



## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

### Applications for New Awards; State Personnel Development Grants

**AGENCY:** Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Department of Education.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Education (Department) is issuing a notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year (FY) 2024 for the State Personnel Development Grants (SPDG) program.

**DATES:**

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

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Pre-Application Webinar Information: No later than [INSERT DATE 5 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER], the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services will post pre-recorded informational webinars designed to provide technical assistance (TA) to interested applicants. The webinars may be found at <https://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/osep/new-osep-grants.html>.

**Note:** For new potential grantees unfamiliar with grantmaking at the Department, please consult our "Getting

Started with Discretionary Grant Applications" webpage at <https://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/about/discretionary/index.html>.

**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 [www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/12/07/2022-26554/common-instructions-for-applicants-to-department-of-education-discretionary-grant-programs](http://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/12/07/2022-26554/common-instructions-for-applicants-to-department-of-education-discretionary-grant-programs).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Jennifer Coffey, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, room 4A220 Washington, DC 20202. Telephone: (202) 987-0150. Email: [jennifer.coffey@ed.gov](mailto:jennifer.coffey@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 purpose of the SPDG program is to assist State educational agencies (SEAs) in reforming and improving their systems for personnel preparation and professional development in early intervention,

educational, and transition services to improve results for children with disabilities.

*Assistance Listing Number:* 84.323A.

*OMB Control Number:* 1820-0028.

*Background:* "Raise the Bar: Lead the World" (RTB) is the Department's call to action to transform prekindergarten through postsecondary learning and unite around what truly works by promoting academic excellence, boldly improving learning conditions, and preparing our Nation's students for global competitiveness ([www.ed.gov/raisethebar/](http://www.ed.gov/raisethebar/)). A well-prepared and supported and sustainable educator workforce available to educate and support all children and youth, including children and youth with disabilities, is essential to this call to action. This competition is designed to support the Department's RTB goals. Specifically, the priorities for this competition are designed to support projects that--

- Mitigate the barriers to improved educational opportunities and outcomes and functional results for children with disabilities by increasing the number of well-qualified, fully certified special education teachers, including paraprofessionals;
- Increase collaborative and effective instruction and services for children with disabilities;

- Expand the ability of principals to serve as instructional leaders who create an equity-based, cooperative, and inclusive environment; and
- Provide pre-service and in-service personnel with the knowledge, attitudes, skills, and aspiration to engage effectively with families.

The SPDG program, as a pre-service and in-service professional development program, is uniquely positioned to support the Department's RTB goals by helping to ensure that children with disabilities have access to well-qualified educators and by growing the number of teachers and administrators who can use data to develop and implement standards-based individualized education programs (IEPs) and provide effective instruction in inclusive environments. The priorities specified in this notice are designed to support pathways and professional development for personnel to improve outcomes for children with disabilities. For more on the Department's work to eliminate educator shortages, see [www.ed.gov/raisethebar/educators](http://www.ed.gov/raisethebar/educators).

This competition also includes four competitive preference priorities. Applicants may address up to two. With respect to Competitive Preference Priority 1, we note that Competitive Preference Priority 1 encourages applications that provide pathways for becoming fully certified special education teachers that are affordable

and provide for robust preservice classroom experience. By reducing the cost of earning a license and offering flexible scheduling, teacher residency, Grow Your Own (GYO), and registered teacher apprenticeships programs are designed to bring more people into the profession. These programs may open doors to the profession for those who may otherwise face barriers to entrance, including multilingual, racially, and ethnically diverse individuals, individuals who have disabilities, and paraprofessionals who may already have decades of classroom experience, but for numerous reasons, including cost, could not pursue a teaching degree or a high-quality pathway into the profession that includes significant clinical experience.

Research shows that high-quality residency models can expand the pool of well-prepared applicants entering the teaching profession, increase the diversity of the workforce and bring a wide range of experiences into the classroom to support students. A 2014 implementation study published by the Institute of Education Sciences shows that residents are more likely than nonresidents to report feeling prepared to enter the classroom and that after program completion, more than 90 percent of residents stayed in their school district for three years (Silva et al., 2014).

When aligned to high-quality, evidence-based practices for education preparation, such as those drafted by the

Pathways Alliance ([www.thepathwaysalliance.org/reports](http://www.thepathwaysalliance.org/reports)) and approved by the Department of Labor, registered teacher apprenticeship programs have the potential to be an effective, high-quality "earn and learn" model that allow candidates to earn their teaching credential while earning a salary by combining coursework with structured, paid on-the-job learning experiences with a mentor teacher (Pathways Alliance, 2023). Registered teacher apprenticeship programs for K-12 teachers can be used to establish, scale, and build on existing high-quality pathways into teaching that emphasize classroom-based experience, such as teacher residencies and GYO.

GYO is an approach to developing a pipeline of educator candidates to meet specific workforce needs that seeks to eliminate any barriers that may prevent local candidates from entering or remaining in the field. GYO programs are distinguished from other pipelines by whom they target, focusing on recruitment of high school students, career changers, paraprofessionals, non-teaching-school faculty, and community members (Espinoza et al., 2018). Offering financial aid (e.g., loan forgiveness, grants, and scholarships) to candidates completing GYO programs, targeting communication to specific populations, and establishing systems for candidates to receive continuous coaching and mentoring from entrance into the GYO program through early service can all aid in the

success of these programs (Carver-Thomas, 2018; Professional Educator Standards Board, 2018; Texas Comprehensive Center, 2018). GYO programs can help address shortages in high-need areas and subjects, such as in rural schools and in special education (Jessen et al., 2020); it can also result in improved recruitment and retention of teachers of color (Gist et al., 2019).

*Priorities:* This notice contains three absolute priorities and four competitive preference priorities. In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(1), Absolute Priority 1 is from the notice of final priorities and definitions (NFP) published in the *Federal Register* on August 2, 2012 (77 FR 45944) (2012 NFP); and Absolute Priority 3 and the four competitive preference priorities are from the NFP for this program published elsewhere in this issue of the *Federal Register* (2024 NFP). In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(iv), Absolute Priority 2 is from sections 651 through 655 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

*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 Priorities 1,

2, and 3 (i.e., an applicant must address all three absolute priorities in their application).

