

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION & REHABILITATIVE SERVICES
OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20202**

**FISCAL YEAR 2007
APPLICATION FOR NEW GRANTS UNDER THE
INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT (IDEA)**

**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND DISSEMINATION TO
IMPROVE SERVICES AND RESULTS FOR CHILDREN
WITH DISABILITIES**

**THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT
PAPERWORK WAIVER DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM
(CFDA 84.326P)**

**THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT MULTI-
YEAR INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM
DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM (CFDA 84.326Q)**



DATED MATERIAL - OPEN IMMEDIATELY
CLOSING DATE: , 2007

FORM APPROVED - OMB No. 1820-0028, EXP. DATE: 01/31/09

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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 1820-0028. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 45 hours and 40 minutes per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202-4651. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to: Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., PCP 4106, Washington, D.C. 20202-2600.

Dear Applicant:

This application packet contains information and the required forms for you to use in submitting a new application for funding under one program authorized by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This packet covers two competitions under the Technical Assistance and Dissemination to Improve Services and Results for Children with Disabilities (CFDA 84.326) program.

An application for an award must be: (1) hand-delivered, submitted electronically, or mailed by the closing date; and, (2) for paper applications, have an original signature on at least one copy of the assurances and certifications (Part IV of the application form). It is also important to include the appropriate Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) numeric and alpha in Item #11 on SF Form 424 (e.g., CFDA No. 84.326P) for paper applications.

Please note the following:

- **APPLICATION SUBMISSION.** Based on the precautionary procedures the U.S. Postal Service is using to process mail, we are experiencing delays in the delivery of mail to the Department. Therefore, you may want to consider sending your application by overnight courier or submitting your application electronically.
- **GRANTS.GOV APPLICATION SUBMISSION.** Applications for grants under this competition may be submitted electronically using the Grants.gov Apply site (www.Grants.gov). Please read carefully the document that we have included immediately following this letter (see page A-4), which includes helpful tips about submitting electronically using the Grants.gov Apply site. Please note that you must follow the Application Procedures as described in the Federal Register notice announcing this grant competition. Information (including dates and times) about how to submit your application electronically, or by mail or hand delivery, can also be found in the Application Transmittal Instructions and Requirements for Intergovernmental Review section of this application package.
- **MAXIMUM AWARD AMOUNT.** In addition to providing detailed budget information for the total grant period requested, the competition included in this package has a maximum award amount (See Section B of this package). Please be advised that for the priority in this package, the maximum award amount covers all project costs including indirect costs.

- **STRICT PAGE LIMITS.** The competition included in this package limits the Part III Application Narrative to a specified number of double-spaced pages. This page limitation applies to all material presented in the application narrative -- including, for example, any charts, tables, figures, and graphs. (Please refer to the specific requirements on page limits for the priority/competition to which you are submitting an application - i.e., Section B of this package). The Department will reject, and will NOT consider an application that does not adhere to the page limit requirements for the competition.
- **FORMAT FOR APPLICATIONS.** Please note that additional information regarding formatting applications has been included on Pages C-3 and 4 of the “General Information on Completing An Application” section of this package.
- **PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS IN RESEARCH.** The discretionary grant Application Form 424 (ED supplement to the SF 424 on Grants.gov) requires applicants to indicate whether they plan to conduct research involving human subjects at any time during the proposed project period. The Protection of Human Subjects in Research Attachment is an integral part of the SF 424 form (ED supplement to the SF 424 on Grants.gov). It includes information that applicants need to complete the protection of human subjects item and, as appropriate, to provide additional information to the Department regarding human subjects research projects. Additional information on completing the protection of human subjects item is also available and can be accessed on the INTERNET at:

<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/gcsindex.html>
<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/humansub.html>
- **RESPONSE TO GPRA.** As required by the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993 OSEP has developed a strategic plan for measuring GPRA performance. The program included in this announcement is authorized under Part D - National Activities to Improve Education of Children with Disabilities of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) will collect information to assess progress and performance. See Performance Measures included in the Priority Description section of this application package. Applicants are encouraged to consider this information, as applications are prepared.
- **COPIES OF THE APPLICATION.** Current Government-wide policy requires that an original and two copies need to be submitted. OSEP would appreciate receiving three additional copies to facilitate the peer review process. This means an original and two copies are required but we would appreciate your voluntarily submitting an additional three copies (six applications in all). If you are submitting your application electronically, you do not need to submit paper copies of the application. Please note: If an application is recommended for funding and a grant award is issued, we will contact the applicant to request a copy of the application on a diskette or CD. The Department is moving toward an electronic grant filing system and an electronic copy of all applications that are being funded will facilitate this effort.

A program officer is available to provide information to you regarding this competition. Please refer to the name of the program contact at the end of the priority description. For

information about other U.S. Department of Education grant and contract opportunities, we encourage you to use the Department's grant information web page which can be accessed on the INTERNET at:

<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/gcsindex.html>

We appreciate your efforts to improve the provision of services for individuals with disabilities.

Sincerely,

Louis C. Danielson, Ph.D.
Director
Research to Practice Division
Office of Special Education
Programs

IMPORTANT – PLEASE READ FIRST
U.S. Department of Education
Grants.gov Submission Procedures and Tips for Applicants

To facilitate your use of Grants.gov, this document includes important submission procedures you need to be aware of to ensure your application is received in a timely manner and accepted by the Department of Education.

- 1) **REGISTER EARLY** – Grants.gov registration may take five or more business days to complete. You may begin working on your application while completing the registration process, but you cannot submit an application until all of the Registration steps are complete. For detailed information on the Registration Steps, please go to: http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp. [Note: Your organization will need to update its Central Contractor Registry (CCR) registration annually.]
- 2) **SUBMIT EARLY** – **We strongly recommend that you do not wait until the last day to submit your application. Grants.gov will put a date/time stamp on your application and then process it after it is fully uploaded.** The time it takes to upload an application will vary depending on a number of factors including the size of the application and the speed of your Internet connection, and the time it takes Grants.gov to process the application will vary as well. If Grants.gov rejects your application (see step three below), you will need to resubmit successfully before 4:30 pm on the deadline date.

Note: To submit successfully, you must provide the DUNS number on your application that was used when your organization registered with the CCR (Central Contractor Registry).

- 3) **VERIFY SUBMISSION IS OK** – You will want to verify that Grants.gov and the Department of Education receive your Grants.gov submission timely and that it was validated successfully. To see the date/time your application was received, login to Grants.gov and click on the Track My Application link. For a successful submission, the date/time received should be earlier than 4:30 p.m. on the deadline date, AND the application status should be: Validated, Received by Agency, or Agency Tracking Number Assigned.

If the date/time received is later than 4:30 p.m. Washington, D.C. time, on the closing date, your application is late. If your application has a status of “Received” it is still awaiting validation by Grants.gov. Once validation is complete, the status will either change to “Validated” or “Rejected with Errors.” If the status is “Rejected with Errors,” your application has not been received successfully. Some of the reasons Grants.gov may reject an application can be found on the Grants.gov site: http://www.grants.gov/help/submit_application_faqs.jsp#10. For more detailed information on why an application may be rejected, you can review Application Error Tips <http://www.grants.gov/section910/ApplicationErrorTips.pdf>. If you discover your application is late or has been rejected, please see the instructions below. Note: You will receive a series of confirmations both online and via e-mail about the status of your application. Please do not rely solely on e-mail to confirm whether your application has been received timely and validated successfully.

