



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Applications for New Awards; Mental Health Service

Professional Demonstration Grant Program

AGENCY: Office of Elementary and Secondary Education,
Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Education (Department) is issuing a notice inviting applications for fiscal year (FY) 2024 for the Mental Health Service Professional (MHSP) Demonstration Grant Program, Assistance Listing Number 84.184X. This notice relates to the approved information collection under OMB control number 1810-0772.

DATES:

Applications Available: [INSERT DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE **FEDERAL REGISTER**].

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: [INSERT DATE 75 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE **FEDERAL REGISTER**]

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: [INSERT DATE 135 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE **FEDERAL REGISTER**].

Pre-Application Webinar Information: The Department will hold a pre-application meeting via webinar for prospective applicants on TBD, at 1:00 pm and TBD at 1:00 pm Eastern Time. To register, please visit the program website at: <https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-formula-grants/safe->

supportive-schools/mental-health-service-professional-demonstration-grant-program/.

ADDRESSES: For the addresses for obtaining and submitting an application, please refer to our Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the *Federal Register* on December 7, 2022 (87 FR 75045) and available at <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/12/07/2022-26554/common-instructions-for-applicants-to-department-of-education-discretionary-grant-programs>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Nicole White, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, 4th Floor, Washington, DC 20202-6450. Telephone: (202) 453-6729. Email: Mental.Health@ed.gov.

If you are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability and wish to access telecommunications relay services, please dial 7-1-1.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The MHSP Program provides competitive grants to support and demonstrate innovative partnerships to train school-based mental health services providers (as defined in section 4102 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA)) (services providers) for employment in schools and local educational

agencies (LEAs). The goal of this program is to increase the number and diversity of high-quality, trained providers available to address the shortages of mental health services professionals in schools served by high-need LEAs (as defined in this notice). The partnerships must include (1) one or more high-need LEAs or a State educational agency (SEA) on behalf of one or more high-need LEAs and (2) one or more eligible institutions of higher education (eligible IHE) (as defined in this notice).

Partnerships must provide opportunities to place postsecondary education graduate students in school-based mental health fields into high-need schools (as defined in this notice) served by the participating high-need LEAs to complete required field work, credit hours, internships, or related training, as applicable, for the degree or credential program of each student. In addition to the placement of graduate students, grantees may also develop mental health career pathways as early as secondary school, through career and technical education opportunities, or through paraprofessional support degree programs at local community or technical colleges.

Background:

Like good physical health, positive mental health promotes success in life. As defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), "Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-

being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make healthy choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood.”¹

Support for the mental health of children and youth advances educational opportunities by helping to create conditions for students to fully engage in learning. The increases in mental health related needs, including those resulting from traumatic events such as the COVID-19 pandemic, community violence, adverse childhood experiences, the impact of social media, and more present challenges for children and youth that for many impact their overall emotional, psychological, and social well-being and their ability to fully engage in learning.

The priorities, requirements, and definitions used in this notice aim to address student mental health needs by training more school-based mental health services providers who will be available to work in high-need LEAs. While the complementary K-12 mental health program, the School-Based Mental Health Services Program (SBMH), focuses on the immediate need of hiring more school-based mental health services providers, the MHSP program is designed to increase the overall number of services providers prepared

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. www.cdc.gov/mentalhealth/learn/index.htm. Accessed on February 12, 2024.

to enter the workforce. Additionally, we aim to make more awards to eligible applicants who have not yet benefited from an MHSP grant, to increase the number of services providers from diverse backgrounds or from the school communities they will serve, and to ensure that all services providers are trained in inclusive practices, including ensuring access to services for children and youth who are English learners.

In developing applications that meet the absolute priorities, we encourage applicants to consider the needs of individuals from diverse backgrounds and utilize the program's broad allowability to use funds to provide support services that will have a meaningful impact on diversifying the school-based mental health services workforce. For example, projects may pay for participants' tuition, provide a modest salary for internships, cover the cost of transportation to and from the high-need school where the participant is placed, pay for childcare while the participant is working at the high-need school, and pay for administrative expenses, such as background check fees that are necessary for placement in a participating school. Such uses of funds may be especially critical in supporting individuals from low-income backgrounds who are pursuing careers as school-based mental health services providers.

