INTRODUCTION MEMO

TO: Any organization that has demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy activities for eligible individuals (as defined in CFR 463.24) seeking federal and/or state Adult Basic Education (ABE) funding, which may include:

A. a local educational agency;
B. a community-based organization or faith-based organization;
C. a volunteer literacy organization;
D. an institution of higher education;
E. a public or private nonprofit agency;
F. a library;
G. a public housing authority;
H. a nonprofit institution that is not described above and has the ability to provide adult education and literacy activities to eligible individuals;
I. a consortium or coalition of the agencies, organizations, institutions, libraries, or authorities described above;
J. a partnership between an employer and an entity described above; and
K. any other entity that has demonstrated effectiveness in serving eligible individuals.

FROM: Todd Wagner, Supervisor of Adult Basic Education

ACTION: Signed and submitted applications must be received by: June 1, 2018, 3:30 PM Central Daylight Time

PURPOSE AND OUTCOME OF THE GRANT OPPORTUNITY

The Minnesota Department of Education makes this funding available, in accordance with the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) for the purpose of providing adults with educational opportunities to acquire and improve their literacy skills necessary to become self-sufficient and to participate effectively as productive workers, family members and citizens.
FUNDING AVAILABLE

Estimated state funding (FIN 322) is $49,000,000 to fund multiple organizations, allocated via formula that equates to an estimated $6.00 per prior year’s contact hour plus additional funding for Census Count, LEP and Census No-Diploma. Estimated federal funding (FIN 438) is $4.8 million to fund multiple organizations, allocated via formula that equates to an estimated $0.50 per prior year’s contact hour plus additional funding for technology aid. This notification of funding does not obligate the state to make an award. The state reserves the right to cancel this notification if it is considered to be in the state’s best interest or if funding is terminated.

GRANT PERIOD

This is a multiyear grant, lasting the authorization period of the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA). All providers will be subject to the same grant cycle. The current term of the grant period is anticipated to be from July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019. The grant is renewable annually pending availability of funding and compliance with state statute, federal law, and grant expectations.

STATE’S RIGHT TO CANCEL

This grant opportunity does not obligate the state to award a contract or complete the project, and the state reserves the right to cancel the solicitation if it is considered to be in its best interest due to lack of funding, agency priorities or other considerations. All costs incurred in responding to this grant opportunity will be borne by the applicant.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The Minnesota Department of Education is offering technical assistance for any potential applicants via webinars, reference documents and additional assistance.

Webinar: The Minnesota Department of Education will host a webinar on Wednesday May 9, 2018 1-2:30 PM to answer any questions from potential applicants. To register for the webinar, please contact Cherie Eichinger (Cherie.eichinger@state.mn.us).

Additional: Please contact Jodi Versaw (Jodi.versaw@state.mn.us) for any additional questions or technical assistance needs.

FUNDING DETAILS

Federal Funding

Federal funding is available through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014. The estimated amount of federal funding for FY 2018-19 (July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019) is approximately $4.8 million. Awarded grantees are required to use the SERVS Financial System to report expenditures and to access federal ABE funding.

Under the Minnesota State Plan for Adult Basic Education, a funding formula based on prior year contact hours will be used to determine federal ABE allocations. For FY 2018-19, approved programs will be funded based on their proportional share of estimated or actual student hours delivered to all eligible enrollees for federally-FORMULA - 438 SFY 2019 FEDERAL - ADULT BASIC EDUCATION (ABE) GRANT OPPORTUNITY, CFDA 84.002A, FFY 2018
approved activities. The forward-funding concept of the federal distribution formula ensures that the federal funds will be a known and fixed amount for an approved ABE provider for the coming state fiscal year.

For FY 2018-19, two components of federal aid will be awarded to approved providers:

- **Regular Federal Aid** based upon the program’s proportion of eligible prior year learner hours. Hours reported for GED testing and for Conditional Work Referrals are not included in the prior year count for federal aid. Federal aid is expected to be about $0.50 per prior year student contact hour. The Minnesota Department of Education will contact and work with new providers to help develop a count of contact hours based on proposed programming and target student population for funding purposes.

