**Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA)**

**World Language Advancement and Readiness Program**

**Transcript of Pre-Recorded Technical Assistance Webinar**

**April 1, 2021**

JDP: Good afternoon and welcome to the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) webinar for the world language advancement and readiness program grants. In today's webinar will be hosted by myself Jennifer Dailey-Perkins, also known as JDP, the do DoDEA grant program manager and Kristy Pitts who is our DoDEA grant program monitoring specialist.

In today's webinar, these are the topics that we will cover. We will discuss a little bit about DoDEA as an organization and how we support students not only in the DoDEA school system but students who attend public schools and also schools around the world. We will talk some specifics about the World Language grant announcement and where you can find the announcement highlights. We will talk a little bit about the award process, and we will detail the project narrative format in which you should submit your grant proposal, as well as the required forms.

Towards the end of the webinar, we will go over some frequently asked questions. This should be able to answer most of the questions that we have received regarding the webinar. However, if you do have questions after the webinar has been completed and after reviewing the FAQ document, you can always contact us for more information. We will share that contact information with you. Now I will turn it over to Kristy Pitts who will give us a brief discussion about DoDEA as a school system.

Kristy: We have a vision to engage, empower, and educate military-connected students to succeed in a dynamic world, and that includes students in DoDEA schools and local school districts. DoDEA operates 160 schools worldwide, accounting for about 69,000 military connected students in grades pre-K through 12. With over 90% of school-aged children and military families attending local schools across the United States, DoDEA shares its resources to support educational opportunities for those children through a competitive grant program.

DoDEA has ability to influence educational outcomes as best leverage through community partnerships with school districts and professional organizations. Grants provide school districts with resources to meet the academic, social, and emotional needs of the highly mobile military-connected students in their communities.

Districts qualify for the resources because of military-connected student enrollment, but every student in their learning community receives the opportunity to benefit from these resources. This slide also shows how many states have received a DoDEA grant in the past, those states are indicated in blue.

JDP, I am going to turn it back over to you now, thank you.

JDP: Thanks, Kristy. So, let us talk a little bit about the specifics of the world language grant announcement. The link that shown here will take you directly to the announcement page on grants.gov. The world languages grant is currently open and accepting applications. The deadline to apply is Friday, May seventh at 11:59 PM Eastern Time.

Eligibility for this grant has two criteria: 1) eligible schools must have a 10% or higher military-connected student enrollment. This enrollment should be able to be verified by either your state’s military student identifier information or your school year (SY) 2019-20 Impact Aid information. We will also accept your SY 2020-21 Impact Aid information if it is available as well.

It is also important to note that a school district does not have to have the 10% requirement, however, the district applies on behalf of eligible schools So, for example, if your school district only has an 8% military-connected student enrollment, but you have schools that have 50% or 10%, this school district can apply on behalf of those schools that have the military-connected student enrollment percentage.

The second criteria are that the eligible schools must be a part of a school district that currently hosts a unit of Junior ROTC in one of their local high schools. However, it is important to know that the general JROTC unit high school does not have to be a part of one of the target schools that the grants will be focusing on. However, there must be a JROTC unit in the school district, that is applied.

The objective of this grant is to establish, improve, or expand world language programs that target elementary and secondary students. Later in the webinar, we will provide some examples of what this could potentially look like in your school districts if you are thinking about ideas to meet the objective.

The funding ceiling for this announcement is $3 million and the floor is $500,000. This means that a school district can apply up to for up to $3 million in funding for their eligible school districts, or as low as $500,000 for their eligible schools and any amount in between the floor and the ceiling. We encourage school districts to apply for the funding that meets their needs, so if your district does not that believe that it will need $3 million to implement its program, then we encourage you to apply for the funding that you will need to meet your program goals.

Also, important to know is the period of performance. If awarded, the grant will start on September 30th of this year, and the end date for the grant will be May 31st of 2026. The first year of any DoDEA grant is what we consider a planning year, and the respective following years are considered to be implementation years.

After you submit your application—which consists of the required federal documents, as well as your project narrative and detailed budget—to grants.gov, DoDEA retrieves that application package from grants.gov and we conduct a merit review. The merit review is conducted by third-party reviewers who read your application. These reviewers are qualified and have experience in grant application reviews, and they give your application a merit review cumulative score.

After DoDEA receives the merit review score, we conduct a risk assessment for those who have received DoDEA grants in the past. We look at your past performance to determine if you would be considered a high-risk or a low-risk grantee to the government, we also check the school district’s eligibility for a system of award management to ensure that you are eligible to receive federal grant funding.

As stated before, all award notifications will be made by September 30th, 2021. Kristy or I will reach out to you to conduct technical assistance if there are corrections or revisions that may need to be made to your application if you are considered to be a prospective awardee.

So, the formatting for your project narrative. It is very, very, very—I cannot stress how very important—it is for you to use the exact session headers. We encourage everyone when going on grants.gov for this announcement to click the tab that states “related documents”. On the related documents tab, you will find a zip file that says instructions. These instructions provide you with all of the information that you need in order to write a successful project narrative located in Section five B subsection to Title application and submission instructions. It lays out specifically the headings for your project narrative. You see some examples there as far as needs assessment project goals you can find these all of the sections in actual the table of contents.

It is very important for us to smoothly process your merit review that you follow the exact section headings in your project narrative. There is an application template Word document that will be able to assist you in your writing located on our dodeagrants.org homepage where you are finding this pre-recorded webinar for you to use.

Please also keep in mind that there is a 20-page maximum for your project narrative. Some folks can be a bit lengthy, but we ask that you are very clear and concise with your content and your project narratives, you use the exact language and also look at the appendices. Appendix items do not count against the 20-page limit, so hopefully that will help you in writing a concise project narrative. Please make sure that you have evidence included in your project narrative, especially when we talk about the needs assessment of why this grant is important to your school district in those target schools.