These priorities are:

*Absolute Priority 1: Effective and Efficient Delivery of Professional Development.*

The Department establishes a priority to assist SEAs in reforming and improving their systems for personnel (as that term is defined in section 651(b) of IDEA) preparation and professional development of individuals providing early intervention, educational, and transition services in order to improve results for children with disabilities.

In order to meet this priority an applicant must demonstrate in the SPDG State Plan it submits as part of its application under section 653(a)(2) of IDEA that its proposed project will--

(1) Use evidence-based (as defined in this notice) professional development practices that will increase implementation of evidence-based practices and result in improved outcomes for children with disabilities;

(2) Provide ongoing assistance to personnel receiving SPDG-supported professional development that supports the implementation of evidence-based practices with fidelity (as defined in this notice); and

(3) Use technology to more efficiently and effectively provide ongoing professional development to personnel, including to personnel in rural areas and to

other populations, such as personnel in urban or high-need local educational agencies (LEAs) (as defined in this notice).

*Absolute Priority 2: State Personnel Development Grants.*

Statutory Requirements. To meet this priority, an applicant must meet the following statutory requirements:

1. State Personnel Development Plan.

An applicant must submit a State Personnel Development Plan that identifies and addresses the State and local needs for the personnel preparation and professional development of personnel, as well as individuals who provide direct supplementary aids and services to children with disabilities, and that--

(a) Is designed to enable the State to meet the requirements of section 612(a)(14) of IDEA, as amended by the ESSA, and section 635(a)(8) and (9) of IDEA;

(b) Is based on an assessment of State and local needs that identifies critical aspects and areas in need of improvement related to the preparation, ongoing training, and professional development of personnel who serve infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and children with disabilities within the State, including--

(1) Current and anticipated personnel vacancies and shortages; and

(2) The number of preservice and in-service programs;

(c) Is integrated and aligned, to the maximum extent possible, with State plans and activities under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA); the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; and the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA);

(d) Describes a partnership agreement that is in effect for the period of the grant, which agreement must specify--

(1) The nature and extent of the partnership described in section 652(b) of IDEA and the respective roles of each member of the partnership, including, if applicable, an individual, entity, or agency other than the SEA that has the responsibility under State law for teacher preparation and certification; and

(2) How the SEA will work with other persons and organizations involved in, and concerned with, the education of children with disabilities, including the respective roles of each of the persons and organizations;

(e) Describes how the strategies and activities the SEA uses to address identified professional development and personnel needs will be coordinated with activities supported with other public resources (including funds provided under Part B and Part C of IDEA and retained for use at the State level for personnel and professional development purposes) and private resources;

(f) Describes how the SEA will align its personnel development plan with the plan and application submitted under sections 1111 and 2101(d), respectively, of the ESEA;

(g) Describes strategies the SEA will use to address the identified professional development and personnel needs and how such strategies will be implemented, including--

(1) A description of the programs and activities that will provide personnel with the knowledge and skills to meet the needs of, and improve the performance and achievement of, infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and children with disabilities; and

(2) How such strategies will be integrated, to the maximum extent possible, with other activities supported by grants funded under section 662 of IDEA, as amended by the ESSA;

(h) Provides an assurance that the SEA will provide TA to LEAs to improve the quality of professional development available to meet the needs of personnel who serve children with disabilities;

(i) Provides an assurance that the SEA will provide TA to entities that provide services to infants and toddlers with disabilities to improve the quality of professional development available to meet the needs of personnel serving such children;

(j) Describes how the SEA will recruit and retain teachers who meet the qualifications described in section

612(a)(14)(C) of IDEA, as amended by the ESSA, and other qualified personnel in geographic areas of greatest need;

(k) Describes the steps the SEA will take to ensure that poor and minority children are not taught at higher rates by teachers who do not meet the qualifications described in section 612(a)(14)(C) of IDEA, as amended by the ESSA; and

(l) Describes how the SEA will assess, on a regular basis, the extent to which the strategies implemented have been effective in meeting the performance goals described in section 612(a)(15) of IDEA, as amended by the ESSA.

## 2. Partnerships.

### (a) Required Partners.

Applicants must establish a partnership with LEAs and other State agencies involved in, or concerned with, the education of children with disabilities, including--

(1) Not less than one institution of higher education (IHE);

(2) The State agencies responsible for administering Part C of IDEA, early education, childcare, and vocational rehabilitation programs; and

(3) In accordance with section 652(b)(3) of IDEA, if State law assigns responsibility for teacher preparation and certification to an individual, entity, or agency other than the SEA, such individual, entity, or agency. The SEA must ensure that any activities it carries out under this

program that are within such partner's jurisdiction (which may include activities described in section 654(b) of IDEA) are carried out by that partner.

(b) Other Partners.

An SEA must work in partnership with other persons and organizations involved in, and concerned with, the education of children with disabilities, which may include--

(1) The Governor;

(2) Parents of children with disabilities ages birth through 26;

(3) Parents of nondisabled children ages birth through 26;

(4) Individuals with disabilities;

(5) Parent training and information centers or community parent resource centers funded under sections 671 and 672 of IDEA, respectively;

(6) Community based and other nonprofit organizations involved in the education and employment of individuals with disabilities;

(7) Personnel as defined in section 651(b) of IDEA;

(8) The State advisory panel established under Part B of IDEA;

(9) The State interagency coordinating council established under Part C of IDEA;

(10) Individuals knowledgeable about vocational education;

(11) The State agency for higher education;

(12) Public agencies with jurisdiction in the areas of health, mental health, social services, and juvenile justice;

(13) Other providers of professional development that work with infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and children with disabilities; and

(14) Other individuals.

