which you are submitting your application; and

(2) The Application Control Center will mail to you a notification of receipt of your grant application. If you do not receive this grant notification within 15 business days from the application deadline date, you should call the U.S. Department of Education Application Control Center at (202) 245–6288.

V. Application Review Information

Selection Criteria: The selection criteria for this competition are from 34 CFR 263.6 and are listed in the application package.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. *Award Notices:* If your application is successful, we notify your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators and send you a Grant Award Notification (GAN). We may notify you informally, also.

If your application is not evaluated or not selected for funding, we notify you.

2. *Administrative and National Policy Requirements:* We identify administrative and national policy requirements in the application package and reference these and other requirements in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice.

We reference the regulations outlining the terms and conditions of an award in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice and include these and other specific conditions in the GAN. The GAN also incorporates your approved application as part of your binding commitments under the grant.

3. *Reporting:* At the end of your project period, you must submit a final performance report, including financial information, as directed by the Secretary. If you receive a multi-year award, you must submit an annual performance report that provides the most current performance and financial expenditure information as directed by the Secretary under 34 CFR 75.118. The Secretary may also require more frequent performance reports under 34 CFR 75.720(c). For specific requirements on reporting, please go to *http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html.*

4. *Performance Measures:* The Secretary has established the following key performance measures for assessing the effectiveness of the Professional Development program: (1) The percentage of participants in administrator preparation projects who become principals, vice principals, or other school administrators in LEAs that enroll five percent or more American Indian and Alaska Native students; (2) the percentage of participants in teacher preparation projects who become teachers in LEAs that enroll five percent or more American Indian and Alaska Native students; (3) the percentage of program participants who meet the definition of ''Highly Qualified'' in section 9101(23) of the ESEA; (4) the percentage of program participants who complete their service requirement on schedule; (5) the cost per individual who successfully completes an administrator preparation program, takes a position in an LEA with a significant American Indian and Alaska Native student population, and completes the service requirement in that LEA; and (6) the cost per individual who successfully completes a teacher preparation program, takes a position in an LEA with a significant American Indian and Alaska Native student population, and completes the service requirement in that LEA.

We encourage applicants to demonstrate a strong capacity to provide reliable data on these measures in their responses to the selection criteria ''Quality of project services'' and ''Quality of the project evaluation.''

All grantees will be expected to submit, as part of their performance report, information with respect to these performance measures.

VII. Agency Contact

For further information contact: Lana Shaughnessy, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 3E231, Washington, DC 20202–6335. Telephone: (202) 205–2528 mail to: or by e-mail: *Lana.Shaughnessy@ed.gov.*

If you use a TDD, call the Federal Relay Service, toll free, at 1–800–877–8339.

VIII. Other Information

Accessible Format: Individuals with disabilities can obtain this document and a copy of the application package in an accessible format (e.g. braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) on request to the program contact person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** in section VII of this notice.

Electronic Access to This Document: You can view this document, as well as all other documents of this Department published in the **Federal Register,** in text or Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) on the Internet at the following site: *http://www.ed.gov/news/fedregister.* To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at this site.

Note: The official version of this document is the document published in the **Federal Register**.

Free Internet access to the official edition of the **Federal Register** and the Code of Federal Regulations is available on GPO Access at: *http://www.gpoaccess.gov/nara/index.html.*

Dated:December 15, 2009.

Thelma Meléndez de Santa Ana,

Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education.

[FR Doc. E9–30201 Filed 12–17–09; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR)—Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects and Centers Program—Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs)—Individual-Level Characteristics Related to Employment Among Individuals With Disabilities

AGENCY: Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice of proposed priority.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 84.133B–1.

SUMMARY: The Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services proposes a funding priority for the Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects and Centers Program administered by NIDRR. Specifically, this notice proposes a priority for an RRTC. The Assistant Secretary may use this priority for competitions in fiscal year (FY) 2010 and later years. We take this action to focus research attention on areas of national need. We intend this priority to improve rehabilitation services and outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

DATES: We must receive your comments on or before January 19, 2010.

ADDRESSES: Address all comments about this notice to Donna Nangle, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 6029, Potomac Center Plaza (PCP), Washington, DC 20202–2700.

