

\$25 mil. up for grabs from U.S. Department of Education

By Richard Perez-Pena, New York Times

School districts will be able to submit proposals for innovative educational programs this year to compete for federal grants of up to \$25 million under a new national contest, part of the three-year-old Race to the Top program. Rules for the competition were to be announced on Tuesday by the Department of Education.

Like the department's state-level competition for federal grants that preceded it, the program will require systems for measuring student progress and assessing teachers and administrators and will target low-income communities. Under the department's rules, the schools included in each application must have at least 40 percent of students qualify for federally subsidized school lunches.

A spokesman for the department said it would look for programs that provide ways to tailor instruction to individual students.

"We need to take classroom learning beyond a one-size-fits-all model and bring it into the 21st century," Arne Duncan, the education secretary, said in a statement.

The rules require districts to show how they will focus resources on "students facing significant challenges, such as students with disabilities, English learners and students affected by impacts of poverty or family instability."

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