DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648–XF221

Caribbean Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of a public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Caribbean Fishery Management Council’s (Council) District Advisory Panels (DAPs) for Puerto Rico, St. Croix and St. Thomas/ St. John, USVI, will hold a joint meeting.

DATES: The meeting will be held on March 7–8, 2017, from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Verdana Hotel, Tartak St., Isla Verde, Puerto Rico.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Caribbean Fishery Management Council, 270 Muñoz Rivera Avenue, Suite 401, San Juan, Puerto Rico 00918, telephone: (787) 766–5926.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The DAPs will meet to discuss the items contained in the following agenda:

March 7, 2017, 9:30 a.m.
—Call to Order
—Welcome—Miguel A. Rolón, Executive Director, Caribbean Fishery Management Council, 270 Muñoz Rivera Avenue, Suite 401, San Juan, Puerto Rico 00918, telephone: (787) 766–5926.

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

Sunshine Act Notice

AGENCY: Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board.

ACTION: Notice of public business meeting.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the provisions of the Government in the Sunshine Act (5 U.S.C. 552b), notice is hereby given of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board’s (Board) public business meeting described below.

TIME AND DATE: 10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m., February 21, 2017.


STATUS: Open.

MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED: This public meeting will be conducted pursuant to the Government in the Sunshine Act, the Board’s implementing regulations for the Government in the Sunshine Act, and the Board’s Operating Procedures. The purpose of this meeting is for Board members to discuss and deliberate on business of the Board. The meeting will proceed in accordance with the meeting agenda, which is posted on the Board’s public Web site at www.dnfsb.gov. The Chairman will provide opening remarks followed by discussion led by the members of the Board. The Board will receive comments from the public prior to the close of the meeting. The Chairman will then provide closing remarks. The public is invited to view this business meeting and provide comments. A transcript of the business meeting will be made available by the Board for inspection and viewing by the public on the Board’s public Web site. The Board specifically reserves its right to further schedule and otherwise regulate the course of business of this meeting, to recess, reconvene, postpone, or adjourn the meeting, and otherwise exercise its rights under the Atomic Energy Act, the Government in the Sunshine Act and the Board’s Operating Procedures.


SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Public participation in the meeting is invited during the public comment period of the agenda. The Board is setting aside time for presentations and comments from the public. Individual oral comments may be limited by the time available, depending on the number of persons who wish to comment.


Sean Sullivan,
Chairman.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Applications for New Awards; State Personnel Development Grants (SPDG) Program

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

ACTION: Notice.
Overview Information


Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 84.323A.


Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The purpose of this program, authorized by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), is to assist State educational agencies (SEAs) in reforming and improving their systems for personnel preparation and professional development in early intervention, educational, and transition services in order to improve results for children with disabilities.

Priorities: This notice contains two absolute priorities and one competitive preference priority. In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(iv), Absolute Priority 2 is from sections 651 through 655 of IDEA, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(v), the competitive preference priority is from allowable activities specified in the statute (see IDEA section 654(a)(3)(B)(iii)).

Absolute Priorities: For FY 2017 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, these priorities are absolute priorities. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), we consider only applications that meet both of these priorities.

These priorities are:

Absolute Priority 1—Effective and Efficient Delivery of Professional Development

The Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services establishes a priority to assist SEAs in reforming and improving their systems for personnel (as that term is defined in section 651(b) of IDEA) preparation and professional development of individuals providing early intervention, educational, and transition services in order to improve results for children with disabilities.

In order to meet this priority, an applicant must demonstrate in the SPDG State Plan it submits, as part of its application under section 653(a)(2) of IDEA, that its proposed project will—

1. Use professional development practices that are supported by a “strong theory” of evidence (as defined in this notice) that will increase implementation of practices supported by evidence and result in improved outcomes for children with disabilities;
2. Provide ongoing assistance to personnel receiving SPDG-supported professional development that supports the implementation of practices supported by evidence with fidelity (as defined in this notice); and
3. Use technology to more efficiently and effectively provide ongoing professional development to personnel, including to personnel in rural areas and to other populations, such as personnel in urban or high-need local educational agencies (LEAs) (as defined in this notice).

