

Promise Neighborhoods Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)



**U.S. Department of Education
Office of Innovation and Improvement**

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Purpose of the FAQs

The purpose of these Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) is to provide information about the Promise Neighborhoods Program. The FAQs do not impose any requirements beyond those included in the Promise Neighborhoods Program notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year 2010 (notice) and other applicable laws and regulations. In addition, they do not create or confer any rights for or on any person.

The Department will provide additional or updated program guidance as necessary on its Promise Neighborhoods Web site: www2.ed.gov/programs/promiseneighborhoods/index.html. If you have further questions that are not answered here, please email promiseneighborhoods@ed.gov. We cannot respond to individual questions, but we will post answers to the most frequently asked questions on our Web site.

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A. Purpose

A-1. What is the purpose of a Promise Neighborhoods planning grant?

A Promise Neighborhoods planning grant is a one-year award that will support activities that lead to the development of a plan to implement a Promise Neighborhood. The plan must include the core program features described in the Promise Neighborhoods Program notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year 2010 (notice).

A-2. What are the expected outcomes for the planning year, and what types of planning activities are allowable during the planning year?

The primary expected output during the planning year is a feasible plan to implement a continuum of cradle-through-college-to-career solutions that will significantly improve results for children. Accordingly, the Department is requiring that planning grantees undertake the following activities during the planning year--

- (1) Conduct a comprehensive needs assessment of children along the cradle-through-college-to-career continuum, which builds on the statement of need prepared to address the selection criteria, and includes collecting data for the academic and family and community support indicators described in the notice, for children in the geographic area proposed to be served;
- (2) Conduct a segmentation analysis (as defined in the notice) of the needs in the neighborhood to better target solutions for the children in that neighborhood;
- (3) Develop a plan to deliver the continuum of cradle-through-college-to-career solutions that addresses the challenges identified through the needs assessment and segmentation analysis;
- (4) Work with public and private agencies, organizations (including philanthropic organizations), and individuals to gather and leverage resources to support the financial sustainability of the plan;
- (5) Identify strategies for building upon and leveraging high-quality academic programs and family and community supports, existing and anticipated Federal investments, including the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA); and existing and anticipated investments in neighborhood revitalization efforts and similar place-based initiatives funded by other Federal agencies such as the U.S. Departments of Housing and Urban Development, Health and Human Services, and Justice. Efforts funded by other Federal agencies include programs such as HOPE VI and Choice Neighborhoods, Health Centers, and the Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation and Weed and Seed Programs;
- (6) Build community support for and involvement in the development of the plan, which includes establishing outcomes for children in the neighborhood that are communicated and analyzed on an ongoing basis by leaders and members of the community;
- (7) Obtain commitments from partners to work long-term to implement the plan and help ensure continued programmatic success of their plan, and develop a strategy to hold partners accountable for meeting performance goals and milestones;
- (8) Plan, build, adapt, or expand a comprehensive, longitudinal data management system, while abiding by Federal, State, and other privacy laws and requirements, for all academic and family and community support indicators, as described in the notice, as well as for additional indicators needed for the Promise Neighborhoods evaluation, such as demographic characteristics;
- (9) Work with a national evaluator for Promise Neighborhoods; and
- (10) Participate in a community of practice, as described in the notice.

The Department will monitor the grantees' progress toward completion of these activities. During the planning year, grantees must be able to demonstrate performance, or show significant progress toward completion of activities (1)-(10), including by responding to the Department's questions and concerns regarding progress.

A-3. Has the Department set a limit for the number of grants that will be awarded to any individual State, city, or region? *(from Addendum 1, published May 11, 2010)*

No. The Department has not set any limits regarding the geographic distribution of grant awards. All applications will be evaluated and scored by peer reviewers using the selection criteria described in the notice. The Department will prepare a rank-order list of applications for each absolute priority based solely on the peer reviewers' evaluation of their quality according to the selection criteria. In accordance with 34 CFR 75.217(c)(3), the Department will make final awards after considering the rank ordering and other information including an applicant's performance, use of funds, and compliance history under a previous award under any Department program.

B. Eligible Applicants and Partners

B-1. Who is eligible to apply for a Promise Neighborhoods planning grant?

An eligible applicant for a Promise Neighborhoods planning grant is an eligible entity (as defined in the notice, and below) that operates a school or partners, in coordination with the school's local educational agency (LEA), with at least one school in the geographic area¹ proposed to be served. In cases where an eligible entity operates a school or partners with a school that does not serve all students in the neighborhood, the applicant must partner with at least one additional school or schools that serves students in the neighborhood. The Department of Education (Department) strongly encourages eligible applicants also to partner with entities such as the LEA; Federal, State and local government leaders; and providers of family and community supports (as defined in the notice).

An eligible entity is an entity that--

- a) Is representative of the geographic area proposed to be served (as defined in the notice);
- b) Is one of the following:
 - i. A nonprofit organization that meets the definition of a nonprofit under 34 CFR 77.1(c), which may include a faith-based nonprofit organization; or
 - ii. An institution of higher education as defined by section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended; and
- c) Currently provides at least one of the solutions from the applicant's continuum of solutions in the geographic area proposed to be served.

For the purposes of Absolute Priority 3 (Promise Neighborhoods in Tribal Communities), an eligible applicant is an eligible entity that partners with an Indian Tribe, or an Indian Tribe that meets the definition of an eligible entity. An eligible applicant for Absolute Priority 3 must also operate a school or partner, in coordination with the school's LEA, with at least one school in the geographic area proposed to be served.

B-2. May a consortium of eligible entities apply for a Promise Neighborhoods planning grant?

No. Only a single eligible entity may apply for a Promise Neighborhoods planning grant.

B-3. How does an entity, excluding an institution of higher education, provide verification that it meets the definition of a nonprofit organization as defined under 34 CFR 77.1(c)?

Consistent with 34 CFR 75.51(b), an entity may show that it is a nonprofit organization (as defined under 34 CFR 77.1(c)) by providing any of the following:

- (1) Proof that the Internal Revenue Service currently recognizes the applicant as an organization to which contributions are tax deductible under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code;
- (2) A statement from a State taxing body or the State attorney general certifying that:
 - (i) The organization is a nonprofit organization operating within the State; and

¹ For the purposes of this document, the Department uses the terms "neighborhood" and "geographic area" interchangeably.

- (ii) No part of its net earnings may lawfully benefit any private shareholder or individual;
- (3) A certified copy of the applicant's certificate of incorporation or similar document if it clearly establishes the nonprofit status of the applicant; or
- (4) Any item described in paragraphs (1) through (3) of this section [immediately above] if that item applies to a State or national parent organization, together with a statement by the State or parent organization that the applicant is a local nonprofit affiliate.

Documentation verifying the nonprofit status should be included in Appendix E of the application.

B-4. Is there a requirement for matching funds?

Yes, an applicant must demonstrate it has received a commitment from one or more entities in the public or private sector, which may include philanthropic organizations, to provide matching funds, excluding other Federal funds, for the planning process. An applicant must obtain matching funds or in-kind donations for the planning process equal to at least 50 percent of its requested grant award, except that an applicant proposing a project that meets the criterion for Absolute Priority 2 or Absolute Priority 3 must obtain matching funds or in-kind donations equal to at least 25 percent of their requested grant award. In addition, the applicant must specify the source of the cost or contribution and, in the case of a third-party in-kind contribution, a description of how the value was determined for the donated or contributed goods or service. Applicants must demonstrate the match commitment by including letters in their applications explaining the type and quantity of the match commitment, including original signatures from the executives of organizations or agencies providing the match.

The Secretary may consider decreasing the matching requirement in the most exceptional circumstances, on a case-by-case basis. An applicant that anticipates being unable to meet the matching requirement must include in its application a request to the Secretary to reduce the matching requirement, including the amount of the requested reduction and a statement of the basis for the request.

For more FAQs about the matching requirement, *see* [I: Matching Requirement](#).

