**Workforce 3One**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**Performance Partnership Pilots   
FY 2014 Notice Inviting Applications**

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BRIAN KEATING: And without any further ado, I'm going to turn things over to Johan – oh, I'm sorry; actually, Jennifer Kemp from the Employment and Training Administration and our moderator for today. Jennifer?

JENNIFER KEMP: Hey. Thanks, Brian. And thanks, everyone, for joining us. We're really excited that now the P3 can get off and share with you all what we know.

We'd like to get started with a few polling questions, as Brian mentioned. And some of you have filled this in when you first began. We just needed – wondering if you were from a state entity, a local entity, a tribal entity, a researcher, nonprofit organization, private sector, federal partner, or if you're someone else who we didn't categorize. We'd really like to see who's interested in the P3 and get a sense of who our audience is.

And so as you can see, there are a lot of folks piling in, a lot of nonprofit interest, followed closely by state and local entities. We have some tribal entities, which is fabulous; as well as researchers, private sector and other folks we didn't think to classify. So if you're from another, you could also – other organization, you could also enter into the chat what we missed so that can help inform us as we move forward with our work. That would be great.

OK. We're still seeing some numbers going up. And if you are looking at the numbers on the slides, you will be able to tell you're joined by almost 600 other folks listening to this conversation. So we're really excited about the interest in this.

So moving to the next slide, we are also interested in knowing what types of services you primarily provide to youth. We're interested in knowing if you're from the education sector, labor/workforce, child welfare, cross-cutting – meaning you work across many of these areas – and other – and other focus of services that we didn't include. And if you are in another focused area, if you could just also in the chat feature give us a little bit of information about what you consider your primary services. That would be great.

And we can see the numbers coming in here as well. We have a good mix between education, workforce, the other category and cross-cutting. So that's great because really P3 is about cross-cutting and all these different sectors working together. So that's exciting for us as we begin our presentation.

OK. So here are the people that you're going to hear from today. The good news is that there are a lot of us here to talk to you. So we'll be giving you a lot of information in a short time, but you'll get to hear a lot of different voices. And there are a lot of partners in the room.

So first, this is Jennifer Kemp with Employment and Training Administration at the Department of Labor. And I am joined by Mary Ellen Wiggins from Office of Management and Budget; Kimberly Clum from ASPE at Health and Human Services. And our acronyms come very easy to us in D.C., so we will all try to say what the acronyms stand for.

Braden Goetz is also with us from the Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education at the Department of Education; and Julie Glasier from ETA is also – ETA is the Employment and Training Administration – at the Department of Labor.

So we're excited to talk to you and we are also joined by what I would consider two special guests, Johan Uvin, who is the acting assistant secretary for the Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education at the Department of Education; and Demetra Nightingale, who is the chief evaluation officer at the Department of Labor.

So with this quick introduction of who you're going to hear from, I'm going to turn it over to Johan Uvin with the Department of Education to help us set the context for P3. Johan?

JOHAN UVIN: Yes. Thank you, Jennifer. And hello, everyone. President Obama has challenged us to restore the promise of opportunity for all. And for youth and many adults, this involves creating a career path to postsecondary education and careers, and thus building ladders of opportunity to the middle class.

Now, according to the Census Bureau, more than 5 million 14- to 24-year-olds in the United States are not on such a career path to postsecondary education or training and a career. They are neither working nor in school. And in many cases, there is the additional challenges of being homeless, in foster care or involved in the justice system.

Often disconnected from their families and valuable social networks, these young people struggle to make successful transitions to adulthood and to reach the educational and employment milestones critical to escaping a lifetime of poverty.

Practitioners, youth advocates and others on the front line of service delivery have told us about the significant challenges they face in improving outcomes for these youth. Some of these challenges include limited evidence of what actually works with this population, poor coordination and alignment of services across systems that serve these youth, policies that make it hard to target the neediest youth and overcome gaps in services, fragmented data systems that inhibit the flow of information, and many administrative requirements that impede holistic approaches to serving this population.

The Performance Partnership pilots – or P3 – is one of several Obama administration initiatives that seek to address critical social challenges through community-driven evidence-based strategies.

Complementary initiatives include: Promise Zones, which focused federal programs and resources intensely on hard-hit communities; job-driven training, which promotes improvements in education and training programs, emphasizing effective approaches that lead to in-demand jobs and that provide workers with pathways to good careers and incomes; federal innovation funds, including the Social Innovation Fund, the Workforce Innovation Fund and the Investing in Innovation Funds, all of which support projects that use and build evidence about how to effectively improve skills of at-risk youth; and finally, Pay for Success initiatives launched by the Departments of Justice and Labor and the Corporation for National and Community Service, which fostered partnerships to implement cost-effective services that improve outcomes while generating savings for taxpayers.

President Obama is also committed to strengthening the nation-to-nation relationship with Indian tribes, as well as strengthening broader tribal communities. As a result of this commitment, tribal governments are one of three key eligible entities for this Performance Partnership pilot opportunity. We were very excited to hear of the great interest when we held outreach sessions leading up to the release of this solicitation.

And with this as background, it is now my pleasure to turn it over to Demetra Nightingale, chief evaluation officer at the Department of Labor, who will address the opportunity P3 represents from an evidence development perspective. Demetra?

DEMETRA NIGHTINGALE: Thank you, Johan. And welcome to all of you.

One of our objectives is to make sure that P3 builds the evidence about what works – what works for the disconnected youth populations. Again, the evidence agenda is a very high priority and a major emphasis of the Obama administration. And some of the creative approaches that will be allowed under P3 will add to what we know about what works.