Priorities: This competition has three absolute priorities and three competitive preference priorities. Absolute

Priority 1 and the competitive preference priorities are from the notice of final priorities, requirements, and definitions for the MHSP Program published in the *Federal Register* on October 4, 2022 (87 FR 60083) (the NFP).

Absolute Priority 2 and Absolute Priority 3 are from the Administrative Priorities for Discretionary Grants Programs (Administrative Priorities), published in the *Federal Register* on March 9, 2020 (85 FR 13640).

Absolute Priorities: For FY 2024 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, these priorities are absolute priorities. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), we consider only applications that meet Absolute Priority 1 and Absolute Priority 2 or Absolute Priority 3.

The Secretary intends to create two funding slates for MHSP applications, one slate for applications that meet Absolute Priority 1 and Absolute Priority 2 and a second slate for applications that meet Absolute Priority 1 and 3. As a result, the Secretary may fund applications out of the overall rank order.

These priorities are:

Absolute Priority 1 - Expand Capacity of High-need LEAs.

Projects that propose to expand the capacity of high-need LEAs in partnership with eligible IHEs to train school-based mental health services providers (as defined

in this notice), with the goal of expanding the number of these professionals available to address the shortages of school-based mental health services providers in high-need schools.

To meet this priority, the applicant must propose a school-based mental health partnership (as defined in this notice) to place the IHE's graduate students in school-based mental health services fields into high-need schools served by the participating high-need LEAs for the purpose of completing required field work, credit hours, internships, or related training necessary to complete their degree or obtain a credential as a school-based mental health services provider.

Absolute Priority 2 - Applications From New Potential Grantees.

Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate the following:

(a) The applicant does not, as of the deadline date for submission of applications, have an active grant, including through membership in a group application submitted in accordance with 34 CFR 75.127-75.129, under the program from which it seeks funds.

(b) For the purpose of this priority, a grant is active until the end of the grant's project or funding period, including any extensions of those periods that extend the grantee's authority to obligate funds.

Absolute Priority 3 - Applications from Grantees that Are Not New Potential Grantees.

Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate the following:

(a) The applicant has, as of the deadline date for submission of applications, an active grant, including through membership in a group application submitted in accordance with 34 CFR 75.127-75.129, under the program from which it seeks funds.

(b) For the purpose of this priority, a grant is active until the end of the grant's project or funding period, including any extensions of those periods that extend the grantee's authority to obligate funds.

Competitive Preference Priorities: For FY 2024 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, these priorities are competitive preference priorities. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i), we award up to an additional 5 points for Competitive Preference Priority 1, depending on how well the application meets the priority. We award up to an additional 5 points for Competitive Preference Priority 2, depending on how well the application meets the priority. We award an additional 5 points to an application that meets Competitive Preference Priority 3. The total number of competitive preference points an applicant may receive is 15.

An applicant must clearly identify in the project abstract and the project narrative section of its application the competitive preference priority or priorities it wishes the Department to consider for purposes of earning competitive preference priority points.

These priorities are:

Competitive Preference Priority 1-Increase the Number of Qualified School-Based Mental Health Services Providers in High-Need LEAs Who Are from Diverse Backgrounds or from Communities Served by the High-Need LEAs. (Up to 5 points)

Projects that propose to increase the number of qualified school-based mental health services providers in high-need LEAs who are from diverse backgrounds (*i.e.*, backgrounds that reflect the communities, identities, races, ethnicities, abilities, and cultures of the students in the high-need LEA, including underserved students) or who are from communities served by the high-need LEAs.²

Applicants must describe how their proposal to increase the number of school-based mental health services providers who are from diverse backgrounds or who are from the communities served by the high-need LEA will help increase access to mental health services for students within the high-need LEA and best meet the mental health needs of the diverse populations of students to be served.

² All strategies to increase the diversity of providers must comply with applicable Federal civil rights laws, including title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Competitive Preference Priority 2-Promote Inclusive Practices. (Up to 5 points)

Projects that propose to provide evidence-based (as defined in this notice) pedagogical practices in mental health services provider preparation programs or professional development programs that are inclusive with regard to race, ethnicity, culture, language, disability, and for students who identify as LGBTQI+, and that prepare school-based mental health services providers to create culturally and linguistically inclusive and identity-safe³ environments for students when providing services.