B-5. May a Promise Neighborhoods planning grants be used to plan to “scale up” existing cradle-through-college-to-career activities beyond the geographic area that an applicant is currently serving?

Yes. An applicant that has been serving children, and has already achieved significant results with those children, in a target geographic area prior to applying for a Promise Neighborhoods planning grant may propose to use planning grant funds to develop a plan to expand services and scale up beyond this initial area to serve children in a new neighborhood. An applicant proposing to plan to “scale up” existing activities in a new neighborhood must partner with at least one organization or entity that provides at least one of the solutions from the applicant’s proposed continuum of solutions in the geographic area proposed to be served.

B-6. May a newly created eligible entity apply for a Promise Neighborhoods planning grant?

Yes; however, a newly created eligible entity must still meet one of the absolute priorities as well as the other requirements set forth in the notice. Under the absolute priorities, an applicant must provide a

description of its organizational capacity to plan and implement a proposed Promise Neighborhood. In the case of a newly created eligible entity, the applicant must describe the prior performance of its management team in developing and managing projects or programs similar to the proposed Promise Neighborhood.

B-7. May an eligible applicant that does not currently have a governing board or advisory board that meets the criteria described in the definition of “representative of the geographic area proposed to be served” create a new advisory board or modify an existing board in order to be eligible to apply for a Promise Neighborhood planning grant?

An eligible applicant may create a new advisory board or modify an existing board so long as the governing board or advisory board meets the definition of “representative of the geographic area proposed to be served” and is established before the applicant submits its Promise Neighborhood planning grant application.

B-8. May an eligible applicant that proposes to serve a community with a migrant population apply for a Promise Neighborhoods planning grant, given that proposals must focus on a defined geographic area and migrant children and families will likely reside only temporarily in such an area?

Yes. Promise Neighborhoods planning grants will support activities that lead to a plan to create a continuum of services that supports communities in distress and all children who live within them. The notice does not exclude any group of children in a community or any particular type of distressed community.

B-9. The notice states that a maximum of one-half of the Promise Neighborhood’s governing or advisory board may be made up of “public officials.” How does the Department define “public official?”

A public official (as defined in the notice) means elected officials (e.g., council members, aldermen and women, commissioners, State legislators, Congressional representatives, members of the school board), appointed public officials (e.g., members of a planning or zoning commission, or of any other regulatory or advisory boards or commissions), or individuals who are not necessarily public officials, but who have been appointed by a public official to serve on the Promise Neighborhoods governing board or advisory board.

B-10. Are Indian tribes eligible to apply for Promise Neighborhoods planning grants? (from Addendum 1, published May 11, 2010)

In order to be eligible for a Promise Neighborhoods planning grant, an entity must be able to demonstrate, among other requirements, that it is either a nonprofit organization that meets the definition of a nonprofit under 34 CFR 77.1(c) or an institution of higher education as defined by section 101(a) of the HEA. An Indian tribe that meets one of these definitions is eligible to apply for a Promise Neighborhoods planning grant so long as it also meets all of the other eligibility requirements described in the notice. For further guidance on verifying nonprofit status, *see* B-3.

B-11. If an entity has both a governing board and an advisory board, must both boards be “representative of the geographic area proposed to be served,” as defined in the notice, in order for the entity to be eligible to receive a grant? (from Addendum 1, published May 11, 2010)

No. To be considered "representative of the geographic area proposed to be served," an eligible entity must have at least one governing or advisory board that meets the definition of "representative of the geographic area proposed to be served," as defined in the notice, and residents of the geographic area proposed to be served must have an active role in the organization's decision-making. An entity is not required to have both a governing board and an advisory board that meets these requirements.

B-12. What entity may act as the fiscal agent for a Promise Neighborhoods planning grant? (from Addendum 2, published May 18, 2010)

The Department will award a Promise Neighborhoods planning grant to the applicant, which then becomes the grantee. Under all Department grant programs, the grantee is the fiscal agent. A grantee may rely on a third party to perform fiscal management functions related to its Promise Neighborhoods grant. The grantee, however, remains the fiscal agent for the grant and, as such, is responsible for ensuring that grant funds are used for allowable and documented costs.

As described in the eligibility section of the notice, an eligible applicant (and, if successful, a grantee) may be:

- A nonprofit organization that meets the definition of a nonprofit under 34 CFR 77.1(c); or
- An institution of higher education as defined by section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended.

B-13. Is an eligible entity required to have an office or headquarters located in the geographic area proposed to be served? (from Addendum 3, published May 25, 2010)

No. However, an eligible entity is required to be representative of the geographic area proposed to be served (as defined in the notice) and must currently be providing at least one of the solutions from the applicant's proposed continuum of solutions in the geographic area proposed to be served.

B-14. May an entity apply for a Promise Neighborhoods planning grant if that entity does not currently meet the definition of an eligible entity but anticipates being able to meet that definition at some point after the application deadline? (from Addendum 3, published May 25, 2010)

No. In order to be eligible for a Promise Neighborhoods planning grant, an entity must meet all of the eligibility requirements on or before the application deadline date. An entity that does not meet the definition of a nonprofit organization under 34 CFR 77.1(c) or the definition of an institution of higher education as defined by section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, on or before June 25, 2010 is not eligible to apply for a Promise Neighborhoods planning grant.

B-15. Has the Department established any limits or restrictions on the number of applications that a single entity may submit or the number of applicants that a single entity may partner with? (from Addendum 4, published June 2, 2010)

No. The Department has not established any limits or restrictions on the number of applications that a single entity may submit or partnerships in which a single entity may take part. However, the Department will not provide funding to support the implementation of duplicate projects or pay for the same costs more than once.

B-16. May an eligible entity propose to serve a geographic area located in the outlying areas? *(from Addendum 5, published June 7, 2010)*

Yes. An eligible entity may propose to serve a geographic area in the outlying areas (as defined in Section 9101(30) of the ESEA), which include Puerto Rico, United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and, because Promise Neighborhoods is a discretionary grant program, the Freely Associated States of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of Palau.

B-17. If an entity uses an advisory board to meet the definition of “representative of the geographic area proposed to be served,” are there additional requirements beyond those described in the notice that the advisory board must meet? *(from Addendum 5, published June 7, 2010)*

No. In order for an entity to be considered “representative of the geographic area proposed to be served,” residents of that geographic area must have an active role in decision-making and at least one-third of the eligible entity’s governing board or advisory board must meet the descriptions in paragraphs (a)-(d) of the definition of “representative of the geographic area proposed to be served,” in the notice. The Department has not established any additional requirements for an advisory board. *See* B-7 for additional information regarding newly created boards.

B-18. Must an eligible applicant currently provide solutions in at least one school in order to meet the eligibility requirement of operating or partnering with at least one school? *(from Addendum 7, published June 22, 2010)*

No. An eligible applicant is not required to currently provide solutions in a school in order to be eligible for a Promise Neighborhoods planning grant. However, an applicant who does not operate a school must describe how it will partner, in coordination with the school’s LEA, with at least one school during the planning year, and that school partner should be included in the memorandum of understanding. In addition, an eligible entity must currently provide at least one solution from the proposed continuum of solutions in the geographic area proposed to be served.

C. Priorities

C-1. Are there requirements on the number of students that must be served in a Promise Neighborhood?

No; however, the Department expects that the goal of every proposed Promise Neighborhood will be to ensure that children in the geographically defined area improve academic and developmental outcomes from the cradle through college to career, thereby improving the likelihood that children will have the tools, resources, and supports to succeed academically. An applicant should ensure that its management plan is adequate to support the proposed activities that lead to the development of a plan to implement a Promise Neighborhood.

C-2. What does it mean to break down agency “silos” as cited in the Purpose of Program section of the notice?

Breaking down agency “silos” means ensuring that multiple public agencies at the Federal, State, or local levels work together to share information, plan jointly, focus on improving outcomes, and ensure that outcomes are shared, communicated, and analyzed on an on-going basis. When agencies break down “silos,” they can more efficiently and effectively provide comprehensive services to address the needs of children and families in distressed communities.