So P3 is an exciting and unique opportunity not only to test the innovative, cost-effective strategies for improving results for the disconnected youth, but to build our evidence about effective practices and how to implement the practices and strategies developed to improve results.

The various federal agencies that are participating in P3 were all speaking to make sure that the pilots create a real strong foundation for broader change and continuous improvement of serving disconnected youth.

As we go through the slides today, we'll also be talking about how P3 will build into these opportunities for learning, both along the way as pilots are implemented but also from the results of some of the pilots.

A few of the opportunities that we'll get back to in a few minutes. One is supporting the pilots that include, to the greatest extent possible, evidence-based and evidence-informed interventions and practices. Also, we'll have an emphasis on the grantees' and applicants' data capacity, such as their ability to collect data, to analyze data and use data for decision making, for learning and for continuous improvement.

There'll be also a national, federally-funded evaluation to help understand how P3 is implemented across the different pilots, and perhaps in a few of the pilots to test and experiment with some innovative approaches.

There will also be competitive preference points for applicants who propose to evaluate impact in their own pilots. And the federal partners will be setting up a community of practice for the finally selected pilots during the implementation.

These are just some of the examples of how all of the federal agencies here in Washington are working together to make sure that P3 follows through on its promise of accountability for outcomes but flexibility for service delivery and administration. And we want to create an environment where federal, state and local, tribal and nonprofit organizations are learning together and building the evidence about how we can best serve our young people.

We'll get back to this in a little while, but right now I want to turn the floor back to our moderator, Jennifer Kemp from the Department of Labor.

MS. KEMP: Thanks, Demetra. So want to take a few moments to highlight what we're going to cover in today's discussion. In just a moment we'll go over the timeline, but we will also be talking about the – giving you an overview of P3. We'll be talking about eligible applicants and eligible programs. We'll be talking about the absolute set of requirements as we go through. We will also be giving you the application requirements, the selection criteria, and the reviews and selection process.

Now, we know that a lot of questions will come up as we go through this and we've already begun to get questions. And we'll give you at the end the address of where to send further questions to. Given the time that we have for today's webinar and the size of our audience, we won't be able to answer your questions, most likely. But we do encourage you to share any that you have in the chat feature.

Where there are – so when you're looking at the slides, we have prepared some FAQs – frequently asked questions – already. And so when you're looking at the slides, sometimes there'll be a button or a red note that will show in the lower left-hand corner. That will indicate that there's an FAQ that will give you – a frequently asked question – that will give you more information about what we're talking about.

And again, for remaining questions we encourage you to email us as early as possible so that we can provide answers regarding the answer, I guess, as appropriate.

So going to the next slide, here is the timeline. And as you all are probably aware, a week ago, on November 24th, the P3 solicitation came out. The deadline for notice of intent to apply, which is optional, is January 8th. And the deadline for submitting applications is March 4th. So those are the timelines, giving folks about a hundred days to submit proposals.

So with this I'm going to turn it over to Mary Ellen Wiggins from OMB and she will go into the meat of what we're looking for.

MARY ELLEN WIGGINS: OK. Thank you so much, Jennifer. Hello, everyone, and welcome. We're excited to be here with you today and sharing this information.

So the headline around Performance Partnership pilots is that the purpose is really to allow state and local and tribal governments, working of course together with their community partners, to test innovative and outcome-focused strategies to improve outcomes for disconnected youth, using new flexibility to blend existing federal funds from at least two youth-serving programs, and also to seek waivers of program requirements from the programs that are involved.

So when we talk about improving outcomes for disconnected youth, what that means specifically – according to the P3 statute – is to increase the rate at which disconnected youth achieve success in meeting educational, employment or other key goals. And we can do up to 10 pilots in this competition.

So our hypothesis here is that the flexibility to blend money and to get waivers can help states and localities and tribal communities and their partners overcome hurdles to improving outcomes for disconnected youth.

So thinking about who can participate, disconnected youth is a term that gets used in a lot of different ways, but Congress did give us a specific definition for purposes of P3. So for P3, disconnected youth includes individuals who are between the ages of 14 and 24; who are low-income; and either homeless, in foster care, involved in the juvenile justice system, unemployed, or not enrolled in or at risk of dropping out of an educational institution.

So one of the ways that P3 can support better outcomes is by enabling pilots to blend together funds from different youth-serving programs. And when we talk about blending funds, what that means is that multiple funding streams or portions of multiple funding streams can be merged together into one pot, if you want to think about it that way.

So that means that the funds that are blended lose their original identity that was associated with their specific original award; and instead, those blended funds together are subject to a single set of reporting and other requirements, so that all of the money has the same identity. It's all subject to the same requirements. So the requirements for the blended funds will still be consistent with the underlying purposes of the original funding stream, even with the flexibility that may be offered.

The funds that can be used include money that was appropriated by Congress in FY14 for certain programs under the Departments of Education, Labor, Health and Human Services, the Corporation for National and Community Service, and the Institute for Museum and Library Services. And we'll get into specific examples of programs that might be included in a pilot a little bit later on in this webinar.

So while Congress has only authorized the use of funds that are appropriated in FY14 so far, both the House and the Senate bills for FY15 – so for our current fiscal year – include expanded authority for P3. And that includes the ability to incorporate funds that will be appropriated in FY15 into pilots that will be selected in the coming months.

