your budget expenditure, like I said, to proposed activities, very important. If you talk about spending money on contractual but you're not really responding to. . . you're not talking about what activities you have in mind and it's not in your project narrative, it's not anywhere to be found, then that may affect the points you receive. If you're lucky to get to the awarded stage, that may affect the amount of money you receive. Link your budget expenditure. . . oh, I said that already. Have a fresh pair of eyes read your proposal before submission. I think I mentioned that earlier, very important. I know it happens to me all the time and many people I work with. [[01:14:51]] When we work on something and we work for days and days and days, we tend to kind of overlook some of the errors we make. It's human. So having someone else who maybe hasn't seen what you've written down, have someone else look at it and it'll be helpful. If you get someone else to do that for you, that will help you. If you don't understand any instructions or requirements call Shahla Ortega. You've got my number, you've got my email, so you're welcome to call me. Next slide. [[01:15:36]] Application submission. Again these are tips; register early. grants.gov registration is a very complicated, I don't want to say it's complicated, that sounds kind of difficult but it's an involved process. It has

many steps, you have to take many steps and it takes time so allow time for that. You must register in grants.gov if you want to submit, apply and then submit. You must be registered. [[01:16:04]] You must also be registered. . . [[01:16:27]] You must also be registered in what we call SAM and SAM stands for System for Award Management. This is government lingo, but the site is, it's a site that includes many different other little systems. It used to be several systems, you had to go in and register for I don't know, accessing data or creating an account. Not just creating a one stop shop and it's called System for Awards Management but in order for you to access it you have to register and the reason you go to SAM is because you have to register and enter your, what we call your DUN number, I don't remember exactly what that stands for. But that's like an account number for your entity, for your applying. You have to do that. [[01:17:33]] Again it's an evolved process so allow time for that. Again, submit early, do not wait until the last day to submit your application. Verify that your submission is okay, that's very important. Don't assume that just because you think you pressed the submit button it went through. Make sure that grants.gov received your application and it received it on time and it was validated successfully. [[01:18:02]] The system tells you whether it's been validated, be patient and go through all the steps and make sure that it's been validated and it tells you whether it's validated or not. So just because you submitted and you pressed the submit button, it doesn't mean it went through. [[01:18:31]] Just make sure that that's completed. What happens next? Applications that are received on time will be screened for eligibility. If you're deemed ineligible for review during the screening process, you will receive a notification from our office, that's OIE. All eligible applications will be peer-reviewed by a panel comprised of non-federal field readers with relevant experience. Reviewers will evaluate all the applications using the selection criteria, we talked about that earlier and your application package and your federal staff, [[01:19:18]] like I said myself and the OIE office, will conduct budget reviews of the highest scoring applications and make appropriate funding recommendations to the secretary. We don't award, we recommend. It's the secretary's office that, then, approves the recommendations or not. We anticipate that awards will be made in September, 2015. Next slide tells you what attachments to upload. Again for a more complete list of these attachments go to the application package. It's very important to upload these attachments. If there are forms to upload, make sure that you have filled out those forms. Don't upload blank forms, it's the contents we're

looking for so make sure those are properly uploaded. Next slide. [[01:20:14]] The next slide also gives you a list of resources and links that you can go to, it includes SAM, it includes grants.gov, FAQs for STEP and some articles that you can tap into for capacity building and so on and so forth. Next slide. If you have any questions?

[[01:20:39]] - [Joyce] There are a couple of questions. One, I believe you answered unless you want to expand on it is, what are the required travel costs? You mentioned that one time a year coming to D.C. are there any additional required travel costs?

- [Shahla] That depends on the budget that you develop and the project that you propose to carry out. You may have travel to go to the SEA site or the LEA site in which case you probably accrue mileage and various other travel related expenses. This goes to how you plan your project. So I can't tell you that you must include that but the project directors meeting is a must that you have to come to that you have to make sure is included in your budget and it's for each year of the grant. The other example I gave you is optional and it depends on the way you develop your budget and your project.

[[01:21:48]] - [Joyce] Then there's an additional question. Can activities be planned to start as of October 1?

- [Shahla] Our best hope is that this program is awarded by the end of September and we're hoping that's the case.

[[01:22:04]] - [Joyce] Are there any additional questions?

- [Bill] While we're waiting for other questions to come, I know we had a previous request from Trudy Jackson regarding the funding flow from the SEA. And just want to remind folks that in the course of the development of the agreement with the state educational agency or LEA in terms of those state administrative ESEA formula grant programs that were previously identified, it's up to the state to agree if there are any additional sharing of those formula funds. And then, they would also have to be permissible under the activities of that grant. So I just wanted to make sure and share that point that that is an option.