C-3. What is the Department’s definition of “need” in the context of Promise Neighborhoods?

The notice describes the types of need that communities served by Promise Neighborhood projects are likely to have but does not include a single, specific definition of need. Applicants must describe the geographically defined area to be served and the level of distress in that area based on indicators of need (as defined in the notice) and other relevant indicators.

C-4. Will an applicant that plans to coordinate its proposed project with other neighborhood revitalization efforts supported by other Federal funds receive preference in the Promise Neighborhoods competition?

Peer reviewers will use the project design selection criterion to rate applications on the extent to which a proposed project will be coordinated with similar or related efforts, and with other appropriate community, State, and Federal resources. The Department encourages applicants to build upon and leverage existing and anticipated investments in programs funded under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) and existing and anticipated investments in neighborhood revitalization efforts and other initiatives from Federal agencies such as the Departments of Housing and Urban Development, Health and Human Services, and Justice; examples of these initiatives include HOPE VI, Choice Neighborhoods, Health Centers, Children’s Systems of Care, Project Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Children’s Health (LAUNCH), and Weed and Seed.

C-5. Must an applicant meet Absolute Priorities 1, 2, and 3 in order to be considered for a Promise Neighborhoods planning grant?

No. An applicant must meet one of the three absolute priorities, as described in the notice. An applicant must indicate in its application whether the applicant is applying under Absolute Priority 1, Absolute

Priority 2, or Absolute Priority 3. An applicant that applies under Absolute Priority 2 but is not eligible for funding under Absolute Priority 2, or applies under Absolute Priority 3 but is not eligible for funding under Absolute Priority 3 may be considered for funding under Absolute Priority 1, provided that the applicant meets the requirements under Absolute Priority 1.

C-6. May an applicant propose to serve neighborhoods in both rural and non-rural communities in a single application?

Yes. Applicants may propose to serve multiple, non-contiguous geographically defined areas that include both a rural community and a non-rural community. In cases where an applicant proposes to serve a rural and non-rural community through a single grant, the applicant must explain its rationale for including both communities and will be scored under Absolute Priority 1.

C-7. What does it mean to “scale up” a proposed Promise Neighborhood in a rural community?

To “scale up” a proposed Promise Neighborhood in a rural community may mean serving additional neighborhoods within a town, serving children in an additional defined geographic area within the county but outside the initial neighborhood, or expanding to neighboring towns or counties.

C-8. Must the geographic area proposed to be served demonstrate a specified minimum level of need?
(from Addendum 1, published May 11, 2010)

The Department has not established a minimum threshold of need for the geographic area proposed to be served by an eligible applicant. Applicants must describe the geographically defined area to be served and the level of distress in that area based on indicators of need (as defined in the notice) and other relevant indicators. Peer reviewers will consider the need for the proposed project, including the magnitude or severity of the problems to be addressed by the project, as well as the extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructures, or opportunities will be identified and addressed by the project.

C-9. Is an eligible applicant required to operate or partner with at least one target school that is within the geographic area proposed to be served? *(from Addendum 2, published May 18, 2010)*

Yes. Eligible applicants must operate or partner with at least one target school described in paragraph 2(a)(i), 2(a)(ii), or 2(a)(iii) of Absolute Priority 1² that is within the geographic area proposed to be served. In cases where an eligible applicant operates or partners with a target school that does not serve all students in the neighborhood, the applicant must partner with at least one additional school that serves students in the neighborhood.

² Paragraphs 2(a)(i), 2(a)(ii), and 2(a)(iii) of Absolute Priority 1 in the notice refer to a persistently lowest-achieving school, a low-performing school, and an effective school (all as described in the notice), respectively.

C-10. Is an eligible applicant permitted to partner with a school that is located outside of the geographic area proposed to be served? *(from Addendum 2, published May 18, 2010)*

Yes, an eligible applicant may partner with a school that is located outside of the geographic area proposed to be served, so long as the applicant also partners with at least one target school that is within the geographic area proposed to be served.

C-11. What types of applications meet the requirements of Absolute Priority 2: Promise Neighborhoods in Rural Communities? *(from Addendum 3, published May 25, 2010)*

In order to meet the requirements of Absolute Priority 2, an applicant must (1) meet all requirements in Absolute Priority 1; and (2) propose a project that will serve one or more rural communities only. As defined in the notice, “rural community” means a community that is served by an LEA that is currently eligible under the Small Rural School Achievement (SRSA) program or the Rural and Low-Income School (RLIS) program authorized under Title VI, Part B of the ESEA. An applicant may determine whether a particular LEA is eligible under these programs by referring to information on the following Department Web sites. For the SRSA program, see www.ed.gov/programs/reapsrsa/eligible09/index.html. For the RLIS program, see www.ed.gov/programs/reaprlisp/eligible09/index.html.

C-12. What types of applications will meet the requirements of Absolute Priority 3: Promise Neighborhoods in Tribal Communities? *(from Addendum 3, published May 25, 2010)*

In order to meet the requirements of Absolute Priority 3, an applicant must (1) meet all requirements in Absolute Priority 1; (2) propose a project that will serve one or more Indian tribes; and (3) either partner with an Indian tribe (as defined in the notice) or be an Indian tribe that meets the definition of an eligible entity.

C-13. The notice states that one possible indicator of family and community support need is the percentage of the residents living at or below the Federal poverty threshold. What are the current Federal poverty thresholds? *(from Addendum 3, published May 25, 2010)*

Federal poverty thresholds can be found at:
<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/threshld/thresh09.html>.

C-14. May an applicant propose to partner with a school or schools that is not one of the three types of target schools described in paragraphs 2(a)(i), 2(a)(ii), and 2(a)(iii) of Absolute Priority 1³? (from Addendum 3, published May 25, 2010)

Applicants are required to partner with at least one target school that is either a persistently lowest-achieving school, a low-performing school, or an effective school (all as described in the notice), within the geographic area proposed to be served (*see* paragraphs 2(a)(i), 2(a)(ii), and 2(a)(iii) of Absolute Priority 1). An applicant that meets this requirement may partner with additional schools that do not fall within any of these three categories of schools.

C-15. Are applicants required to operate or partner with a target school that is a high school? (from Addendum 3, published May 25, 2010)

No. Applicants are required to operate or partner with a target school or schools that is one of the three types of target schools described in paragraphs 2(a)(i), 2(a)(ii), and 2(a)(iii) of Absolute Priority 1. There are no requirements for the grade levels that must be served by the target school or schools described in a planning grant application. However, applicants are required to propose how they will create a feasible plan to implement a complete continuum of cradle-through-college-to-career solutions for children in the target school or schools, which includes programs, policies, and personnel that are linked to improved academic outcomes for children in kindergarten through the 12th grade. In addition, applicants must ensure, as appropriate, that children in the neighborhood who do not attend the target school or schools have access to solutions designed to significantly improve educational and developmental outcomes.

C-16. Must applicants describe how they will plan to provide a complete continuum of solutions for all students who attend the target school or schools, or only those students who attend the target school or schools and live in the Promise Neighborhood? (from Addendum 3, published May 25, 2010)

The plan to be developed by the applicant must ensure that children *who attend the target school or schools and live in the Promise Neighborhood* have access to a complete continuum of solutions. Applicants must also ensure, *as appropriate*, that children in the neighborhood who do not attend the target school or schools have access to solutions designed to significantly improve educational and developmental outcomes.

C-17. Is an eligible applicant required to describe a project indicator for each of the academic and family and community support results listed in the notice? (from Addendum 3, published May 25, 2010)

An applicant must use the academic results indicators described in Table 1 of the notice as project indicators; an applicant may, but is not required to develop or describe additional project indicators for academic results. For family and community support results, an applicant may either: (a) use the indicators in Table 2 of the notice as project indicators; or (b) develop and describe other project indicators that align with the goals and objectives of its project for each of the family and community results.

