



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**Personnel Development to Improve Services and Results for
Children with Disabilities--Interdisciplinary Preparation
of Early Intervention, Special Education, and Related
Services Personnel Serving Children with Disabilities who
have High-Intensity Needs**

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) 2025 for Personnel Development to Improve
Services and Results for Children with Disabilities--
Interdisciplinary Preparation of Early Intervention,
Special Education, and Related Services Personnel Serving
Children with Disabilities who have High-Intensity Needs.

DATES:

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

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: [INSERT DATE 30
DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: [INSERT DATE 90
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 details on pre-recorded informational webinars designed to provide technical assistance to interested applicants. Links to the webinars may be found at www.ed.gov/about/ed-offices/osers/osep/new-osep-grant-competitions.

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 23, 2024 (89 FR 104528) and available at www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/12/23/2024-30488/common-instructions-for-applicants-to-department-of-education-discretionary-grant-programs.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sunyoung Ahn, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, room 4A10, Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC 20202. Telephone: 202-987-0141. Email: Sunyoung.Ahn@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: Applications funded under this notice will be funded in lieu of applications received under the notice that published in the *Federal Register* on October 8, 2024 (89 FR 81493).

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The purposes of this program are to (1) help address State-identified needs for personnel preparation in early intervention, special education, related services, and regular education to work with children, including infants, toddlers, and youth with disabilities; and (2) ensure that those personnel have the necessary skills and knowledge, derived from practices that have been determined through scientifically based research, to be successful in serving those children.

Assistance Listing Number (ALN): 84.325K.

OMB control number: 1820-0028.

Priorities: This competition includes one absolute priority and one competitive preference priority. In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(v), the absolute priority is from allowable activities specified in the statute (see sections 662 and 681 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (20 U.S.C. 1462 and 1481)). The competitive preference priority is from 34 CFR 75.225.

Absolute Priority: For FY 2025 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, this priority is an absolute priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), we consider only applications that meet this priority.

This priority is:

*Interdisciplinary Preparation of Early Intervention,
Special Education, and Related Services for Personnel
Serving Children with Disabilities who have High-Intensity
Needs.*

Background:

It is this Administration's priority that children, including infants, toddlers, and youth with disabilities (children with disabilities) who have high-intensity needs receive instruction and support from educators and related services personnel who are fully credentialed. Under this absolute priority, the Department will fund high-quality interdisciplinary projects that prepare personnel in early intervention, special education, and related services at the master's degree, educational specialist, or clinical doctorate degree levels for professional practice in a variety of education settings, including natural environments (the home and community settings in which infants and toddlers with and without disabilities participate), early childhood programs, classrooms, schools, and distance learning environments.

Absolute Priority:

The purpose of this priority is to increase the number and improve the quality of early intervention, special education, and related services¹ personnel who are fully

¹For the purposes of this priority, "related services" includes the following: speech-language pathology and audiology services; assistive technology services; interpreting services; intervener services;

credentialed to serve children who have high-intensity needs.² The priority will fund high-quality interdisciplinary³ projects that use evidence-based⁴ strategies to prepare scholars⁵ at the master's, educational

psychological services; applied behavior analysis; physical therapy and occupational therapy services; recreation, including therapeutic recreation services; social work services; counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling; and orientation and mobility services.

² For the purposes of this priority, "high-intensity needs" refers to a complex array of disabilities (e.g., multiple disabilities, significant cognitive disabilities, significant physical disabilities, significant sensory disabilities, significant autism, significant emotional disabilities, or significant learning disabilities, including dyslexia) or the needs of children with these disabilities requiring intensive, individualized intervention(s) (i.e., that are specifically designed to address persistent learning or behavior difficulties, implemented with greater frequency and for an extended duration than is commonly available in a typical classroom or early intervention setting, or which require personnel to have knowledge and skills in identifying and implementing multiple evidence-based interventions).

³ For the purposes of this priority, "interdisciplinary" refers to preparing scholars from two or more graduate degree programs in special education or early intervention and one or more related services through shared coursework, group assignments, and extensive and coordinated field or clinical experiences. Different graduate degree programs across more than one institution of higher education may partner to develop an interdisciplinary project.