Submission Problems – What should you do?

If you have problems submitting to Grants.gov before the closing date, please contact Grants.gov Customer Support at 1-800-518-4726 or use the customer support available on the Web site: http://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant_help.jsp.

If electronic submission is optional and you have problems that you are unable to resolve before the deadline date and time for electronic applications, please follow the transmittal instructions for hard copy applications in the Federal Register notice and get a hard copy application postmarked by midnight on the deadline date.

If electronic submission is required, you must submit an electronic application before 4:30 p.m., unless you follow the procedures in the Federal Register notice and qualify for one of the exceptions to the electronic submission requirement and submit, no later than two weeks before the application deadline date, a written statement to the Department that you qualify for one of these exceptions. (See the Federal Register notice for detailed instructions.)

Helpful Hints When Working with Grants.gov

Please note, once you download an application from Grants.gov, you will be working offline and saving data on your computer. Please be sure to note where you are saving the Grants.gov file on your computer. You will need to logon to Grants.gov to upload and submit the application. **You must provide on your application the DUNS number that was used when your organization registered with the CCR.**

Please go to http://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant_help.jsp for help with Grants.gov. For additional tips related to submitting grant applications, please refer to the Grants.gov Submit Application FAQs found on the Grants.gov http://www.grants.gov/help/submit_application_faqs.jsp.

Dial-Up Internet Connections

When using a dial up connection to upload and submit your application, it can take significantly longer than when you are connected to the Internet with a high-speed connection, e.g. cable modem/DSL/T1. While times will vary depending upon the size of your application, it can take a few minutes to a few hours to complete your grant submission using a dial up connection. **If you do not have access to a high-speed connection and electronic submission is required, you may want to consider following the instructions in the Federal Register notice to obtain an exception to the electronic submission requirement no later than two weeks before the application deadline date.** (See the Federal Register notice for detailed instructions.)

MAC Users

If you do not have a Windows operating System, you will need to use the Citrix solution discussed on Grants.gov or a Windows Emulation program to submit an application using Grants.gov. For additional information, review the FAQs for non-windows users http://www.grants.gov/resources/download_software.jsp#non_window. Also, to view white paper for Macintosh users published by Pure Edge go to the following link: <http://www.grants.gov/section678/PureEdgeSupportforMacintosh.pdf>, and/or contact Grants.gov Customer Support (<http://www.grants.gov/contactus/contactus.jsp>) for more information. **If electronic submission is required and you are concerned about your ability to submit electronically as a non-windows user, please follow instructions in the Federal Register notice to obtain an exception to the electronic submission requirement no later than two weeks before the application deadline date.** (See the Federal Register notice for detailed instructions.)

ATTENTION – Microsoft Vista and Word Users

Please note that Grants.gov does not currently support the new Microsoft Vista Operating system. The PureEdge software used by Grants.gov for forms is not compatible with Vista.

In addition, the new version of Microsoft Word saves documents with the extension .DOCX. The Grants.gov system does not process Microsoft Word documents with the extension .DOCX. When submitting Microsoft Word attachments to Grants.gov, please use the version of Microsoft Word that ends in .DOC. If you have any questions regarding this matter please email the Grants.gov Contact Center at support@grants.gov or call 1-800-518-4726.)

PRIORITY DESCRIPTION

AND

SELECTION CRITERIA

FOR THE

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND DISSEMINATION TO

IMPROVE SERVICES AND RESULTS FOR

FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT
PAPERWORK WAIVER DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM
_(CFDA 84.326P)

DEADLINE: 0/0/07

ABSOLUTE PRIORITY:

Background:

We published a notice of proposed requirements and selection criteria for the Paperwork Waiver Program in the Federal Register on December 19, 2005 (70 FR 75161) (December 2005 Notice).

On December 3, 2004, President Bush signed into law Public Law 108-446, 118 Stat. 2647, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, reauthorizing and amending the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (Act). This new law reflects the importance of strengthening our Nation's efforts to ensure every child with a disability has available a free appropriate public education (FAPE) that is (1) of high quality and (2) designed to achieve the high standards established in the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB).

The Paperwork Waiver Program is one of two demonstration programs authorized under the new law that is designed to address parents', special educators' and States' desire to reduce excessive and repetitious paperwork, administrative burden, and non-instructional teacher time and, at the same time, to increase the resources and time available for classroom instruction and other activities focused on improving educational and functional results of children with disabilities.

Paperwork burden in special education affects (1) the time school staff can devote to instruction or service provision and (2) retention of staff, particularly special education teachers. In 2002, the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) funded a nationally representative study of teachers' perceptions of sources of paperwork burden, the hours devoted to these activities, and possible explanations for variations among teachers in the hours devoted to these tasks. Among the findings related to the Individualized Education Program (IEP), student evaluations, progress reporting, and case management was that teachers whose administrative duties and paperwork exceeded four hours per week were more likely to perceive these responsibilities as interfering with their job of teaching. Moreover, the study found that the mean number of hours reported by teachers to be devoted to these tasks was 6.3 hours per week. However, data from the study also suggested that there was considerable variation in the amount of time special education teachers devoted to paperwork. For example, the average hours spent on administrative duties and paperwork varied significantly by geographic region, with the Northeast having the lowest paperwork burden.

Through the Paperwork Waiver Program, established under section 609(a) of the Act, the Secretary may grant waivers of certain statutory and regulatory requirements under part B of the Act to not more than 15 States, including Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia, and the outlying areas (States) based on State proposals to reduce excessive paperwork and non-instructional time burdens that do not assist in improving educational and functional results for children with disabilities. The Secretary is authorized to grant these waivers for a period of up to four years.

Although the purpose of the Paperwork Waiver Program is to reduce the paperwork burden associated with the Act, not all statutory and regulatory requirements under part B of the Act may be waived. Specifically, the Secretary may not waive any statutory or regulatory provisions relating to applicable civil rights requirements or procedural safeguards. Furthermore, waivers may not affect the right of a child with a disability to receive FAPE. In short, State proposals must preserve the basic rights of students with disabilities.

Statutory Requirements for Paperwork Waiver Program

As outlined in the December 2005 Notice, the Act establishes the following requirements to govern the Paperwork Waiver Program proposals:

1. States applying for approval under this program must submit a proposal to reduce excessive paperwork and non-instructional time burdens that do not assist in improving educational and functional results for children with disabilities.
2. A State submitting a proposal for the Paperwork Waiver Program must include in its proposal a list of any statutory requirements of, or regulatory requirements relating to, part B of the Act that the State desires the Secretary to waive, in whole or in part (not including civil rights requirements and procedural safeguards as noted elsewhere in this notice); and a list of any State requirements that the State proposes to waive or change, in whole or in part, to carry out the waiver granted to the State by the Secretary. Waivers may be granted for a period of up to four years.
3. The Secretary is prohibited from waiving any statutory requirements of, or regulatory requirements relating to procedural requirements under section 615 of the Act or applicable civil rights requirements. A waiver may not affect the right of a child with a disability to receive FAPE (as defined in section 602(9) of the Act).
4. The Secretary will not grant any waiver to a State if the Secretary has determined that the State currently meets the conditions under section 616(d)(2)(A)(iii) or (iv) of the Act relative to its implementation of part B of the Act.
5. The Secretary will terminate a State's waiver granted as part of this program if the Secretary determines that the State (a) needs assistance under section 616(d)(2)(A)(ii) of the Act and that the waiver has contributed to or caused the need for assistance; (b) needs intervention under section 616(d)(2)(A)(iii) of the Act or needs substantial intervention under section 616(d)(2)(A)(iv) of the Act; or (c) fails to appropriately implement its waiver.

