# Grants Management System (GMS) And Application Instructions

(Revised September, 2013)

## Hardware/Software Requirements

### Minimum Software and Browser Requirements:

**Internet Access**

An Internet connection is required to access the Grants Management System (GMS). A high-speed connection is recommended, but is not required.

**Operating Systems**

- PC Users: Microsoft® Windows XP or higher
- **Macintosh Users: Mac OSX v10.4 (Tiger) or higher**

There is no minimum requirement for computer processor/speed. No software beyond a browser is required to use the system. Some reports may be delivered as PDF documents. To open and save PDF documents, you must install a free copy of Adobe Reader. To download: http://get.adobe.com/reader/

**Browsers**

- Microsoft® Internet Explorer 7.0 and higher
  To download: http//www.microsoft.com/windows/internet-explorer/worldwide-sites.aspx

- Mozilla Firefox 1.5 or higher
  To download: http://www.mozilla.com/en-US/firefox/

The GMS may function properly with other browsers such as Safari and Chrome. However, such browsers are not certified for use with the GMS.

**Pop-up Blocker**

The Review Checklist documents within the GMS open in a second window. Turn off the pop-up blocker in your browser to allow these documents to open. Some computers may have multiple pop-up blockers installed. All will need to be set to allow the pop-up window in order to view the checklist.

**Resolution**

The GMS is best viewed in 1024 X 768 or higher resolution.

**NOTE: Internet Explorer 6.0 has an option that may cause problems with the system if not set appropriately. The following steps will allow you to check this: *Tools→ Internet Options→ Temporary Internet Files Section→ Settings→ Check for new versions of stored pages→ Automatically.* If the setting is not "Automatically", the system will not save data entered.**

### Overview of the Grants Management System:

**System Rules:**

- A check in a box means "yes", a blank box means "no".

- SAVE:  Use the Save Page button at the end of each page.  Whenever a page is SAVED, the system brings the user back to the top of that page.  If something needs to be changed on that page, an error message will appear in red at the top of the page and data will not be saved.
- **DO NOT use the "BACK" button** on the browser to move among the tabs.  Click on the next tab or use the pull-down menu of applications.
- **USERS can move among tabs and programs without having to SAVE the information entered on one page.  That is why it is so important to SAVE what has been entered.  Selecting another Tab without clicking Save Page (and resolving any errors) will result in loss of the data entered.**
- Data that has been SAVED can be changed at any time until the application is submitted.

**Page Design:**

- At the top of each page is the name of the applicant and a unique number assigned to each applicant.  ESU area, county, district.
- A pull-down menu on the right hand side contains all grant programs included in the application.
- Beneath the pull-down menu is an option to print a page without the graphics (Printer Friendly).  If you desire to print a single web page within the GMS, it is recommended to first click the Printer Friendly link, and then use your browser's File→ Print option.
- A link (identified by the underline) to instructions for that page is also on the top right hand side of most pages.

Across the screen is a TAB strip designed to look like the tabs from a file folder.  The number and name of tabs vary based on which program you are on.  Each tab represents a different web page that should be reviewed and completed by the applicant.  Some pages, like Overview, are strictly informational, and require no data entry.

**Assistance to Applicants:**

- A ***"Contact Us"*** link at the bottom of each application page provides a list of program staff, financial services staff, data center staff and the helpdesk email and phone numbers.  **If program questions or technical problems arise, use this link to determine whom to contact.**
- A link to Instructions is provided on nearly every page that requires data to be entered by the applicant.  (The link to Instructions on the Application's Goals and Needs page will allow an applicant to print out all the instructions at once.)

**Security:**

The Grants Management System has several security features.  It has been designed to work with the NDE Portal to assure that there is only one authorized representative to submit the application per district.  Through the Portal, the authorized representative can approve staff requests to complete parts of the application but only the authorized representative can agree to the assurances and submit the application to NDE.