So moving through to our next slide, proposals from applicants should include at least two federally-funded programs that are targeted on disconnected youth, or designed to help prevent youth from disconnecting, by providing social services, including education and training, employment or other services. And programs that serve youth and also other populations may still be eligible for inclusion. It doesn't have to be only youth.

And of the programs that an applicant proposes to include in a pilot, at least one has to be administered either completely or in part by a state, local or a tribal government.

So moving on to waivers, waivers are another key component of P3. And they really offer an important tool to help achieve outcomes by gaining flexibility. P3 includes broad waiver authority that allows the heads of the participating federal agencies, first, to waive anything that they can already waive under their existing authority; and also to waive any statutory or regulatory or administrative requirements that they are not otherwise authorized to waive, but in keeping with important safeguards.

So these safeguards include that waivers have to be, one, consistent with the statutory purposes of their relevant federal programs; two, necessary to achieve the pilot's outcomes, but no broader in scope than is necessary; and three, able to result either in efficiencies by simplifying reporting burdens or reducing administrative barriers, or increased eligibility – excuse me – increased ability of individuals to obtain access to services that are provided under the relevant program.

And then as additional safeguards, waivers cannot be related to nondiscrimination, the wage and labor standards, or to allocations of funds to state and sub-state levels. Meaning that the federal formulas for distributing funds to states and below the state level cannot be changed.

In addition, as you'll see on the slides, federal agency has to make determinations to make sure that individual eligibility and vulnerable populations are protected. In order to provide guidance on these determinations, the agencies have developed some FAQs – as Jennifer was mentioning earlier – that appear in the application package.

And we don't have time in this webinar to talk in depth about these determinations, but FAQs C-2 and C-3 in particular may be helpful for understanding how applicants can make sure in their proposals that they are being consistent with these requirements. And the FAQs discuss some specific scenarios that may apply.

And then moving on to our start-up grant funds. So in general, the P3 model is really designed to promote outcomes through more flexible use of existing funding streams that already go to communities.

However, to help facilitate the initial implementation of performance agreements that are likely going to require additional coordination and collaboration among a range of state and local and tribal agencies, and of course other partners as well, the agencies are awarding FY14 start-up funding in this competition. Grants can go up to $700,000 for pilots. And potential uses include planning, governance, technical assistance, evaluation, data collection, capacity building and coordination activities.

And statute also requires that each selected pilot be governed by a performance agreement that will be between a lead federal agency and also the respective representatives of all the participating state, local or tribal governments.

So this could include multiple bureaus within a larger state, local or tribal department coming together; multiple departments at a single level of government – state, local or tribal level – or it could be multiple agencies from across different levels of government that would all participate in the performance agreement.

When a P3 pilot is proposed at the local or tribal level and it's financed with funds that are administered by a state, the administering state agency has to be party to the agreement and has to agree to any waivers or other proposals that are needed in order to implement the pilot, that fall under that agency's jurisdiction.

Or if a state or a group of states proposes a pilot that would only be implemented in certain local communities and would involve participation by those local governments, then those local jurisdictions will need to be party to the agreement as well. So we want to make sure that we have agreement from everyone who needs to be involved to make sure that the pilots can move forward.

And the application package discusses all of the specific elements that are required under a performance agreement. But some examples of what needs to be in there include the federal funds and the programs that would be involved in the pilot, the population to be served, the outcomes to be achieved, and the cost-effective federal oversight procedures that would be used for accountability in the pilot.

So the Office of Management and Budget – OMB – is responsible for designating lead agencies for each pilot. And for purposes of administering the P3 start-up grants we've designated the Department of Education as the lead. However, we may also designate an additional lead federal agency for each pilot just based on the programs that are included or the outcomes that are sought under any particular pilot.

So that concludes our overview. And with that I will turn it over to my colleague Kim Clum from the Department of Health and Human Services.

KIMBERLY CLUM: Thank you, Mary Ellen. Just to underscore who the eligible applicants are for the P3, while the pilots can include many partners, there does need to be a single lead applicant. And the lead applicant must be a state, a local or tribal government entity, represented by the head of that entity.

In addition to formally submitting the application, the official representative of the lead applicant will serve as the primary official whose responsible for the pilot project if the proposal is selected as a pilot. Although a nonprofit may not serve as the pilot applicant or the fiscal agents of the pilot implementation, it may still play a very significant role in the design and governance of a Performance Partnership pilot.

And to cover eligible programs, so really the biggest question we've been getting from the field, besides who the eligible applicants can be, are the eligible programs that can be part of a Performance Partnership pilot.

In general, the discretionary – it's discretionary programs, which include certain formula and competitive grants that are eligible. Certain programs might be particularly well-suited for blending if they have broad authority or a purpose that's well-aligned with that of the Performance Partnership pilot, and therefore have a very low risk of violating the P3 statutory protections that Mary Ellen discussed in the prior slides.

On the other hand, other programs may not be appropriate for a pilot at all if the agencies determined their inclusion would infringe on the statutory protections or that inclusion would undermine important federal policies or objectives.

So to assist applicants, in the notice inviting applications we included an Appendix B which identifies three categories of risk and provides some specific examples of the type of programs in each of those categories. The categories in Appendix B are: programs that have a low likelihood of adversely affecting vulnerable populations, programs requiring significant review to ensure that vulnerable populations are not adversely affected, and programs that are likely inappropriate due to a high likelihood of adversely affecting vulnerable populations.

Appendix B isn't a comprehensive list of all programs that could be involved in a pilot and applicants may choose programs that are not on that list.

