

**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 mission statement of the Office of Special Populations and Monitoring at the Texas Education Agency is that together, we are committed to high expectations and strong systems that achieve equitable outcomes for students in special populations. Additionally, the philosophy of the entire Agency is that every child will be prepared for success in college, a career, or the military. The activities the Agency engages in as a result of IDEA-B funding are driven by both of the above priorities, which include initiatives to ensure equitable access and participation by all students.

All projects and activities implemented with state level activity funds undergo an extensive needs assessment process, with effectiveness measured by established performance measures and student outcome data.

Agency efforts focus on technical assistance and professional development in multiple areas, along with the development and implementation of valid and reliable state assessments, especially for those with significant cognitive disabilities. All efforts focus on ensuring children with disabilities have equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the general education curriculum.

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

Students with disabilities, when compared to students without disabilities, lag behind their peers in state assessment performance and graduation rates, and have a higher rate of dropping out of school. Ensuring access to, and participation in, all school activities and quality tier one instruction is critical for the success of students with disabilities.

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?

State and federal funds are targeted to prioritize educational access for students with disabilities. Before implementing activities and programs with federal funds, a thorough needs assessment takes place, goals and objectives are developed, and ongoing progress monitoring is planned and then implemented.

Specifically, Rider 17 of the General Appropriations Act of the 87<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature requires the Texas Education Agency to set aside 10.5% of IDEA B funds allocated for state-level activities for the express purpose of providing students with disabilities equitable access to the general curriculum. The Agency grants these funds to the 20 regional Education Service Centers to support implementation of strong programs promoting well implemented inclusion programs, multi-tiered systems of support, and other initiatives designed to provide all students with disabilities with equitable access to the general curriculum.

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

The Office of Special Programs and Monitoring engages in ongoing progress monitoring of expected milestones for the achievement, access, and participation of students with disabilities. Each annual cycle of the activities implemented with the IDEA-B state level appropriations entails a significant investment in whether the activity achieved its expected milestones, and, if not, uses this information to address equity in access and participation in the activities for the following 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](mailto: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.