- **Technology Aid**: The state expects that accountability is an ongoing responsibility of an approved provider. Expenses related to student testing, data management, and reporting should be planned for and budgeted by every program. To supplement this required effort, an amount of federal aid will be determined for each approved provider based upon prior year enrollment. The Minnesota Department of Education will contact and work with new providers to help develop an enrollment count based on proposed programming and target student population for funding purposes. If this supplemental aid represents an amount in excess of what the approved provider expends for accountability, the program may apply any overage to other ABE related expenses. Technology aid is calculated per approved provider in three components: 1) Data management: $2,000 minimum or $3.60 x prior year enrollment, whichever is greater; 2) testing/assessment: $1.00 x prior year enrollment; and 3) online learning: $2.30 x prior year enrollment.

The accurate counting, documenting and reporting of learner contact hours are required. Approved ABE programs are expected to understand and comply with the definitions of contact hours that are provided with this packet. **Failure to count hours correctly will put the approved provider’s entire Federal ABE aid allocation at risk.** Fiscal audits and contact hour audits are a part of the ABE law. A state-initiated ABE fiscal audit process will include contact hour review, eligible learner criteria review and a review of the ABE expenditures.

**State Funding**

State ABE aid is expected to be available for approved ABE consortia under Minnesota Statute 124D.51. The amount of State ABE aid available statewide is estimated to be about the same as SFY 2018. The amount of funding per consortia is established under a four-component formula in law. State funding is metered throughout the year through MDE’s IDEA’s system.

Funding components of the State ABE formula are:

Base Population Aid: $1.73 per school district resident using the current community education census. The remaining 3 components of the formula are calculated as a percentage of the remaining appropriation after the Base Population Aid is subtracted from the total State ABE aid available:

A. Prior Year Contact Hour Revenue: 84 percent of the remainder (estimated to be $6.00)  
B. Prior Year K-12 LEP Revenue: 8 percent of the remainder (about $44 per K-12 LEP unit)  
C. Over 25 No Diploma Residents Revenue: 8 percent of the remainder (about $8.00 per resident that is over 25 and has no high school diploma – US Census)

The exact proportions of these components are not known until all SFY 2018 participation data (contact hours) are aggregated and the exact state ABE appropriation from the 2018 legislature is known.

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In order to receive the Base Population Aid noted above, school districts must be formal members of an approved ABE consortium. All of Minnesota’s approximately 340 school districts are assigned to an ABE consortium. There were 43 ABE consortia funded statewide during SFY 2018. For administrative efficiency, all State ABE aid is paid directly to the single fiscal agent of a consortium. An ABE consortium may not have more than one fiscal agent. Fiscal agents are held responsible for all financial dealings of the consortium.

The accurate counting, documenting, and reporting of enrollee contact hours are required. Approved ABE programs are expected to understand and comply with the definitions of contact hours that are provided in policy. Failure to count hours correctly will put the consortium’s entire State and Federal ABE aid allocation at risk. Fiscal audits and contact hour audits are a part of the ABE law. A state-initiated ABE fiscal audit process will include contact hour review, eligible enrollee criteria review and a review of the ABE expenditures.

**General Information Section**

**GENERAL EXPECTATIONS OF GRANTEES**

Grantees will not expend more than five percent of federal ABE funding to administer a grant or contract under title II. In cases where five percent is too restrictive to allow for administrative activities, the eligible agency may increase the amount that can be spent on local administration. In such cases, the eligible provider must negotiate with the Minnesota Department of Education to determine an adequate level of funds to be used for non-instructional purposes. Local administrative activities considered for federal funding may include planning, administration and accountability, professional development, providing adult education and literacy services in alignment with local workforce plans (including co-enrollment in programs and activities with title I, as appropriate), and carrying out the one-stop partner responsibilities (including contributing to infrastructure costs of the one-stop system, as appropriate), in accordance with federal regulations (§463.26).