The other thing to consider is that FY14 competitive grants that have already been awarded will merit special consideration on a case-by-case basis to determine whether the scope, objectives and target populations of the existing competitive grant award are appropriately and sufficiently aligned with, as well as enhance the scope, objectives and target populations of the proposed pilot.

The programs that are categorically not allowed by statute to be included are mandatory entitlement programs. Those include things like Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, most of the foster care IV-E program and the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families.

Where federal programs aren't eligible or suitable for blending under P3, pilots may still consider how to braid funding streams or align them in ways that might promote more efficient and effective outcomes, even though the streams would maintain a separate identity – the funding streams would maintain a separate identity and would remain subject to the requirements of the programs to which each funds were appropriated.

And I'm going to turn it over to my colleague Braden Goetz at Department of Education.

BRADEN GOETZ: Since effective strategies for serving disconnected youth may differ across environments, the agencies want to test P3 authority in a variety of settings. Stakeholder input as P3 was developed emphasized the tribal and rural communities in particular can face unique challenges in effectively serving disconnected youth.

As a result, the competition has the three absolute priorities shown here: improving outcomes for disconnected youth, doing so in rural communities and doing so in tribal communities. These absolute priorities constitute distinct funding categories.

In selecting pilots, the agencies may consider high-ranking applications meeting absolute priority two or absolute priority three separately, to ensure that there is the diversity of pilots. Absolute priority one applies to all applicants, even if you also apply under another priority.

In addition to priority one, applicants may apply under priority two if they propose to serve disconnected youth in rural communities only. For the purposes of P3, rural communities can be identified based on whether they are, one, served by local education agencies eligible for either Education's Small Rural School Achievement program or the Rural and Low-Income School program; or two, includes only schools designated by the National Center for Education Statistics with a locale code of 42 or 43. This slide shows you websites that can assist you in determining this information.

So applying under priority two, applicants must include a list of communities that they propose to serve and a list of the LEAs – local education agencies – serving those communities. The application package provides more detail about how to provide the correct information.

Keep in mind, an LEA or school does not need to be involved in a pilot in order to quality for P3. The information is only to determine eligibility for absolute priority two.

Applicants may apply under absolute priority three in addition to absolute priority one if they, one, will serve disconnected youth in one or more Indian tribes that they clearly identify; and two, represent a partnership that includes one or more Indian tribes.

Now I'm pleased to turn the deck over to Demetra Nightingale.

MS. NIGHTINGALE: Thank you, Braden. Again, P3 really provides an important opportunity so that we can build greater knowledge about what works and most effective ways to serve the disconnected youth.

Our competitive preference priorities reflect the emphasis on learning through rigorous evaluation. P3 includes three possible ways that applicants can receive priority points when their applications are being scored here at the federal level, two of which the points are based on applicants' plans to conduct impact evaluations at their site of at least one service delivery or operational component in their pilot, in addition to participating in the national evaluation.

When we refer to an impact evaluation, what we really mean is an evaluation that measures changes in the outcomes for the target populations through methods that are as rigorous as possible, and strong enough for us to have confidence in whether the changes are due to specific interventions that the pilot is implementing. I know it gets a little bit technical, but some of you have participated in evaluations before.

So the first competitive preference priority will award up to five points to applicants that propose to conduct an independent evaluation using a quasi-experimental design. The second competitive preference priority will award up to 10 points to applicants that propose to conduct an independent evaluation of the impacts of their program or components of their program on disconnected youth using a randomized control trial as (random assignments ?).

If well-designed and executed, both quasi-experimental and randomized control trial designs can produce high-quality, precise estimates of results that can give us a high degree of confidence in the findings. In both types of evaluations you compare a treatment group that receives an intervention, such as participating in a new program under the pilot or receiving a particular service, compared to a control group that receives other services or whatever services would typically be provided in the absence of the pilot.

The difference in the types of designs has to do with how you create the treatment group and how you create the control group. In a randomized control trial, the groups are created through random assignment, such as a lottery, which helps to ensure that the two groups are essentially the same. So instead of having differences that might exist, for example, if people were able to choose which group they were in.

A quasi-experimental design does not use random assignment and instead attempts to approximate random assignment by identifying a comparison group that is similar to the treatment group in important respects, without using random assignment.

In order to be considered under the competitive preference priority one and priority preference number two, applicants must submit an evaluation plan that describes how the pilot or a component of the pilot would be rigorously evaluated.

The plan should include the following. First, a brief description of the research questions proposed for the study – and an explanation is relevant to the overall model and to the population – including how the study will build on research evidence-based and how the findings will be used to improve program implementation.

Second, the application must also include a description of the impact study methodology, whether it will be using random assignment, experimental design or a non-experimental design; including key outcome measures, the way that the comparison or control group would be created; and a justification for the sample size that's needed.

A proposed evaluation timeline, including dates for reports, is also required. And not surprisingly, a plan for selecting a qualified independent evaluator. Evaluations are technically sophisticated and do require expert evaluators to do that.

Evaluation plan, though, for the applications should not exceed eight pages, double-spaced. What we're looking for is the foundation and the framework for an evaluation, and clear thinking about what the evaluation would be.

And here we have requirements for also submitting an evaluation budget for competitive preference priorities one or two, which is separate from the evaluation plan.

The evaluation budget must include the following. A description of the costs associated with funding the proposed evaluation. An explanation of the funding sources, such as is it coming from blended funds or from foundation grants, some other source. A breakout of the costs by the key evaluation activities, the most important ones are data collection and perhaps following up with participants. A description of the applicant's strategy for refining the budget once an evaluator has been procured. And finally, travel costs for the evaluator to attend one in-person conference in Washington during the period of the evaluation.