Background for Additional Requirements

While the Act establishes the foregoing requirements, it does not provide for other requirements that are necessary for the implementation of this program. Accordingly, in the December 2005 Notice, we proposed additional Paperwork Waiver Program requirements to address program implementation issues as well as selection criteria that we will use to evaluate State proposals for this program.

In this notice, we also establish requirements with which States must comply that will allow the Department to evaluate the effectiveness of the Paperwork Waiver Program. Under section 609(b) of the Act, the Department is required to report to Congress on the effectiveness of this program. To accomplish this, the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) will conduct an evaluation using a quasi-experimental design that collects data on the following outcomes: (a) educational and functional results (including academic achievement) for students with disabilities, (b) allocation and engagement of instructional time for students with disabilities, (c) time and resources spent on administrative duties and paperwork requirements by teaching and related services personnel, (d) quality of special education services and plans incorporated in IEPs, (e) teacher, parent, and administrator satisfaction, (f) the promotion of collaboration of IEP team members, and (g) enhanced long-term educational planning for students. These outcomes will be compared between students who participate in the Paperwork Waiver Program, and students who are matched on disability, age, socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, language spoken in the home, prior educational outcomes, and to the extent feasible, the nature of special education, who do not participate in the paperwork waiver program. Specifics of the design will be confirmed during discussion with the evaluator, a technical workgroup, and the participating States during the first several months of the study.

Participating States will play a crucial supportive role in this evaluation. They will, at a minimum, assist in developing the evaluation plan, assure that districts participating in the Paperwork Waiver Program will collaborate with the evaluation, provide background information on relevant State policies and practices, supply data relevant to the outcomes from State data sources (e.g., student achievement and functional performance data, complaint numbers), provide access to current student IEPs (if appropriate and paperwork waiver affects an IEP) during Year 1 of the evaluation (consistent with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. §1232g (FERPA) and the privacy requirements under the Act), complete questionnaires and surveys, and participate in interviews. Data collection and analysis will be the responsibility of IES through its contractor. States can expect to allocate resources for this purpose at a minimum during Year 1 to assist with planning the details of the evaluation, ensuring participation of involved districts, providing access to relevant State records, and completing questionnaires or participating in interviews. Over the course of the evaluation, participating States will receive an annual incentive payment (described in the Additional Requirements section of this notice) that will offset the cost of participating in the evaluation.

Additional Requirements:

The Secretary establishes the following additional requirements for the Paperwork Waiver Program.

(1) A State applying for approval under this program must submit a proposal to reduce excessive paperwork and non-instructional time burdens that do not assist in improving educational and functional results for children with disabilities. A State submitting a proposal under the Paperwork Waiver Program must include the following material in its proposal:

(a) A description of how the State met the public participation requirements of section 612(a)(19) of the Act, including how the State (1) involved multiple stakeholders, including parents, children with disabilities, special education and regular education teachers, related services providers, and school and district administrators, in selecting the requirements proposed for the waiver and any specific proposals for changing those requirements to reduce paperwork, and (2) provided an opportunity for public comment in selecting the requirements proposed for the waiver.

(b) A summary of public comments received in accordance with paragraph 1(a) of these additional requirements and how the public comments were addressed in the proposal.

(c) A description of the procedures the State will employ to ensure that, if the waiver is granted, it will not result in a denial of the right to FAPE to any child with a disability, a waiver of any applicable civil rights requirements, or a waiver of any procedural safeguards under section 615 of the Act. This description also must include an assurance that the State will collect and report to the Department, as part of the State's annual performance report submission to the Secretary in accordance with section 616(b)(2)(c)(ii)(II) of the Act, and to the national evaluator, all State complaints related to the denial of FAPE to any student with a disability and how the State responded to this information, including the outcome of that response such as providing technical assistance to the LEA to improve implementation, or suspending or terminating the authority of an LEA to waive paperwork requirements due to unresolved compliance problems.

(d) A description of the procedures the State will employ to ensure that diverse stakeholders (including parents, teachers, administrators, related services providers, and other stakeholders, as appropriate) understand the proposed elements of the State's submission for the Paperwork Waiver Program.

(e) Assurances that each parent of a child with a disability in participating LEAs will be given written notice (in the native language of the parent, unless it clearly is not feasible to do so) of any statutory, regulatory, or State requirements that will be waived and notice of the procedures that State will employ under paragraph 1(c) in easily understandable language.

(f) Assurances that the State will require any participating LEA to obtain voluntary informed written consent from parents for a waiver of any paperwork requirements related to the provision of FAPE, such as changes related to IEPs.

(g) Assurances that the State will require any participating LEA to inform parents in writing (and in the native language of the parents, unless it clearly is not feasible to do so) of (i) any differences between the paperwork requirements of the Act related to the provision of FAPE, such as changes related to IEPs, (ii) the parent's right to revoke consent to waive any paperwork requirements related to the provision of FAPE at any time, (iii) the LEA's responsibility to meet

all paperwork requirements related to the provision of FAPE if the parent does not provide voluntary written informed consent or revokes consent, and (iv) the LEA's responsibility to conduct an IEP meeting to develop an IEP that meets all requirements of section 614(d) of the Act within 30 calendar days if the parent revokes consent to waiving paperwork requirements related to the content, development, review and revision of IEPs.

(h) Assurances that the State will cooperate fully in a national evaluation of this program, if selected to participate in the Paperwork Waiver Program. Cooperation includes devoting a minimum of 4 months between the award and the implementation of the State's waiver to conduct joint planning with the evaluator. It also includes participation by the State educational agency (SEA) in the following evaluation activities:

(i) Ensuring that, for each item in the list of statutory, regulatory, or State requirements submitted pursuant to paragraph 2 in the Statutory Requirements for Paperwork Waiver Program section of this notice, and consistent with the privacy requirements of the Act and The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, the evaluator will have access to the original and all subsequent new versions of the associated documents for each child involved in the evaluation, together with a general description of the process for completing each of the documents. For example, if elements of the IEP process are waived, the evaluator shall have access to the most recent IEP created under previous guidelines for each participating child (if a previous IEP was created), as well as all of the new IEPs created under the waiver, along with a description of the process for completing both types of IEPs.

(ii) Recruiting districts or schools to participate in the evaluation (as established in the evaluation design) and ensuring their continued cooperation with the evaluation. Providing a list of districts and schools that have been recruited and have agreed to implement the proposed Paperwork Waiver Program, along with a description of the circumstances under which district participation may be terminated, allow data collection to occur, and cooperate fully with the evaluation. For each participating school or district, providing basic demographic information such as student enrollment, district wealth and ethnicity breakdowns, the number of children with disabilities by category, and the number or type of personnel, as requested by the evaluator.

(iii) Serving in an advisory capacity to assist the evaluator in identifying valid and reliable data sources and improving the design of data collection instruments and methods.

(iv) Providing to the evaluator an inventory of existing State-level data relevant to the evaluation questions or consistent with the identified data sources. Supplying requested State-level data in accordance with the timeline specified in the evaluation design.