³ Paragraphs 2(a)(i), 2(a)(ii), and 2(a)(iii) of Absolute Priority 1 in the notice refer to a persistently lowest-achieving school, a low-performing school, and an effective school (all as described in the notice), respectively.

C-18. Where can applicants find a list of the persistently lowest-achieving schools identified by their State? *(from Addendum 4, published June 2, 2010)*

Information regarding the persistently lowest-achieving schools for a number of States can be found at the following Department Web site: <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/summary/index.html>. This list includes only those States whose School Improvement Grant applications have been approved by the Department; applications from other States are currently under review and will be added to the Web site as they are approved. Applicants from States whose applications are not provided on this Web site should contact their State educational agencies directly for this information.

C-19. Is an eligible applicant required to partner with a target school that is a persistently lowest-achieving school or a low-performing school? *(from Addendum 4, published June 2, 2010)*

An eligible applicant must partner with at least one target school described in paragraph 2(a)(i), 2(a)(ii), or 2(a)(iii) of Absolute Priority 1. This school may be a persistently lowest-achieving school, a low-performing school, or an effective school (all as defined in the notice). In cases where an eligible applicant operates or partners with a school that does not serve all students in the neighborhood, the applicant must partner with at least one additional school that serves students in the neighborhood.

C-20. Is an eligible applicant required to identify in its application the organizations that will provide each of the solutions in the continuum of solutions? *(from Addendum 4, published June 2, 2010)*

Yes. As part of the description of how the applicant will plan to build a continuum of solutions, the applicant must identify one or more partners that will participate in the implementation of each solution (in any case in which the applicant will not implement the solution directly).

C-21. Must an eligible applicant identify the project director and other project personnel in its planning grant application? *(from Addendum 5, published June 7, 2010)*

An applicant is not required to identify the project director or other project personnel in its application. However, as part of their review of applications, peer reviewers will consider the quality of the project personnel who will carry out the proposed project (*see* selection criterion, “Quality of Project Personnel”). Specifically, reviewers will consider the qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the applicant, including the project director, and the prior performance of the applicant on efforts similar or related to the proposed Promise Neighborhood.

C-22. What requirements has the Department established for an applicant’s partnership with a school that is not a target school, as described in paragraph 2(c) of Absolute Priority 1? *(from Addendum 6, published June 14, 2010)*

As described in paragraph 2(c) of Absolute Priority 1, an eligible applicant that operates or partners with a target school that does not serve all students in the neighborhood must partner with at least one additional school that serves students in the neighborhood. The Department has not established any specific requirements regarding this partnership, but an applicant might work with the school partner to ensure, as appropriate, that children in the neighborhood who do not attend the target school or schools have access to solutions designed to significantly improve educational and developmental outcomes, as described in

paragraph 2(b) of Absolute Priority 1. It should be noted that under the selection criteria “Quality of Project Design” and “Quality of Project Services,” peer reviewers will evaluate each application on the extent to which the proposed plan will build a continuum of solutions designed to significantly improve the academic and family and community support indicators and the likelihood that the services to be provided by the proposed project will lead to improvements in the achievement of students as measured against rigorous academic standards.

C-23. How can an applicant identify the low-performing schools in its State? *(from Addendum 6, published June 14, 2010)*

As defined in the notice, low-performing schools are schools receiving assistance through Title I that are in corrective action or restructuring, as determined by the State educational agency under section 1116 of the ESEA, and the secondary schools (both middle and high schools) in the State that are equally as low-achieving as these Title I schools and are eligible for, but do not receive, Title I funds. States are required to identify schools that are in corrective action or restructuring and make this information available to the public. Applicants should refer to their State educational agencies for current information about the low-performing schools in their States.

C-24. May an eligible applicant propose to partner with a target school that is currently implementing one of the four school intervention models? *(from Addendum 7, published June 22, 2010)*

Yes. An eligible applicant may propose to partner with a target school that is currently implementing one of the four school intervention models described in paragraph 2(a)(i) of Absolute Priority 1.

D. Target Population and Neighborhood

- D-1. In order for an eligible entity to be considered “representative of the geographic area proposed to be served,” residents of the geographic area must have an active role in the organization’s decision-making. How will the Department determine whether community residents truly play an active role in decision-making?**

In the preliminary memorandum of understanding described in paragraph 5 of Absolute Priority 1, applicants must describe the governance structure of the proposed Promise Neighborhood, including how the eligible entity’s governing board or advisory board is representative of the geographic area proposed to be served, and how residents of the geographic area have an active role in the organization’s decision making. This will provide the Department with information to determine whether community residents play an active role in the organization’s decision-making for the proposed Promise Neighborhood.

- D-2. May solutions supported by a Promise Neighborhoods grant occur outside of school buildings?**

Yes. Although improving and supporting schools is the centerpiece of the Promise Neighborhoods Program, and schools will likely be the home of many solutions along the cradle-through-college-to-career continuum, the Department acknowledges that learning occurs in many settings within a community and may occur outside of school buildings. Applicants are strongly encouraged to partner with entities such as an LEA; Federal, State, and local government leaders; and providers of family and community supports, all of which may deliver solutions in a variety of settings.

- D-3. Has the Department established requirements for the size of the geographic area to be served by a proposed Promise Neighborhood?**

No. There are no requirements regarding the size of the geographic area to be served by a proposed Promise Neighborhood. Furthermore, the geographic area to be served need not be geographically contiguous. The geographic area must be determined by indicators of need (as defined in the notice). Moreover, applicants should ensure that their management plan is adequate to achieve the objectives of the proposed budget on time and within budget.

- D-4. Must the geographically defined area of the proposed Promise Neighborhood align with the attendance zone of the school with which the eligible applicant proposes to partner?**

No. Although there may be programmatic benefits, such as easier data collection, in aligning the geographic boundaries of the proposed geographic area with school attendance zones or other geographically defined boundaries such as census tracts, the Department believes that eligible applicants are best positioned to determine the geographic boundaries of their proposed Promise Neighborhoods.

- D-5. May a geographically defined area include more than one governmental jurisdiction, e.g., two cities?**

Yes. Although there may be programmatic benefits, such as easier data collection, in creating the geographic boundaries of the proposed geographic area within a single governmental jurisdiction, the

Department believes that eligible applicants are best positioned to determine the geographic boundaries of their proposed Promise Neighborhoods.

D-6. As described in the notice, one indicator of academic need is that all or a portion of a neighborhood includes or is within the attendance zone of a low-performing school that is a high school, especially one in which the graduation rate (as defined in the notice) is less than 60 percent. Does this mean that eligible applicants are required to propose to serve a geographic area that includes the attendance zone of a high school in which the graduation rate is less than 60 percent? (from Addendum 4, published June 2, 2010)

No. However, an eligible applicant must propose to serve a geographically defined area in which there are multiple signs of distress based on indicators of need (as defined in the notice), which include both academic and family and community support needs, as well as other relevant indicators. One of the indicators of academic need that an applicant may include in its description of need is that all or a portion of a neighborhood includes or is within the attendance zone of a low-performing school that is a high school, especially one in which the graduation rate (as defined in the notice) is less than 60 percent.

E. Project Design

E-1. What is a continuum of cradle-through-college-to-career solutions?

A continuum of cradle-through-college-to-career solutions is defined in the notice as a set of programs, policies, practices, services, systems, and supports, with strong schools at the center, designed to ensure that children in a Promise Neighborhood improve academic and developmental outcomes from cradle through college to career. These solutions must be based on the best available evidence including, where available, strong or moderate evidence (as defined in the notice), be linked and integrated seamlessly (as defined in the notice), and include both academic programs and family and community supports (both as defined in the notice).

E-2. Must an applicant for a Promise Neighborhood planning grant include in its grant application its proposal to create a plan to implement a full continuum of cradle-through-college-to-career solutions for children in its proposed Promise Neighborhood?