All of the costs included in this supplementary budget narrative that's specifically about the evaluation must be reasonable and appropriate to the project timeline. There is no page limit for the budget narrative.

If you look in Appendix C of the notice, there'll be more details on the evaluation plan and the evaluation budget narrative.

Federal start-up funds and blended funds may be used to fund the evaluations, which could augment the evidence that's gained through the impact studies included in the national evaluation.

The proposals then are going to be scored. This part of the proposal will be scored by evaluation experts. And we'll be looking at the clarity and the feasibility of the proposed evaluation design, and the applicant's expertise and plan for conducting the evaluation study.

Agency clearinghouses, which are shown on the slide, describe and present standards and guidelines that different federal agencies use for designing and implementing these types of rigorous evaluation. So depending on the application, you should look at the different clearinghouses.

The agencies will review the summary evaluation plans and the evaluation budget narrative and provide feedback to the applicants that receive the competitive preference priority points and/or are selected as finalists for pilots or alternates.

After the award, the pilots will have to submit to the designated federal agency a detailed evaluation plan of no more than about 30 pages. And by that point you would already be depending on an independent evaluator to help with the details. So the detailed evaluation plan must address the agency's feedback in the second stage of the application.

Again, in addition to these site-specific evaluations for which you can get priority preference points, the federal government will also be conducting a national evaluation that will be more cross-site that would include both the innovative system dimensions of the P3 approach and also may include some special tests and experiments in some of the sites.

Applicants may also – may receive two extra points under a competitive preference priority number three, which has to do with Promise Zone, if they propose projects that are designed to serve and coordinated with the federally-designated Promise Zone.

Applicants should submit a letter of support from the lead organization of a designated Promise Zone describing how the activities proposed under P3 will contribute and coordinate with the Promise Zone approach. And please see the website that's shown on this slide for a list of Promise Zones and their lead agencies. Many of you know where they are located.

I'm going to turn it over now to Julie Glasier from DOL's Employment and Training Administration to talk a little bit more about the application.

JULIE GLASIER: Great. Thank you, Demetra. In the next portion we will review the application requirements for P3. Applicants should respond to the application requirements and the related selection criteria in the application narrative. We encourage applicants to not exceed 40 pages total for the application narrative.

The first application requirement for this competition is a statement of need for a defined population. The defined target population for this competition must be consistent with the populations identified in the law, which is, as you see on this slide, individuals between the ages of 14 and 24, and who are low-income and either homeless, in foster care, involved in the juvenile justice system, unemployed, or not enrolled in or at risk of dropping out of an educational institution.

In addition, the defined target population to be served must be based on data and analysis demonstrating the need for services within the relevant geographic area.

The applicant's statement of need must present data that demonstrates how the target population lags behind other groups in achieving the outcomes that the pilot will seek to attain, including an analysis of disparities in circumstances and outcomes among the target population and these other groups.

These data must be based on a needs assessment that was conducted or updated within the past three years, using representative data on youth from the jurisdictions proposing the pilot. Applicants do not need to include a copy of the needs assessment within the application package but must identify when the needs assessment was conducted.

And for more information on the needs assessment we direct you to FAQ E-1 in the application package.

The next application requirement is an identification of the federal flexibilities sought, that are needed to implement the proposed pilot and to improve outcomes for the target populations. Applicants must describe the specific federal statutory, regulatory or other requirements for which they are seeking flexibility. Examples of potential requests for flexibility include, but are not limited to, changes to eligibility requirements, allowable uses of funds or performance reporting.

In addition to federal flexibility, successful implementation of proposals may also depend on flexibility related to requirements imposed at the state, local or tribal level. The agencies do not have the authority to waive non-federal requirements. Therefore, applicants must identify the specific state, local or tribal policies, regulations or other requirements that may impeded the pilot's ability to achieve its goals.

This is because if the proposed pilot and flexibility, including waivers, are approved, requirements across non-federal levels of government are – we want them to be aligned to support effective implementation of the pilot.

Applicants then must provide written assurance that the state, local or tribal government with authority to grant any needed non-federal flexibility will approval such flexibility within 60 days of an applicants' designation as a pilot finalist; or non-federal flexibility – or that non-federal flexibility is not needed in order to successfully implement the pilot.

The third application requirement is project design. The applicant must present a project design for how it will improve significant outcomes for the target populations. The design must indicate the proposed length of the pilot, which may not extend beyond September 30th, 2018. Applicants must also describe whether and how the applicant intends to incorporate future funding, including FY 2015 funding if Congress extends P3 authority.

The project design must include the following elements. First, an explanation of how the strategies and activities that the pilot will employ are based on or informed by available research evidence. Applicants must cite the studies on service interventions and system reform that inform their pilot design, and explain the relevance of the cited evidence to the proposed project.

Second, the project design must include a graphic depiction, not longer than one page, of the pilot's logic model that illustrates the underlying theory of how the pilot's strategy will produce intended outcomes.

Third, a description of the federal program funds the applicant will blend in the pilot to carry out the activities described. In order to qualify for a pilot, the proposal must include at least two federal programs that have policy goals related to P3, and at least one program which is administered in whole or in part by a state, local or tribal government.

And the next application requirement is the work plan. Applicants must provide a detailed work plan that describes how the proposed work will be accomplished. They must also describe the professional qualifications that will be required of the project manager and other key personnel to ensure proper management of pilot activities.