Grantees that are school districts will use the Uniform Financial Accounting and Reporting Standards (UFARS) and any other financial reporting forms provided by the department.

Grantees are capable of administering a grant successfully and professionally.

Grantees follow all state and federal grant regulations and policies.

Grantees keep a ledger and all documents that support your budget’s line item expenses, in case we request it.

Grantees have a conflict of interest policy and adhere to it during the grant period.

**RESOURCES FOR APPLICANTS**

**UFARS Reporting**

Minnesota school districts and charter schools must report their expenditures under the guidelines in the Uniform Financial Accounting and Reporting System

**Capital Assets**

Read the Capital Assets Guide (http://www.osa.state.mn.us/other/GASBTools/capital_asset_guide.pdf)

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Federally Funded Grants

Federal Guidance

Please refer to Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Title 2, Parts 200, for uniform guidance, crosswalks and cost principles for state, local, and Indian Tribes institutions of higher education and nonprofit organizations. You can access the information below at the electronic code of federal regulations (access at http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200_main_02.tpl).

Indirect Rates for Minnesota Public Schools plus Charter Schools and Education Cooperatives

Information on school district and local education agency (LEA) current fiscal year federal indirect cost rates (http://w20.education.state.mn.us/MDEAnalytics/Data.jsp).

State Travel Plan

Commissioner’s Travel Reimbursement Plan (http://www.mmd.admin.state.mn.us/commissionersplan.htm)

State Grant Management Policies

The Minnesota Office of Grant Management Policies are available to view (http://mn.gov/admin/government/grants/policies-statutes-forms).

GRANT APPLICATION COMPONENTS

APPLICATION INFORMATION

You must complete the application by providing the identified official with authority (IOWA) to sign on behalf of the applicant, a program contact person, and a business office contact person.

Applicant organizations must provide their complete zip code. Refer to the United States Postal Service site for information to look up the zip code plus 4 (https://tools.usps.com/go/ZipLookupAction!input.action).

REQUIRED IDENTIFICATION NUMBERS

It is likely your organization already has these numbers; check with your business office.

Minnesota Statewide Integrated Financial Tool System (SWIFT) Vendor Number (required for all applicants).

- If you are a fiscal agent applicant, SWIFT vendor number included must be for the fiscal agent who will be receiving and administering the grant funds.
- Get a SWIFT Vendor Number (access at https://supplier.swift.state.mn.us/psp/fmssupap/SUPPLIER/ERP/h/?tab=SUP_GUEST)

Federal Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number.

- All organizations applying for federal funding must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS). A DUNS is a unique nine-character I.D. number that is used to track how the federal grant is allocated.
- To register for or verify a DUNS number (access at http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/displayHomePage.do).
MDE Organization Site Number

- To obtain an MDE organization number, go to [http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/datasub/SiteVerif/](http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/datasub/SiteVerif/)
- Note: It takes a long time to open this page. Scroll down to the instructions and “Site Change Request Form”. Email the form or your questions it to mde.school-verify@state.mn.us. To determine the classification of an educational site, please refer to the information on that page.

Congressional District – (for federal grants) enter the congressional district that you (the site to receive the grant funding resides). Visit the federal house of representatives to search for your district ([http://www.house.gov/representatives/find/](http://www.house.gov/representatives/find/)).

County Name – (all applicants) enter the county you (the grantee who will receive and administer funds) reside in.

Are you a nonprofit organization reporting as a 501(c)(3) organization? Enter yes or no.

**GRANT FUNDING APPLICATION**

Complete this section by choosing the correct type of ABE funds you are applying for: federal, state, or both.

**PROGRAM STATUS**

Choose one of the following whether you are a continuing ABE consortium, realigned or significantly restricted ABE consortium, or a new consortium. Please read and choose the correct category depending on how you are applying.

**FEDERAL FUNDING ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY ACT**

Respond to the following 2 questions if you are a nongovernmental entity and the grant award will be $25,000 and over and, if your gross income is $300,000 or more from all sources for the previous tax year. This is only if the grant award is a federal award.