Applicants must describe how their proposal to provide evidence-based pedagogical practices in mental health services provider preparation programs or professional development programs will prepare school-based mental health services providers to provide inclusive practices and to create culturally and linguistically inclusive and identity-safe environments for students when providing services.

Competitive Preference Priority 3-Partnerships with HBCUs, TCUs, or other MSIs. (0 or 5 points)

³ An identity-safe environment is a place where every student feels physically and emotionally safe. Perceptions of safety often differ across different groups of students, and each intervention and support measure should be designed to ensure the safety and belonging of all students.

Applicants that propose to implement their projects by or in partnership with one or more of the following entities:

(1) Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) (as defined in 34 CFR 608.2).

(2) Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) (as defined in section 316(b)(3) of the HEA).

(3) Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs) (as defined in sections 316 through 320 of part A of title III, under part B of title III, or under title V of the HEA).

Note: Only institutions that the Department determined to be eligible through the FY 2024 process for eligible MSI designation (which includes HBCU and TCU designations), or which were granted a waiver under the process, may be considered eligible for this competitive preference priority.

Requirements: These application requirements are from the NFP. These requirements are:

Program Requirement: Eligible applicants for this program are high-need LEAs, SEAs on behalf of one or more high-need LEAs, and IHEs. High-need LEA applicants and SEA applicants on behalf of one or more high-need LEAs must propose to work in partnership with an eligible IHE, which may include institutions that serve diverse learners such as an HBCU (as defined in 34 CFR 608.2), TCU (as defined in section 316(b)(3) of the HEA), or other MSI (as defined in

sections 316 through 320 of part A of title III, under part B of title III, or under title V of the HEA). Eligible IHE applicants must propose to work in partnership with one or more high-need LEAs or an SEA.

Application Requirements: An applicant must include the following in its application:

(a) *Identification of schools to be served by the proposed project.*

Applicants must identify or describe how they will identify the high-need schools to be served in each high-need LEA that is part of the school-based mental health partnership.

(b) *A description of the nature and magnitude of the problem.*

Applicants must describe how the lack of school-based mental health services providers is specifically affecting students in the high-need schools to be served by project activities. Applicants must describe the nature of the problem for the LEA, based on, but not limited to, the most recent available ratios of school-based mental health services providers to students enrolled in the schools in each high-need LEA that is part of the school-based mental health partnership (in the aggregate and disaggregated by profession (e.g., school social workers, school psychologists, and school counselors)). The description may also include LEA and school-level demographic data,

including chronic absenteeism and discipline data, school climate surveys, school violence/crime data, data related to suicide rates, and descriptions of barriers to hiring and retaining services providers in the LEA.

(c) A plan to enhance LEA capacity to provide mental health services to students.

Applicants must describe the specific activities they will conduct to expand and improve LEA capacity to provide mental health services to students in high-need LEAs and ensure that students receive appropriate, evidence-based, and culturally and linguistically inclusive mental health services. To meet this requirement, the applicant must propose a school-based mental health partnership established for the purpose of placing the IHE's graduate students in school-based mental health fields into high-need schools served by the participating high-need LEAs to complete required field work, credit hours, internships, or related training as applicable for the degree or credential program of each student. If the applicant intends to establish a program that directly benefits an individual graduate student, such as through a stipend or tuition credit, the applicant must describe its approach to implementing a service obligation for such graduate student as a school-based mental health services provider in a high-need LEA commensurate with the level of support the graduate student receives.

(d) *A memorandum of understanding (MOU), a memorandum of agreement (MOA), or letter of agreement between the LEA or SEA, and the IHE.*

Applicants must include with their application an MOU, MOA, or letter of agreement that is signed by the authorized representatives of the LEA or SEA, and the IHE. The MOU, MOA, or letter of agreement must provide details regarding the roles and responsibilities of each entity in the partnership and include a description of how the partnership will place graduate students into high-need schools served by the participating high-need LEAs to complete required field work, credit hours, internships, or related training necessary to complete their degree or obtain a credential as a school-based mental health services provider. Additionally, SEA and LEA applicants must describe in the MOU, MOA, or letter of agreement how leaders across all levels of the project will be engaged in the implementation and evaluation of the project. The MOU, MOA, or letter of agreement must also include the estimated number of mental health services providers that will be placed into employment in high-need schools and high-need LEAs on an annual basis.