For the purpose of this priority, "interdisciplinary" does not include: (a) individual scholars who receive two or more graduate degrees; (b) one graduate degree program that prepares scholars with different areas of focus; (c) one graduate degree program that offers interdisciplinary content but does not prepare scholars from two or more degree programs together; or (d) one graduate degree program in special education, early intervention, and related services partnering with a graduate degree program other than special education, early intervention, or related services. Programs in which scholars receive only a certificate or endorsement without a graduate degree are not eligible.

⁴ For the purposes of this priority, "evidence-based" means, at a minimum, evidence that demonstrates a rationale (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1), where a key project component (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1) included in the project's logic model (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1) is informed by research or evaluation findings that suggest the project component is likely to improve relevant outcomes (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1).

⁵ For the purposes of this priority, "scholar" means an individual who: (a) is pursuing a bachelor's, certification, master's, or educational specialist degree in early intervention or special education; (b) receives scholarship assistance as authorized under section 662 of IDEA (34 CFR 304.3(g)); (c) will be eligible for a license, endorsement, or certification from a State or national credentialing authority following completion of the degree program identified in the application; and (d) will be able to be employed in a position that serves children with disabilities for a minimum of 51 percent of their time or case load. Individuals pursuing degrees in general education

specialist, or clinical doctoral degree levels for professional practice in natural environments, early childhood programs, classrooms, school settings, and in distance learning environments serving children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs.

Specifically, an applicant must propose an interdisciplinary project supporting scholars from two or more graduate degree programs in special education or early intervention and one or more related services. An interdisciplinary project is a project that delivers core content through shared coursework, group assignments, and extensive and coordinated field and clinical experiences as part of two or more master's degree, educational specialist degree, or clinical doctoral degree programs for scholars. Not all requirements (e.g., courses and field or clinical experiences) of each participating graduate degree program must be shared across all degree programs participating in the interdisciplinary project, but the interdisciplinary project must: (a) identify the competencies needed to promote high expectations and address the individualized needs of children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs using an interdisciplinary approach to service delivery; (b) outline how the project will build capacity in those areas through shared coursework, group assignments, and extensive and coordinated field or

or early childhood education do not qualify as "scholars" eligible for scholarship assistance.

clinical experiences for scholars supported by the proposed project; and (c) identify the aspects of each graduate degree program that are shared across all participating degree programs and those that remain unique to each.

Note: Projects may include individuals who are not funded as scholars (see footnote 5), but are in degree programs (e.g., general education, early childhood education, administration) that are cooperating with the grantee's project. These individuals may participate in the coursework, assignments, field or clinical experiences, and other opportunities required of scholars' program of study (e.g., speaker series, monthly seminars) if doing so does not diminish the benefit for project-funded scholars (e.g., by reducing funds available for scholar support or limiting opportunities for scholars to participate in project activities).

Note: Degree programs across more than one institution of higher education (IHE) may partner together within a project. Personnel preparation degree programs that prepare all scholars to be dually certified, including dually certified in special education and a related service, can qualify under this priority.

Personnel preparation programs that prepare individuals to be educational interpreters for the deaf at the bachelor's degree level can qualify under this priority and are exempted from (a) the interdisciplinary requirement

and (b) the requirement for two or more graduate degree programs. All other priority requirements specified for graduate programs will apply to the bachelor's program. While interdisciplinary projects are not required for educational interpreters, they are encouraged.

Note: Applicants under this priority may not submit the same proposal under Personnel Preparation of Special Education, Early Intervention, and Related Services Personnel at Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities, and Other Minority Serving Institutions, ALN 84.325M. Applicants may submit substantively different proposals under ALN 84.325K and ALN 84.325M. The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) will not fund similar personnel preparation projects within the same IHE across the ALN 84.325K and 84.325M competitions.

Note: Eligible applicants may submit only one application under the 84.325K competition.

