

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 Vermont Agency of Education implements state and federal laws, policies, and regulations to ensure all Vermont learners have equitable access to high-quality learning opportunities. The agency accomplishes this mission through the provision of its leadership, support, and oversight of Vermont's public education system. This includes monitoring for compliance and the provision of technical assistance for ensuring that students with disabilities have access to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE).

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

Vermont (VT) continues to experience critical shortages of special educators across the state. In addition, there continues to be a high rate of turnover of key leadership positions such as superintendent, principal, and special education administrators.

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?

The Agency of Education (AOE) continues to provide an alternative pathway to licensure alongside mentor training and support. In addition, high-quality technical assistance and support will continue to be provided to assist local education agencies (LEAs) in maximizing the use of state and federal funding to provide a high-quality education for students with disabilities.

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

The Agency continues to provide the supports identified in our 2023 GEPA submission of providing statewide training and technical assistance on the use of Comprehensive Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CCEIS) funds and maintaining improved access to special education licensure through sustaining the implementation of the Agency sponsored mentoring program. By July 1, 2025, the Agency will provide asynchronous learning modules for mentors of teachers pursuing alternative certification and are participating in the Agency sponsored mentoring program. The Agency continues to work towards our goal of having students on IEPs maintain

target levels of participation in the general education classroom, with 80 percent of students on IEPs in the general education environment at least 80 percent of the time. By July 1, 2025, the Agency will develop an inclusive scheduling pilot program to assist local education agencies in providing support to students with disabilities in their least restrictive environment.

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.