**History:**

The Grants Management System will record the activity for each application.  This includes the date submitted and who submitted it, the approval date, amendment dates, etc.  The system will keep applications from year to year and all previous actions (applications and amendments) will be available for review.

**Built-in Validations and Accuracy:**

The system has several ways to ensure that when an application is submitted, it is as accurate and complete as possible.  For example, an **error message will appear in red at the top of the page** if a number is entered when a word is required.  Validation errors must be corrected before the data can be saved. When the correct entry is made, the error message disappears and the data is saved. Warning messages are similar – they allow a save but appear in red.

The system has been designed to ensure that applications are complete before submission. The last step in the process of completing the Application is on a tab called ***"Submit"***. Prior to the authorized representative clicking the ***"Submit"*** button, the system requires a ***"Consistency Check"*** to be successfully performed. The consistency check examines the entire application, as opposed to a single web page of the application. Example: If any page contains required responses that were skipped or if any available funds were not budgeted, an error message is displayed. The "Submit to NDE" button is only available to the authorized representative after the consistency check has successfully passed. Further, when the consistency check does pass, the application is ***"Locked"***. This prevents modifications to the application that could nullify the consistency check. If the applicant desires to change the application after a successful consistency check (but before submission), they must click the ***"Unlock Application"*** button, also located on the Submit page. **<u>This can only be done by the person's login id and password who "locked" the application.</u>** By unlocking the application at this time, the record of a successful consistency check is erased, necessitating the consistency check being run again prior to submission.

The submit page will be different for a person designated for data entry. The data entry person will have a ***"Submit"*** button but will send the completed application to the authorized representative. **Only the authorized representative can submit the application to NDE for review and approval.**

**The *"Submit"* page has a comment box to provide an opportunity for miscellaneous communication between the district and the reviewer. This is to be used for general comments or questions that cannot be accommodated on the *"Amendment Description"* page or in the REVIEW CHECKLIST.**

This is a consolidated application for all IDEA flow-through funds a district will receive. The application cannot be submitted until all components are completed and the consistency check is run. Example: the IDEA Base pages of the IDEA Consolidated Application cannot be submitted separately from the IDEA E/P if funds are available for both.

**The *"Amendment Description"* is designed for districts to describe what revisions they have made to the original application upon an amendment. Please use this page as it provides program staff, who are reviewing your application, information to the programs and pages that were revised.**

**Communication:**

The system will automatically send email messages to the authorized representatives and others, as defined in the NDE Portal, whenever there is an approval or an application and/or payment request is returned for changes. The system will notify the appropriate staff person in the Department when an application or amendment has been submitted. The messages will be sent to the email address as provided by the agency in the Portal. If changes are needed, select ***"Profile"*** from the portal tab strip, make changes, and then hit ***"update"*.** The update will be communicated from the Portal to GMS overnight.

**Lock Application:**

After successfully running the ***"Consistency Check"***, the application will be locked. This means that information cannot be added or changed while in lock status. Only the user who placed the application in lock status for that agency can ***"unlock"*** the application. Upon clicking the ***"Submit to NDE"*** button, the application is locked and no changes can be made.

**NDE Review and Approval of Applications:**

Each Application will be reviewed and approved or disapproved by one of the NDE Program staff. Each applicant will have one person to contact with questions regarding the application for all of the programs. Final approval of applications will be given by an NDE Leadership Council member.

When an application is being reviewed for approval, the reviewer will use the Review Checklist. This Checklist is available to all applicants as a reference during the process of completing their application. Any applicable item on the checklist that is not acceptable will cause the application to be returned to the district for changes. The Checklist will identify the needed changes and contain the comments of the reviewer as to what is needed. The Checklist is accessible by clicking the ***"Review Checklist"*** button on the Application Select page. The Checklist will open in a separate browser window. To view the checklist, you must allow pop-ups for the page to display. This enables the users to easily toggle between the application and the review checklist. During the review and approval process, neither the district nor Department staff will be able to change anything on the application.