(e) *A plan for collaboration and coordination with related Federal, State, and local initiatives.*

Applicants must propose a plan that describes:

(1) The activities to be carried out in coordination with the national, State, or local mental health, public health, child welfare, and other community agencies, which may include school-based health centers, to achieve the plan goals and objectives of establishing a pipeline program to train and expand the capacity of school-based mental health services providers in high-need LEAs; and

(2) How they will leverage other available Federal, State, and local resources to achieve project goals and objectives and sustain investments beyond the budget period. Applicants must identify these other available resources and describe how they will be used to promote success across programs.

Evidence of collaboration and coordination described in paragraph (e)(1) must be provided through letters of support or MOAs/MOUs from State or local organizations or agencies, where applicable.

(f) A description of the process to identify students for mental health services.

Applicants must describe the specific process and activities they will use to ensure students in high-need LEAs who need school-based mental health services are properly identified, assessed, and provided the appropriate school-based mental health services by qualified personnel in consultation with educators, including school leaders, and parents and families, as appropriate. To meet this

requirement, applicants must also describe how they will ensure that services are evidence-based and inclusive with regard to race, ethnicity, culture, language, disability, homelessness, and for students who identify as LGBTQI+, and are accessible to all. Further, applicants must describe how LEAs will engage parents and families for the purposes of raising awareness about the availability of services and connecting students to services.

Definitions: The definitions of "eligible institution of higher education," "high-need LEA," "high-need school," "school-based mental health partnership," and "students/children from low-income backgrounds" are from the NFP. The definitions of "evidence-based" (20 U.S.C. 7801(21), "institution of higher education" (20 U.S.C. 7801(29), "local educational agency" (20 U.S.C. 7801(30)), "State educational agency" (20 U.S.C. 7801(49)), and "school-based mental health services provider" (20 U.S.C. 7112(6)) are from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA). The definitions of "ambitious," "baseline," "demonstrates a rationale," "logic model," "project component," and "relevant outcome" are from 34 CFR 77.1. These definitions apply to the FY 2024 MHSP Program competition and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition.

These definitions are:

Ambitious means promoting continued meaningful improvement for program participants or for other individuals or entities affected by the grant, or representing a significant advancement in the field of education research, practices, or methodologies. When used to describe a performance target, whether a performance target is ambitious depends upon the context of the relevant performance measure and the baseline for that measure.

Baseline means the starting point from which performance is measured and targets are set.

Demonstrates a rationale means a key project component included in the project's logic model is informed by research or evaluation findings that suggest the project component is likely to improve relevant outcomes.

Eligible institution of higher education means an institution of higher education that offers a program of study that leads to a master's degree or other graduate degree—

(a) In school psychology that prepares students in such program for a State credential as a school psychologist;

(b) In school counseling that prepares students in such program for a State credential in school counseling;

(c) In school social work that prepares students in such program for a State credential in school social work;

(d) In another school-based mental health field that prepares students in such program for a State credential to deliver school-based mental health services; or

(e) In any combination of study described in paragraphs (a) through (d).

Evidence-based, when used with respect to a State, local educational agency, or school activity, means an activity, strategy, or intervention that— (a) demonstrates a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes or other relevant outcomes based on— (i) strong evidence from at least 1 well-designed and well-implemented experimental study; (ii) moderate evidence from at least 1 well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental study; or (iii) promising evidence from at least 1 well-designed and well-implemented correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias; or (b) (i) demonstrates a rationale based on high-quality research findings or positive evaluation that such activity, strategy, or intervention is likely to improve student outcomes or other relevant outcomes; and (ii) includes ongoing efforts to examine the effects of such activity, strategy, or intervention.

High-need local educational agency (LEA) means an LEA—

(a) (1) For which at least 20 percent of the children served by the agency are children from low-income backgrounds;

(2) That serves at least 10,000 children from low-income backgrounds;

(3) That meets the eligibility requirements for funding under the Small, Rural School Achievement (SRSA) program under section 5211(b) of the ESEA; or

(4) That meets the eligibility requirements for funding under the Rural and Low-Income School (RLIS) program under section 5221(b) of the ESEA; and—

(b) For which there is a high student to qualified mental health services provider ratio as compared to other LEAs statewide or nationally.

