

**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.**

Oregon Equity Stance

Education equity is the equitable implementation of policy, practices, procedures, and legislation that translates into resource allocation, education rigor, and opportunities for historically and currently marginalized youth, students, and families including civil rights protected classes. This means the restructuring and dismantling of systems and institutions that create the dichotomy of beneficiaries and the oppressed and marginalized.

Oregon's existing Equity Stance reflects the mission of the Office of Enhancing Student Opportunities in the implementation of Part B IDEA programs. The values of inclusion and equity for students and families for whom the system has historically marginalized guides the decision-making processes and implementation of Part B IDEA activities.

State Agency staff operationalize this equity stance by examining, disrupting, and revising the conditions contributing to the systematic marginalization of youth, students, and families served through Part B IDEA programs. The State Agency contributes to the restructuring and dismantling of systems serving students and families along the educational cascade at the levels of state policy development and implementation, allocation of funding based on priorities, and supports to local agencies to directly provide services to and on behalf of students and families in Part B programs.

The State Agency ensures equitable access to IDEA Part B programs through the implementation of a robust state level general supervision system. This general supervision system includes state level policies aimed at providing equitable access, procedures for monitoring and supporting local agencies, and the allocation of resources in concert with data and priorities.

The State Agency further actualizes the equity stance through the approaches taken to community engagement and participation in public input related to activities including SPP/APR target setting, discussion of improvement strategies, and the evaluation of outcomes.

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

Statewide staffing shortages of special educators, instructional assistants, medical providers, and related service providers impact the ability of students to be fully served under IDEA Part B programs by local education agencies.

The statewide staffing shortage impacts access during the prereferral and eligibility processes, especially for students experiencing limited medical access and being considered for special education eligibilities requiring medical provider statements. The statewide shortage of medical providers may be more of a barrier in rural areas than in urban and suburban communities. There is also a shortage of behavioral specialists and mental health providers who can provide bilingual services in English and Spanish. This inequitably impacts Spanish speaking students and families.

The statewide staffing shortage also impacts the delivery of special education and related services. While many local agencies are experiencing staffing shortages, rural areas experience higher shortage rates than urban and suburban communities. The impact of staffing shortages is compounded for groups of students and families who speak Spanish as a home language and for students and families residing in rural Oregon.

Additionally, students and families who are speakers of languages other than English may experience impeded participation in IDEA Part B programs.

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?

Oregon is addressing the barrier of a shortage of special education staff and instructional assistants by offering a financial incentive to special education staff. The Legislature allocated funding to the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) for providing one-time payments to Oregon's special education staff in the 2024-25 school year. The purpose of these funds is to recognize the critical services staff provide to students served by Oregon's public special education programs, as well as to support retention of qualified special education professionals. Local entities employing special education staff including school districts and educational service districts are eligible to apply for a grant from the State for the purposes of providing a one-time stipend to specified special education staff.

To improve access to IDEA Part B programs for students and families who are speakers of languages other than English, the State is enacting multiple strategies at the state and local levels. Statewide, there has been an expansion in the number of languages that documents are translated into. This will increase access to and understanding of programs for students and families who speak a language other than English or one of the previously available languages for translation. Additionally, the statewide Parent Training and Information Center, FACT Oregon, is supporting families with live and on-demand training about IDEA topics available in English and Spanish.

Additionally, FACT Oregon and ODE are partnering to identify and address barriers that arise when transition planning with culturally and linguistically diverse parents.

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

The timeline for addressing the barrier of a shortage of special education staff began on October 17, 2024, when the State Board of Education adopted administrative rules to implement the stipend program ([OAR 581-017-1000](#)). The application form opened to available entities on November 15, 2024. The period to apply will remain open through January 31, 2025. To be eligible for the stipend, qualifying staff must be employed and working on December 2, 2024 and through the date stipends are issued by their employer in spring 2025. Qualifying staff must have an active, paid position with the entity and must not be on leave for more than half the school year.

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.