If you prefer to send your comments by e-mail, use the following address: *donna.nangle@ed.gov.* You must include the term ''Proposed Priority for an RRTC on Individual-Level Characteristics Related to Employment Among Individuals with Disabilities'' in the subject line of your electronic message.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Donna Nangle. Telephone: (202) 245–7462 or by e-mail: *donna.nangle@ed.gov.*

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), call the Federal Relay Service (FRS), toll free, at 1–800–877–8339.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This notice of proposed priority is in concert with NIDRR's Final Long-Range Plan for FY 2005–2009 (Plan). The Plan, which was published in the **Federal Register** on February 15, 2006 (71 FR 8165), can be accessed on the Internet at the following site: *http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/nidrr/policy.html.*

Through the implementation of the Plan, NIDRR seeks to: (1) Improve the quality and utility of disability and rehabilitation research; (2) foster an exchange of expertise, information, and training to facilitate the advancement of knowledge and understanding of the unique needs of traditionally underserved populations; (3) determine best strategies and programs to improve rehabilitation outcomes for underserved populations; (4) identify research gaps; (5) identify mechanisms of integrating research and practice; and (6) disseminate findings.

This notice proposes a priority that NIDRR intends to use for RRTC competitions in FY 2010 and possibly later years. However, nothing precludes NIDRR from publishing additional priorities, if needed. Furthermore, NIDRR is under no obligation to make an award for this priority. The decision to make an award will be based on the quality of applications received and available funding.

Invitation to Comment: We invite you to submit comments regarding this notice. To ensure that your comments have maximum effect in developing the notice of final priority, we urge you to clearly identify the specific topic that each comment addresses.

We invite you to assist us in complying with the specific requirements of Executive Order 12866 and its overall requirement of reducing regulatory burden that might result from this proposed priority. Please let us know of any further ways we could reduce potential costs or increase potential benefits while preserving the effective and efficient administration of the program.

During and after the comment period, you may inspect all public comments about this notice in room 6029, 550 12th Street, SW., PCP, Washington, DC between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Washington, DC, time, Monday through Friday of each week except Federal holidays.

Assistance to Individuals with Disabilities in Reviewing the Rulemaking Record: On request we will provide an appropriate accommodation or auxiliary aid to an individual with a disability who needs assistance to review the comments or other documents in the public rulemaking record for this notice. If you want to schedule an appointment for this type of accommodation or auxiliary aid, please contact the person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

Purpose of Program: The purpose of the RRTC program is to improve the effectiveness of services authorized under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, through advanced research, training, technical assistance, and dissemination activities in general problem areas, as specified by NIDRR. Such activities are designed to benefit rehabilitation service providers, individuals with disabilities, and the family members or other authorized representatives of individuals with disabilities. In addition, NIDRR intends to require all RRTC applicants to meet the requirements of the *General Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTC) Requirements* priority that it published in a notice of final priorities in the **Federal Register** on February 1, 2008 (72 FR 6132). Additional information on the RRTC program can be found at: *http://www.ed.gov/rschstat/research/pubs/res-program.html#RRTC.*

Statutory and Regulatory Requirements of RRTCs

RRTCs must—

- Carry out coordinated advanced programs of rehabilitation research;
- Provide training, including graduate, pre-service, and in-service training, to help rehabilitation personnel more effectively provide rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities;
- Provide technical assistance to individuals with disabilities, their representatives, providers, and other interested parties;
- Disseminate informational materials to individuals with disabilities, their representatives, providers, and other interested parties; and
- Serve as centers of national excellence in rehabilitation research for individuals with disabilities, their representatives, providers, and other interested parties.

Applicants for RRTC grants must also demonstrate in their applications how they will address, in whole or in part, the needs of individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds.

Program Authority: 29 U.S.C. 762(g) and 764(b)(2).

Applicable Program Regulations: 34 CFR part 350.

Proposed Priority

This notice contains one proposed priority.

Individual-Level Characteristics Related to Employment Among Individuals with Disabilities

Background: Individuals with disabilities experience lower rates of employment than those without disabilities, and the disparity in employment rates is seen across all sociodemographic groups (Steinmetz, 2006; U.S. Census Bureau, 2006; U.S. Department of Labor, 2009). This disparity in employment outcomes also extends to other aspects of employment, such as monthly earnings and hourly wages (Ozawa & Yeo, 2006).