(v) Providing assistance to the evaluator with the collection of data from parents, including obtaining informed consent, for parent interviews and responses to surveys and questionnaires, if necessary to the final design of the evaluation.

(vi) Designating a coordinator for the project who will monitor the implementation of the project and work with the evaluator. This coordinator also will serve as the primary point of contact for the OSEP project officer.

(2) For purposes of the statutory requirement prohibiting the Secretary from waiving any statutory requirements of, or regulatory requirements relating to, but not limited to, applicable civil rights, the term "applicable civil rights requirements," as used in this notice, includes all civil rights requirements in: (a) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; (b) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; (c) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; (d) Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; and (e) Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and their implementing regulations. The term does not include other requirements under the Act.

(3) Each State receiving approval to participate in the Paperwork Waiver Program will be awarded an annual incentive payment of not less than \$10,000 to be used exclusively to support program-related evaluation activities, including one trip to Washington, DC, annually to meet with the project officer and the evaluator. Each participating State will receive an additional incentive payment of not less than \$15,000 annually from the evaluation contractor to support evaluation activities in the State. Incentive payments may also be provided to participating districts to offset the cost of their participation in the evaluation of the Paperwork Waiver Program. Total available funds will depend on the number of awards made.

Note: Receipt of an award for the Paperwork Waiver Program does not preclude an applicant from applying for and receiving an award for the Department's Multi-Year IEP Program. However, a State that receives an award for both programs may not execute both programs within the same local school district.

Note: The term "parent" as used in these requirements and selection criteria for the Paperwork Waiver Program has the same meaning given the term in section 300.30 of the final regulations implementing part B of the Act.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1408, 1463 and 1481.

APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE:

DEADLINE FOR TRANSMITTAL OF APPLICATIONS:

DEADLINE FOR INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW:

ESTIMATED AVAILABLE FUNDS: \$150,000.

ESTIMATED AVERAGE SIZE OF AWARD: \$10,000.

MAXIMUM AWARDS: We will reject any application that proposes a budget that does not equal \$10,000 for a single budget period of 12 months.

NUMBER OF AWARDS: 15.

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

PROJECT PERIOD: Up to 48 months.

PAGE LIMITS: If you are an applicant, Part III of an application submitted under this notice, the application narrative is where an applicant addresses the selection criteria that are used by reviewers to evaluate the application. You must limit Part III to the equivalent of no more than 50 pages, using the following standards:

- A "page" is 8.5" x 11", (on one side only) with 1" margins (top, bottom, and sides).
- Double-space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative, including titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs.
- Use a font that is either 12-point or larger or no smaller than 10 pitch (characters per inch).

The page limit does not apply to Part I, the cover sheet; Part II, the budget section, including the narrative budget justification; Part IV, the assurances and certifications; or the abstract, the resumes, the bibliography, references, or the letters of support. However, you must include all of the application narrative in Part III.

We will reject any application if --

- You apply these standards and exceed the page limit; or
- You apply other standards and exceed the equivalent of the page limit.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS:

(a) Projects funded under this notice must make positive efforts to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities in project activities (see section 606 of IDEA); and

(b) Applicants and grant recipients funded under this notice must involve individuals with disabilities or parents of individuals with disabilities in planning, implementing, and evaluating the projects (see section 682(a)(1)(A) of IDEA).

APPLICABLE REGULATIONS:

(a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 75, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 84, 85, 97, 98, and 99; and (b) The selection criteria for this program are drawn from EDGAR in 34 CFR 75.210.

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 79 apply to all applicants except federally recognized Indian tribes.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS: State educational agencies (SEAs) in any State, including the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and each of the outlying areas.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW:

The program in this notice is subject to the requirements of Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. One of the objectives of the Executive Order is to foster an intergovernmental partnership and a strengthened federalism. The Executive order relies on processes developed by State and local governments for coordination and review of proposed Federal financial assistance.

This document provides early notification of our specific plans and actions for this program.

FEDERAL REGISTER NOTICE: Published See http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/aces/fr-cont.html

For further information about this priority contact:

***Patricia Gonzalez, Competition Manager
Research to Practice Division
Office of Special Education Programs
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THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT MULTI-YEAR INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM (CFDA 84.326Q)

DEADLINE: 0/0/07

ABSOLUTE PRIORITY:

Background:

We published a notice of proposed requirements and selection criteria for the Multi-Year IEP Program in the Federal Register on December 19, 2005 (70 FR 75158) (December 2005 Notice).

The purpose of the Multi-Year IEP Program established under section 614(d)(5) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, as amended by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (Act), is to provide an opportunity for States (including Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia and the outlying areas) to allow parents and LEAs the opportunity for long-term planning by offering the option of developing a comprehensive multi-year IEP, not to exceed three years, that is designed to coincide with the natural transition points for the child. Under section 614(d)(5)(C) of the Act, the term "natural transition points" means those periods that are close in time to the transition of a child with a disability from preschool to elementary grades, from elementary grades to middle or junior high school grades, from middle or junior high school grades to secondary school grades, and from secondary school grades to post-secondary activities, but in no case a period longer than three years (for the full text of section 614(d)(5) of the Act, go to: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/plaws/index.html>).
Statutory Requirements for Multi-Year IEP Program

As outlined in the December 2005 Notice, the Act establishes the following requirements that States must follow in developing and implementing their Multi-Year IEP Program proposals:

1. A State applying for approval under this program must propose to conduct demonstrations using a comprehensive multi-year IEP (not to exceed three years) that coincides with natural transition points for each participating child.
2. Except as specifically provided for under this program, all of the Act's requirements regarding provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to children with disabilities (including requirements related to the content, development, review, and revision of the IEP under section 614(d) of the Act and procedural safeguards under section 615 of the Act) apply to participants in this Multi-Year IEP Program.

3. A State submitting a proposal under the Multi-Year IEP Program must include the following material in its proposal:

(a) Assurances that if an LEA offers parents the option of a multi-year IEP, development of the multi-year IEP is voluntary.

(b) Assurances that the LEA will obtain informed consent from parents before a comprehensive multi-year IEP is developed for their child.

(c) A list of all required elements for a comprehensive multi-year IEP, including:

(i) Measurable long-term goals not to exceed three years, coinciding with natural transition points for the child, that will enable the child to be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum and that will meet the child's other needs that result from the child's disability.

(ii) Measurable annual goals for determining progress toward meeting the long-term goals, coinciding with natural transition points for the child, that will enable the child to be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum and that will meet the child's other needs that result from the child's disability.

(d) A description of the process for the review and revision of a multi-year IEP, including:

(i) A review by the IEP team of the child's multi-year IEP at each of the child's natural transition points.

(ii) In years other than a child's natural transition points, an annual review of the child's IEP to determine the child's current levels of progress and whether the annual goals for the child are being achieved, and a requirement to amend the IEP, as appropriate, to enable the child to continue to meet the measurable goals set forth in the IEP.

(iii) If the IEP team determines, on the basis of a review, that the child is not making sufficient progress toward the goals described in the multi-year IEP, a requirement that within 30 calendar days of the IEP team's determination, the LEA shall ensure that the IEP team carries out a more thorough review of the IEP in accordance with section 614(d)(4) of the Act.

(iv) A requirement that, at the request of the parent, the IEP team will conduct an immediate review of the child's multi-year IEP, rather than at the child's next transition point or annual review.