3. Use of Funds.

(a) Professional Development Activities--Each SEA that receives a grant under this program must use the grant funds to support activities in accordance with the State's Personnel Development Plan, including one or more of the following:

(1) Carrying out programs that provide support to both special education and regular education teachers of children with disabilities and principals, such as programs that--

(i) Provide teacher mentoring, team teaching, reduced class schedules and caseloads, and intensive professional development;

(ii) Use standards or assessments for guiding beginning teachers that are consistent with challenging State academic achievement standards and with the requirements for professional development, as defined in section 8101 of the ESEA; and

(iii) Encourage collaborative and consultative models of providing early intervention, special education, and related services.

(2) Encouraging and supporting the training of special education and regular education teachers and administrators to effectively use and integrate technology-

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(i) Into curricula and instruction, including training to improve the ability to collect, manage, and analyze data to improve teaching, decision making, school improvement efforts, and accountability;

(ii) To enhance learning by children with disabilities; and

(iii) To effectively communicate with parents.

(3) Providing professional development activities that--

(i) Improve the knowledge of special education and regular education teachers concerning--

(A) The academic and developmental or functional needs of students with disabilities; or

(B) Effective instructional strategies, methods, and skills, and the use of State academic content standards and student academic achievement and functional standards, and State assessments, to improve teaching practices and student academic achievement;

(ii) Improve the knowledge of special education and regular education teachers and principals and, in appropriate cases, paraprofessionals, concerning effective instructional practices, and that--

(A) Provide training in how to teach and address the needs of children with different learning styles and children who are limited English proficient;

(B) Involve collaborative groups of teachers, administrators, and, in appropriate cases, related services personnel;

(C) Provide training in methods of--

(1) Positive behavioral interventions and supports to improve student behavior in the classroom;

(2) Scientifically based reading instruction, including early literacy instruction;

(3) Early and appropriate interventions to identify and help children with disabilities;

(4) Effective instruction for children with low-incidence disabilities;

(5) Successful transitioning to postsecondary opportunities; and

(6) Using classroom-based techniques to assist children prior to referral for special education;

(D) Provide training to enable personnel to work with and involve parents in their child's education, including

parents of low income and limited English proficient children with disabilities;

(E) Provide training for special education personnel and regular education personnel in planning, developing, and implementing effective and appropriate individualized education programs (IEPs); and

(F) Provide training to meet the needs of students with significant health, mobility, or behavioral needs prior to serving those students;

(iii) Train administrators, principals, and other relevant school personnel in conducting effective IEP meetings; and

(iv) Train early intervention, preschool, and related services providers, and other relevant school personnel in conducting effective individualized family service plan (IFSP) meetings.

(4) Developing and implementing initiatives to promote the recruitment and retention of special education teachers who meet the qualifications described in section 612(a)(14)(C) of IDEA, as amended by the ESSA, particularly initiatives that have proven effective in recruiting and retaining teachers, including programs that provide--

(i) Teacher mentoring from exemplary special education teachers, principals, or superintendents;

(ii) Induction and support for special education teachers during their first three years of employment as teachers; or

(iii) Incentives, including financial incentives, to retain special education teachers who have a record of success in helping students with disabilities.

(5) Carrying out programs and activities that are designed to improve the quality of personnel who serve children with disabilities, such as--

(i) Innovative professional development programs (which may be provided through partnerships that include IHEs), including programs that train teachers and principals to integrate technology into curricula and instruction to improve teaching, learning, and technology literacy, which must be consistent with the definition of professional development in section 8101 of the ESEA; and

(ii) The development and use of proven, cost effective strategies for the implementation of professional development activities, such as through the use of technology and distance learning.

(6) Carrying out programs and activities that are designed to improve the quality of early intervention personnel, including paraprofessionals and primary referral sources, such as--

(i) Professional development programs to improve the delivery of early intervention services;

(ii) Initiatives to promote the recruitment and retention of early intervention personnel; and

(iii) Interagency activities to ensure that early intervention personnel are adequately prepared and trained.

(b) Other Activities--Each SEA that receives a grant under this program must use the grant funds to support activities in accordance with the State's Personnel Development Plan, including one or more of the following:

(1) Reforming special education and regular education teacher certification (including recertification) or licensing requirements to ensure that--

(i) Special education and regular education teachers have--

(A) The training and information necessary to address the full range of needs of children with disabilities across disability categories; and

(B) The necessary subject matter knowledge and teaching skills in the academic subjects that the teachers teach;

(ii) Special education and regular education teacher certification (including recertification) or licensing requirements are aligned with challenging State academic content standards; and

(iii) Special education and regular education teachers have the subject matter knowledge and teaching skills, including technology literacy, necessary to help

students with disabilities meet challenging State student academic achievement and functional standards.

(2) Programs that establish, expand, or improve alternative routes for State certification of special education teachers for individuals with a baccalaureate or master's degree who meet the qualifications described in section 612(a)(14)(C) of IDEA, as amended by the ESSA, including mid-career professionals from other occupations, paraprofessionals, and recent college or university graduates with records of academic distinction who demonstrate the potential to become highly effective special education teachers.

(3) Teacher advancement initiatives for special education teachers that promote professional growth and emphasize multiple career paths (such as paths to becoming a career teacher, mentor teacher, or exemplary teacher) and pay differentiation.

(4) Developing and implementing mechanisms to assist LEAs and schools in effectively recruiting and retaining special education teachers who meet the qualifications described in section 612(a)(14)(C) of IDEA, as amended by the ESSA.

(5) Reforming tenure systems, implementing teacher testing for subject matter knowledge, and implementing teacher testing for State certification or licensure,

consistent with title II of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1021 et seq.).

(6) Funding projects to promote reciprocity of teacher certification or licensing between or among States for special education teachers, except that no reciprocity agreement developed under this absolute priority or developed using funds awarded under the SPDG competition may lead to the weakening of any State teacher certification or licensing requirement.

(7) Assisting LEAs to serve children with disabilities through the development and use of proven, innovative strategies to deliver intensive professional development programs that are both cost effective and easily accessible, such as strategies that involve delivery through the use of technology, peer networks, and distance learning.