Do not respond to the 2 questions, if the grant award including continuation awards will be $25,000 and over and, if your gross income from all sources for the previous tax year was less than $300,000 and if the required reporting discloses classified information (Refer to FFATA Sections, 2(a)(1)(C), 2(e), 3.

1. In your organization’s preceding fiscal year, did the organization receive 80% or more of its annual gross revenues in U S federal contracts, subcontracts, loans, grants, subgrants, and/or cooperative agreements; and $25,000,000 or more in annual gross revenues from U S federal contracts, subcontracts, loans, grants, subgrants, and/or cooperative agreements?
2. If you answered yes to the question above, does the public have access to information about the compensation of the executives in your organization through periodic reports filed under section 13(a) or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934?

If you responded no to question 2, we may need additional information from you for reporting. We will contact you, if necessary.
ASSURANCES – STANDARD AND PROGRAM-SPECIFIC

When you submit the application, you certify that you have read the application and that you will comply with the approved application, the assurances herein, and all other applicable federal regulations, state statutes, and local policies.

TABLES

Complete and attach the four Grant Tables, Including Table A, Table 7, Table 13, and Table B. The tables are a separate document in a Excel format. Each table should be completed as follows:

- On Table A, list the total enrollment and contact hours
- On Table 7, list the adult education personal by function and job status, this is broken down by part time and full time personal, as well as any unpaid volunteers
- On Table 13, list the local grantee by funding source
- On Table B, list the consortium members and sites

APPLICATION SUBMISSION AND SIGNATURE

Applications must be submitted into the SERVS system and signed as described in Appendix A by June 1, 2018, 3:30 PM, Central Daylight Time.

**Faxed, mailed, or applications in Google Docs will not be accepted.**

Costs associated with preparing the application must be borne by the applicant. The burden of proof of timely submission is on the applicant.
APPENDIX A – SERVS INSTRUCTIONS

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) implemented a recertification process for authorization, for staff from organizations (school districts, charter schools, etc.) that need to access SERVS, Test WES, STAR and many other protected sites.

The new process requires the Identified Official with Authority (IOWA), the person who has legal authority to sign documents on behalf of the organization, to submit a request for access via the External User Access Recertification System and authorize their staff specific roles in secure MDE sites for the organization they represent. From the MDE Data Submissions access the External User Access Recertification System at http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/datasub/ExtUserAccess/

The IOWA sets up an account (if the IOWA does not already have one) and may link to the user access recertification system.

All users of protected sites, including the IOWA, must have an MDE account set up.

Assistance with Applications in SERVS

If you need assistance submitting your application into the SERVS system, please contact mde.servsfinancial@state.mn.us or the primary contact for the initiative. Assistance is provided during regular business hours. You may also call 651-582-8500 for assistance. Please leave a message if a staff person is unable to assist you at the time of your call. Your question will be forwarded to the most appropriate person within the agency. Please allow time for assistance to be provided and consider extra time to allow for submission and electronic signature application by the IOWA.

Work with the contact person identified in your application and in the grant opportunity announcement for assistance in building your budget in the SERVS system (formula grant (noncompetitive), if applicable, or for drawing down funds).

Application Coversheet

In order to complete your application coversheet, provide each of the following:

1. Organization site (ORG) number with the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE).
3. Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number (if federal).

Refer to Item 2 below (Required Coversheet Information in the Application Section) for information on where to obtain these numbers.

1. Obtaining SERVS Financial Access and MDE Account Setup

Before your agency can submit a grant application, the identified official with legal authority (IOWA), who signs on behalf of their organization and assign roles to their staff in SERVS, must be granted access to do so in the recertification system.
An organization IOWA using SERVS or wanting access to data protected sites must go to the [link to the recertification site for role authorization for SERVS](#). The instructions for using this system are located on the site.

The IOWA will have access to control which staff should have access to SERVS and the appropriate role for each staff person. They will also revoke or recertify their access **annually**.