Background for Additional Requirements

While the Act establishes the foregoing requirements, it does not provide for other requirements that are necessary for the implementation of this program. Accordingly, in the December 2005 Notice, we proposed additional Multi-Year IEP Program requirements to

address program implementation issues as well as selection criteria that we will use to evaluate State proposals for this program.

In the December 2005 Notice, we also proposed requirements with which States would need to comply to allow the Department to evaluate the effectiveness of the Multi-Year IEP Program. Under section 614(d)(5)(B) of the Act, the Department is required to report to Congress on the effectiveness of this program. To accomplish this, the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) will conduct an evaluation of the program using a quasi-experimental design that collects data on the following outcomes:

- (i) Educational and functional results (including academic achievement) for students with disabilities.
- (ii) Time and resource expenditures by IEP team members and teachers.
- (iii) Quality of long-term education plans incorporated in IEPs.
- (iv) Degree of collaboration among IEP members.
- (v) Degree of parent satisfaction.

These outcomes will be compared for students whose parents consent to their child's participation in a multi-year IEP and students who are matched on type of disability, age, socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, language spoken in the home, prior educational outcomes, and to the extent feasible, the nature of special education, who do not participate in the multi-year IEP. Specifics of the design will be confirmed during discussions with the evaluator, a technical workgroup, and the participating States during the first several months of the study. Participating States will play a crucial supportive role in this evaluation. They will, at a minimum--

- (i) Assist in developing the specifics of the evaluation plan;
- (ii) Assure that districts participating in the multi-year IEP will participate in the evaluation;
- (iii) Supply data relevant to the outcomes being measured from State data sources (e.g., student achievement and functional outcome data, complaint numbers); and
- (iv) Provide background information on relevant State policies and practices, provide access to current student IEPs (consistent with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. §1232g (FERPA) and the privacy requirements under the Act) during Year 1 of the evaluation, and complete questionnaires and participate in interviews.

Additional Requirements

The Secretary establishes the following additional requirements for the Multi-Year IEP Program:

1. The Secretary may deny a State approval to participate in this program if the Secretary determines that the State currently meets the conditions under section 616(d)(2)(A)(iii) or (iv) of the Act relative to its implementation of part B of the Act.

2. The Secretary may terminate any Multi-Year IEP Program project if the Secretary determines that the State (a) needs assistance under section 616(d)(2)(A)(ii) of the Act and the State's participation in this program has contributed to or caused the need for assistance; (b) needs intervention under 616(d)(2)(A)(iii) of the Act or needs substantial intervention under section 616(d)(2)(A)(iv) of the Act; or (c) failed to appropriately implement its project.

3. States submitting a proposal under the Multi-Year IEP Program must include the following material in their proposal:

(a) Assurances that the multi-year IEP for any child with a disability who takes an alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards includes a description of benchmarks or short-term objectives in accordance with section 614(d)(1)(A)(i)(I)(cc) of the Act.

(b) Assurances that before an LEA requests a parent's voluntary informed written consent to the development of a multi-year IEP in lieu of an IEP that meets the requirements of section 614(d)(1)(A) of the Act, the LEA will inform the parent in writing (and in the native language of the parent, unless it clearly is not feasible to do so) of:

(i) any differences between the requirements relating to the content, development, review, and revision of IEPs under section 614(d) of the Act and the State's requirements relating to the content, development, review, and revision of IEPs under the State's approved Multi-Year IEP Program proposal; and

(ii) the parent's right to revoke consent at any time during the implementation of the Multi-Year IEP Program and the LEA's responsibility to conduct, within 30 calendar days after revocation by the parent, an IEP meeting to develop an IEP that meets the requirements of section 614(d)(1)(A) of the Act.

(c) A description of how the State will meet the public participation requirements of section 612(a)(19) of the Act, including how the State:

(i) involved multiple stakeholders, including parents, children with disabilities, special education and regular education teachers, related services providers, and school and district administrators, in the development of its proposal;

(ii) provided an opportunity for public comment in developing its proposal. This description must include a summary of public comments received by the State as well as a description of how the proposal addresses those public comments; and

(iii) obtained input from school and district personnel and parents in developing the list of required elements for each multi-year IEP and the description of the process for the review and revision of each multi-year IEP.

(d) Assurances that the State will cooperate fully in a national evaluation of this program, if selected to participate in the Multi-Year IEP Program. Cooperation includes devoting a minimum of four months between the State's award and subsequent implementation of this program to conduct joint planning with the evaluator. It also includes participation by the State educational agency (SEA) in the following evaluation activities:

(i) Providing to the evaluator the list of required elements for the multi-year IEP and the description of the process for the review and revision of the multi-year IEP submitted as part of the State's application for this program. Consistent with the privacy requirements of the Act and The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, ensuring that the evaluator will have access to the most recent IEP created (if applicable) before participating in the Multi-Year IEP Program and the multi-year IEP(s) created during the project for each participating child (multi-year IEP participants and matched participants who do not have a multi-year IEP), together with a general description of the process for completing both versions of the IEP.

(ii) Recruiting districts or schools to participate in the evaluation (as established in the evaluation design) and ensuring their continued cooperation with the evaluation. Providing a list of districts and schools that have been recruited and have agreed to implement the proposed Multi-Year IEP Program, allow data collection to occur, and cooperate fully with the evaluation. Providing, for each participating school or district, basic demographic information such as student enrollment, district wealth and ethnicity breakdowns, the number of children with disabilities by category, and the number or type of personnel, as requested by the evaluator.

(iii) Serving in an advisory capacity to assist the evaluator in identifying valid and reliable data sources and improving the design of data collection instruments and methods.

(iv) Providing to the evaluator an inventory of existing State-level data relevant to the evaluation questions or consistent with the identified data sources. Supplying requested State-level data in accordance with the timelines specified in the evaluation design.

(v) Providing assistance to the evaluator on the collection of data from parents, including obtaining written informed consent for parents to participate in interviews and respond to surveys and questionnaires.

(vi) Designating a coordinator for the project who will monitor the implementation of the project and work with the evaluator. This coordinator also will serve as the primary point of contact for the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) project officer.

(e) A description of how the State will collect and report to the Department, as part of the State's annual performance report submission to the Secretary in accordance with section 616(b)(2)(c)(ii)(II) of the Act, and to the national evaluator, that children are not receiving appropriate services because of the State's implementation of Multi-Year IEP Program, and how the State responded to this information, including the outcome of that response such as providing technical assistance to the LEA to improve implementation, or suspending or terminating the authority of an LEA to implement multi-year IEPs due to unresolved compliance problems.

(f) A description of the procedures the State will employ to ensure that diverse stakeholders (including parents, teachers, administrators, related services providers, and other

stakeholders, as appropriate) understand the proposed elements of the State’s submission for the Multi-Year IEP Program.

4. Each State receiving approval to participate in the Multi-Year IEP Program will be awarded an annual incentive payment of not less than \$10,000 to be used exclusively to support program-related evaluation activities, including one trip to Washington, DC, annually to meet with the project officer and the evaluator. Each participating State will receive an additional incentive payment of not less than \$15,000 annually from the contractor to support evaluation activities in the State. Incentive payments may also be provided to participating districts to offset the costs of their participation in the evaluation of the Multi-Year IEP Program. Total available funds will depend on the number of awards made.