When the application has received final approval, the system will notify the authorized representative. A Grant Award Notification (GAN) for each approved grant in the Application is available on the green link on the Application Select Page as a .pdf file ***("View GAN").***

**Types of Users within the Portal:**

***District Administrator (*DistAdmin)** – this role allows access for data entry, ability to sign the assurances and submit the application and future amendments; accessing the request for reimbursement in the payment portion of the GMS and submitting claims. **NOTE: THE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR IS THE ONLY ROLE THAT HAS THE *"SUBMIT TO NDE"* BUTTON.**

***Data Entry*** – this role allows access for data entry to the application and submission to district administrator; **does not allow for submitting to NDE.**

***Bookkeeper*** – this role allows view only rights to the application and data entry access to the payment portion of the GMS and ability to submit a request for reimbursement. **NOTE: THE BOOKKEEPER ROLE HAS THE *"SUBMIT TO NDE"* BUTTON FOR SUBMITTING REIMBURSEMENT REQUESTS AND FINAL REPORTS ONLY.**

***View Only*** – this role allows view only rights to the application pages and payment portion of the GMS.

## EACH USER SHOULD LOG IN WITH HER/HIS OWN USER ID AND PASSWORD.

**Getting Started:**

After getting registered and obtaining an activation code for the type of user account assigned to you by your authorized representative, the applicant will select GMS from the Portal tab strip. This will bring up the Grants Management System (GMS) menu of available applications. IDEA Consolidated Application is one of the options. Selecting the IDEA Consolidated Application opens the application pages within the GMS.

**Organization Select** – If an administrator is responsible for more than one district, the **Organization Select** screen appears first. This screen will list all the districts approved for that person.

**Application Select** – The first step is selecting the application. The system is designed to maintain a history of applications and amendments through the years. To start a new application, select the ***"Create Application"*** button. The button actions that are not valid will not be enabled and will appear fuzzy on the screen since they are disabled. For example, an amendment cannot be created until after an application has been approved. Therefore, selecting an application whose status is ***"Submitted for Review"***, results in the "Create Amendment" button still being disabled.

**IDEA Consolidated Application:**

The IDEA Consolidated Application appears on the screen when the application is first opened. The set of tabs for the IDEA Consolidated Application are reviewed below.

**TAB: Overview**

The overview provides the background information for the consolidated application and all of the programs included. The IDEA Consolidated Application is built around the requirements of IDEA and Rule 51. There is no action needed on this page.

**TAB: Allocations**

This page lists all the allocations for the five programs in the IDEA Consolidated Application that a district will receive. Down the left hand column are variables that can affect the total allocation. These include reallocated funds, carryover amounts (not included until after the previous year's project is closed-out), and a record of released funds, if any. When carryover funds are available, an amendment will be necessary to add them to the application's budget.

The next set of lines on the Allocations page is where districts may use the option to transfer CEIS funds to IDEA E/P. **CEIS remains an option for districts and is <u>not</u> a requirement.** CEIS funds may be transferred to IDEA E/P in whole or partial amounts: however, once funds are transferred out of CEIS, <u>they may not be returned</u>. The maximum allocation for CEIS consideration is 15% (amount pre-calculated and displayed).

The net impact of using this option is reflected in the "Total Available" cell on the IDEA E/P Budget Detail page. Example: A district indicates that the CEIS funds will be used under IDEA E/P. The Total Available on the IDEA E/P Budget Detail page will include funds from both CEIS and IDEA E/P.

**Districts cannot transfer funds out of and into other programs. For example, funds from IDEA Base cannot be transferred to IDEA E/P. Districts can release funds by marking the checkbox at the bottom of the page.**

**TAB: Contact Information**

This page asks for contact information for staff that will be completing the various components of the application. **The authorized representative (THIS IS TO BE THE SUPERINTENDENT) section is required.** Complete section for additional persons wanting to receive email communications.