Yes. Planning grant applicants must describe in their application how they will use the one-year planning period to create a plan to implement a full continuum of cradle-through-college-to-career solutions that is designed to ensure that children in the target school or schools described in paragraph 2(a)(i), 2(a)(ii), or 2(a)(iii) of the notice have access to a complete continuum of solutions. The plan to be developed by the applicant must also ensure, as appropriate, that children in the neighborhood who do not attend the target school or schools have access to solutions designed to significantly improve educational outcomes and to support their healthy development and well-being. In addition, applicants must explain how they will use their needs assessment and segmentation analysis to determine the children with the highest needs and ensure that they will receive the appropriate services to meet academic and developmental outcomes.

E-3. Are planning grantees expected to pilot or fully implement cradle-through-college-to-career solutions during the planning year or to produce a plan for implementation of the solutions?

Applicants for Promise Neighborhoods planning grants are likely to be at different points of readiness when they begin the planning process. Because the definition of an eligible entity requires an applicant to currently provide at least one of the solutions from the applicant's proposed continuum of cradle-through-college-to-career solutions, the Department anticipates that some solutions will be implemented during the planning year. Applicants may propose to pilot some solutions during the planning year; however, the primary expected output during the planning year is a feasible plan to implement a complete continuum of solutions for children in the target school or schools described in paragraph 2(a)(i), 2(a)(ii), or 2(a)(iii) of the notice.

E-4. Does the Department expect that some or all of the solutions in the cradle-through-college-to-career continuum will be provided by partner organizations based in the proposed Promise Neighborhood?

The Department believes there are many programmatic benefits of providing solutions that are developed and managed by organizations based in the proposed Promise Neighborhood. This is why the Department is requiring that an eligible applicant be a nonprofit organization or institution of higher education that is representative of the geographic area proposed to be served; and that currently provides at least one of the solutions from the applicant's continuum of solutions in the geographic area proposed to be served. There is, however, no requirement that all solutions be provided by organizations based in

the proposed neighborhood. The primary focus in developing and selecting solutions must be whether the solutions will significantly improve the educational outcomes and support the healthy development and well-being of children in the neighborhood.

E-5. Will preference be given to applications that combine efforts from multiple neighborhoods from the same city or geographic area?

No, the Secretary will not give any competitive preference to regional or consolidated applications. However, the Department strongly encourages applicants to develop partnerships with LEAs; Federal, State, and local government leaders; and providers of family and community supports.

E-6. What is the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act of 2009 (ARRA), and what are examples of ARRA programs with which Promise Neighborhood grantees are encouraged to coordinate?

The ARRA is the economic stimulus package enacted by Congress in February, 2009. Funds made available under ARRA are used to expand programs such as Early Head Start, Community Development Block Grants, School Improvement Grants, and the National School Lunch Program. Promise Neighborhoods grantees are encouraged to coordinate with these and other federally funded programs. More information about the ARRA is available at <http://www.recovery.gov>.

E-7. Is there a minimum amount of funds that an eligible applicant must request in its application for a Promise Neighborhoods Planning Grant? (from Addendum 1, published May 11, 2010)

No. The Department has not prescribed a minimum amount of funds that an eligible applicant must request in its application. An eligible applicant should request the amount of funds necessary to carry out the planning activities described in the notice, including developing a feasible plan to implement a continuum of solutions with the potential to improve results for children in the community being served. The Department estimates that awards will range between \$400,000 and \$500,000. The Department does not intend to award any grant to an applicant with a budget exceeding \$500,000.

E-8. Are applicants expected to plan to implement their complete continuum of cradle-through-college-to-career solutions at the end of the planning year, or may they plan to build up the complete continuum over a period of time? (from Addendum 2, published May 18, 2010)

The Department believes that applicants are best positioned to determine the timing of the eventual implementation of their continuum of solutions. The primary expected output during the planning year is a feasible plan to implement a complete continuum of solutions for children in the target school or schools described in paragraph 2(a)(i), 2(a)(ii), or 2(a)(iii) of Absolute Priority 1.

E-9. When will planning grant funds be available to selected grantees? (from Addendum 2, published May 18, 2010)

Planning grants will be awarded no later than September 30, 2010. The full amount of funding for the planning grant will be awarded to grantees at the time the initial grant is made.

E-10. How may a Promise Neighborhoods grantee draw down funds to pay for expenses related to its grant? (from Addendum 2, published May 18, 2010)

Although the full amount of funding for the planning grant will be awarded to grantees at the time the initial grant is made, Parts 74 of EDGAR provides that grantees should minimize the period of time between their drawdown of grant funds (i.e., the transfer of those funds to a grantee from the U.S. Treasury), and the use of those funds by the grantee to pay for grant related expenses.

E-11. Will selected grantees be required to plan to implement the exact continuum of solutions described in their planning grant applications, or may they adapt their proposed solutions in response to the needs assessment, segmentation analysis, and other activities that take place during the planning year? (from Addendum 4, published June 2, 2010)

The Department recognizes that applicants will be at different points of readiness, in terms of developing a plan, when they apply for a planning grant. As part of their proposal to plan to build a continuum of solutions, applicants must propose solutions that the applicant will plan to implement in the geographic area proposed to be served, describe the evidence supporting each solution, and propose one or more partners that will participate in the implementation of each solution (in any case in which the applicant does not implement the solution directly). During the planning year, applicants will develop a plan to deliver the continuum of solutions that addresses the challenges and gaps identified through the needs assessment and segmentation analysis. The Department expects that grantees will use data gathered from these activities to inform decision-making and manage implementation of the solutions proposed in the planning application.

E-12. Must an eligible applicant's proposal include a plan to implement one of the four school intervention models⁴ in the proposed target school? (from Addendum 5, published June 7, 2010)

As described in Absolute Priority 1 of the notice, all eligible applicants must partner with at least one target school that is either a persistently lowest-achieving school, a low-performing school, or an effective school (all as described in the notice). An applicant that partners with a target school that is a *persistently lowest-achieving school* must plan to implement one of the four school intervention models (turnaround model, restart model, school closure, or transformation model). An applicant that partners with a target school that is a *low-performing school that is not also a persistently lowest-achieving school* must implement ambitious, rigorous, and comprehensive interventions to assist, augment, or replace the school, which may include implementing one of the four school intervention models, or may include another model of sufficient ambition, rigor, and comprehensiveness to significantly improve academic and other outcomes for students, with elements that address the effectiveness of teachers and leaders and the school's use of time and resources, including increased learning time (as defined in the notice). An applicant that partners with a target school that is an *effective school* must support and sustain that school by providing academic programs in a manner that significantly enhances and expands current efforts to improve the academic outcomes of the children in the neighborhood.

⁴ The four school intervention models are the turnaround model, restart model, school closure, and transformation model described in Appendix C of the Race to the Top Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for FY 2010, 74 FR 59836, 59866 (November 18, 2009)

F. Data Collection and Reporting

F-1. What demographic data must an applicant provide in its application?

Applicants must describe the geographically defined area they propose to serve. This description must include an explanation of the level of distress present in the area based on (1) indicators of need (academic and family and community support) as defined in the notice, and (2) other relevant indicators.

F-2. What types of data must Promise Neighborhoods grantees collect during the planning year?

Grantees will collect data for its needs assessment that includes academic and family and community support program indicators (as defined in the notice) that are prescribed by the Department. Grantees may also develop and use their own family and community support project indicators (as defined in the notice) that reflect the specific needs in their communities and for which they will develop solutions. Grantees must report data on program and project indicators to the Department. For additional information on these indicators and their use, please refer to Table 1 and Table 2 in the notice. Grantees must also work with the Department and with a national evaluator for Promise Neighborhoods to ensure that data collection and program design are consistent with plans to conduct a rigorous national evaluation of the Promise Neighborhoods program during the implementation phase and of specific solutions and strategies pursued by individual grantees.

F-3. What measures should applicants consider to assess the learning and development of three-year-olds?

The Department expects applicants to propose using developmentally appropriate early learning measures (as defined in the notice) at the beginning of the program or school year to ensure that young children meet developmental milestones for age-appropriate functioning across multiple domains of early learning (as defined in the notice).