(8) Developing, or assisting LEAs in developing, merit-based performance systems and strategies that provide differential and bonus pay for special education teachers.

(9) Supporting activities that ensure that teachers are able to use challenging State academic content standards and student academic achievement and functional standards, and State assessments for all children with disabilities, to improve instructional practices and improve the academic achievement of children with disabilities.

(10) When applicable, coordinating with, and expanding centers established under section 2113(c)(18) of the ESEA, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002, to benefit special education teachers.

(c) Contracts and Subgrants--An SEA that receives a grant under this program--

(1) Must award contracts or subgrants to LEAs, IHEs, parent training and information centers, or community parent resource centers, as appropriate, to carry out the State Personnel Development Plan; and

(2) May award contracts and subgrants to other public and private entities, including the State lead agency (LA) (as defined in this notice) under Part C of IDEA, to carry out the State Personnel Development Plan.

(d) Use of Funds for Professional Development--An SEA that receives a grant under this program must use--

(1) Not less than 90 percent of the funds the SEA receives under the grant for any fiscal year for the Professional Development Activities described in paragraph (a); and

(2) Not more than 10 percent of the funds the SEA receives under the grant for any fiscal year for the Other Activities described in paragraph (b).

*Absolute Priority 3: Improving Engagement between Schools and Families.*

Projects designed to develop the capacity of administrators and educators to develop systems and use strategies that build trust and engagement with families, while further strengthening the role families play in their child's development and learning. Projects must--

(a) Provide training and coaching to assist administrators to--

(1) Develop and implement policies and programs that recognize families' funds of knowledge, connect family engagement to student learning, and create welcoming, inviting cultures; and

(2) Create systems that support staff and families in meaningful engagement (i.e., Leading by Convening and the Dual-Capacity Framework. For more information visit [www.dualcapacity.org](http://www.dualcapacity.org) and [www.ncsi.wested.org/resources/leading-by-convening](http://www.ncsi.wested.org/resources/leading-by-convening));

(b) Provide training and coaching to assist educators and early intervention providers to--

(1) Build their knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, aspirations, and behaviors about effective strategies to engage families in their child's learning;

(2) Work with families to make collaborative, data-based decisions in the development and implementation of the child's IEP; and

(3) Provide information and resources to families that enable them to support their children's learning and behavior at home; and

(c) Provide training and coaching to families so they can--

(1) Meaningfully participate in the development and implementation of their child's IEP;

(2) Participate in data-based decision making related to their child's education; and

(3) Further their child's learning at home.

In their applications, States must describe how their projects will meet these program requirements. In addition to these requirements, to be considered for funding under this priority, applicants must meet the application and administrative requirements under *Common Requirements*.

*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 four priorities are competitive preference priorities. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i), we award additional points to an application that meets up to two of these competitive preference priorities. An applicant is not required to address any of the competitive preference priorities. If an applicant addresses the competitive preference priorities, the applicant must indicate which one or two competitive preference priorities they are responding to in

the application. We award up to an additional 5 points to an application, depending on how well the application meets Competitive Preference Priority 1. For Competitive Preference Priorities 2, 3, and 4, we award up to an additional 2 points to an application, depending on how well the application meets the competitive preference priority.

*Competitive Preference Priority 1: Providing Career Pathways for Those Interested in Becoming Fully Certified Special Education Teachers, Including Paraprofessionals, Through Residency, Grow Your Own (GYO), and Registered Apprenticeships Programs (up to 5 points).*

Projects designed to increase the number of fully certified special education teachers by establishing a new, or enhancing an existing, teacher residency, GYO, or registered teacher apprenticeship program that minimizes or eliminates the cost of certification for special education teacher candidates and provides opportunities for candidates to be paid, including being provided with a stipend (which, for programs that include paid experience for the duration of the certification program, can be met through paragraph (i), below), to cover the time spent gaining classroom experience during their certification program.

A project implementing a new or enhanced teacher residency, GYO, or registered teacher apprenticeship

program must--

(a) Use data-driven strategies and evidence-based approaches to increase recruitment, successful completion, and retention of the special education teachers supported by the project;

(b) Provide standards for participants to enter into and complete the program;

(c) Be aligned to evidence-based practices for effective educator preparation;

(d) Have little to no financial burden for program participants, or provide for loan forgiveness, grants, or scholarship programs;

(e) Provide opportunities for candidates to be paid, including being provided with a stipend, to cover time spent in clinical experience during their certification program;

(f) Develop a plan to monitor program quality;

(g) Require completion of a bachelor's degree either before entering or as a result of the teacher residency, GYO, or teacher apprenticeship program;

(h) Result in the satisfaction of all requirements for full State teacher licensure or certification, excluding emergency, temporary, provisional, or other sub-standard licensure or certification;

(i) Provide increasing levels of responsibility for the resident/GYO participant/apprentice during at least one

year of paid on-the-job learning/clinical experience, during which a mentor teacher is the teacher of record; and

(j) Develop a plan to ensure the program has funding after the end of the project period.

In their applications, States must describe how their projects will meet these program requirements. In addition to these requirements, to be considered for funding under this priority, applicants must address the application and administrative requirements under *Common Requirements*.

*Competitive Preference Priority 2: Supporting Emergency Certified Special Education Teachers to Become Fully Certified* (up to 2 points).

Projects designed to increase the number of fully certified special education teachers by implementing plans that address the emergency certification needs of personnel who work with children with disabilities. The plans must--

(a) Identify the barriers and challenges to full certification that are experienced by special education personnel on emergency certifications;

(b) Include evidence-based strategies to address those barriers and challenges and assist special education personnel on emergency certifications to obtain full certification, consistent with State-approved or State-recognized requirements, within three years;

(c) Include training and coaching on, at a minimum--

(1) The skills needed to collaboratively develop,

implement, and monitor standards-based IEPs;

(2) High-leverage and evidence-based instructional and classroom management practices; and

(3) The provision of wrap-around services (e.g., social, emotional, and mental health supports), special education services, and other supports for children with disabilities; and

(d) Provide participating special education personnel on emergency certifications with opportunities to apply the evidence-based skills and practices described in paragraph (c) in the classroom.