High-need school means a school that, based on the most recent data available, meets at least one of the following:

(a) The school is in the highest quartile of all schools served by an LEA ranked in descending order by percentage of students from low-income backgrounds enrolled in such schools, as determined by the LEA based on one of the following measures of poverty:

(1) The percentage of students aged 5 through 17 in poverty counted in the most recent census data approved by the Secretary.

(2) The percentage of students eligible for a free or reduced-price school lunch under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act based on the most recently available data.

(3) The percentage of students in families receiving assistance under the State program funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act.

(4) The percentage of students eligible to receive medical assistance under the Medicaid program.

(5) A composite of two or more of the measures described in paragraphs (a)(1) through (4).

(b) In the case of--

(1) An elementary school, the school serves students not less than 60 percent of whom are eligible for a free or reduced-price school lunch under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act based on the most recently available data; or

(2) Any other school that is not an elementary school, the other school serves students not less than 45 percent of whom are eligible for a free or reduced-price school lunch under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act based on the most recently available data.

Institution of higher education has the meaning given to such term in section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001).

Local educational agency means a public board of education or other public authority legally constituted within a State for either administrative control or direction of, or to perform a service function for, public elementary schools or secondary schools in a city, county,

township, school district, or other political subdivision of a State, or of or for a combination of school districts or counties that is recognized in a State as an administrative agency for its public elementary schools or secondary schools.

(b) The term includes any other public institution or agency having administrative control and direction of a public elementary school or secondary school.

(c) The term includes an elementary school or secondary school funded by the Bureau of Indian Education but only to the extent that including the school makes the school eligible for programs for which specific eligibility is not provided to the school in another provision of law and the school does not have a student population that is smaller than the student population of the local educational agency receiving assistance under this Act with the smallest student population, except that the school shall not be subject to the jurisdiction of any State educational agency other than the Bureau of Indian Education.

(d) The term includes educational service agencies and consortia of those agencies.

(e) The term includes the State educational agency in a State in which the State educational agency is the sole educational agency for all public schools.

Logic model (also referred to as a theory of action) means a framework that identifies key project components of the proposed project (*i.e.*, the active “ingredients” that are hypothesized to be critical to achieving the relevant outcomes) and describes the theoretical and operational relationships among the key project components and relevant outcomes.

Project component means an activity, strategy, intervention, process, product, practice, or policy included in a project. Evidence may pertain to an individual project component or to a combination of project components (*e.g.*, training teachers on instructional practices for English learners and follow-on coaching for these teachers).

Relevant outcome means the student outcome(s) or other outcome(s) the key project component is designed to improve, consistent with the specific goals of the program.

School-based mental health partnership means the formal relationship, established for the purpose of training school-based mental health services providers for employment in schools and LEAs, between--

(a) One or more high-need LEAs or an SEA on behalf of one or more high-need LEAs; and

(b) One or more eligible IHEs, including HBCUs (as defined in 34 CFR 608.2), MSIs (as defined in sections 316 through 320 of part A of title III, under part B of title

III, or under title V of the HEA), and TCUs (as defined in section 316(b)(3) of the HEA).

School-based mental health services provider means a State-licensed or State-certified school counselor, school psychologist, school social worker, or other State licensed or certified mental health professional qualified under State law to provide mental health services to children and adolescents.

Students/children from low-income backgrounds means students whose families meet any of the poverty thresholds established in section 1113 of the ESEA for the relevant grade level.

State educational agency means the agency primarily responsible for the State supervision of public elementary schools and secondary schools.

Program Authority: Section 4631(a)(1)(B) of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. 7281).

Note: Projects will be awarded and must be operated in a manner consistent with the nondiscrimination requirements contained in Federal civil rights laws.

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations in 34 CFR parts 75, 77, 81, 82, 84, 97, 98, and 99. (b) The Office of Management and Budget Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of the

Department in 2 CFR part 3485. (c) The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3474. (d) The NFP. (e) The Administrative Priorities.

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Discretionary grants.

Estimated Available Funds: \$19,000,000.

The actual level of funding, if any, depends on final congressional action. However, we are inviting applications to allow enough time to complete the grant process if Congress appropriates funds for this program.

Contingent upon the availability of funds and the quality of applications, we may make additional awards in subsequent years from the list of unfunded applications from this competition.