The IOWA must identify himself/herself in the role to approve (sign) applications and budgets. Once the IOWA is identified, **then** they may enter the [External User Access Recertification System](#) and preauthorize roles for their staff. The IOWA **must** inform each staff person what role they are assigned. Any questions about user roles should be directed towards the IOWA.

Each person will only be assigned one of four roles in SERVS by the identified official with authority (IOWA) from their organization or district.

The four (4) different user roles that can be authorized in SERVS Financial are:

1) **Approve Application and Budget**: approver; read/write in grant and budget, approves grant submission and read in checkbook. (Role of the identified official with legal authority (IOWA).) This would likely be the superintendent or executive director who will sign applications.

2) **Application and Budget**: can submit applications, create and submit budgets. May NOT submit reimbursement requests.

3) **Account Register/Request Draws**: cash management; can submit, delete and correct reimbursement requests (role of business office and generally for formula type grants).

4) **Read Only**: no write permission; can only view and track applications, budgets or reimbursement requests. They may NOT edit.

Every user must create an MDE account **before** they can access SERVS or other secured sites.

Users must access this link [to create an MDE Account](#).

You may view your MDE account or modify the account, if needed. To view the role you are assigned, **after** logging into SERVS, select View or Update Your Account and then click on View Access Details in the left hand navigation panel.

If you are denied access to a role, an explanation is included in the email notification sent to you. Your role must match the role authorized by your IOWA who completed the authorization document.

If you have questions, please contact [mde.servsfinancial@state.mn.us](mailto:mde.servsfinancial@state.mn.us) or call 651-582-8500. Or, contact the primary contact identified in the grant announcement.

**2. Required Coversheet Information in the Application Section**

(Required Numbers in the Application (Coversheet) or Directly in SERVS)

To apply for a grant opportunity your agency head will be expected to provide the following information. Please check in with your business office to determine if your organization already has this information. School districts and approved charter schools are likely to have these numbers. For state funded initiatives in SERVS you may not have to provide the DUNS.

1. MDE Organization Site Number (example: 01-11).

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• Minnesota SWIFT Vendor ID Number.

• Federal DUNS Number.

**MDE Organization Site Number**

If you currently do not have an organization site (ORG) number with MDE you will need to obtain one before you can complete submission of your application into the SERVS application site.

To register and obtain an ORG number, read the instructions on the [http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/datasub/siteverif/](http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/datasub/siteverif/)

Scroll down and select the MDE Site Request or Change Form. You can save the form to your computer, complete it and email to mde.school-verify@state.mn.us. If you have any questions or forgot your number, please send an email to mde.school-verify@state.mn.us or call Mary Pat Olsen at 651-582-8624. If you are a nongovernmental entity, some of the information requested will not be applicable to your organization (just schools). *If you are a nongovernmental entity and not submitting an application into the SERVS system, an organization number will not be necessary.*

**SWIFT Vendor Number**

To obtain Minnesota Statewide Integrated Financial Tools general information and a SWIFT Vendor Number visit the site below.

[https://supplier.swift.state.mn.us/psp/fmssupap/SUPPLIER/ERP/h/?tab=SUP_GUEST](https://supplier.swift.state.mn.us/psp/fmssupap/SUPPLIER/ERP/h/?tab=SUP_GUEST)

**What is a DUNS?**

All school districts, charters schools, non-profits and other entities applying for federal funding are required to have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number. This is a federal requirement.

If you have never submitted an application to the SERVS system, you will be asked to provide your DUNS number. For additional information on DUNS, visit the [DUNS website](http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform).

**3. Preparing Your Application**

While you await your IOWA's certification of your role in SERVS, you may begin preparing your grant application.

Download the original application documents from MDE's grant opportunity [https://w1.education.state.mn.us/EGMS/searchAllActiveGrants.do](https://w1.education.state.mn.us/EGMS/searchAllActiveGrants.do)

You can view a list of open grant opportunities for both competitive and formula initiatives. Scroll down to open the announcement for the grant opportunity of your choice.