In their applications, States must describe how their projects will meet these program requirements. In addition to these requirements, to be considered for funding under this priority, applicants must meet the application and administrative requirements under *Common Requirements*.

*Competitive Preference Priority 3: Person-Centered IEPs that Support Instructional Progress* (up to 2 points).

Projects designed to provide pre-service and in-service training to school and district personnel, including IEP team members (e.g., special education and general education teachers, related service personnel who work with children with disabilities) and administrators, to improve their skills in developing and implementing person-centered IEPs that support instructional progress

and improve functional outcomes<sup>1</sup> for children with disabilities. Projects must--

(a) Provide training and coaching to administrators and IEP team members to increase their ability to develop, implement, and monitor person-centered IEPs that support instructional progress so that they can--

(1) Use appropriate data to determine the child's instructional and functional strengths and needs;

(2) Increase the child's learning time and opportunities with general education peers, as appropriate, based on research;

(3) Choose and use evidence-based practices for core instruction; and

(4) Supplement core instruction with special education services.

In their applications, States must describe how their projects will meet these program requirements. In addition to these requirements, to be considered for funding under this priority, applicants must meet the application and administrative requirements under *Common Requirements*.

*Competitive Preference Priority 4: Principals as Instructional Leaders Who Support Collaborative Service Provision* (up to 2 points).

Projects designed to provide professional development

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<sup>1</sup> An IEP that supports instructional progress is an IEP that focuses on the academic, vocational, developmental, and social needs of the child and allows the child to benefit from instruction.

to improve the instructional leadership provided by principals and other school leaders, district leaders, and teacher leaders to promote educational equity for children with disabilities. Projects must provide training and coaching to assist administrators to--

(a) Create and support equitable school schedules and other operations that enable collaborative services from general and special education staff;

(b) Support schoolwide inclusionary practices within a multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) framework;

(c) Support evidence-based professional development for their staff related to--

(1) Effective content instruction;

(2) Data for decision-making and continuous progress monitoring;

(3) IEP development and implementation; and

(4) Wrap-around services;

(d) Actively engage families and school communities to identify and address concerns regarding, and barriers to, accessibility, equity, and inclusiveness, using frameworks such as universal design; and

(e) Provide administrators structured learning opportunities, such as through a cohort model, mentoring, one-on-one coaching, networking to build a professional community, and applied learning opportunities, such as problem-solving related to the needs of individual

children.

In their applications, States must describe how their projects will meet these program requirements. In addition to these requirements, to be considered for funding under this priority, applicants must meet the application and administrative requirements under *Common Requirements*.

*Common Requirements:*

In addition to the requirements contained in these priorities, to be considered for funding, applicants must meet the following application and administrative requirements:

(a) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under "Significance," how the proposed project will--

(1) Align with and integrate other State initiatives and programs, as well as district and local improvement plans, to leverage existing professional development and data systems;

(2) Develop and implement plans to sustain the grant program after the grant funding has ended; and

(3) Integrate family engagement into all project efforts by supporting capacity building for personnel and families.

(b) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under "Quality of Project Services," how the proposed project will--

(1) Ensure equal access and treatment for members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. To meet this requirement, the applicant must describe how it will--

(i) Develop the knowledge and ability of personnel to be culturally responsive and engage children and families with a strengths-based approach;

(ii) Engage students, families, and community members to assess the appropriateness and impact of the intervention, program, or strategies; and

(iii) Review program procedures and resources to ensure a diversity of perspectives are brought into the project; and

(2) Achieve the project's goals and objectives. To meet this requirement, the applicant must provide--

(i) Either a logic model or theory of action (to be provided in appendix A), which demonstrates how the proposed project will achieve intended measurable outcomes;

(ii) A description of proposed in-State and national partners that the project will work with to achieve the goals and objectives of the grant and how the impact of these partnerships will be measured; and

(iii) A description of how the project will be based on current research and make use of evidence-based

practices. To meet this requirement, the applicant must describe--

(A) The current research base for the chosen interventions;

(B) The evidence-based model or practices to be used in the project's professional development activities; and

(C) How implementation science will be used to support full and sustained use of evidence-based practices and result in sustained systems of implementation support.

(c) In the narrative section of the application under "Quality of the project evaluation," include an evaluation plan for the project developed in consultation with and implemented by a third-party<sup>2</sup> evaluator. The evaluation plan must--

(1) Articulate formative and summative evaluation questions, including important process and outcome evaluation questions. These questions should be related to the project's proposed logic model or theory of action required under paragraph (b)(2)(i) of these requirements;

(2) Describe how progress in and fidelity of implementation, as well as project outcomes, will be measured to answer the evaluation questions. Specify the

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<sup>2</sup> A "third-party" evaluator is an independent and impartial program evaluator who is contracted by the grantee to conduct an objective evaluation of the project. This evaluator must not have participated in the development or implementation of any project activities, except for the evaluation activities, nor have any financial interest in the outcome of the evaluation.

measures and associated instruments or sources for data appropriate to the evaluation questions. Include information regarding reliability and validity of measures where appropriate;

(3) Describe strategies for analyzing data and how data collected as part of this plan will be used to inform and improve service delivery over the course of the project and to refine the proposed logic model or theory of action and evaluation plan, including subsequent data collection;

(4) Provide a timeline for conducting the evaluation and include staff assignments for completing the plan. The timeline must indicate that the data will be available annually for the annual performance report to the Department; and

(5) Dedicate sufficient funds in each budget year to cover the costs of developing or refining the evaluation plan in consultation with a third-party evaluator, as well as the costs associated with the implementation of the evaluation plan by the third-party evaluator.