Individuals with disabilities are a heterogeneous group and employment-related outcomes for people with disabilities appear to be associated with individual-level characteristics, such as severity of disability and sociodemographic characteristics (Crisp, 2005; Ozawa & Yeo, 2006). Many studies of individual-level characteristics and employment-related outcomes of individuals with disabilities have been based on samples of individuals with a specific disabling condition such as spinal cord injury, making it difficult to generalize findings across disability types (Krause, 2003; Krause & Terza, 2006; Phillips & Stuifbergen, 2006; Walker *et al.,* 2006). In the few studies that have used samples of individuals with a variety of disabilities, disparities in employment outcomes across subpopulations of individuals with disabilities appear to be defined by the characteristics of the individual's disability or sociodemographic group. For example, the likelihood of poor employment outcomes tends to increase with severity of disability (Crisp, 2005; Meade *et al.,* 2004; Ozawa & Yeo, 2006; Phillips & Stuifbergen, 2006; Walker *et al.,* 2006). In addition, poorer employment outcomes are associated with being a member of a minority race or ethnic group or being less well educated (Crisp, 2005; Krause & Terza, 2006; Ozawa & Yeo, 2006; Randolph & Andresen, 2004).

More systematic analyses of cross-disability data are needed to examine the associations among disability and sociodemographic characteristics and employment-related outcomes in order to identify those subpopulations of individuals with disabilities who are most at risk for poor employment outcomes. In addition, there is a need

for further information about the barriers to, and facilitators of, employment for specific subpopulations, which can be used to design interventions to improve the employment outcomes of members of these specific subpopulations.

References:

Crisp, R. (2005). Key factors related to vocational outcome: Trends for six disability groups. Journal of Rehabilitation, 71, 30–37.

Krause, J. S. (2003). Years to employment after spinal cord injury. Archives of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation, 84, 1282–1289.

Krause, J., Terza, J. (2006). Injury and demographic factors predictive of disparities in earnings after spinal cord injury. Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, 87, 1318–1326.

Meade, M., A.L., Njeri, J.M., & Hess, D. (2004). Race, employment, and spinal cord injury. Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, 85, 1782–1792.

Ozawa, M.N., & Yeo, Y., H. (2006). Work status and work performance of people with disabilities. Journal of Disability Policy Studies, 17, 180–190.

Phillips, L., & Stuifbergen, A. (2006). Predicting continued employment in persons with multiple sclerosis. Journal of Rehabilitation, 72, 35–43.

Randolph, D.W., & Andresen, E.M. (2004). Disability, gender, and unemployment relationships in the United States from the behavioral risk factor surveillance system. Disability & Society, 19, 403–414.

Steinmetz, E. (2006). Americans With Disabilities: 2002. Household Economic Studies Current Population Reports P70–107 Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau. *See http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/disability/sipp/disable02.html.*

U.S. Census Bureau (2006). American Community Survey table B1802: Selected Economic Characteristics for the Civilian Noninstitutionalized Population By Disability Status. Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau. *See http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/STTable?_bm=y&-qr_name=ACS_2006_EST_G00_S1802&-geo_id=01000US&-ds_name=ACS_2006_EST_G00_&-_lang=en&-format=&-CONTEXT=st.*

U.S. Department of Labor (2009). Labor force statistics from the current population survey. *See http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsdisability.htm.*

Walker, W., Marwitz, J., Kreutzer, J., Hart, T., & Novack, T. (2006). Occupational categories and return to work after traumatic brain injury: A multicenter study. Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, 87, 1576–1582.

Proposed Priority: The Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services proposes a priority for a Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (RRTC) on Individual-Level Characteristics Related to Employment Among Individuals with Disabilities. This RRTC must identify subpopulations of individuals with disabilities who are at risk of poor employment outcomes, and document the barriers to, and facilitators of, employment that these subgroups experience. This new knowledge is intended to serve as a foundation for future interventions research that will target those who are most at risk of poor employment outcomes. The RRTC must be designed to contribute to the following outcomes:

(a) A synthesis of available knowledge about employment disparities among subpopulations of individuals with disabilities. The RRTC must contribute to this outcome by conducting a review and synthesis of existing research on individual-level characteristics related to successful and poor employment outcomes among individuals with disabilities. Such individual-level characteristics may include, but are not limited to the following: disabling condition, severity of disability, age, gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, education level, and urban/rural status. Successful and poor employment outcomes may be measured by the following indicators: an individual's employment status (*e.g.,* employed, unemployed, underemployed), income, and job retention or promotion. The RRTC must complete this activity by the end of the first year of the grant.