Please ensure to use references and any evidence necessary for each indicator and, again, we cannot stress enough to upload all of your materials to grants.gov. And again, the related documents tab that instructions provide you with all of the information on how you can do so.

Submission—so again, grants.gov is the only way in which we can retrieve your application. Though I just stayed in that instructions, you will find in the related documents tab, and in the instructions, you will find how to submit via grants.gov. There is also a web link here to show you where you can exactly go to our grants.gov to get instructions on how to submit your application.

Please be advised that any applications that are email to us will not be considered for award and we will not accept any applications after the deadline. Again, please submit all of the required federal forms, so your standard form 424 your lobbying form, as well as your project narrative should all go into that workspace on grants.gov for consideration.

So now I am going to hand it over to Kristy to lead us through some frequently asked questions (FAQs).

Kristy: All right, thank you, JDP, so when we think about this grant opportunity, we have got some scenarios and application ideas that we would like to share with you. If you think back to the objective of the grant, it was to establish, improve or expand a world language program.

So, when we think about establishing a language learning opportunity for a school, it might just be in an eligible elementary school, just as JDP said, when that is meeting the military-connected student percentage.

When we think about improving, maybe you have got a nine through 12 grades language program that is being offered that needs some improvement, and so that could be the focus of your goal.

Also, if you have got a dual language immersion program, you might want to expand that. Maybe it is only offered in the high school and you are looking to expand it to your middle school also.

So, again just some different opportunities. The ideas are limitless, and you can choose to expand and establish or only focus on one of the objectives. So, it is really up to the needs within your school.

We are going to now share a few more common questions, many of which can be found by referencing the announcement.

Kristy: Alright, so JDP, if I needed to find the list of the approved languages, where would I go to find that?

JDP: Yes, ma'am, so you would go again to the related documents tab on that announcement, you would click open that instructions and you look at appendix. Appendix C is the actual foreign languages, identify on the DoDEA strategic language list, and it lists all of the approved languages that can be used to fulfill the objective of this grant. Also, to American sign language is included as an option to reach the objectives on this grant.

Kristy: Alright, another question for you JDP, how much funding can one district receive? I remember you said something about a floor and a ceiling, can you remind me of what the floor in the ceiling?

JDP: Yes, ma'am, so you can also find this again and the instructions section IIIA. Funding amount and period of performance of the title of that section. It can request a minimum of $500,000 of funding, and a maximum of $3 million for funding. I think it is also important to know that only one application can be submitted per school district. Therefore, it is highly encouraged that the school districts only submit one application with all eligible schools. Per the criteria for award, you may only want to focus on maybe the elementary schools that are eligible, or maybe only the high schools that are eligible, but it is definitely important to note that only one application per school district will be considered for award.

Kristy: Great that is very helpful, thank you. Alright, another question, what is the definition of military-connected students? I have heard you say that several times, so could you give me a better understanding of what military-connected students actually means?

JDP: Absolutely. So, again, in the instructions section, an eligible applicant for the purpose of this announcement, we consider military-connected students are pre-K through grade 12 who is: (i) a dependent of a member of the Armed Forces; (ii) a dependent of a civilian employee of the Department of Defense; or (iii) a dependent of a person who is not a member of the Armed Forces or a civilian employee of the Department of Defense but who is employed on Federal property. So, it is very important for you to review the eligible applicant’s section for a under the instructions to see if you do have military-connected students at your target schools.

Kristy: Okay, and I think I know the answer to this, but just to remind me, are all the schools in the applying Local Education Agency (LEA) eligible?

JDP: No. All schools are not eligible. The way to school is that meet the eligibility requirement again, is that 10% military-connected or above and has a JROTC unit in one of their high school and the district are eligible. If you are a coterminous school district, then yes all of your schools are eligible, however, there are only eight coterminous school districts in the US, so the answer for most folks are no, not all schools are not eligible. Again, we encourage you to review the eligibility guidelines to see if your schools that you are thinking about for this grant opportunity are eligible for award.

Kristy: Alright, and could you just talk a little bit more about who actually can apply for this opportunity?

JDP: Absolutely. I spoke about earlier, only US public schools are eligible to apply for this opportunity. So, applicants can consider working with other organizations, for example. You gave some great examples earlier about ideas for this grant opportunity to expanding dual enrollment in a language is potentially idea for the school districts and the district can definitely work with higher education organizations such as their local community colleges and universities or other organizations that provide services to meet. Any of the strategies and initiatives of this award, for example, you can work with different vendors or organizations to provide potentially professional development to your teachers, but only out the only eligible entities for this grant opportunity are US public schools. So, the school district must and will be the awardee. However, they can work with and partner with higher education or any other organizations again to meet the strategy and initiatives of the award. I cannot stress enough that there can only be one application per school district.

Kristy: Great Thank you and we have one more that will ask today. Will there be any other opportunities for world languages available? For instance, if we are not sure we want to apply this year, but we were thinking about maybe applying next year. So, could you just speak to if there will be other opportunities for world languages available?

JDP: Absolutely, so this is a pilot program that DoDEA was instructed to execute by Congress, and we have not received as of yet any further guidance or regarding continuation of this award in the future. However, if DoDEA will be instructed by Congress, if this work is to further continue, and when that becomes available, we will be starting to put that announcement on our dodeagrants.org website.

Kristy: All right, if you have any additional questions, we have got our contact information here with the DoDEA grant program office. Also, the evaluation technical assistance center (ETAC) information is available there.

We also are on Twitter @dodeagrants or #dodeagrants, so if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us. Thank you so much for joining this webinar.