**TAB: Goals and Needs**

Clicking ***"Goals and Needs"*** opens up four *new* tabs that address each Goal. This is the "heart" and most critical part of the Consolidated Application. The IDEA Consolidated Application is designed to ensure that IDEA funds support activities tied to district goals. Please read through the entire section of the instructions before completing this part of the application. It is important to understand how the information entered here will be used throughout the application.

Under each goal or text response, there is a list of the IDEA programs included in the Consolidated Application. If funds from a program will be used to support the goal, the box must be checked. More than one IDEA program may be checked for each goal.

**Each goal that is listed on the Budget Detail page must have a budget. If a goal will not be financially supported by one or more of the listed programs, the "Not Applicable" box <u>must</u> be checked.**

<u>The Goal will reappear on the ***"Budget Detail"*** page for each IDEA program checked. All IDEA funds must be budgeted in support of one or more of the Goals. Once funds have been budgeted on the Budget Detail page in support of a particular goal, the checkbox on the Goals and Needs page that caused this Goal to be copied to the Budget Detail page cannot be unchecked. In order to unselect such a checkbox, the user must first delete all rows on the Budget Detail page for that program associated with the Goal and save. Once these budget details are deleted, then the checkbox can be unchecked.</u>

**TAB: Assurances**

Assurances for all of the IDEA programs are provided under this tab. At the end of the assurances is the ***"Organization Agrees"*** button. **NOTE: This button will only be displayed to the authorized representative.** Once the district agrees to the assurances, it does not need to repeat this step for amendments or changes later in the year.

**The Special Education Statement of Assurances must be completed by <u>ALL</u> school districts. A Certification regarding Lobbying, Debarment, Suspension and other responsibility matters is included. For districts choosing to use IDEA E/P funds for Minor Building Modifications, an additional assurance is required.**

**TAB: Submit**

This is the last step in the process and is used only when all applicable program specific pages are complete for each IDEA program. Prior to the authorized representative clicking on the ***"Submit"*** button, the system requires a ***"Consistency Check"*** to be successfully performed. The consistency check examines the entire application, as opposed to a single web page of the application. Example: If any page contains required responses that were skipped or if any available funds were not budgeted, an error message is displayed. The "Submit to NDE" button is only available after the consistency check has successfully passed. Further, when the consistency check does pass, the application is ***"Locked"***. This prevents modifications to the application that could nullify the consistency check (but before submission), they must click the ***"Unlock"*** button, also located on the Submit page. **<u>This can only be done by the person's login id and password who "locked" the application.</u>** By unlocking the application at this time, the record of a successful consistency check is erased, necessitating the consistency check being run again prior to submission.

The submit page will be different for a person designated for data entry. The data entry person will have a "submit" button but it will send the completed application to the authorized representative. **Only the authorized representative can submit the application to NDE for review and approval.**

If an attempt is made to submit an application before the agency has agreed to the assurances, an error message will direct the applicant to the assurances.

**TAB: Amendment Description**

The Amendment Description Page is a page that was created for Reviewer efficiency and auditing purposes. This page only needs to be completed upon an amendment to the original application. All amendments require information describing the changes made to the application. This text box description allows the reviewer to accurately determine and approve changes from the original application.

**TAB: Application History**

This tab will display the progress of your application after submission to NDE.

**TAB:  Page Lock Control**

Once an application is submitted to the Department of Education, it is set in a "Locked Status".  This feature was put into place as an auditing control.  If a page is locked, no changes can be saved.  A page can be unlocked by clicking the check box next to the page name and clicking on the <Save Page> button.  For further details, please refer to this link: http://www.education.ne.gov/gms/pagelockcontrol.pdf

**Program Specific Pages**

When the IDEA Consolidated Application pages are complete (through Goals and Needs), use the pull-down menu on the right hand corner to find and complete the pages for each of the five IDEA programs that have an allocation.  The guidance that follows provides information on completing specific information.