Estimated Range of Awards: \$400,000 to \$1,000,000.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$700,000 for each 12-month period.

Estimated Number of Awards: Between 23 - 33 awards.

Note: The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

Project Period: Up to 60 months.

III. Eligibility Information

1. *Eligible Applicants:* High-need LEAs, SEAs on behalf of one or more high-need LEAs, and IHEs. High-need LEA applicants and SEA applicants on behalf of one or more high-need LEAs must propose to work in partnership with an eligible IHE, which may include institutions that serve diverse learners such as an HBCU (as defined in 34 CFR 608.2), TCU (as defined in section 316(b)(3) of the HEA), or other MSI (as defined in sections 316 through 320 of part A of title III, under part B of title III, or under title V of the HEA). Eligible IHE applicants must propose to work in partnership with one or more high-need LEAs or a SEA.

2. a. *Cost Sharing or Matching:* This competition does not require cost sharing or matching.

b. *Indirect Cost Rate Information:* This program uses an unrestricted indirect cost rate. For more information regarding indirect costs, or to obtain a negotiated indirect cost rate, please see www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/intro.html.

c. *Administrative Cost Limitation:* This program does not include any program-specific limitation on administrative expenses. All administrative expenses must be reasonable and necessary and conform to Cost Principles described in 2 CFR part 200 subpart E of the Uniform Guidance.

3. *Subgrantees*: A grantee under this competition may not award subgrants to entities to directly carry out project activities described in its application.

4. *Limitation on Awards*: The Department will make only one award that serves any individual LEA.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. *Application Submission Instructions*: Applicants are required to follow the Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the *Federal Register* on December 7, 2022 (87 FR 75045), and available at <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/12/07/2022-26554/common-instructions-for-applicants-to-department-of-education-discretionary-grant-programs>, which contain requirements and information on how to submit an application. Please note that these Common Instructions supersede the version published on December 7, 2021.

2. *Intergovernmental Review*: This program is subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. Information about Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs under Executive Order 12372 is in the application package for this competition.

3. *Funding Restrictions*: We reference regulations outlining funding restrictions in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice. In addition, we remind applicants that sections 4001(a) and 4001(b) of the ESEA

(20 U.S.C. 7101) apply to this program. Section 4001(a) requires entities receiving funds under title IV of the ESEA to obtain prior, written, informed consent from the parent of each child who is under 18 years of age to participate in any mental-health assessment or service that is funded under title IV of the ESEA and conducted in connection with an elementary or secondary school. Section 4001(b) prohibits the use of funds for medical services or drug treatment or rehabilitation, except for integrated student supports, specialized instructional support services, or referral to treatment for impacted students, which may include students who are victims of, or witnesses to, crime or who illegally use drugs. This prohibition does not preclude the use of funds to support mental health counseling and support services, including those provided by a mental health services provider outside of school, so long as such services are not medical.

V. Application Review Information

1. *Selection Criteria:* The selection criteria for this program are from 34 CFR 75.210. The maximum score for all selection criteria is 100 points. The points assigned to each criterion are indicated in parentheses. Non-Federal peer reviewers will evaluate and score each application program narrative against the following selection criteria:

(a) *Need for the Project and Significance* (Up to 15 points)

(1) The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses. (Up to 10 points)

(2) The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population. (Up to 5 points)

(b) *Quality of the project design* (Up to 25 points)

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the design of the proposed project includes a thorough, high-quality review of the relevant literature, a high-quality plan for project implementation, and the use of appropriate methodological

tools to ensure successful achievement of project objectives. (Up to 15 points)

(ii) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition. (Up to 5 points)

(iii) The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)). (Up to 5 points)

(c) *Quality of project services* (Up to 30 points)

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project, the Secretary considers the quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. (Up to 15 points)

(3) In addition, the Secretary considers the extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are likely to alleviate the personnel shortages that have been identified or are the focus of the proposed project. (Up to 15 points)

(d) *Management Plan and Adequacy of Resources* (Up to 20 points).

(1) The Secretary considers the management plan and the adequacy of resources for the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the management plan and the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

(i) The adequacy of mechanisms for ensuring high-quality products and services from the proposed project.