Partnership capacity is the next application requirement. Applicants must identify the proposed partners, including any and all state, local and tribal entities, and non-governmental organizations that would be involved in implementation of the pilot.

As part of this requirement, applicants must provide assurance of the proposed partners' commitment, such as a memorandum of understanding – or an MOU – or a letter of commitment, and include at minimum, one, a description of each proposed partners' commitment of financial or in-kind resources, if applicable; two, how each proposed partners' existing vision and current and proposed activities align with those of the proposed pilot; and third, how each proposed partner will be held accountable under the proposed governance structure for the pilot.

A description of how the applicant and proposed partners will use and coordinate resources in order to improve outcomes for disconnected youth must also be included.

A description of the partnership data and evaluation capacity is also an application requirement. This section must describe the extent to which partners have and will continue to do the following: manage and maintain computerized administrative data systems to track program participants, services and outcomes; execute data-sharing agreements to share information with program partners, in accordance with federal, state and other privacy laws and requirements; link or make progress toward linking program data to administrative data; collect, store and make data available to program partners, researchers and evaluators, in accordance with federal, state and other privacy laws and regulations; use data to determine cost-effective strategies for improving outcomes; and regularly analyze program data to assess the pilot's progress.

As part of this requirement, applicants must also propose outcome measures and interim indicators to gauge pilot performance. At least one outcome measure must be in the domain of education and at least one outcome measure must be in the domain of employment. So an example of an education-related outcome measure and interim indicator, as indicated on this slide, for high school graduation an interim indicator could be high school enrollment.

Applicants may specify additional employment and education outcome measures as well – outcome measures in other domains, such as well-being, criminal justice, or physical and mental health, or housing.

For each proposed outcome measure and interim indicator, the applicant must describe the methodology and progress milestones – such as monthly, quarterly, annually – that will be used to assess progress; the sources of data that will be used and whether the data are subject to audit or other means of validation for accuracy; and the frequency with which data will be recorded by the pilot and the frequency with which the applicant proposed to report on outcome measures, interim indicators and project progress milestones to the federal government.

Lastly, applicants should include a budget and budget narrative for their proposal. The applicant must identify specific funding levels for the funding sources to be used in the pilot. Specifically, for each federal program, the amount of funds to be blended and the percentage of total program funding received by the applicant that this amount represents; the total amount of funds from all federal programs that would be blended under the pilot; the source and amount of any non-federal funds and programs, including funds from state, local, tribal, philanthropic and other sources that will be used; the amount of all funds, federal and non-federal, that will be used to support activities related to the pilot.

The applicant must indicate whether in-kind contributions or other braided federal funds will be used to support the pilot; and if so, identify these contributions.

The applicant also must provide a detailed budget and a budget narrative that describes how all funds will be used, including how the pilot plans to use the start-up grant funds, which will range between 400,000 (dollars) to $700,000. And describe how the pilot will use these start-up funds to support effective implementation, such as planning, governance, technical assistance, site-specific evaluations, capacity building and coordination activities.

And now I'd like to turn it over to my colleague Braden Goetz again, from Department of Education, who will walk through the selection criteria.

MR. GOETZ: In addition to the application requirements, there are also four program requirements that relate to the ongoing implementation of pilots once they are selected.

Number one, participation in any federally-sponsored P3 evaluation activity, including the national evaluation of P3 that Demetra discussed earlier. Applicants must agree to participate by submitting the evaluation commitment form that you can find in Appendix A of the application package.

Number two, participation in a community of practice that includes an annual in-person meeting of pilot sites, virtual peer-to-peer learning activities and working with the lead federal agency on a plan for supporting technical assistance needs, which may be financed using federal funds under the pilot.

Three, explaining how the pilot will comply with applicable federal, state, local and tribal privacy laws, such as by securing necessary consent from parents, guardians, students or youth program participants who access data for their pilot and the evaluations. This is important because pilot partners will need to share data in order to support effective implementation, such as coordinating services and to conduct any site-specific evaluations.

Fourth, entering into a performance agreement with a lead federal agency that will govern implementation.

Now I'll turn to the seven selection criteria for P3 applications, which are tied to the application requirements discussed earlier.

The points that you see in the header of the slide are the total points available for that criterion, which may be broken out among subcriterion. Applicants can get a maximum of 100 points under the selection criteria, not including any applicable competitive preference priority points.

Criterion A is the need for the project, worth five points. It relates to the needs assessment discussed under the first application requirement. Reviewers will consider the extent to which the applicant used a comprehensive needs assessment to, one, show disparities and outcomes among key subpopulations; and two, identify an appropriate target population of disconnected youth with a high level of need.

The needs assessment should draw on representative data on youth in the jurisdictions to be served by the pilot. These data should be disaggregated according to relevant demographic factors. Examples of relevant demographic factors include race, ethnicity, gender, age, disability status, involvement in systems such as foster care or justice, status as pregnant or parenting, and other key factors selected by the applicant.

The needs assessment must have been conducted in the past three years. Please don't forget to specify when your needs assessment was conducted. You do not need to include the needs assessment with your application.

Criterion B is the need for the requested flexibility, including blending of funds and other waivers. Reviewers will consider the extent to which the applicant, one, presents evidence that specific federal barriers are hindering successful achievement of outcomes for the pilot target population of disconnected youth, citing the relevant statutes, regulations and/or administrative requirements where flexibility is sought; and two, justifies how the requested flexibility will reduce barriers, increase efficiency, support implementation of the pilot and produce significantly better outcomes for the target population.