[[01:22:49]] - [Joy] In addition to the flow of money from the SEA I just want to point to an example of how the SEA and the TEA have worked together in a previous grant. For example, the SEA reached out to the TEA to ask for help planning culturally responsive professional development and curriculum assistance. There are other ways besides the financials for the TEA and the SEA to engage.

- [Bill] We just want to take the opportunity to apologize. We may be experiencing some technical difficulty on the voice over internet protocol where we may be cutting in and out to folks. If you experienced some of that please let us know on the chat function or through email so we can make sure and appropriately find out what's happening there and we'll work to rectify that in the next technical assistance session.

[[01:23:57]] - [Joyce] Okay, anymore questions? There appears like there are some questions being typed, unless your hands are sitting on the keyboard.

- [Shahla] We have a few more minutes so go ahead and type your questions. Folks, in a few minutes we're going to open the line. Folks, in a few minutes we're going to open the line, make it available for you. You can come on live and ask your questions if you have any questions. We'll give you two more minutes and then we'll open the line. [[01:24:36]] [pause] [[01:25:58]] - [Isabel] Thank you everyone for hanging in there. We were going to open up the line, but given how many times some folks have gotten disconnected a few times, we think it's best to go ahead and stick with the chat function. If you have any questions, please continue to submit them through the chat box as you have been doing and we will answer them. Thank you.

[[01:26:20]] - [Joyce] The PowerPoint will be. . . We will be providing a link to all the folks who have submitted emails and you will get a link to the PowerPoint and it will have audio and visual attached.

- [Shahla] I hope everyone could hear that. I think some of you wanted to know how to access the PowerPoint. It will be uploaded and you will be notified because you registered, we have your name here, how to access it. It may take 24 hours for the PowerPoint to be uploaded so it will be, what Friday, Monday? No later than Monday. Again, this is Shahla Ortega, you have my contact information. You can

also send me emails, call me, I'm here to help you as much as possible. If you have any questions please let us know. We're going to keep the chat box open for your questions for the next ten minutes. If you have any questions that you want to bring up please type it in the chat box, we're here for the next 10 minutes. So if you have any questions that you want to bring up, please put them in the chat box, we're here for the next 10 minutes. [[01:27:52]] [pause] [[01:28:00]] - [Joy] We'll also make the PowerPoint available on the website for those of you who didn't register. So everyone should be able to get access to the PowerPoint. [[01:28:18]] [pause] [[01:28:38]] - [Joyce] There is a question about the role of the SEA and is it important to gaining tribal council support in the application. For example is MOA required? If the information is included in the application, this person can review this piece with the council.

- [Shahla] I'm going to ask Joyce and . . . what was your name again? Bill Mendoza to respond if you don't mind. Sorry.

[[01:29:13]] - [Bill] No problem. That certainly depends on the tribal context. What is the process and protocols to engage in formal agreement and what authority tribal education agencies have to be able to engage in the preliminary agreements that are required as well as the final agreement for the program. We know that that varies at different stages for tribes across the country. Sometimes it goes to an education committee, sometimes they have the authority to pursue grant opportunities going directly to the tribal councils. So really that's the best guidance that we could give. Joyce do you have any other. . . ?

[[01:29:59]] - [Joyce] Yes, the preliminary agreement is the piece that is required in order to submit the application. It's not exactly a memorandum of agreement in that standard, but it is a prescribed list of topics that you need to address in the agreement between the state, the TEA and the LEAs that will be involved.

- [Isabel] One person asked to bring back the slide that is currently up and they really wanted to address those differences between the demonstration grant and the STEP grant.

[[01:30:45]] - [Joyce] There will be a new webinar, a pre-application webinar also, for the Native Youth Community Project and that will be held on May 14th, at 1:00 in the afternoon Eastern Standard Time. We will also be doing a comparison

with that and we will try to provide additional information with that. We realize that there is a process of decision making that needs to happen at the local level to determine what is the best fit of these different applications that are mutually available to some grantees. [[01:31:32]] Someone else wanted additional information on the federal register.

- [Shahla] Say that again?

- [Female] They wanted additional information on where they can access the Native Youth Community Program.

- [Joyce] The federal register came out on April 28th.

- [Bill] We'll make sure that that federal register notice is sent out to the participants on today's webinar to make sure that you get that again.

[[01:32:05]] - [Joyce] The link will also be as part of the announcement for the NYCP pre-application webinar. So there'll be multiple areas also up on OIE website as well.

[[01:32:37]] - [Bill] With that folks, thank you so much for participating in today's call. If you have any further questions or comments, please refer to the resources that we left with you today. Thank you so much for being with us and we look forward to engaging with you on the future opportunities to take advantage of these two grants; State Tribal Education Grant as well and the Native Youth Community Project. Have a good day.

- [Joyce] Thank you everyone.