5. States must describe how districts were selected and provide an assurance that districts are voluntarily participating along with a description of the circumstances under which district participation may be terminated. States participating in this program and the Paperwork Waiver Demonstration Program may not select the same LEAs to participate in both programs.

6. Proposals must be for projects not to exceed a period of four years.

Note: The term “parent” as used in these requirements and selection criteria for the Multi-Year IEP Program has the same meaning given the term in section 300.30 of the final regulations implementing part B of the Act.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1414, 1463 and 1481.

APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE:

DEADLINE FOR TRANSMITTAL OF APPLICATIONS:

DEADLINE FOR INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW:

ESTIMATED AVAILABLE FUNDS: \$150,000.

ESTIMATED AVERAGE SIZE OF AWARD: \$10,000.

MAXIMUM AWARDS: We will reject any application that proposes a budget that does not equal \$10,000 for a single budget period of 12 months.

NUMBER OF AWARDS: 15.

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

PROJECT PERIOD: Up to 48 months.

PAGE LIMITS: If you are an applicant, Part III of an application submitted under this notice, the application narrative is where an applicant addresses the selection criteria that are used by

reviewers to evaluate the application. You must limit Part III to the equivalent of no more than 50 pages, using the following standards:

- A "page" is 8.5" x 11", (on one side only) with 1" margins (top, bottom, and sides).
- Double-space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative, including titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs.
- Use a font that is either 12-point or larger or no smaller than 10 pitch (characters per inch).

The page limit does not apply to Part I, the cover sheet; Part II, the budget section, including the narrative budget justification; Part IV, the assurances and certifications; or the abstract, the resumes, the bibliography, references, or the letters of support. However, you must include all of the application narrative in Part III.

We will reject any application if --

- You apply these standards and exceed the page limit; or
- You apply other standards and exceed the equivalent of the page limit.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS:

(a) Projects funded under this notice must make positive efforts to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities in project activities (see section 606 of IDEA); and

(b) Applicants and grant recipients funded under this notice must involve individuals with disabilities or parents of individuals with disabilities in planning, implementing, and evaluating the projects (see section 682(a)(1)(A) of IDEA).

APPLICABLE REGULATIONS:

(a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 75, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 84, 85, 97, 98, and 99; and (b) The selection criteria for this program are drawn from EDGAR in 34 CFR 75.210.

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 79 apply to all applicants except federally recognized Indian tribes.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS: State educational agencies (SEAs) in any State, including the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and each of the outlying areas.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW:

The program in this notice is subject to the requirements of Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. One of the objectives of the Executive Order is to foster an intergovernmental partnership and a strengthened federalism. The Executive order relies on processes developed by State and local governments for coordination and review of proposed Federal financial assistance.

This document provides early notification of our specific plans and actions for this program.

FEDERAL REGISTER NOTICE: Published See
http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/aces/fr-cont.html

For further information about this priority contact:

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SELECTION CRITERIA AND FORMAT FOR THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT PAPERWORK WAIVER DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM (CFDA NO. 84.326P) AND THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT MULTI-YEAR INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM (CFDA No. 84.326Q) COMPETITIONS

Part III of the application form requires a narrative that addresses the selection criteria that will be used by reviewers in evaluating individual proposals. Applications are more likely to receive favorable reviews by panels when they are organized according to the format suggested below. This format was published in the FEDERAL REGISTER as an appendix to the program regulations, and it addresses all the selection criteria used to evaluate applications required by regulations. If you prefer to use a different format, you may wish to cross-reference the sections of your application to the selection criteria to be sure that reviewers are able to find all relevant information.

The selection criteria that will be used to evaluate applications submitted to the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Paperwork Waiver Demonstration Program (CFDA No. 84.326P)** and the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Multi-Year Individualized Education Program Demonstration Program (CFDA No. 84.326Q)** competitions are the selection criteria for new grants required by the EDGAR general selection criteria menu. The maximum score for all of the criteria is 100 points.

An **abstract**, not to exceed two pages, should precede the application narrative of all applications and it would be helpful if it included the following information: Purpose of the project; disability addressed by the project; age group (e.g., 0-3, preschool, elementary school, middle school, high school, secondary transition, and postsecondary); geography (e.g., rural, suburban, urban); severity (e.g., mild, moderate, and severe); proposed products; proposed outcomes; names/affiliations of key collaborators. It would be helpful if the abstract includes: (a) the title of the program, (b) the name of the Absolute Priority, and (c) the CFDA Number (e.g., 84.326P).

For Technology and Technical Assistance and Dissemination applications, the abstract should include (a) design and (b) project evaluation, including measures.

The application narrative should include the following sections in this order:

(a) Significance (35 points)

(1) The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies.

(ii) The potential contribution of the proposed project to increased knowledge or understanding of educational problems, issues or effective strategies.

(iii) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the project, especially improvements in teaching and student achievement.

(b) Quality of the project design (45 points)

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

(ii) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs.

(iii) The quality of the proposed project's procedures for documenting project activities and results.

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

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

(i) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

(ii) How the applicant will ensure that a diversity of perspectives are brought to bear in the operation of the proposed project, including those of parents, teachers, the business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients or beneficiaries of services, or others, as appropriate.

GENERAL INFORMATION
ON COMPLETING
AN APPLICATION

GENERAL INFORMATION ON COMPLETING AN APPLICATION

Potential applicants frequently direct questions to officials of the Department regarding application notices and programmatic and administrative regulations governing various direct grant programs. To assist potential applicants, the Office of Special Education Programs staff have assembled the following most commonly raised issues. In general, this information applies to the grant competitions covered by this application package.

- **EXTENSION OF DEADLINES**

Waivers for individual applications are not granted, regardless of the circumstances. Under very extraordinary circumstances a closing date may be changed. Such changes are announced in the Federal Register.

- **COPIES OF THE APPLICATION**

Current Government-wide policy is that only an original and two copies need to be submitted. OSEP would appreciate receiving three additional copies to facilitate the peer review process. This would mean an original and two copies need to be submitted and we would appreciate your voluntarily submitting an additional three copies (six applications in all). Copies of the application may be bound, but it is not necessary or required. If bound, one copy should be left unbound to facilitate electronic scanning and any necessary reproduction. Applicants should not use colored paper, foldouts, photographs, or other materials that are hard to duplicate.

Please Note: If an application is recommended for funding and a grant award is issued, we will contact the applicant to request a copy of the application on a diskette or CD. The Department is moving toward an electronic grant filing system and an electronic copy of all applications that are being funded will facilitate this effort.

- **MAKING APPLICATIONS MORE ACCESSIBLE TO REVIEWERS WHO ARE BLIND OR HAVE LOW VISION**

The Department will accept one copy of the application in an accessible format (i.e., IBM PC compatible WordPerfect or ASCII code diskette) along with the original and two print copies of the application. The accessible format copy can be used with available software to convert the text of the application into Braille, or with text to voice applications. If there are any differences in the print original provided on the disk and in print, the print original is assumed to be the correct version. Please note that it is not a requirement that one copy of the application be in an accessible format.

- **MISSED DEADLINES AND SUBMISSION UNDER OTHER COMPETITIONS**

Should an application miss the deadline for a particular competition, it may be submitted to another competition. However, if an application is properly prepared to meet the specifications of one competition, it is extremely unlikely that it would be favorably evaluated under a different competition.