Focus Areas:

Within this absolute priority, the Secretary intends to support interdisciplinary projects under the following two focus areas: (A) Preparing Personnel to Serve Infants, Toddlers, and Preschool-Age Children with Disabilities who have High-Intensity Needs; and (B) Preparing Personnel to Serve School-Age Children with Disabilities who have High-Intensity Needs.

In this competition, Focus Areas (A) and (B) each constitute a separate funding category. The Secretary intends to award grants under each of these funding categories, provided that applications submitted are of sufficient quality.

Applicants must identify the specific focus area (i.e., A or B) under which they are applying as part of the competition title on the application cover sheet (SF 424, line 12).

Focus Area A: Preparing Personnel to Serve Infants, Toddlers, and Preschool-Age Children with Disabilities who have High-Intensity Needs. This focus area is for interdisciplinary projects that deliver core content through shared coursework, group assignments, and extensive and coordinated field or clinical experiences for scholars across two or more graduate degree programs in early intervention or early childhood special education and one or more related services for infants, toddlers, and preschool-age children with disabilities or developmental delays who have high-intensity needs.

Early intervention personnel are those who are prepared to provide services to infants and toddlers with disabilities ages birth to three, and early childhood personnel are those who are prepared to provide services to children with disabilities ages three through five (and in States where the age range is other than ages three through

five, we defer to the State's certification for early childhood special education). In States where certification in early intervention is combined with certification in early childhood special education, applicants may propose a combined early intervention and early childhood special education personnel preparation project under this focus area.

Focus Area B: Preparing Personnel to Serve School-Age Children with Disabilities who have High-Intensity Needs.

This focus area is for interdisciplinary projects that deliver core content through shared coursework, group assignments, and extensive and coordinated field or clinical experiences to scholars across two or more graduate degree programs in special education and one or more related services for school-age children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs.

Focus Areas A and B:

Prior to enrolling scholars, applicants may, but are not required to, use up to \$100,000 of grant funds in the first budget period and up to the first 12 months of the performance period for project planning, including enhancing an existing program. If an applicant chooses to use up to the first 12 months for project planning, then the applicant must provide a comprehensive justification for the need for project planning and include the goals, objectives, and intended outcomes of the planning; a

description of the proposed activities; and a timeline for the work. The plan may include activities such as--

(1) Developing new and updating current coursework, assignments, or extensive and coordinated field or clinical experiences needed to support interdisciplinary preparation for personnel in early intervention, special education, or related services serving children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs;

(2) Building capacity (e.g., hiring a field supervisor, providing professional development for faculty and field supervisors) of the personnel to prepare scholars to serve children with disabilities with high-intensity needs and their families;

(3) Purchasing needed resources (e.g., additional teaching supplies or specialized equipment to enhance instruction); and

(4) Establishing relationships with early intervention and early childhood programs or schools to serve as sites for field or clinical experiences needed to support the project. These sites may include high-need local educational agencies (LEAs),⁶ high-poverty schools,⁷

⁶ For the purposes of this priority, "high-need LEA" means an LEA (a) that serves not fewer than 10,000 children from families with incomes below the poverty line; or (b) for which not less than 20 percent of the children are from families with incomes below the poverty line.

⁷ For the purposes of this priority, "high-poverty school" means a school in which at least 50 percent of students are from low-income families as determined using one of the measures of poverty specified in section 1113(a)(5) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA). For middle and high schools, eligibility may be calculated on the basis of comparable data from feeder schools.

schools identified for comprehensive support and improvement,⁸ and schools implementing a targeted support and improvement plan⁹ for children with disabilities; early childhood and early intervention programs located within the geographic boundaries of a high-need LEA; and early childhood and early intervention programs located within the geographical boundaries of an LEA serving the highest percentage of schools identified for comprehensive support and improvement or implementing targeted support and improvement plans in the State.

In addition to requesting up to \$100,000 for planning, additional Federal funds may also be used for scholar support and other grant activities occurring in year one of the project, provided that the total request for year one does not exceed the maximum award available for one budget period of 12 months (i.e., \$350,000). Applicants proposing projects to develop, expand, or add a new area of emphasis to early intervention, special education, or related

Eligibility as a high-poverty school under this definition is determined on the basis of the most currently available data.