(d) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under "Adequacy of resources," how--

(1) The proposed project will encourage applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability, as appropriate;

(2) The proposed key project personnel, consultants, and subcontractors have the qualifications and experience to carry out the proposed activities and achieve the project's intended outcomes;

(3) The applicant and any key partners have adequate resources to carry out the proposed activities; and

(4) The proposed costs are reasonable in relation to the anticipated results and benefits and funds will be spent in a way that increases their efficiency and cost-effectiveness, including by reducing waste or achieving better outcomes.

(e) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under "Quality of the management plan," how the proposed management plan will ensure that the project's intended outcomes will be achieved on time and within budget. To address this requirement, the applicant must describe--

(1) Clearly defined responsibilities for key project personnel, consultants, and subcontractors, as applicable;

(2) Timelines and milestones for accomplishing the project tasks;

(3) How key project personnel and any consultants and subcontractors will be allocated to the project and how these allocations are appropriate and adequate to achieve the project's intended outcomes; and

(4) How the proposed project will benefit from a diversity of perspectives, including those of families, educators, TA providers, researchers, and policy makers, among others, in its development and operation.

(f) Address the following application requirements. The applicant must--

(1) Include, in appendix A, personnel-loading charts and timelines, as applicable, to illustrate the management plan described in the narrative;

(2) Provide an assurance that any project website will include relevant information and documents in a form that meets a government or industry-recognized standard for accessibility;

(3) Include, in the budget, attendance at the following:

(i) An annual one and one-half day SPDG National Meeting in the Washington, DC area during each year of the project period; and

(ii) A three-day project directors' conference in Washington, DC, during each year of the project period, provided that, if the conference is conducted virtually, the project must reallocate unused travel funds no later than the end of the third quarter of each budget period; and

(4) Budget \$6,000 annually for support of the SPDG program network and website currently administered by the University of Oregon ([www.signetwork.org](http://www.signetwork.org)).

Under 34 CFR 75.253, the Secretary may reduce continuation awards or discontinue awards in any year of the project period for excessive carryover balances, a failure to make substantial progress, or has not maintained financial and administrative management systems that meet requirements in 2 CFR 200.302, Financial management, and § 200.303, Internal controls. The Department intends to closely monitor unobligated balances and substantial progress under this program and may reduce or discontinue funding accordingly.

*References:*

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*Definitions:* For FY 2024 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, the following definitions apply to this competition. We provide the source of the definitions in parentheses.

*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. (34 CFR 77.1)

*Evidence-based* means, for purposes of Absolute Priority 1, practices for which there is strong evidence or moderate evidence of effectiveness (2012 NFP); and for purposes of the competitive preference priorities, the proposed project component is supported by one or more of strong evidence, moderate evidence, promising evidence, or evidence that demonstrates a rationale (34 CFR 77.1).

*Experimental study* means a study that is designed to compare outcomes between two groups of individuals (such as

students) that are otherwise equivalent except for their assignment to either a treatment group receiving a project component or a control group that does not. Randomized controlled trials, regression discontinuity design studies, and single-case design studies are the specific types of experimental studies that, depending on their design and implementation (e.g., sample attrition in randomized controlled trials and regression discontinuity design studies), can meet What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) standards without reservations as described in the WWC Handbooks:

(i) A randomized controlled trial employs random assignment of, for example, students, teachers, classrooms, or schools to receive the project component being evaluated (the treatment group) or not to receive the project component (the control group).

(ii) A regression discontinuity design study assigns the project component being evaluated using a measured variable (e.g., assigning students reading below a cutoff score to tutoring or developmental education classes) and controls for that variable in the analysis of outcomes.

(iii) A single-case design study uses observations of a single case (e.g., a student eligible for a behavioral intervention) over time in the absence and presence of a controlled treatment manipulation to determine whether the outcome is systematically related to the treatment. (34 CFR 77.1)

*Fidelity* means the delivery of instruction in the way in which it was designed to be delivered. (2012 NFP)

*High-need LEA* means, in accordance with section 2102(3) of the ESEA, an LEA--

(a) That serves not fewer than 10,000 children from families with incomes below the poverty line (as that term is defined in section 8101(41) of the ESEA), or for which not less than 20 percent of the children served by the LEA are from families with incomes below the poverty line; and

(b) For which there is (1) a high percentage of teachers not teaching in the academic subjects or grade levels that the teachers were trained to teach, or (2) a high percentage of teachers with emergency, provisional, or temporary certification or licensing. (2012 NFP)

*Lead agency* means the agency designated by the State's Governor under section 635(a)(10) of IDEA and 34 CFR 303.120 that receives funds under section 643 of IDEA to administer the State's responsibilities under part C of IDEA. (34 CFR 303.22)

*Local educational agency* (LEA) 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 for such combination of school districts or

counties as are recognized in a State as an administrative agency for its public elementary schools or secondary schools. (Section 602(19) of IDEA (20 U.S.C. 1401(19)))

*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. (34 CFR 77.1)

*Moderate evidence* means that there is evidence of effectiveness of a key project component in improving a relevant outcome for a sample that overlaps with the populations or settings proposed to receive that component, based on a relevant finding from one of the following:

(i) A practice guide prepared by the WWC using version 2.1, 3.0, 4.0, or 4.1 of the WWC Handbooks reporting a "strong evidence base" or "moderate evidence base" for the corresponding practice guide recommendation;

(ii) An intervention report prepared by the WWC using version 2.1, 3.0, 4.0, or 4.1 of the WWC Handbooks reporting a "positive effect" or "potentially positive effect" on a relevant outcome based on a "medium to large" extent of evidence, with no reporting of a "negative effect" or "potentially negative effect" on a relevant outcome; or

(iii) A single experimental study or quasi-experimental design study reviewed and reported by the WWC using version 2.1, 3.0, 4.0, or 4.1 of the WWC Handbooks, or otherwise assessed by the Department using version 4.1 of the WWC Handbooks, as appropriate, and that—

(A) Meets WWC standards with or without reservations;

(B) Includes at least one statistically significant and positive (i.e., favorable) effect on a relevant outcome;