- SUBMISSION TO MORE THAN ONE PROGRAM

Applications may be submitted to more than one Federal program if you are unsure of the most appropriate program. Each application should be prepared following the instructions for that particular program as closely as possible (which may require some reformulation). It is very helpful if each program is notified that an identical or similar application is being submitted to another program.

- HELP PREPARING APPLICATIONS

We are happy to provide general program information. Clearly it would not be appropriate for staff to participate in the actual writing of an application, but we can respond to specific questions about our application requirements and evaluation criteria, or about the announced priorities. Applicants should understand that such previous contact is not required, nor does it guarantee the success of an application.

- NOTIFICATION OF FUNDING

The time required to complete the evaluation of applications is variable. Once applications have been received staff must determine the areas of expertise needed to appropriately evaluate the applications, identify and contact potential reviewers, convene peer review panels, and summarize and review the recommendations of the review panels. You can expect to receive notification within 3 to 6 months of the application closing date, depending on the number of applications received and the number of competitions with closing dates at about the same time. The requested start date can be no later than January 1 of the year following the closing date of the competition.

- POSSIBILITY OF LEARNING THE OUTCOME OF REVIEW PANELS PRIOR TO OFFICIAL NOTIFICATION

Every year we are called by a number of applicants who have legitimate reasons for needing to know the outcome of the review prior to official notification. Some applicants need to make job decisions, some need to notify a local school district, etc. Regardless of the reason, we cannot share information about the review with anyone until the Assistant Secretary has approved a slate of projects recommended for funding. You will be notified as quickly as possible either by telephone (if your application is recommended for funding), or through a letter (if your application is not successful).

- FORMAT FOR APPLICATIONS

The application narrative (Part III of the application form) should be organized to follow the exact sequence of the components in the selection criteria used to evaluate applications. (The selection criteria for the competitions covered by this packet are listed following the specific competition information in section "B" of this packet.) A table of contents, list of priority requirements, and an abstract (see page B-18) should precede the application narrative. If you prefer to use a different format, you may wish

to cross-reference the sections of your application to the selection criteria to be sure that reviewers are able to find all relevant information.

To aid in screening and reviewing the application, applicants should list in Part II and prior to the abstract, all general, special, and other requirements for the priority and corresponding page number (s) where requirements are addressed within the application. Page limits do not apply to this list. (All requirements are found in each priority description included in this application package.) The format included below is an example of how you might provide this information in your application.

Page #	Requirements
_____	(a) Projects funded under this notice must make positive efforts to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities in project activities. (See Section 606 of IDEA)
_____	(b) Applicants and grant recipients funded under this notice must involve individuals with disabilities or parents of individuals with disabilities ages birth through 26 in planning, implementing, and evaluating the projects. (See Section 682(a)(1)(A) of IDEA)
_____	(c) Applicant must describe steps to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. (See Section 427, GEPA)
_____	(d) Projects funded under these priorities must budget for a three-day Project's Directors' meeting in Washington, D.C. during each year of the project.

- PAGE LIMITS

Please note that all applications submitted under the competition in this application package must adhere to the Part III - Application Narrative page limit requirements that are specified under each priority/competition description. Your application should provide enough information to allow the review panel to evaluate the importance and impact of the project as well as to make knowledgeable judgments about the methods you propose to use (design, subjects, sampling procedures, measures, instruments, data analysis strategies, etc.). It is often helpful to have:

- (1) Staff Vitae--They should include each person's title and role in the proposed project and contain only information that is relevant to this proposed project's activities and/or publications. Vitae for consultants and Advisory Council members should be similarly brief.
- (2) Instruments--except in the case of generally available and well known instruments.

- (3) Agreements--when the participation of an agency other than the applicant is critical to the project. This is particularly critical when an intervention will be implemented within an agency, or when subjects will be drawn from particular agencies. Letters of cooperation should be specific, indicating agreement to implement a particular intervention or to provide access to a particular group of students.

The items listed above are not included under page limits.

- **MAKING SURE APPLICATION IS ASSIGNED TO THE CORRECT COMPETITION**

Applicants should clearly indicate in Item 11 on the application (SF Form 424) the CFDA number of the program priority (e.g., 84.326Q, etc.) representing the competition in which the application should be considered. If this information is not provided, your application may inadvertently be assigned and reviewed under a different competition from the one you intended.

- **RETURN OF NON-FUNDED APPLICATIONS**

We do not return original copies of applications. Thus, applicants should retain at least one copy of the application. Copies of reviewer comments will be mailed to all applicants.

- **PROPOSED STAFF AVAILABILITY TO PROJECT**

For each staff person named in the application, please provide documentation of all internal and external time commitments. In instances where a staff person is committed on a federally supported project, please provide the project name, Federal office, program title, the project Federal award number, and the amount of committed time by each project year. This information (e.g., Staff: Jane Doe; Project Name: Succeeding in the General Curriculum; Federal office: Office of Special Education Programs; Program title: Technical Assistance and Dissemination to Improve Services and Results for Children with Disabilities; Award number: H326A030002; Time commitments: Year 1—30%; Year 2—25% and Year 3—40%) can be provided as an Appendix to the application.

In general, we will not reduce time commitments on currently funded grants from the time proposed in the original application. Therefore, we will not consider for funding any application where key staff are bid above a time commitment level that staff have available to bid. Further, the time commitments stated in newly submitted applications will not be negotiated down to permit the applicant to receive a new grant award.

- **USE OF PERSON LOADING CHARTS**

It is important for applicants to include proposed time commitments for all project personnel. Also, program officials and applicants often find person loading charts

useful formats for showing project personnel and their time commitments to individual activities. A person loading chart is a tabular representation of major evaluation activities by number of days spent by each key person involved in each activity, as shown in the following example.

Table #
Person Loading Chart - Time in Day(s) by Person*

Activity	Time in Day(s) by Person			
	Person A	Person B	Person C	Person D
Library Research	15	20	0	0
Hire Staff	0	0	0	5
Prepare Materials	5	25	0	0
Train Raters	0	2	0	0
Data Collection	60	60	0	0
Data Analysis	0	0	25	5
Dissemination (manuscripts, etc.)	0	1	0	10

*Note: All figures represent FTE for the grant year.

- DELIVERING/SENDING APPLICATIONS TO THE COMPETITION MANAGER

Applications can be mailed or hand delivered, or submitted electronically but in either case must go to the Application Control Center at the address listed in the Application Transmittal Instructions. Delivering or sending the application to the competition manager in the program office may prevent it from being logged in on time to the appropriate competition and may result in the application not being reviewed.

- ALLOWED TRAVEL UNDER THESE PROJECTS

Travel is allowed if the travel specifically relates to the expressed goals of the project. Travel by students to further their education under the project's goals is also allowed. Travel to conferences is the travel item that is most likely to be questioned during negotiations. Such travel is sometimes allowed when it is for purposes of dissemination, when there will be results to be disseminated, and when it is clear that a

conference presentation or workshop is an effective way of reaching a particular target group.

- FUNDING OF APPROVED APPLICATIONS

It is often the case that the number of applications recommended for approval by the reviewers exceeds the dollars available for funding projects under a particular competition. When the panel reviews are completed for a particular competition, the individual reviewer scores and applications are ranked. The higher ranked, approved applications are funded first, and there are often lower ranked, approved applications that do not receive funding. Sometimes, one or two applications that are approved and fall next in rank order (after those projects selected for funding) are placed on hold. If dollars become available as a result of negotiations, or if a higher ranked applicant declines the award, the projects on hold may receive funding. If you receive a letter stating that you will not receive funding, then your project has neither been selected for funding nor placed on hold.