(b) New knowledge about the individual-level characteristics that are most strongly associated with employment-related outcome variables among individuals with disabilities. The RRTC must contribute to this outcome by conducting research on the extent to which employment of individuals with disabilities is related to individual-level characteristics. This research must include, but is not limited to, multivariate analyses of existing national datasets. Analyses of existing data must examine possible variations of employment, including full- or part-time work, self-employment, and industry sector. The RRTC must complete this activity by the end of the second year of the grant.

(c) New knowledge of the employment experiences of individuals who are at risk of poor employment outcomes. The RRTC must contribute to this outcome by collecting and analyzing information from members of subpopulations identified under paragraphs (a) and (b) of this priority. The RRTC must collect individual-level data about the barriers to, and facilitators of, employment that members of these subpopulations have experienced (*e.g.,* the availability of transportation to and from work, social support, workplace accommodations, and employer practices).

(d) Increased incorporation of disability and employment research findings into practice or policy. The RRTC must contribute to this outcome by:

(1) Collaborating with stakeholder groups to develop, evaluate, or implement strategies to promote utilization of the RRTC's research findings.

(2) Conducting training and dissemination activities to facilitate the utilization of the RRTC's research findings by individuals with disabilities, employers, policymakers, and State vocational rehabilitation agencies.

In addition, this RRTC must collaborate with relevant Rehabilitation Services Administration grantees, such as the 10 regional Technical Assistance and Continuing Education projects.

Types of Priorities: When inviting applications for a competition using one or more priorities, we designate the type of each priority as absolute, competitive preference, or invitational through a notice the **Federal Register**. The effect of each type of priority follows:

Absolute priority: Under an absolute priority, we consider only applications that meet the priority (34 CFR 75.105(c)(3)).

Competitive preference priority: Under a competitive preference priority, we give competitive preference to an application by (1) awarding additional points, depending on the extent to which the application meets the priority (34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i)); or (2) selecting an application that meets the priority over an application of comparable merit that does not meet the priority (34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(ii)).

Invitational priority: Under an invitational priority, we are particularly interested in applications that meet the priority. However, we do not give an application that meets the priority a preference over other applications (34 CFR 75.105(c)(1)).

Final Priority: We will announce the final priority in a notice in the **Federal Register**. We will determine the final priority after considering responses to this notice and other information available to the Department. This notice does not preclude us from proposing additional priorities, requirements, definitions, or selection criteria, subject to meeting applicable rulemaking requirements.

Note: This notice does *not* solicit applications. In any year in which we choose to use this priority, we invite applications through a notice in the **Federal Register.**

Executive Order 12866: This notice has been reviewed in accordance with Executive Order 12866. Under the terms of the order, we have assessed the potential costs and benefits of this proposed regulatory action.

The potential costs associated with this proposed regulatory action are those resulting from statutory requirements and those we have determined as necessary for administering this program effectively and efficiently.

In assessing the potential costs and benefits—both quantitative and qualitative—of this proposed regulatory action, we have determined that the benefits of the proposed priority justify the costs.

Discussion of Costs and Benefits: The benefits of the Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects and Centers Programs have been well established over the years in that similar projects have been completed successfully. This proposed priority will generate new knowledge through research and development.

Another benefit of this proposed priority is that the establishment of a new RRTC will improve the lives of individuals with disabilities. The new RRTC will disseminate and promote the use of new information that will improve the options for individuals with disabilities to obtain, retain, and advance in employment.

Intergovernmental Review: This program is not subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79.

Accessible Format: Individuals with disabilities can obtain this document in an accessible format (*e.g.,* braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) on request to the program contact person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

Electronic Access to This Document: You can view this document, as well as all other documents of this Department published in the **Federal Register**, in text or Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) on the Internet at the following site: *http://www.ed.gov/news/fedregister.*

To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at this site.