(Up to 10 points)

(ii) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project. (Up to 10 points)

(e) *Quality of the project evaluation* (Up to 10 points)

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals,

objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project. (Up to 5 points)

(ii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic

assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

(Up to 5 points)

2. *Review and Selection Process:* We remind potential applicants that, in reviewing applications in any discretionary grant competition, the Secretary may consider, under 34 CFR 75.217(d)(3), the past performance of the applicant in carrying out a previous award, such as the applicant's use of funds, achievement of project objectives, and compliance with grant conditions. The Secretary may also consider whether the applicant failed to submit a timely performance report or submitted a report of unacceptable quality.

In addition, in making a competitive grant award, the Secretary requires various assurances including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

3. *Risk Assessment and Specific Conditions:* Consistent with 2 CFR 200.206, before awarding grants under this program the Department conducts a review of the risks posed by applicants. Under 2 CFR 200.208, the Secretary may impose specific conditions and, under 2 CFR 3474.10, in appropriate circumstances, high-risk conditions on a grant if the applicant or grantee is not financially stable; has a history of unsatisfactory performance; has a financial or

other management system that does not meet the standards in 2 CFR part 200, subpart D; has not fulfilled the conditions of a prior grant; or is otherwise not responsible.

4. *Integrity and Performance System:* If you are selected under this competition to receive an award that over the course of the project period may exceed the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$250,000), under 2 CFR 200.206(a)(2) we must make a judgment about your integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards--that is, the risk posed by you as an applicant--before we make an award. In doing so, we must consider any information about you that is in the integrity and performance system (currently referred to as the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)), accessible through the System for Award Management. You may review and comment on any information about yourself that a Federal agency previously entered and that is currently in FAPIIS.

Please note that, if the total value of your currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from the Federal Government exceeds \$10,000,000, the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 200, appendix XII, require you to report certain integrity information to FAPIIS semiannually. Please review the requirements in 2 CFR part 200, appendix XII, if this grant plus all the other Federal funds you receive exceed \$10,000,000.

5. *In General:* In accordance with the Office of Management and Budget's guidance located at 2 CFR part 200, all applicable Federal laws, and relevant Executive guidance, the Department will review and consider applications for funding pursuant to this notice inviting applications in accordance with:

(a) Selecting recipients most likely to be successful in delivering results based on the program objectives through an objective process of evaluating Federal award applications (2 CFR 200.205);

(b) Prohibiting the purchase of certain telecommunication and video surveillance services or equipment in alignment with section 889 of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2019 (Pub. L. No. 115-232) (2 CFR 200.216);

(c) Providing a preference, to the extent permitted by law, to maximize use of goods, products, and materials produced in the United States (2 CFR 200.322); and

(d) Terminating agreements in whole or in part to the greatest extent authorized by law if an award no longer effectuates the program goals or agency priorities (2 CFR 200.340).

VI. Award Administration Information

1. *Award Notices:* If your application is successful, we notify your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators and send you a Grant Award Notification (GAN); or we may send

you an email containing a link to access an electronic version of your GAN. We may notify you informally, also.

If your application is not evaluated or not selected for funding, we will notify you.

2. *Administrative and National Policy Requirements:*

We identify administrative and national policy requirements in the application package and reference these and other requirements in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice.

We reference the regulations outlining the terms and conditions of an award in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice and include these and other specific conditions in the GAN. The GAN also incorporates your approved application as part of your binding commitments under the grant.

3. *Open Licensing Requirements:* Unless an exception applies, if you are awarded a grant under this competition, you will be required to openly license to the public grant deliverables created in whole, or in part, with Department grant funds. When the deliverable consists of modifications to pre-existing works, the license extends only to those modifications that can be separately identified and only to the extent that open licensing is permitted under the terms of any licenses or other legal restrictions on the use of pre-existing works.

Additionally, a grantee or subgrantee that is awarded

competitive grant funds must have a plan to disseminate these public grant deliverables. This dissemination plan can be developed and submitted after your application has been reviewed and selected for funding. For additional information on the open licensing requirements please refer to 2 CFR 3474.20.

4. *Reporting:* (a) If you apply for a grant under this competition, you must ensure that you have in place the necessary processes and systems to comply with the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 170 should you receive funding under the competition. This does not apply if you have an exception under 2 CFR 170.110(b).