These measures may be part of a coordinated system of assessments and strategies intended to collect information about the process and context of young children's learning and development in order to make informed instructional and programmatic decisions. Such systems include appropriate screening, diagnostic, formative, and observational measures and make use of relevant descriptive data.

Such instruments may be appropriate for use with three-year-olds if they meet the definition of developmentally appropriate early learning measures for multiple domains of early learning and fit within the context of a comprehensive assessment system.

F-4. Are applicants responsible for selecting the national evaluator? What must an applicant do with respect to the national evaluation?(from Addendum 1, published May 11, 2010)

The Department will select the national evaluator. Applicants must commit to working with the Department and with the national evaluator for Promise Neighborhoods to ensure that data collection practices and program designs are consistent with plans to conduct, during the implementation phase, a rigorous national evaluation of the Promise Neighborhoods Program and of specific solutions and strategies pursued by individual grantees.

F-5. Must an eligible applicant conduct a needs assessment and segmentation analysis prior to submitting its planning grant application? (from Addendum 3, published May 25, 2010)

No. In its application, an eligible applicant should describe the academic indicators and family and community support indicators that it will use in conducting a needs assessment and segmentation analysis during the planning year.

F-6. Does the Department expect grantees to collect data on the academic and family and community support indicators during the planning year? If so, are grantees expected to collect data on the program indicators, the project indicators, or both? (from Addendum 7, published June 22, 2010)

Yes. Under paragraph 10 of Absolute Priority 1, grantees must collect data on the program indicators for academic results and family and community support results, as described in Table 1 and Table 2 of the notice, as well as collect data on any unique project indicators they have developed, if applicable.

G. Allowable Activities

G-1. May an applicant propose to serve adults in the Promise Neighborhood?

Yes; however, applicants must explain in their applications how the services for adults directly align with improved academic and family and community support results for children. Examples of such services include, but are not limited to, family literacy programs and other training for community members to support student learning.

G-2. Does the definition of “increased learning time” include before- or after-school instructional programs?

Yes. Extending learning into before- and after-school hours can be difficult to implement effectively, but before- or after-school instructional programs may be included under the definition of “increased learning time.” If an applicant proposes to offer these programs to children in the proposed Promise Neighborhood, we encourage the applicant to plan to closely integrate and coordinate academic work that takes place during regular school hours and academic work that occurs before or after regular school hours.

G-3. Should applicants include expenses related to the national evaluation in their budgets? *(from Addendum 2, published May 18, 2010)*

No. Applicants are not expected to include expenses related to the national evaluation in their budgets. The Department will pay those expenses separately.

G-4. How does an eligible applicant determine what expenditures are allowable and what expenditures are prohibited? *(from Addendum 2, published May 18, 2010)*

The budget an eligible applicant includes in its application should include only costs that are reasonable and necessary for carrying out the objectives of the proposed Promise Neighborhoods planning process. Rules about allowable costs are included both in EDGAR (*see* <http://www.ed.gov/policy/fund/reg/edgarReg/edgar.html>) and in the cost principles contained in applicable Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars: A-21 for institutions of higher education, and A-122 for nonprofit organizations (*see* www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars).

G-5. May an eligible applicant propose to work with a local evaluator in addition to cooperating with the national evaluator? *(from Addendum 3, published May 25, 2010)*

Yes. The Department has not set any restrictions or requirements regarding work with local evaluators.

G-6. May Promise Neighborhoods planning grant funds be used to pay for construction or to purchase real property? *(from Addendum 3, published May 25, 2010)*

No. Promise Neighborhoods planning grants cannot be used to pay for construction or the acquisition of real property. For additional information on this topic, see 34 CFR 75.533 of EDGAR, which can be viewed at <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/fund/reg/edgarReg/edgar.pdf>.

G-7. What is the difference between direct costs and indirect costs? (from Addendum 4, published June 2, 2010)

As described in OMB Circular A-122, which applies to nonprofit organizations, direct costs are those that can be identified specifically with a particular final cost objective. As described in OMB Circular A-21, which applies to institutions of higher education (IHEs), direct costs are those costs that can be identified specifically with a particular sponsored project, an instructional activity, or any other institutional activity, or that can be directly assigned to such activities relatively easily with a high degree of accuracy.

Indirect costs, by contrast, are those (a) incurred for a common or joint purpose benefiting more than one cost objective, and (b) not readily assignable to the cost objectives specifically benefitted, without effort disproportionate to the results achieved. Indirect costs represent the expenses of doing business that are not readily identified with a particular grant project function or activity, but are necessary for the general operation of the organization and the conduct of activities it performs.

For the full text of OMB Circular A-122, which applies to nonprofit organizations, see http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars_a122_2004/#ab. For the full text of OMB Circular A-21, which applies to IHEs, see http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars_a021_2004/#d.

G-8. May an applicant include indirect costs in its budget request? (from Addendum 4, published June 2, 2010)

Yes. The amount of indirect costs, if an applicant chooses to request them, should be noted on line 10 of Section A of ED Standard Form 524, which is included in the Promise Neighborhoods application package. In addition, as described in the application package, applicants requesting reimbursement for indirect costs should specify in their budget narrative (a) the estimated amount of the base to which the indirect cost rate is applied, (b) the total indirect expense, (c) which costs are included as indirect costs, and (d) which costs are excluded from the base to which the indirect cost rate is applied.

G-9. What must a grantee do in order to claim indirect costs under its Promise Neighborhoods planning grant? (from Addendum 4, published June 2, 2010)

Under 34 CFR 75.560(b), a grantee, if it has not already done so, must obtain a current indirect cost rate from its cognizant Federal agency in order to charge those costs to its grant. The cognizant Federal agency is generally the Federal department or agency providing the grantee with the most Federal funding subject to indirect cost support (or an agency otherwise designated by OMB).

For additional information about obtaining an approved indirect cost rate or applying for an indirect cost rate, contact the Department's Office of the Chief Financial Officer at (202) 377-3909 or (202) 377-3838.

G-10. If, at the time it receives its Promise Neighborhoods planning grant award, a grantee does not have an indirect cost agreement with its cognizant Federal agency, must it submit its indirect cost

proposal to its cognizant Federal agency within a certain timeframe? *(from Addendum 4, published June 2, 2010)*

Yes. A grantee that does not have an indirect cost agreement must submit an indirect cost proposal to its cognizant Federal agency within 90 days of receiving its grant award notification. 34 CFR 75.560(b).

G-11. May a grantee that does not yet have an approved indirect cost rate charge indirect costs to its grant? *(from Addendum 4, published June 2, 2010)*

A grantee that does not have a federally recognized indirect cost rate agreement may charge its grant for indirect costs at a temporary rate of 10 percent of budgeted direct salaries and wages. 34 CFR 75.560(c). However, a grantee that does not submit an indirect cost proposal to its cognizant Federal agency within 90 days of receiving its grant award notification, will not be allowed--absent exceptional circumstances as determined by the Department--to charge indirect costs to its Promise Neighborhoods planning grant until it obtains a federally recognized indirect cost agreement. 34 CFR 75.560(d).

G-12. Is the Promise Neighborhoods planning grant competition subject to a restricted indirect cost rate? *(from Addendum 4, published June 2, 2010)*

No, there is not a restricted indirect cost rate for the Promise Neighborhoods planning grant competition.

G-13. May a Promise Neighborhoods grantee use its planning grant funds to make subgrants to other entities? *(from Addendum 6, published June 14, 2010)*

No. The authorizing statute for the Promise Neighborhoods program, sections 5411 through 5413 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended, does not authorize subgrants. Consequently, grantees under the Promise Neighborhoods program will not be able to use planning grant funds to make subgrants to other entities (*see* 34 CFR 75.708). In all cases in which a grantee needs to pay another party for goods and services to carry out its grant, the grantee must follow the applicable procurement procedures in EDGAR. Nonprofit organizations and institutions of higher education must follow the procurement procedures in 34 CFR 74.40-74.48.

