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Superintendent of Education

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **USED Issues Updated GDOE Specific Conditions for FFY24**

***Tiyan, Guam*** – The U.S. Department of Education (USED) has issued the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2024 Departmentwide specific conditions for USED grants awarded to the Guam Department of Education (GDOE).

In September 2023, GDOE successfully completed a six-month probationary period in which GDOE demonstrated its ability to perform the financial management duties being performed by a third-party fiduciary agent (TPFA). Upon completion of this probationary period, ED conducted an on-site visit for the purpose of assessing GDOE's progress in managing federal funds and to determine whether to remove the TPFA requirement that has been in place since 2010. As a result of a successful six-month probationary period and on-site monitoring visit, USED removed the specific condition requirement for a TPFA resulting in saving millions of dollars in local funds.

The updated specific conditions letter emphasizes GDOE's enhanced Internal Audit Office (IAO) structure establishing the office as an independent reviewer of all GDOE internal processes to ensure accountability, transparency, and proper oversight of GDOE internal control processes.

The FFY 2024 specific conditions letter describes GDOE's responsibility to continue to make progress in managing fiscal oversight responsibilities for USED grant funds that were previously performed by a TPFA. The FFY 2024 specific conditions are relative to:

1. GDOE's IAO and Guam Office of Public Accountability (OPA) periodic audits;
2. expending federal funds for allowable costs;
3. charging grants for obligations within the period of availability and liquidating within 120 days after the end of the funding period or within authorized extension period;
4. establishing and maintain an effective employee time tracking process;
5. within 24 hours accept/reject goods or services and draw funds for vendor payment; and
6. ensuring property management procedures are in compliance with federal regulations.

The requirement for the IAO and OPA to perform periodic audits is a new condition that has been added for FY 2024. Moving forward, the specific conditions require for GDOE to complete the implementation of the 17 pending items within the Reconsideration Evaluation Plan relative to employee time tracking, financial management improvement system, internal controls, procurement, and property management.



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Superintendent Swanson stated *“The FY2024 specific conditions letter shows GDOE continues to make progress with managing all of USEd grants. Although the letter shows progress, there is still much to improve upon and complete. It is my intent to address all the remaining specific conditions and request for full removal of high-risk designation over the next 12 months.”*

This year’s letter also highlights the need for GDOE to fill critical positions in financial and grants management with qualified individuals and supporting the IAO which has assumed the role of federal grants monitoring with the removal of the TPFA.

GEB Chairwoman Dr. Mary Okada comments *“The GEB attends USEd’s monthly meetings and supports the Superintendent and GDOE’s efforts in addressing the specific conditions and ensuring compliance to all federal regulations. We will work with GDOE leadership, as well as the federal granting agency to ensure GDOE is successful in moving towards the full removal of its high-risk designation.”*

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**-END OF STATEMENT-**