⁸ For the purposes of this priority, "school implementing a comprehensive support and improvement plan" means a school identified for comprehensive support and improvement by a State under section 1111(c)(4)(D) of the ESEA that includes (a) not less than the lowest performing 5 percent of all schools in the State receiving funds under title I, part A of the ESEA; (b) all public high schools in the State failing to graduate one third or more of their students; and (c) public schools in the State described in section 1111(d)(3)(A)(i)(II) of the ESEA.

⁹ For the purposes of this priority, "school implementing a targeted support and improvement plan" means a school identified for targeted support and improvement by a State that has developed and is implementing a school-level targeted support and improvement plan to improve student outcomes based on the indicators in the statewide accountability system defined in section 1111(d)(2) of the ESEA.

services programs must provide, in their applications, information on how these new areas will be sustained once Federal funding ends.

Note: Under 34 CFR 75.250, project periods under this priority may be up to 60 months. Projects should be designed to ensure that all proposed scholars successfully complete the program within 60 months from the project start date. The Secretary may reduce continuation awards for any project in which scholar recruitment is not on track or scholars are not on track to complete the program within the project period. The Department intends to closely monitor unobligated balances and substantial progress under this program and may reduce or discontinue funding accordingly consistent with its authority in 34 CFR 75.253.

To be considered for funding under this absolute priority, all program applicants must meet the requirements contained in this priority.

To meet the application requirements of this priority an applicant must--

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

(1) The proposed project will address the need in the proposed preparation area to prepare personnel who are fully qualified to serve children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs;

(2) The proposed project will increase the number of personnel in the proposed preparation area who demonstrate the competencies needed to--

(i) Promote high expectations and improve outcomes, including literacy and math outcomes, for children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs;

(ii) Differentiate curriculum and instruction;

(iii) Provide intensive, evidence-based individualized instruction and interventions in person and through distance learning technologies in a variety of early intervention, early childhood, and school settings (e.g., natural environments; public schools, including charter schools; private schools; and other nonpublic education settings, including home education);

(iv) Collaborate with families and other providers using an interdisciplinary team approach to address the individualized developmental, learning, and academic needs of children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs, and support their successful transitions from early childhood to elementary, elementary to secondary, or transition to postsecondary education and the workforce; and

(vi) Exercise leadership to improve professional practice and services and education for children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs; and

(3) The applicant has successfully graduated students in their program, including data on the number of students who have graduated in the last five years.

(b) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under "Quality of the project design," how--

(1) The project will conduct its planning activities, if the applicant will use any of the allowable first 12 months of the project period for planning;

(2) The project will recruit and retain scholars. To meet this requirement, the applicant must describe--

(i) The selection criteria the project will use to identify applicants for admission in the program;

(ii) The specific recruitment strategies the project will use to attract applicants including applicants with disabilities; and

Note: The recruitment strategies and selection criteria the applicant intends to use must ensure equal access and treatment of all applicants seeking admission to the program and must be consistent with applicable law, including Federal civil rights law.

(iii) The approach that will be used to mentor and support all scholars for retention and completion of the program within 60 months of the project start date and preparing them for careers in early intervention or special education; and

(3) The project will be designed to promote the

acquisition of the competencies needed by early intervention, special education, or related services personnel to support improved outcomes for children with disabilities with high-intensity needs. To address this requirement, the applicant must--

(i) Describe how the proposed components, such as coursework, field or clinical experiences in early intervention, special education, or related services, work-based experiences, or other opportunities provided to scholars, and sequence of the project components will enable the scholars to acquire the competencies needed by personnel working with children with disabilities with high-intensity needs;

(ii) Describe how the proposed project will reflect current evidence-based practices, including in personnel preparation, to prepare scholars to provide effective evidence-based instruction, interventions, and services that improve outcomes for children with disabilities with high-intensity needs, in a variety of educational or early childhood and early intervention settings, including in-person and remote settings; and

(iii) Describe how the proposed project will engage parents, including parents with disabilities; public or private partnering agencies, schools, or programs; and youth with disabilities, to inform and support project components.