Criterion C is project design, which includes four subcriteria and is worth 25 points total. Under the first subcriterion reviewers will consider how the applicant presents a clear, logical plan to improve outcomes for the target population, by addressing the gaps and disparities identified through the needs assessment.

They will consider the one-page logic model submitted with your application and the extent to which the inputs and activities shown are necessary and sufficient to achieve the project's objectives, and the assumptions are identified and a rationale is provided for them.

Under the second subcriterion reviewers will consider the evidence-based and evidence-informed interventions proposed for the pilot, in addition to systems change. Evidence-based interventions are those validated by scientific evidence from experimental, quasi-experimental or correlational studies.

Evidence-informed interventions are those that bring together the best available research, professional expertise, and input from youth and families to identify and deliver services that have promise to achieve positive outcomes.

Applicants should cite the studies on service interventions and system reform that inform their pilot design, and explain the relevance of the cited evidence to the proposed project.

Under the third subcriterion reviewers will consider how the pilot will provide intensive, comprehensive and sustained service pathways, and coordinated approaches that are likely to improve outcomes significantly in the short, medium, and long term. For example, a pilot might prevent gaps in service that would jeopardize the achievement of outcomes by creating a seamless progression of services that provide continuous support, as needed, to the target populations.

Under the fourth subcriterion reviewers will consider the applicant's explanation of how the use of funds for the pilot, A, will not result in denying or restricting the eligibility of individuals for services that, in whole or in part, are otherwise funded by these programs; and B, based on the best available information will not otherwise adversely affect vulnerable populations that are the recipients of those services.

If the applicant proposes to include FY 2014 competitive grant funds that have already been awarded, they should demonstrate that the scope, objectives and target population of the existing award align with the proposed pilot.

These factors are fairly dense and we highly recommend that applicants learn more through the FAQs provided in the application package.

Criterion D, work plan and project management, is worth 10 points. And it includes, one, a detailed timeline and implementation milestones, including a statement of when any necessary preparatory work will be completed, which must be within 180 days of being awarded the pilot startup funding; the expected start date of a project manager; the expected award dates of contracts and other authorized subawards, and expected dates for establishing agreements among the partner; the start date of the pilot services, such as participant intake services; when the partnership will begin to implement pilot services or changes to administrative systems and policy, and which partners are responsible for key tasks; the number of participants expected to be served under the pilot for each period, such as quarterly or annually – for example, the number of participants enrolled and the number achieving specified education, employment or other outcomes.

Finally, for an applicant that is proposing an evaluation, as described in competitive preference priorities one and two, when it will begin evaluation activities, including the execution of a contract with an independent evaluator.

In the work plan you must also include a description of how the proposed budget and budget narrative align with the work plan, identifying how each implementation milestone will be adequately funded, as outlined in the proposed budget.

It must also include a description of any existing or anticipated barriers to implementation and how they will be overcome. And finally, a description of the professional qualifications that will be required of the project manager and other key personnel.

Criterion E, partnership capacity, has two subcriteria and is worth 15 points. Input from the field has emphasized the importance of anchoring pilots in mature community partnerships that have demonstrated strong capacity to implement cross-system collaboration.

Building on this input, reviewers will consider the extent to which a pilot has an effective governance structure in which, one, partners that are necessary to successfully implement the pilot are represented; two, partners have the necessary authority, resources, expertise and incentives to achieve the pilot's goals, resolve unforeseen issues, and sustain efforts to the extent possible after the project period ends. This includes by demonstrating the extent to which, and how, participating partners have successfully collaborated to improve outcomes for disconnected youth in the past.

The proposed governance structure should reflect a plan for effective cooperation across levels of government, including a description of the state, local and tribal roles in the partnership, or across entities within the same level of government, to improve outcomes for disconnected youth, such as through coordinated program delivery, easier program navigation for participants or identification and resolution and state and local policy barriers.

Reviewers will also consider the extent to which the applicant demonstrates that its proposal was designed with input from all relevant stakeholders, including disconnected youth and other community partners.

Where the project design includes job training strategies, reviewers will consider the extent of employer input and engagement in the identification of skills and competencies needed by employers, the development of the curriculum, and the offering of work-based learning opportunities, including pre-apprenticeship and registered apprenticeship.

Criterion F, data capacity, is worth 30 points, the largest share of points for any of the criteria. It includes five subcriteria.

First, the extent to which the applicant demonstrates the capacity to collect, analyze and use data for decision making, learning, continuous improvement and accountability; and has a strong plan to bridge the gaps in its ability to do so, including in the ways outlined on the slide: Managing data systems to track participant services and outcomes; executing data-sharing agreements; using data to inform cost-effective implementation strategies; and analyzing data to manage pilot projects' progress.

The other four subcriteria address, one, the applicant's plan to manage and link data while protecting privacy; two, how outcomes under the proposed pilot will significantly improve on what would have happened otherwise, both during the project and over the longer term; three, how appropriate and sufficient the proposed outcome measures and indicators are to gauge progress for pilot objectives; and four, the extent to which the data sources for the outcome measures and interim indicators will be accessible and independently audited or validated for accuracy.

The final criterion is the budget and budget narrative, which is worth five points. This will be reviewed for reasonableness.

Now I'm pleased to hand this back over to Mary Ellen Wiggins from the Office of Management Budget.

MS. WIGGINS: OK. Thank you so much, Braden. And I know we've just thrown a lot of information at everyone about the application requirements and how this will be scored. So we're just going to wrap it up here with an overview of the review and selection process.

