

# MEMORANDUM

US Department Of Education  
Student Financial Assistance

June 29, 2001

TO: Office of Management and Budget

THROUGH: Office of the Chief Information Officer  
Regulatory Information Management Group

FROM: General Manager  
Financial Partners Channel/SFA

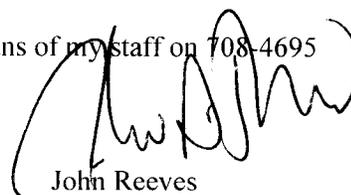
THROUGH: Cameron Ishaq, Director  
State Agency Liaison/Financial Partners Channel

SUBJECT: Request for Emergency Approval of the 2000-2001 Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership (LEAP) and Special Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership (SLEAP) Programs Performance Report (OMB No. 1840-0044) Combined Electronic-Form Clearance Package

The current LEAP performance report form expires November 30, 2003 (OMB 1845-0044). We are seeking to revise this form to include the SLEAP performance report, making it one combined, web-based form. The Financial Partners Channel in collaboration with Student Financial Assistance's (SFA) new Financial Management System (FMS) is automating the LEAP and SLEAP reporting process. This new E-form will allow our state partners to complete reporting requirements on-line, making the process more reliable and with less chance of error than the current process. With the development of this E-form, the Financial Partners Channel will have completed the second and final step in our move towards automating the current paper processes under the LEAP and SLEAP programs. Our state partners have been included in the development of this E-form and are anticipating this new electronic reporting method.

Regulations were finalized for the SLEAP Program November 1, 2000 and the Department's budget was passed December 21, 2000. In addition to appropriating funds for the LEAP and SLEAP programs, significant changes were made to the SLEAP Program statute. As a result, the development of an application to allow states to apply for funding in May 2001 began in January and the development of the attached performance report proceeded concurrently. Changes to the statute required numerous changes to the performance report and the data elements included in it. All of our available resources were involved in the development of both forms from January until the performance report's completion in June, including the state educational agencies. Given all the new program requirements this year and the move to automate the LEAP and SLEAP processes, we felt there was a need to gain state's input in the development of these forms. The performance report especially, because of its complexity of many data elements, needed to be shared with the states and at their request was held in abeyance until extensive review at their most recent National Association of State Student Grant and Aid Programs (NASSGAP) Annual Spring conference held in Washington, DC on June 13, 2001. **Because of the changes to the law and new program requirements, the short time schedule for development of forms, and obtaining state involvement in the process, we are requesting emergency approval of this new performance report form by July 10, 2001. This would allow for the needed time by states to plan and begin reporting under the programs as soon as possible.**

If you have any questions, please contact Greg Gerrans of my staff on 708-4695



John Reeves