(c) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under "Quality of the management plan," how--

(1) The project director and other key project personnel are qualified to prepare scholars in the project's preparation area;

(2) The project director and other key project personnel will manage the components of the project; and

(3) The time commitments of the project director and other key project personnel are adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.

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

(1) Accommodations and resources provided to support scholars will be individualized to support them in completing the program; and

(2) The budget is adequate for meeting the project objectives and mitigating financial burden to scholars in completing the program of study.

(3) Scholar support will be distributed to support scholars in completing their degrees. In distributing scholar support, the applicant must consider that--

(i) Scholar support does not need to be uniform for all scholars and should be customized for individual scholars based on scholars' financial needs, including consideration of all costs associated with the cost of attendance;

(ii) Scholar support can include support for cost of attendance (e.g., tuition and fees; university student health insurance; an allowance for books, materials, and supplies; an allowance for miscellaneous personal expenses; an allowance for dependent care, such as child care; an allowance for transportation; and/or an allowance for room and board), travel in conjunction with training assignments including conference registration, and stipends to support scholars' completion of the program and professional development;

(iii) Projections for scholar support should consider tuition increases and cost of living increases over the project period; and

(iv) Projects that prepare personnel at the bachelor's degree level cannot provide scholar support during the first two years (e.g., freshman and sophomore years) of the degree program to ensure that scholar support can lead to service obligation fulfillment.

(e) Describe, in the narrative section of the application under "Quality of the project evaluation or other evidence-building," how the applicant will--

(1) Evaluate how well the goals or objectives of the proposed project have been met. To meet this requirement, the applicant must describe--

(i) The outcomes to be measured for both the project and the scholars, particularly the acquisition of scholars' competencies; and

(ii) The evaluation methodologies, data collection methods, and data analyses that will be used; and

(2) Collect, analyze, and use data on scholars supported by the project to inform the project on an ongoing basis.

(f) Demonstrate, in the appendices or narrative under "Required project assurances" as directed, that the following requirements are met. The applicant must--

(1) Include in Appendix A of the application--

(i) Charts, tables, figures, graphs, and visuals that provide information directly relating to the application requirements for the narrative; and

(ii) A letter of support from a public or private partnering agency, school, or program, that states it will provide scholars with a field or clinical experience in a high-need LEA, a high-poverty school, a school implementing a comprehensive support and improvement plan, a school implementing a targeted support and improvement plan for children with disabilities, a State educational agency, an early childhood and early intervention program located within the geographical boundaries of a high-need LEA, or an early childhood and early intervention program located within the geographical boundaries of an LEA serving the

highest percentage of schools identified for comprehensive support and improvement or implementing targeted support and improvement plans in the State;

(2) Include in Appendix B of the application--

(i) A table that lists the project's required coursework and includes the course title, brief description, learning goals, and relevant State or national professional organization personnel standards for each course; and

(ii) Four exemplar course syllabi required by the degree program that reflect evidence-based practices across the areas of assessment; inclusive practices; instructional strategies; and literacy and math, as appropriate;

(3) Include in the application budget attendance by the project director at a two-day project directors' meeting in Washington, DC, during each year of the project; and

(4) Provide an assurance that--

(i) The project will meet the requirements in 34 CFR 304.23, particularly those related to (A) informing all scholarship recipients of their service obligation commitment; and (B) disbursing scholarships. Failure by a grantee to properly meet these requirements is a violation of the grant award that may result in the grantee being liable for returning any misused funds to the Department;

(ii) The project will meet the statutory requirements in section 662(e) through (h) of IDEA;

(iii) The project will be operated in a manner consistent with nondiscrimination requirements contained in Federal civil rights laws;

(iv) All the syllabi for the project's required coursework will be provided if requested by OSEP;

(v) At least 65 percent of the total award over the project period (i.e., up to 5 years) will be used for scholar support;