Note: The official version of this document is the document published in the **Federal Register**. Free Internet access to the official edition of the **Federal Register** and the Code of Federal Regulations is available on GPO Access at: *http://www.gpoaccess.gov/nara/index.html.*

Dated: December 15, 2009.

Alexa Posny,

Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.

[FR Doc. E9–30188 Filed 12–17–09; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Notice of Modifications to the Preferred Alternatives for Tank Waste Treatment and Disposal of Off Site Waste in the Draft Tank Closure and Waste Management Environmental Impact Statement for the Hanford Site, Richland, WA

AGENCY: Department of Energy.

ACTION: Modification of Preferred Alternatives.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is modifying its preferred alternatives for tank waste treatment and also for disposal of off-site waste in the *Draft Tank Closure and Waste Management Environmental Impact Statement for the Hanford Site, Richland, Washington* (Draft EIS, DOE/EIS–00391), made available for public comment on October 30, 2009 (74 FR 56194). This Draft EIS has been prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and its implementing regulations. The public comment period for the Draft EIS extends to March 19, 2010.

In this Draft EIS, DOE analyzed, as a reasonable alternative, treating and sending waste from specific tanks to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP), in Carlsbad, New Mexico, as mixed transuranic (TRU) waste. DOE is now expressing its preference that no Hanford tank wastes would be shipped to WIPP. These wastes would be retrieved and treated in the Waste Treatment Plant (WTP) being constructed at Hanford. The State of Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology), a cooperating agency on the EIS, has revised its Foreword to the Draft EIS in response to this modification to the preferred alternative for tank waste. That revision can be found under **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

In addition, consistent with DOE's preference regarding receipt at Hanford of off-site low-level radioactive waste (LLW) and low-level mixed waste (MLLW), DOE would not ship Greater-Than-Class-C (GTCC) LLW to Hanford at least until the WTP is operational (DOE is analyzing disposal of GTCC LLW in a separate EIS).

ADDRESSES: The Draft EIS is available electronically through, and written comments can be submitted at, *TC&WMEIS@saic.com,* or by faxing to (1–888) 785–2865. Paper copies may be obtained by request to the EIS website or by contacting: Mary Beth Burandt, Document Manager, TC & WM EIS comments, Office of River Protection, P.O. Box 1178, Richland, Washington 99352.

The Draft EIS is also available at DOE's NEPA Web site at *http://www.gc.energy.gov/nepa.*

Written comments may be mailed to the document manager at the address above. Further, DOE will accept oral as well as written comments on the Draft EIS during public hearings to be announced soon in the **Federal Register** and local media.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information on the Draft EIS, contact Ms. Burandt at the address above or by telephone, at (1–888) 829–6347. For further information on DOE's NEPA process, contact: Carol M. Borgstrom, Director, Office of NEPA Policy and Compliance, Office of General Counsel, U.S. Department of Energy, Washington, DC 20585–0103, Telephone: (202) 586–4600, or leave a message at (800) 472–2756.

Further information on the Draft EIS is also available through the Hanford Web site at: *http://www.hanford.gov/orp.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The *Draft Tank Closure and Waste Management Environmental Impact Statement* has been prepared in accordance with NEPA and its implementing regulations. The Draft EIS analyzes alternatives for proposed actions in three major areas related to the cleanup of the Hanford Site. These are: (1) Retrieving and treating radioactive waste from 177 underground storage tanks at Hanford and closure of the 149 single-shell tanks; (2) decommissioning of the Fast Flux Test Facility, a nuclear test reactor, and its auxiliary facilities; and (3) continued and expanded solid waste management operations on site, including the disposal of Hanford's LLW and MLLW, and limited volumes of LLW and MLLW from other DOE sites. The Draft EIS also analyzes no action alternatives for each of the three types of proposed actions as required under NEPA for use as a basis for comparison of the alternatives.

In the Draft EIS, DOE narrowed its range of preferred alternatives to five (Section S.7.1 of the Summary and Section 2.12 of the main volume). Three of these alternatives contain options for treating the waste from specific tanks as mixed TRU waste (approximately 3 million gallons) that would be prepared as necessary and shipped to WIPP for disposal. Based on further consideration, DOE has concluded that its preference is to manage the waste from these tanks by treating it through the WTP currently under construction as either high-level waste or low-activity