You must download and save all materials related to the grant opportunity to your computer.
Do not copy and paste the grant opportunity application into a new Word document, as the system will not allow you to upload it in this format. The document that you upload must be the same document that you originally downloaded.

Do not use any underlines or hyperlinks in the application.

Do not change the layout structure of the application. The grant **application must** be completed using Microsoft® Office Word. Supplemental documents may be in another format.

Do not change the name of the application. SERVS ties your grant application to the correct grant opportunity through the original document name. You will receive an error message if you attempt to upload a grant application where the name has been changed.

You must use Microsoft Office versions 2010 or later to complete the template documents.

Save your documents in their native format.

If you are working in Office 2010+, your documents must have .docx (Word) or .xlsx (Excel) extensions

### 4. Uploading your Application (for submission)

**General Information**

Individuals must have an MDE account and must have an approved role in SERVS before they may submit an application. Check in with your organization's IOWA to find your assigned role in SERVS financial.

Before submitting your application into SERVS, send a heads up to your IOWA (generally superintendent/executive director) letting them know you will be submitting an application which will require their electronic signature by a specific date.

The application submitted must be in Word format and must be submitted **before** any supplemental documents are submitted into the system. More than one (up to 5) supplemental document may be attached to the site. We recommend placing all Excel supplemental documents into one Portable Document Format (PDF) file and all Word supplemental documents into one PDF.

*A revised word application document may be submitted which will automatically replace the first one*. The revised version will need to be signed by the IOWA.

In the application submission site in SERVS, after you attached your completed Word application first and then supplemental documents, if any, you need to enter **specific** agency contact information for this grant. If you are selected for an award and this information is not available in SERVS, it might delay the processing of a grant award.

**Submission**

To submit a grant application, [log in to access SERVS grant site](#).

Enter your user ID and password, and select Grants Management to manage current applications or upload a new application. You will select your own district/charter school/organization.

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The application document you upload into SERVS Financial MUST be the same Word document that you originally downloaded to your computer from the MDE website.

If you copy, cut or paste the downloaded document into another Word document, this will cause a major error and/or be considered a corrupt document, when you attempt to upload it. The system will not allow you to upload a new or different Word document; it must be the same Word document originally downloaded to your computer.

Supplemental documents may be in another format; however, the application must be in Word format.

One Word application document may be uploaded into the application site at one time. A revised Word application submitted into the site would replace the original one and would need to be signed again by the IOWA.

Once you have successfully uploaded your grant application into SERVS, the status will say “Signature Pending.” Notify your IOWA (the person with authority to sign) that the application is ready for them to electronically sign. Let them know that it has to be signed by a specific date and time. They will need to log into SERVS to apply their signature to the application.

5. Obtaining Electronic Signatures

After you have uploaded your application into SERVS Financial and it is in the “signature pending” status, you need to obtain the electronic signature from the identified official with authority (IOWA) to sign. Let them know that the application is ready for their signature and there is a due date it needs to be signed by. If you submit a revised Word application, please inform them that they need to sign the revised application.

The IOWA signs applications as the legal representative of the school district, organization or agency (e.g., superintendent, executive director) and must have been assigned the role of Approve Application and Budget.

Follow these steps to log into SERVS and continue towards signature of the application.

Enter the SERVS Financial System and log into SERVS.

Once in SERVS, click on Grant Management (on the left side).

Select the application you want to sign from the list (the status on the application should say "Signature Pending").

You will be able to review the grant application submitted. If satisfied, you will click on "Sign Grant Application".

On the Grant Application Signature page, the IOWA must agree to comply to the terms by clicking on "I accept" which takes them to the next Grant Application Signature page where the IOWA enters their user ID and password and then clicks on submit.

If you agreed to the terms in the Grant Application Signature page, your signature event is recorded (time and date) on the Grant Application Details page. The Grants Application Details page should now state “you have successfully signed the grant application”.

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The grant application status reflected on the SERVS site for your application should have changed from "Signature Pending" to "Under Process".