

NOTICE TO ALL APPLICANTS: EQUITY FOR STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, AND OTHER PROGRAM BENEFICIARIES

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) ([20 U.S.C. 1228a](#)) applies to applicants for grant awards under this program.

ALL APPLICANTS FOR NEW GRANT AWARDS MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IN THEIR APPLICATIONS TO ADDRESS THIS PROVISION IN ORDER TO RECEIVE FUNDING UNDER THIS PROGRAM.

Please respond to the following requests for information:

1. Describe how your entity's existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.

The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) Office of Special Education and Early Learning (OSEEL) is the state's primary implementer of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requirements. The OSEEL identifies, monitors, and verifies the implementation of IDEA requirements regarding Disproportionate Representation, Significant Discrepancy, and Significant Disproportionality by Kentucky's local educational agencies (LEAs).

In addition to concrete and specific remedial action designated and enforced through Corrective Action Plans (CAPs), the OSEEL leads targeted professional development that enhances supports for in-field educators through an ongoing series of communications, supports, and opportunities that help LEAs to improve the equitable access of teachers, students, and other beneficiaries of Federally-assisted programs.

The OSEEL regularly produces and distributes a Office of Special Education and Early Learning Newsletter that includes the OSEEL's North Star Priorities, a Best Practice Spotlight chosen from reader submissions, and information about state and Federal special education news and resources.

The OSEEL also produces a weekly News You Can Use email that is distributed to all Kentucky Directors of Special Education and includes targeted information about KDE initiatives, calendars and deadlines, professional development opportunities, and other resources.

KDE, through the OSEEL, also hosts a Director of Special Education (DoSE) Institute, at which staff from the OSEEL and other content experts share updated information about instructional strategies, data management and use, and IDEA requirements in a live and recorded format.

In recognition of the vital role of parents, the OSEEL provides funding for Kentucky's Special Parent Involvement Network, which makes available specific supports for parents.

Finally, the OSEEL sponsors a Traineeship Program that defrays the cost of program hours, textbooks, and other supports for teachers.

2. Based on your proposed project or activity, what barriers may impede equitable access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries?

Staffing shortages continue to plague Kentucky schools and districts. In addition, many educators are relatively inexperienced and need additional support to continue to meet the requirements of the IDEA.

3. Based on the barriers identified, what steps will you take to address such barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity?

Through rigorous root cause analyses and data, policy, practice, and procedure review, the OSEEL maintains a laserlike focus on identifying implementation problems at the LEA level regarding the equitable access and participation requirements of the IDEA. As noted, Kentucky has determined that inexperienced educators and special education administrators require significant onboarding supports in addition to those provided by their LEAs. Through the previously described DoSE Institute, News You Can Use, and Newsletters, the OSEEL provides direct support regarding best practices, Federal and state requirements, training opportunities, and other resources. This helps to create a web of supports for new, inexperienced, and seasoned educators as they implement the regulatory requirements of the IDEA and move beyond compliance.

4. What is your timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers?

The Office of Special Education and Early Learning expects to continue and to enhance its communication and professional developments supports for Kentucky teachers, parents, and students over the next five years. Kentucky's IDEA monitoring data, and information gleaned from data review and the IDEA dispute resolution processes continue to inform the development and delivery of resources.

Notes:

1. Applicants are not required to have mission statements or policies that align with equity in order to submit an application.
2. Applicants may identify any barriers that may impede equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity, including, but not limited to, barriers based on economic disadvantage, gender, race, ethnicity, color, national origin, disability, age, language, migrant status, rural status, homeless status or housing insecurity, pregnancy, parenting, or caregiving status, and sexual orientation.
3. Applicants may have already included some or all of this required information in the narrative sections of their applications or their State Plans. In responding to this requirement, for each question, applicants may provide a cross-reference to the section(s) and page number(s) in their applications or State Plans that includes the information responsive to that question on this form or may restate that information on this form.

Paperwork Burden Statement

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1894-0005. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 3 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering, and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain a benefit. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate or suggestions for improving this individual collection, send your comments to ICDocketMgr@ed.gov and reference OMB Control Number 1894-0005. All other comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual form may be addressed to either (a) the person listed in the FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT section in the competition Notice Inviting Applications, or (b) your assigned program officer.