H. Future Competitions

H-1. Will grantees that receive Promise Neighborhoods planning grants automatically receive implementation grants or receive any priority in competitions for implementation grants?

No. Implementation grants will be awarded through grant competitions in subsequent years contingent on the availability of funds. Grantees that receive Promise Neighborhoods planning grants will compete for implementation grants alongside applicants who did not compete for or receive a planning grant. While all eligible entities will be able to apply for implementation grants, communities that have effectively carried out the planning activities described in the planning grant notice, whether independently or with a Promise Neighborhoods planning grant, are likely to be well positioned with the plan, commitments, data, and demonstrated organizational leadership and capacity necessary to develop a quality application for an implementation grant.

H-2. If an applicant is unsuccessful in its first planning grant competition, may the applicant apply for another planning grant at a later date?

Yes. In subsequent years and contingent on the availability of funds, the Department intends to conduct further competitions for planning grants for Promise Neighborhoods. So long as an applicant meets the eligibility requirements, the applicant may apply for a planning grant in a subsequent competition.

H-3. Is an eligible applicant for a planning grant required to be the same entity that will eventually implement the plan? (from Addendum 2, published May 18, 2010)

The FY 2010 Promise Neighborhoods grant competition is for planning grants only. The eligible applicant for a Promise Neighborhoods planning grant competition should be the entity that will lead the planning activities during the planning year.

Funding and eligibility requirements for implementation grants are yet to be determined.

I. Matching Requirement

I-1. Is an eligible applicant required to have its matching funds in hand before submitting its application? *(from Addendum 1, published May 11, 2010)*

An applicant must provide evidence that funds or in-kind contributions have been committed at the time it submits its application. These funds or in-kind contributions need not be in hand. As evidence that funds or in-kind contributions have been committed, an applicant must submit a scanned letter or letters in its application explaining the type and quantity of the match commitment. The scanned letter or letters must include original signatures from the executives of organizations or agencies providing the match. In the case of an in-kind contribution, the letter or letters must include a description of how the value was determined for the donated or contributed goods or service.

I-2. What kinds of in-kind contributions may be used to meet the matching requirement? *(from Addendum 1, published May 11, 2010)*

The Department's regulations on matching funds, including in-kind contributions, are set forth in 34 CFR 74.23, which can be viewed at <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/fund/reg/edgarReg/edgar.pdf>. In-kind contributions from Federal sources cannot count toward the match requirement.

I-3. Must an eligible entity that proposes to serve a tribal community in a non-rural area secure a match commitment of 25% or 50% of its grant award? *(from Addendum 1, published May 11, 2010)*

An eligible entity that meets the requirements for Absolute Priority 3 (Promise Neighborhoods in Tribal Communities) must secure a match commitment of at least 25% of its grant award, regardless of the geographic area in which the tribal community it proposes to serve is located.

I-4. Must applicants identify matching funds for implementation grants as part of their planning grant application? *(from Addendum 1, published May 11, 2010)*

No. Applicants for Promise Neighborhoods planning grants must only identify matching funds for the amount of their requested planning grant. The FY 2010 Promise Neighborhoods planning grant competition will award only planning grants; the planning grant competition is not for implementation grants.

I-5. May Federal funds count toward the matching requirement if they are distributed by a State or local governmental entity? *(from Addendum 2, published May 18, 2010)*

No. An applicant may not count Federal funds toward the matching requirement regardless of the entity that distributes them.

I-6. May eligible applicants commit their own funds or in-kind contributions as part of the matching requirement? *(from Addendum 2, published May 18, 2010)*

Yes. Eligible applicants may commit their own funds or in-kind contributions to meet the matching requirement, so long as the funds or in-kind contributions in question: (a) do not come from Federal sources, (b) are spent or used during the planning year, and (c) are used for purposes within the scope of the proposed planning process. The eligible applicant must provide appropriate evidence of the commitment of its own resources in its application.

I-7. Can funds that will be spent during the planning year to implement a solution in the proposed Promise Neighborhood count toward the required match? (from Addendum 3, published May 25, 2010)

Yes, so long as those funds do not come from Federal sources and are used for purposes within the scope of the proposed planning process. For additional information regarding the Department's regulations on matching funds, including in-kind contributions, see 34 CFR 74.23, which can be viewed at <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/fund/reg/edgarReg/edgar.pdf>.

I-8. Is there a limit on the amount of in-kind donations an eligible applicant may count toward the matching requirement? (from Addendum 4, published June 2, 2010)

No. An eligible applicant may meet the matching requirement using funds or in-kind donations from non-Federal sources and is not limited in the amount of in-kind donations it may count toward the matching requirement.

I-9. May an eligible applicant count toward the matching requirement funds or in-kind donations expended or used prior to receipt of a Promise Neighborhoods planning grant? (from Addendum 4, published June 2, 2010)

No. In order to count toward the matching requirement, funds or in-kind donations must be expended or used during the planning year, which begins when the planning grant is awarded. However, an eligible applicant may count existing funds or in-kind contributions toward the required match so long as: (a) these funds or in-kind contributions are reallocated in support of the planning process, (b) the eligible applicant can provide appropriate evidence of this commitment; and (c) these funds or in-kind contributions are expended or used during the planning year.

I-10. May volunteer services count toward the matching requirement? (from Addendum 4, published June 2, 2010)

Yes. Volunteer services may count as an in-kind contribution under EDGAR. For nonprofit organizations, including IHEs as defined in section 101(a) of the HEA, 34 CFR 74.23 (d) and (e) provide the following:

(d) Volunteer services furnished by professional and technical personnel, consultants, and other skilled and unskilled labor may be counted as cost sharing or matching if the service is an integral and necessary part of an approved project or program. Rates for volunteer services must be consistent with those paid for similar work in the recipient's organization. In those instances in which the

required skills are not found in the recipient organization, rates must be consistent with those paid for similar work in the labor market in which the recipient competes for the kind of services involved. In either case, paid fringe benefits that are reasonable, allowable, and allocable may be included in the valuation.

(e) When an employer other than the recipient furnishes the services of an employee, these services shall be valued at the employee's regular rate of pay (plus an amount of fringe benefits that are reasonable, allowable, and allocable, but exclusive of overhead costs), provided these services are in the same skill for which the employee is normally paid.

I-11. The notice inviting applications states that the Department does not intend to award any Promise Neighborhoods planning grant with a budget exceeding \$500,000. Does the \$500,000 include the required matching funds? *(from Addendum 6, published June 14, 2010)*

No. While the Department does not intend to award more than \$500,000 in Promise Neighborhoods planning grant funds to any applicant, an applicant's total project budget may exceed \$500,000 when other funds, which may include matching funds, are included.

I-12. May a grantee use unrecovered indirect costs, i.e., indirect costs that a grantee could have claimed but did not claim under its Promise Neighborhoods planning grant, to meet the matching requirement? *(from Addendum 6, published June 14, 2010)*

No. The Department will not approve the use of unrecovered indirect costs to meet the matching requirement under the Promise Neighborhoods program. See 34 CFR 74.23(b).

I-13. Under what circumstances will the Secretary reduce the match requirement? *(from Addendum 7, published June 22, 2010)*

The Secretary may consider decreasing the matching requirement in the most exceptional circumstances, on a case-by-case basis. An applicant that is unable to meet the matching requirement must include in its application a request to the Secretary to reduce the matching level requirement, including the amount of the requested reduction and a statement of the basis for the request. The Secretary's decision to decrease the match amount will depend on the individual facts presented in an eligible applicant's request.

I-14. Does federally funded staff time qualify as an in-kind contribution towards the match requirement? *(from Addendum 7, published June 22, 2010)*

No. Applicants may not count any Federal funds or federally funded in-kind contributions towards the required match. However, in-kind contributions that are not federally funded may count toward the match requirement.