(C) Includes no overriding statistically significant and negative effects on relevant outcomes reported in the study or in a corresponding WWC intervention report prepared under version 2.1, 3.0, 4.0, or 4.1 of the WWC Handbooks; and

(D) Is based on a sample from more than one site (e.g., State, county, city, school district, or postsecondary campus) and includes at least 350 students or other individuals across sites. Multiple studies of the same project component that each meet requirements in paragraphs (iii)(A), (B), and (C) of this definition may together satisfy the requirement in this paragraph (iii)(D). (34 CFR 77.1)

*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). (34 CFR 77.1)

*Promising evidence* means that there is evidence of the effectiveness of a key project component in improving a relevant outcome, based on a relevant finding from one of the following—

(i) A practice guide prepared by WWC reporting a “strong evidence base” or “moderate evidence base” for the corresponding practice guide recommendation;

(ii) An intervention report prepared by the WWC reporting a “positive effect” or “potentially positive effect” on a relevant outcome with no reporting of a “negative effect” or “potentially negative effect” on a relevant outcome; or

(iii) A single study assessed by the Department, as appropriate, that—

(A) Is an experimental study, a quasi-experimental design study, or a well-designed and well-implemented correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias (e.g., a study using regression methods to account for differences between a treatment group and a comparison group); and

(B) Includes at least one statistically significant and positive (i.e., favorable) effect on a relevant outcome. (34 CFR 77.1)

*Quasi-experimental design study* means a study using a design that attempts to approximate an experimental study by identifying a comparison group that is similar to the treatment group in important respects. This type of study, depending on design and implementation (e.g., establishment of baseline equivalence of the groups being compared), can meet WWC standards with reservations, but cannot meet WWC standards without reservations, as described in the WWC Handbooks. (34 CFR 77.1)

*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. (34 CFR 77.1)

*State educational agency* means the State board of education or other agency or officer primarily responsible for the State supervision of public elementary schools and secondary schools, or, if there is no such officer or agency, an officer or agency designated by the Governor or by State law. (Section 602(32) of IDEA (20 U.S.C. 1401(32)))

*Strong evidence* means that there is evidence of the effectiveness of a key project component in improving a relevant outcome for a sample that overlaps with the populations and settings proposed to receive that component, based on a relevant finding from one of the following--

(i) A practice guide prepared by the WWC using version 2.1, 3.0, 4.0, or 4.1 of the WWC Handbook reporting a "strong evidence base" for the corresponding practice guide recommendation;

(ii) An intervention report prepared by the WWC using version 2.1, 3.0, 4.0, or 4.1 of the WWC Handbook reporting a "positive effect" on a relevant outcome based on a "medium to large" extent of evidence, with no reporting of a "negative effect" or "potentially negative effect" on a relevant outcome; or

(iii) A single experimental study reviewed and reported by the WWC using version 2.1, 3.0, 4.0, or 4.1 of the WWC Handbook, or otherwise assessed by the Department using version 4.1 of the WWC Handbook, as appropriate, and that—

(A) Meets WWC standards without reservations;

(B) Includes at least one statistically significant and positive (i.e., favorable) effect on a relevant outcome;

(C) Includes no overriding statistically significant and negative effects on relevant outcomes reported in the study or in a corresponding WWC intervention report prepared under version 2.1, 3.0, 4.0, or 4.1 of the WWC Handbook; and

(D) Is based on a sample from more than one site (e.g., State, county, city, school district, or

postsecondary campus) and includes at least 350 students or other individuals across sites. Multiple studies of the same project component that each meet requirements in paragraphs (iii)(A), (B), and (C) of this definition may together satisfy this requirement. (34 CFR 77.1)

*What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) Handbooks (WWC Handbooks)* means the standards and procedures set forth in the WWC Standards Handbook, Versions 4.0 or 4.1, and WWC Procedures Handbook, Versions 4.0 or 4.1, or in the WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook, Version 3.0 or Version 2.1 (all incorporated by reference, see §77.2). Study findings eligible for review under WWC standards can meet WWC standards without reservations, meet WWC standards with reservations, or not meet WWC standards. WWC practice guides and intervention reports include findings from systematic reviews of evidence as described in the WWC Handbooks documentation. (34 CFR 77.1)

*Note:* The What Works Clearinghouse Procedures and Standards Handbook (Version 4.1), as well as the more recent What Works Clearinghouse Handbooks released in August 2022 (Version 5.0), are available at <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Handbooks>.

*Program Authority:* 20 U.S.C. 1451-1455.

*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, 79, 81, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98, and 99. (b) The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) 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 Guidance for Federal Financial Assistance in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3474. (d) The 2012 NFP. (e) The 2024 NFP.

*Note:* The U.S. Department of Education will implement the provisions included in the OMB final rule, *OMB Guidance for Federal Financial Assistance*, which amends 2 CFR parts 25, 170, 175, 176, 180, 182, 183, 184, and 200, on October 1, 2024. Grant applicants that anticipate a performance period start date on or after October 1, 2024, should follow the provisions stated in the OMB Guidance for Federal Financial Assistance (89 FR 30046, April 22, 2024) when preparing an application. For more information about these updated regulations please visit:

<https://www.cfo.gov/resources/uniform-guidance/>.

*Note:* The regulations in 34 CFR part 79 apply to all applicants except federally recognized Indian Tribes.

*Note:* The regulations in 34 CFR part 86 apply to IHEs only.

II. Award Information

*Type of Award:* Discretionary grants.

*Estimated Available Funds:* \$3,571,054.

Contingent upon the availability of funds and the quality of applications, we may make additional awards in FY 2025 from the list of unfunded applications from this competition.

*Estimated Range of Awards:* \$500,000 - \$2,100,000 (for the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico). States may not receive less than \$500,000 in each year of the grant and must submit a budget in their application for not less than \$500,000 in each year of the grant. In the case of outlying areas (United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands), awards will be not less than \$80,000.