(vi) Scholar support provided by the project is not based on the condition that the scholar work for the grantee while enrolled in the program (e.g., personnel at the IHE);

(vii) The project director, key personnel, and scholars will actively participate in learning opportunities (e.g., webinars, briefings) supported by OSEP and intended to promote opportunities for participants to understand reporting requirements, share resources, and generate new knowledge by addressing topics of common interest to participants across projects, including Department priorities and needs in the field;

(viii) The project website, if applicable, will be of high quality, with an easy-to-navigate design that meets government or industry-recognized standards for accessibility;

(ix) Scholar accomplishments (e.g., public service, awards, publications, conference presentations) will be reported in annual and final performance reports; and

(x) Annual data will be submitted on each scholar who receives grant support (OMB Control Number 1820-0686). The primary purposes of the data collection are to track the service obligation fulfillment of scholars who receive funds from OSEP grants and to collect data for program performance measure reporting under 34 CFR 75.110. Data collection includes the submission of a signed, completed pre-scholarship agreement and exit certification for each scholar funded under an OSEP grant (see paragraph (f)(4)(i) of this priority). Applicants are encouraged to visit the Personnel Development Program Data Collection System website at <https://pdp.ed.gov/osep> for further information about this data collection requirement.

Competitive Preference Priority: For FY 2025 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, this priority is a competitive preference priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i), we award an additional 5 points to an application that meets the competitive preference priority. Applicants should indicate in the abstract if they are addressing the competitive preference priority.

The competitive preference priority is:

Applications from New Potential Grantees (0 or 5 points).

(a) Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that the applicant (e.g., the IHE) has not had an active discretionary grant under the ALN 84.325K, 84.325M, or 84.325R, including through membership in a group application submitted in accordance with 24 CFR 75.127 through 75.129 in the last five years before the deadline date for submission of applications under this program (ALN 84.325K).

(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.

Waiver of Proposed Rulemaking: Under the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) (5 U.S.C. 553) the Department generally offers interested parties the opportunity to comment on proposed priorities. Section 681(d) of IDEA (20 USC 1481(d)), however, makes the public comment requirements of the APA inapplicable to the absolute priority in this notice.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1462 and 1481.

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 regulations for this program in 34 CFR part 304.

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

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Discretionary grants.

Estimated Available Funds: \$6,000,000.

Contingent upon the availability of funds and the quality of applications, we may make additional awards in FY 2026 from the list of unfunded applications from this competition.

Estimated Range of Awards: \$150,000-\$350,000 per year.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$250,000 per year.

Maximum Award: We will not make an award exceeding \$1,250,000 per project for a project period of 60 months or an award that exceeds \$350,000 for a single budget period of 12 months.

Estimated Number of Awards: 24.

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

Project Period: Up to 60 months.

III. Eligibility Information

1. *Eligible Applicants:* Eligible applicants are IHEs and private nonprofit organizations that have legal authority to enter into grants and cooperative agreements with the Federal government on behalf of an IHE.

Note: If you are a nonprofit organization, under 34 CFR 75.51, you may demonstrate your nonprofit status by providing: (1) proof that the Internal Revenue Service currently recognizes the applicant as an organization to which contributions are tax deductible under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code; (2) a statement from a State taxing body or the State attorney general certifying that the organization is a nonprofit organization operating within the State and that no part of its net earnings may lawfully benefit any private shareholder or individual; (3) a certified copy of the applicant's certificate of incorporation or similar document if it clearly establishes the nonprofit status of the applicant; or (4) any item described above if that item applies to a State or national parent organization, together with a statement by the State or parent

organization that the applicant is a local nonprofit affiliate.

2. a. *Cost Sharing or Matching:* Cost sharing or matching is not required for this competition.

b. *Indirect Cost Rate Information:* This program uses a training indirect cost rate. This limits indirect cost reimbursement to an entity's actual indirect costs, as determined in its negotiated indirect cost rate agreement, or eight percent of a modified total direct cost base, whichever amount is less. For more information regarding training indirect cost rates, see 34 CFR 75.562. For more information regarding indirect costs, or to obtain a negotiated indirect cost rate, please see www.ed.gov/about/ed-offices/fo#Indirect-Cost-Division.