- INDIRECT COST RATE

There is no maximum indirect cost for the competitions in this application package. An organization's current effective indirect cost rate is the rate that should be reflected in your proposed budget. The Department of Education (ED) reimburses grantees for its portion of indirect costs that a grantee incurs in projects funded by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Paperwork Waiver Demonstration Program (CFDA No. 84.326P) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Multi-Year Individualized Education Program Demonstration Program (CFDA No. 84.326Q) competitions. Any grantee charging indirect costs to a grant from this program must use the indirect cost rate (ICR), negotiated with its *cognizant agency*, i.e., either the Federal agency from which it has received the most direct funding, subject to indirect cost support, the particular agency specifically assigned cognizance by the Office of Management and Budget or the State agency that provides the most subgrant funds to the grantee.

Note: Applicants should pay special attention to specific questions on the application budget form (ED 524) about their cognizant agency and the ICR they are using in their budget.

If an applicant selected for funding under this program has not already established a current ICR with its cognizant agency as a result of current or previous funding, ED will require it to do so within 90 days after the date the grant was issued by ED.

Applicants should be aware that ED is very often **not** the cognizant agency for its own grantees. Rather, ED accepts, for the purpose of funding its awards, the current ICR established by the appropriate cognizant agency.

An applicant that has not previously established an indirect cost rate with the Federal government or a State agency under a Federal program and that is selected for funding will not be allowed to charge its grant for indirect costs until it has negotiated a current indirect cost rate agreement with its cognizant agency.

Applicants are encouraged to use their accountant (or CPA) to calculate an indirect cost rate using information in the IRS Form 990, audited financial statements, actual cost data or a *cost policy statement* that such applicants are urged to prepare (but NOT submit to ED) during the application process.

Applicants should use this proposed rate in their application materials and indicate which of the above methods was used to calculate the rate. Guidance for creating a cost policy statement can be obtained by sending an e-mail to katrina.mcdonald@ed.gov.

Applicants with questions about using indirect cost rates under this program should contact the program contact person shown elsewhere in this application package.

- **ISSUES RAISED DURING DISCUSSIONS PRIOR TO AWARD**

If your application is recommended for funding, discussions may be held prior to award to clarify technical or budget issues. These are issues that have been identified during panel and staff review. Generally, technical issues are minor issues that require clarification. Alternative approaches may be presented for your consideration, or you may be asked to provide additional information or rationale for something you have proposed to do. Sometimes, concerns are stated as "conditions". These are concerns that have been identified as so critical that the award cannot be made unless those conditions are met. Questions are also raised about the proposed budget during the discussion phase. Generally, budget issues are raised because there is inadequate justification or explanation of the particular budget item, or because the budget item does not seem critical to the successful completion of the project. A Federal project officer will present the issues to you and ask you to respond. If you do not understand the question, you should ask for clarification. In responding to discussion items you should provide any additional information or clarification requested. You may feel that an issue was addressed in the application. It may not, however, have been explained in enough detail to make it understood by reviewers, and more information should be provided. If you are asked to make changes that you feel could seriously affect the project's success, you may provide reasons for not making the changes, or provide alternative suggestions. Similarly, if proposed budget reductions will, in your opinion, seriously affect the proposed activities, you may want to explain why and provide additional justification for the proposed expenses. Your changes, explanations, and alternative suggestions will be carefully evaluated by staff. In some instances, an applicant may again be contacted for additional information. An award cannot be made until all issues have been resolved and conditions met.

- **TREATING A PRIORITY AS TWO SEPARATE COMPETITIONS.** In the past, there have been problems in finding peer reviewers without conflicts of interest where applications are made by many entities throughout the country. The Standing Panel requirements also place additional constraints on the availability of reviewers. Therefore, The Department has determined that, for some discretionary priorities, applications may be ranked and selected for funding in two or more groups, which will ensure the availability of a much larger group of reviewers without conflicts of interest. This procedure will increase the quality, independence and fairness of the review

process and will permit panel members to review applications under discretionary priorities to which they have also submitted applications.

- **SUCCESSFUL APPLICATIONS AND ESTIMATED/PROJECTED BUDGET AMOUNTS IN SUBSEQUENT YEARS**

There is a maximum award amount specified for the priority/competitions included in this package. The Department rejects and does not consider an application that proposes a budget exceeding the maximum amount for any single budget period of 12 months for the priorities included in this package. Please refer to the priority description to determine the maximum award for any one particular competition. Since the yearly budgets for multi-year projects will be negotiated at the time of the initial award, applicants must include detailed budgets for each year of their proposed project. Generally, out-year funding levels most likely will not exceed 1st year budgets. However, budget modifications during the negotiation process, the findings from the previous year, or needed changes in the study design can affect your budget requirements in subsequent years, but in no case will out-year budgets exceed the maximum award amount.

- **REQUIREMENT TO REPORT THE RESULTS OF GRANT ACTIVITIES**

The Department shall, where appropriate, require recipients of all grants, contracts and cooperative agreements under Part D of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act to prepare reports describing their procedures, findings, and other relevant information. The Department shall require their delivery to the Department of Education and other networks as The Department may determine appropriate. (20 U.S.C. 1482)

- **DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT AND A GRANT**

A cooperative agreement is similar to a grant in that its principal purpose is to accomplish a public purpose of support or stimulation as authorized by a Federal statute. It differs from a grant in the sense that in a cooperative agreement substantial involvement is anticipated between the executive agency (in this case the Department of Education) and the recipient during the performance of the contemplated activity.

- **DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN ABSOLUTE PRIORITY, AN INVITATIONAL PRIORITY, AND A COMPETITIVE PRIORITY**

An absolute priority is a priority that an applicant must address in order to receive an award. If an applicant does not address an absolute priority, their application will be returned as being non-responsive to the priority.

An invitational priority is a priority that reflects a particular interest of the Department, and an applicant is encouraged to address the invitational priority along with the required absolute priority. However, an applicant choosing to address an invitational priority, will not receive any competitive preference over other applications.

A competitive priority is like an invitational priority in that it reflects a particular interest of the Department, and an applicant is encouraged to address the competitive priority along with the required absolute priority. A competitive priority may be handled in one of two ways: (1) an application may be awarded additional points depending on how effectively it addresses the competitive priority; or (2) an application that meets a competitive priority may be selected over an application of comparable merit that does not address the competitive priority. The type of competitive priority for a particular competition is always included in the FEDERAL REGISTER announcement.

- OBTAINING COPIES OF THE FEDERAL REGISTER, PROGRAM REGULATIONS AND FEDERAL STATUTES

Copies of these materials can usually be found at your local library. If not, they can be obtained by writing to:

Superintendent of Documents
U.S. Government Printing Office
Washington, D.C. 20402
Telephone: (202) 512-1800.

Information about the Department's funding opportunities, including copies of application notices for discretionary grant competitions, can be viewed on the Department's grant information web page which can be accessed on the INTERNET at:

<http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/grantapps/index.html>

However, the official application notice for a discretionary grant competition is the notice published in the FEDERAL REGISTER.