We're seeing people entering questions into the chat function. Thank you so much for doing that. Again, that will really help us understand any additional information that we need to provide to the field in order to understand this new model and the processes involved with it.

So turning to the review and selection process, the Department of Education is going to lead review across agencies and will use reviewers with knowledge and expertise on issues that are related to improving outcomes for disconnected youth. And the department will be using a very thorough screening process to prevent any potential conflicts of interest, just to make sure that we have a fair, competitive review.

As Demetra noted when she was going over the competitive preference priorities, we will also ensure that reviewers who are reviewing competitive preference priorities one and two have expertise in evaluation.

Reviewers will read a group of applications that will be assigned to a specific panel that they're on, prepare a written evaluation, and then assign a technical score using the criteria that Braden reviewed, that is also provided in the notice inviting applications.

And then what you see here on this slide is a scoring rubric that is a tool that reviewers will use to promote consistency across and within the various review panels that will be looking at the P3 applications.

So as you might have noticed as Braden was going through the criteria and the subcriteria that are scored, there's typically a maximum point value of either five or 10 points associated with the specific subcriteria. And then based on the quality of the applicant's response, you can see here that there's sort of a range for a low-quality, a medium-quality or a high-quality response. So that's what will be guiding reviewers.

And for folks who are applying under competitive preference priority three – the one related to Promise Zones – there will be, again, two points if the application includes a letter from the lead organization of the designated Promise Zone that describes the contribution of the applicant's proposed activities.

And once all of the applications have been scored, the department will then use these scores to rank order all of the applications. And using this rank order, representatives from the agencies that administer programs under which flexibility in the federal requirements is being sought – so for example, where someone is seeking a waiver – representatives from those agencies will evaluate whether the flexibility that's being requested by the top-scoring applicants meets the statutory requirements that we covered early on for P3 and is otherwise appropriate.

For example, if an applicant is seeking flexibility under programs that are administered by Health and Human Services and the Department of Labor, then its requests for flexibility would be reviewed by officials from those two departments.

And we'd also like to note at this point that applicants may be asked to participate in an interview during this review and selection process, in order to clarify any requests for flexibility and any other aspects of proposals that might benefit from an interview.

And then agency officials may recommend the selection of up to 10 projects as P3 pilots. In selecting pilots, the agencies may consider high-ranking applications that meet absolute priority two, so where applicants are proposing to improve outcomes for disconnected youth in rural communities specifically; or absolute priority three, where applicants are proposing to improve outcomes for disconnected youth in tribal communities separately, just to make sure that there is diversity of pilots.

In addition, each pilot must meet all of the statutory criteria that we covered earlier on.

So for each finalist, a lead federal agency – again, designated by OMB – will be negotiating a performance agreement. If a performance agreement cannot be finalized for a particular finalist within 60 days, then an alternative applicant may be selected as a finalist in their stead.

So that takes us through a review of the review and selection process. And Braden, I'll turn it back over to you to discuss your contact information as the key P3 contact.

MR. GOETZ: As indicated in the notice and the application package, you can reach me at area code 202-245-7405 or by email at disconnectedyouth@ed.gov.

And many of the questions we've received we're going to answer in writing. You can find it on the forum for – on the HHS web page that's indicated in the application package.

MS. KEMP: Great. Thanks, Braden. This is Jennifer Kemp. You can find the information at www.findyouthinfo.gov is where we'll have some of the information up.

So we did want to get a little bit of a response. And you've listened to a lot from us; it is a rather complicated process. We would like to get a feeling from you all what you think about your chances of applying, your interest in applying.

So there's a question on the screen, is, what is your level of interest in applying? One, do plan to apply; two, do not plan to apply; and three, unsure.

And at this point it looks like many of you are unsure, but quite a few of you are interested in applying, which is great news for us at the federal level. So we'll leave that up for just another moment.

And I will also say that we're glad to see many of you are connecting in the chat. That was one of our goals for the webinar is to let you all know who else is online so that you could make some of the very connections that you are making. So we are glad that you were able to do that as well.

OK. Well, with this I always like getting a couple extra minutes in my day. So we will be concluding a little bit earlier than originally scheduled.

We want to thank you for participating. We want to also thank all of the federal partners for all of their work in this initiative. And we really look forward to hearing from you all moving forward.

So again, please send any questions that you have – (inaudible) – frequently asked questions. We will be looking at all the questions that you put in and developing some FAQs from those that don't already exist.

So thank you for your time and I'm going to hand it over to you, Brian.

MR. KEATING: All right. Thanks so much, Jennifer. I just want to encourage everyone before you hang up today or log out to go ahead and – many of you have already actually answered a couple of these questions that we have, or given us feedback.

So you'll notice that at the top right-hand corner of your screen we're asking you to let us know if you'd recommend viewing this webinar to a colleague. So please let us know yes or no.

As you can see, at the bottom left-hand corner of your screen we can go ahead and give us your overall rating of the quality of today's webinar, excellent, satisfactory or poor. We'd love to get your open-ended feedback, as many of you are letting us know at the – right above that window.

And then if there are any additional topics you'd like to see covered by anyone here on the Workforce3One platform, go ahead and let us know in that chat window at the bottom right-hand corner of your screen.

We're going to go ahead and leave it there in terms of what we're covering today audibly. But we'll leave this webinar room open for a couple minutes to give you an opportunity to type in your responses.

Thanks, everyone, for your feedback and we hope to see you on future events. Have a great day, everybody.

(END)