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 Guidance for Federal Financial Assistance.

3. *Subgrantees:* Under 34 CFR 75.708(b) and (c), a grantee under this competition may award subgrants--to directly carry out project activities described in its application--to the following types of entities: IHEs, nonprofit organizations suitable to carry out the activities proposed in the application, and public

agencies. The grantee may award subgrants to entities it has identified in an approved application or that it selects through a competition under procedures established by the grantee, consistent with 34 CFR 75.708(b)(2).

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, with respect to the aspects of their proposed project relating to the absolute priority, 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 23, 2024 (89 FR 104528) and available at <https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2024-30488>, 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.

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 40 pages; (2) limit the whole application to no more than 100 pages; and (3) 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 as follows:

(a) *Significance (10 points).*

The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, especially contributions toward improving teaching practice and student learning and achievement.

(b) *Quality of the project design (35 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 services to be provided by the proposed project reflect up-to-date knowledge and an evidence-based project component;

(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 build recipient and project capacity in ways that lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services; and

(iii) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to meeting program purposes and requirements and serving the target population.

(c) *Quality of the management plan (20 points).*

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan.

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

(i) The extent to which the key personnel in the project, when hired, have the qualifications required for the proposed project, including formal training or work experience in fields related to the objectives of the project, and represent or have lived experiences of the target population;

(ii) The feasibility of the management plan to achieve project objectives and goals on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks; and

(iii) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.

(d) *Adequacy of resources (20 points).*

(1) The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources of the proposed project.

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

(i) The adequacy of support for the project, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant or the lead applicant organization; and

(ii) The extent to which the budget is adequate to support the proposed project and the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.

(e) *Quality of the project evaluation or other evidence-building (15 points).*

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation or other evidence-building to be conducted of the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the evaluation or other evidence-building, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the methods of evaluation or other evidence-building are thorough, feasible, relevant, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project; and

(ii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation or other evidence-building will provide performance feedback and provide formative, diagnostic, or interim data that is a periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

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).

In the event there are two or more applications with the same final score, and there are insufficient funds to fully support each of these applications, the scores under selection criterion (b) *Quality of the project design* will be used as a tiebreaker. If the scores remain tied, then the scores under selection criterion (d) *Adequacy of resources* will be used to break the tie.

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), 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 System for Award Management's (SAM) Responsibility / Qualification reports (formerly referred to as the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)). You may review and comment on any information about yourself that a Federal agency previously entered and that is currently in the Responsibility / Qualification reports in SAM.

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 SAM semiannually. Please review these requirements if this grant plus all the other Federal funds you receive exceed \$10,000,000.

6. *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 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.

(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:* For the purposes of Department reporting under 34 CFR 75.110, the Department has 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 Personnel Development to Improve Services and Results for Children with Disabilities program. These measures include (1) the percentage of preparation programs that incorporate scientifically based practices or evidence-based practices into their curricula; (2) the percentage of scholars

completing the preparation program who are knowledgeable and skilled in evidence-based practices that improve outcomes for children with disabilities, including literacy and math outcomes; (3) the percentage of scholars who exit the preparation program prior to completion due to poor academic performance; (4) the percentage of scholars completing the preparation program who are working in the area(s) in which they were prepared upon program completion; (5) the Federal cost per scholar who completed the preparation program; (6) the percentage of scholars who completed the preparation program and are employed in high-need districts; and (7) the percentage of scholars who completed the preparation program and who are rated effective by their employers.

In addition, the Department will gather information on the following outcome measures: the number and percentage of scholars proposed by the grantee in their application that were enrolled and making satisfactory academic progress in the current academic year; the number and percentage of enrolled scholars who are on track to complete the training program by the end of the project's original grant period; and the percentage of scholars who completed the preparation program and are employed in the field of special education for at least two years.

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; 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; and whether the continuation of the project is in the best interest of the Federal Government.

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. 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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Diana Diaz,

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