*Note:* We will set the amount of each award after considering--

- (1) The amount of funds available for making the grants;
- (2) The relative population of the State or outlying area;
- (3) The types of activities proposed by the State or outlying area;
- (4) The alignment of proposed activities with section 612(a)(14) of IDEA, as amended by the ESSA;

(5) The alignment of proposed activities with State plans and applications submitted under sections 1111 and 2101(d), respectively, of the ESEA; and

(6) The use, as appropriate, of scientifically based research and activities.

Using the same considerations, the Secretary funded these selected applications for FY 2023 at the following levels:

<u>State</u>	<u>FY 2023 Funding Amount</u>
Alabama	\$1,139,436
Connecticut	\$867,060
Kentucky	\$570,000
Virginia	\$2,005,409

*Estimated Average Size of Awards:* \$1,000,000 excluding the outlying areas.

*Estimated Number of Awards:* 4.

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

*Project Period:* Not less than one year and not more than five years.

### III. Eligibility Information

1. *Eligible Applicants:* An SEA of one of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or an outlying area (United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands).

*Note:* Public Law 95-134, which permits the consolidation of grants to the outlying areas, does not apply to funds received under this competition.

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 <https://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 must award contracts and subgrants as described in Absolute Priority 2 (paragraph (3)(c) under Statutory Requirements, Use of Funds). See section 654(c) of IDEA.

4. *Other General Requirements:*

(a) Recipients of funding under this competition must make positive efforts to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities (see section 606 of IDEA).

(b) Applicants for, and recipients of, funding must involve individuals with disabilities or parents of individuals with disabilities ages birth through 26, in planning, implementing, and evaluating the project (see section 682(a)(1)(A) of IDEA).

#### 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 [www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/12/07/2022-26554/common-instructions-for-applicants-to-department-of-education-discretionary-grant-programs](http://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.

2. *Intergovernmental Review:* This competition 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. However, under

34 CFR 79.8(a), we waive intergovernmental review in order to make an award by the end of FY 2024.

3. *Funding Restrictions:* We reference regulations outlining funding restrictions in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice.

4. *Recommended Page Limit:* The application narrative is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application. We recommend that you (1) limit the application narrative to no more than 70 pages and (2) use the following standards:

- A "page" is 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.
- Double-space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative, including titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, reference citations, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, graphs, and screen shots.
- Use a font that is 12 point or larger.
- Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial.

The recommended page limit does not apply to the cover sheet; the budget section, including the narrative budget justification; the assurances and certifications; or the abstract (follow the guidance provided in the application package for completing the abstract), the table of contents, the list of priority requirements, the resumes,

the reference list, the letters of support, or the appendices. However, the recommended page limit does apply to all of the application narrative, including all text in charts, tables, figures, graphs, and screen shots.

## V. Application Review Information

1. *Selection Criteria:* The selection criteria for this competition are from 34 CFR 75.210 and are listed below:

(a) *Significance (20 points).*

(1) The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project.

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

(i) 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.

(ii) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.

(iii) The likelihood that the proposed project will result in system change or improvement.

(b) *Quality of the project design (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 goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

(ii) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs.

(iii) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project involve the collaboration of appropriate partners for maximizing the effectiveness of project services.

(iv) The extent to which the design of the proposed project reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice.

(v) The extent to which the proposed project will establish linkages with other appropriate agencies and organizations providing services to the target population.

(c) *Quality of the project personnel (10 points).*

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

(3) In addition, the Secretary considers the qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

(d) *Adequacy of resources and management plan (20 points).*

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

(2) In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.

(ii) The extent to which the budget is adequate to support the proposed project.

(iii) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

(iv) How the applicant will ensure that a diversity of perspectives are brought to bear in the operation of the proposed project, including those of parents, teachers, the business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients or beneficiaries of services, or others, as appropriate.

(v) The potential for continued support of the project after Federal funding ends, including, as appropriate, the demonstrated commitment of appropriate entities to such support.

(e) *Quality of the project evaluation (25 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 extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

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. Additional Review and Selection Process Factors:*

In the past, the Department has had difficulty finding peer reviewers for certain competitions because so many individuals who are eligible to serve as peer reviewers have conflicts of interest. The standing panel requirements under section 682(b) of IDEA also have placed additional constraints on the availability of reviewers. Therefore, the Department has determined that for some discretionary grant competitions, applications may be separated into two or more groups and ranked and selected for funding within specific groups. This procedure will make it easier for the Department to find peer reviewers by ensuring that greater numbers of individuals who are eligible to serve as reviewers for any particular group of applicants will not have conflicts of interest. It also will increase the quality, independence, and fairness of the review process, while permitting panel members to

review applications under discretionary grant competitions for which they also have submitted applications.

4. *Risk Assessment and Specific Conditions:*

Consistent with 2 CFR 200.206, before awarding grants under this competition 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.

5. *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.

6. *In General:* In accordance with the Guidance for Federal Financial Assistance 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 also may notify you informally.

If your application is not evaluated or not selected for funding, we 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 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](http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html).

5. *Performance Measures:* For the purposes of Department reporting under 34 CFR 75.110, we have established a set of performance measures, including long-term measures, that are designed to yield information on various aspects of the effectiveness and quality of the SPDG program. These measures assess the extent to which--

- Projects use professional development practices supported by evidence to support the attainment of identified competencies;
- Participants in SPDG professional development demonstrate improvement in implementation of SPDG-supported practices over time;
- Projects use SPDG professional development funds to provide activities designed to sustain the use of SPDG-supported practices; and
- Projects improve outcomes for children with disabilities.

Each grantee funded under this competition must collect and annually report data related to its performance on these measures in the project's annual and final performance report to the Department in accordance with section 653(d) of IDEA and 34 CFR 75.590. Applicants should discuss in the application narrative how they propose to collect performance data for these 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 and a copy of the application package 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, 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](http://www.govinfo.gov). At this site you can view this document, as well as all other Department documents 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.

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**Glenna Wright-Gallo,**  
*Assistant Secretary for  
Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.*  
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