(b) At the end of your project period, you must submit a final performance report, including financial information, as directed by the Secretary. If you receive a multiyear award, you must submit an annual performance report that provides the most current performance and financial expenditure information as directed by the Secretary under 34 CFR 75.118. The Secretary may also require more frequent performance reports under 34 CFR 75.720(c). For specific requirements on reporting, please go to www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html.

(c) Under 34 CFR 75.250(b), the Secretary may provide a grantee with additional funding for data collection analysis and reporting. In this case the Secretary establishes a data collection period.

5. *Performance Measures:* The Department has established the following performance measures for Department reporting under 34 CFR 75.110 for the Mental Health Service Professional Demonstration Grant Program:

(a) The unduplicated, cumulative number of school-based mental health services providers trained by the grantee under the project to provide school-based mental health services in high-need LEAs.

(b) The unduplicated, cumulative number of school-based mental health services providers placed in a practicum or internship by the grantee in high-need LEAs to provide school-based mental health services.

(c) The unduplicated, cumulative number of school-based mental health services providers hired by high-need LEAs to provide school-based mental health services.

(d) For grantees that addressed Competitive Preference Priority 1, the number of such grantees that met their goal of increasing the diversity of school-based mental health services providers.

These measures constitute the Department's indicators of success for this program. Consequently, we advise an applicant for a grant under this program to give careful consideration to these measures in conceptualizing the approach and evaluation for its proposed project. Each grantee will be required to provide, in its annual performance and final reports, data about its progress in

meeting these measures. This data will be considered by the Department in making potential continuation awards.

Consistent with 34 CFR 75.591, grantees funded under this program shall cooperate in any evaluation of the program conducted by the Department or an evaluator selected by the Department.

Performance measure targets: The applicant must propose annual targets for the measures listed above in their application. Applications must also provide the following information as directed under 34 CFR 75.110(b) and (c):

(1) An explanation of how each proposed performance target is ambitious (as defined in this notice) yet achievable compared to the baseline (as defined in this notice) for the performance measure.

(2) An explanation of the data collection and reporting methods the applicant would use and why those methods are likely to yield reliable, valid, and meaningful performance data; and

(3) An explanation of the applicant's capacity to collect and report reliable, valid, and meaningful performance data, as evidenced by high-quality data collection, analysis, and reporting in other projects or research.

Note: If the applicant does not have experience with the collection and reporting of performance data through other

projects or research, the applicant should provide other evidence of capacity to successfully carry out data collection and reporting for its proposed project.

The reviewers of each application will score related selection criteria on the basis of how well an applicant has considered these measures in conceptualizing the approach and evaluation of the project.

All grantees must submit an annual performance report and final performance report with information that is responsive to these performance measures.

6. *Continuation Awards:* In making a continuation award under 34 CFR 75.253, the Secretary considers, among other things, whether a grantee has made substantial progress in achieving the goals and objectives of the project; whether the grantee has expended funds in a manner that is consistent with its approved application and budget; and, if the Secretary has established performance measurement requirements, whether the grantee has made substantial progress in achieving the performance targets in the grantee's approved application.

In making a continuation award, the Secretary also considers whether the grantee is operating in compliance with the assurances in its approved application, including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal

financial assistance from the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

VII. Other Information

Accessible Format: On request to the program contact person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**, individuals with disabilities can obtain this document in an accessible format. The Department will provide the requestor with an accessible format that may include Rich Text Format (RTF) or text format (txt), a thumb drive, an MP3 file, braille, large print, audiotape, or compact disc, or other accessible format.

Electronic Access to This Document: The official version of this document is the document published in the *Federal Register*. You may access the official edition of the *Federal Register* and the Code of Federal Regulations at www.govinfo.gov. At this site you can view this document, as well as all other documents of this Department published in the *Federal Register*, in text or Portable Document Format (PDF). To use PDF, you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at the site.

You may also access documents of the Department published in the *Federal Register* by using the article search feature at www.federalregister.gov. Specifically, through the advanced search feature at this site, you can limit your search to documents published by the Department.

Adam Schott,
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy and Programs,

*Delegated the Authority to Perform the Functions and Duties
of the Assistant Secretary,
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education.*

[FR Doc. 2024-04356 Filed: 2/29/2024 8:45 am; Publication Date: 3/1/2024]