J. Selection Criteria

- J-1. One of the selection criteria, quality of project personnel, provides that peer reviewers will consider the quality of the project personnel who will carry out the proposed project. Does this criterion refer solely to the personnel of the eligible applicant or also to the personnel of the applicant's partner organizations?** *(from Addendum 2, published May 18, 2010)*

The eligible applicant is the single entity applying for a Promise Neighborhoods planning grant. In determining the quality of the project personnel, the Secretary will consider the qualifications of the project personnel of the eligible applicant only, including the project director, and the prior performance of the eligible applicant on efforts similar or related to the proposed Promise Neighborhood. This criterion does not concern the personnel of any organization other than the eligible applicant. However, under another selection criterion, quality of the management plan, peer reviewers will consider, among other factors, the extent to which the memorandum of understanding described in Absolute Priority 1 describes each partner's financial and programmatic commitment; how each partner's existing vision, theory of action, and theory of change, and existing activities align with those of the proposed Promise Neighborhood; and the governance structure of the proposed Promise Neighborhood.

- J-2. Will preference be given to solutions that are based on evidence from a particular source or database?** *(from Addendum 5, published June 7, 2010)*

No, preference will not be given to solutions that are based on evidence from any specific source. Peer reviewers will consider the extent to which an applicant describes proposed solutions that are based on the best available evidence including, where available, strong or moderate evidence (both as described in the notice). *See* selection criterion, "Quality of Project Services."

K. Application Process

K-1. Must applications be submitted electronically? *(from Addendum 2, published May 18, 2010)*

Yes. Applications for Promise Neighborhoods planning grants must be submitted electronically using e-Application, which is accessible through the Department's e-Grants Web site at <http://e-grants.ed.gov>. An application will be rejected if it is submitted in paper format unless, as described in the notice and the application package, the applicant qualifies for one of the exceptions to the electronic submission requirement and submits, no later than two weeks before the application deadline date, a written statement to the Department that it qualifies for one of these exceptions. More detailed instructions regarding the electronic submission of applications are in the notice and the application package. Applicants are advised to become familiar with the e-Grants Web site and the electronic submission process well in advance of the application deadline.

We strongly recommend that you **do not wait until the last day to submit your application.** The time it takes to upload the narratives for your application will vary depending on a number of factors including the size of the files and the speed of your Internet connection. **If you try to submit your application after 4:30:00 PM on the deadline date, the e-Application system will not accept it.**

K-2. May an applicant that did not submit a “notice of intent to apply” by May 21, 2010 still apply for a Promise Neighborhoods planning grant? *(from Addendum 3, published May 25, 2010)*

Yes. Submitting a “notice of intent to apply” is not required, and entities that do not submit one may still apply for funding. In addition, an entity that does submit a “notice of intent to apply” is not obligated to apply for a Promise Neighborhoods grant, nor is it bound to the information in its “notice of intent to apply.”

K-3. Should applicants submit a separate memorandum of understanding for each partner, or a single memorandum of understanding that includes all partners? *(from Addendum 3, published May 25, 2010)*

Applicants should submit a single memorandum of understanding that includes all partners. The memorandum of understanding should include the information listed in Absolute Priority 1, part 5, (a)(i)-(iii) of the notice. This document should be double-spaced and no more than ten pages in length.

K-4. How should applicants organize their project narrative? Is the table of contents included in the 40-page limit? *(from Addendum 4, published June 2, 2010)*

The Department strongly recommends that applicants include a table of contents for their project narrative and address each of the selection criteria and requirements from Absolute Priority 1 in the order in which they are described in Table 3 of the notice. After addressing the selection criteria, applicants may address the invitational priority, if applicable. The table of contents will be counted toward the 40-page limit for the project narrative.

K-5. What are the page limits for the project narrative and the memorandum of understanding? Are these page limits required or recommended? *(from Addendum 5, published June 7, 2010; revised by Addendum 7, published June 22, 2010)*

The page limit for the project narrative is 40 pages double-spaced, which includes the table of contents. This page limit is **strongly encouraged, but not** required.

The page limit for the memorandum of understanding is 10 pages double-spaced. This page limit is recommended, but not required. For additional information, *see* K-3.

K-6. Must all eligible applicants provide a DUNS number on the ED Standard Form 424, question 8(c)? *(from Addendum 5, published June 7, 2010)*

Yes, all Federal grant applicants must provide a DUNS number on ED Standard Form 424. A DUNS number is a unique 9-digit number that identifies the organization. Check with your fiscal office to see if your organization already has a DUNS number. If your organization does not have a DUNS number, contact Dun & Bradstreet at 1-888-814-1435 or http://www.dnb.com/US/duns_update/index.html.

K-7. Must a Promise Neighborhoods planning grant application be approved by State officials before it is submitted to the Department? *(from Addendum 5, published June 7, 2010)*

No; however, Promise Neighborhoods applications are subject to intergovernmental review after submission. For additional information about the regulations pertaining to Intergovernmental Review, applicants can refer to the application package and to 34 CFR Part 79 of EDGAR, which can be viewed at <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/fund/reg/edgarReg/edgar.pdf>. In addition, all eligible applicants are strongly encouraged to partner with such entities as an LEA; Federal, State, and local government leaders; and providers of family and community supports.

K-8. What Funding Opportunity Number and Title should Promise Neighborhoods applicants enter on ED Standard Form 424, question 12? *(from Addendum 6, published June 14, 2010)*

The funding opportunity number is ED-GRANTS-050510-001. The title is “Promise Neighborhoods Program.”

Please note: The original version of the application package posted on the Promise Neighborhoods Web site listed the Funding Opportunity Number as 84.215P and the Title as FIE. That information was incorrect and should be disregarded. However, applicants who answer question 12 incorrectly will still be able to submit their applications and will be not be disadvantaged in the competition.

K-9. What Competition Identification Number should Promise Neighborhoods applicants enter on ED Standard Form 424, question 13? *(from Addendum 6, published June 14, 2010)*

Applicants for Promise Neighborhoods grants do not need a Competition Identification Number and should leave this question blank. The Competition Identification Number applies only to applications that are submitted through grants.gov; Promise Neighborhoods applications must be submitted electronically using e-Application and *not* grants.gov.

K-10. Are applicants required to respond to question 14 (Areas Affected By Project) on ED Standard Form 424? *(from Addendum 6, published June 14, 2010)*

No. Question 14 on ED Standard Form 424 is optional, and applicants may leave it blank. Applicants are required to describe the geographic area that they propose to serve in the Project Narrative.

K-11. When is the project start date for projects receiving Promise Neighborhoods planning grant funds (ED Standard Form 424, question 17)? *(from Addendum 6, published June 14, 2010)*

Grantees have discretion in determining the date to begin implementation of their projects, but the project period for all Promise Neighborhoods planning grants officially begins on the date a planning grant is awarded. Because an exact award date has not yet been determined, applicants may enter Oct. 1, 2010, as the start date on the ED Standard Form 424.

K-12. Can the Department provide any guidance on ED Standard Form 424, question 19? *(from Addendum 6, published June 14, 2010)*

Promise Neighborhoods is subject to Executive Order 12372 and 34 CFR part 79, which allow States that have chosen to participate in the intergovernmental review process the opportunity to review and comment on applications submitted to the Department for funding. Question 19 on ED Standard Form 424 requires an applicant to indicate if its State is participating in the intergovernmental review process under Executive Order 12372. A list of States that have chosen to participate in the intergovernmental review process is available at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc/.

K-13. Has the Department established any guidance regarding Appendix F (Other, if applicable)? *(from Addendum 7, published June 22, 2010)*

The Department has not established any specific guidance for Appendix F. An applicant may upload any other documents or materials that it feels are necessary to support its application. However, applicants are strongly encouraged not to include lengthy documents.

K-14. Is there any competitive advantage for applicants to exceed or stay within the recommended page limit for the project narrative? *(from Addendum 7, published June 22, 2010)*

No. Peer reviewers will consider the extent to which applicants address the selection criteria without consideration for the length of the application. The length of the application is not a factor in any of the criteria. Therefore, applicants should prepare an application that addresses the selection criteria in the most appropriate way given the nature of their proposal and unique circumstances.