Absolute Priority 2—State Personnel Development Grants

Statutory Requirements. To meet this priority, an applicant must meet the following statutory requirements:

1. State Personnel Development Plan

An applicant must submit a State Personnel Development Plan that identifies and addresses the State and local needs for the personnel preparation and professional development of personnel, as well as individuals who provide direct supplementary aids and services to children with disabilities, and that—
(a) Is designed to enable the State to meet the requirements of section 612(a)(14) of IDEA, as amended by the ESSA and section 635(a)(8) and (9) of IDEA;
(b) Is based on an assessment of State and local needs that identifies critical aspects and areas in need of improvement related to the preparation, ongoing training, and professional development of personnel who serve infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and children with disabilities, including—
(1) The nature and extent of the personnel needs will be coordinated with activities supported with other public resources (including funds provided under Part B and Part C of IDEA and retained for use at the State level for personnel and professional development purposes) and private resources;
(f) Describes how the SEA will align its personnel development plan with the plan and application submitted under sections 1111 and 2101(d), respectively, of the ESEA, as amended by the ESSA;
(g) Describes how the SEA will address the identified professional development and personnel needs and how such strategies will be implemented, including—
(1) A description of the programs and activities that will provide personnel with the knowledge and skills to meet the needs of, and improve the performance and achievement of, infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and children with disabilities;
(2) How such strategies will be integrated, to the maximum extent possible, with other activities supported by grants funded under section 662 of IDEA, as amended by the ESSA;
(h) Provides an assurance that the SEA will provide technical assistance to LEAs to improve the quality of professional development available to meet the needs of personnel who serve children with disabilities;
(i) Provides an assurance that the SEA will provide technical assistance to entities that provide services to infants and toddlers with disabilities to improve the quality of professional development available to meet the needs of personnel serving those children;
(j) Describes how the SEA will recruit and retain teachers who meet the qualifications described in section 612(a)(14)(C) of IDEA, as amended by the ESSA and other qualified personnel in geographic areas of greatest need;
(k) Describes how the SEA will take to ensure that economically
disadvantaged and minority children are not taught at higher rates by teachers who do not meet the qualifications described in section 612(a)(14)(C) of IDEA, as amended by the ESSA; and

(1) Describes how the SEA will assess, on a regular basis, the extent to which the strategies implemented have been effective in meeting the performance goals described in section 612(a)(15) of IDEA, as amended by the ESSA.

2. Partnerships

Required Partners

Applicants must establish a partnership with LEAs and other State agencies involved in, or concerned with, the education of children with disabilities, including—

(a) Not less than one institution of higher education (IHE); and

(b) The State agencies responsible for administering Part C of IDEA, early education, child care, and vocational rehabilitation programs.

Other Partners

An SEA must work in partnership with other persons and organizations involved in, and concerned with, the education of children with disabilities, which may include—

(a) The Governor;

(b) Parents of children with disabilities ages birth through 26;

(c) Parents of nondisabled children ages birth through 26;

(d) Individuals with disabilities;

(e) Parent training and information centers or community parent resource centers funded under sections 671 and 672 of IDEA, respectively;

(f) Community-based and other nonprofit organizations involved in the education and employment of individuals with disabilities;

(g) Personnel as defined in section 651(b) of IDEA;

(h) The State advisory panel established under Part B of IDEA;

(i) The State interagency coordinating council established under Part C of IDEA;

(j) Individuals knowledgeable about vocational education;

(k) The State agency for higher education;

(l) Public agencies with jurisdiction in the areas of health, mental health, social services, and juvenile justice;

(m) Other providers of professional development who work with infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and children with disabilities;

(n) Other individuals; and

(o) An individual, entity, or agency as a partner in accordance with section 652(b)(3) of IDEA, if State law assigns responsibility for teacher preparation and certification to an individual, entity, or agency other than the SEA.

3. Use of Funds

(a) Professional Development Activities—Each SEA that receives a grant under this program must use the grant funds to support activities in accordance with the State’s Personnel Development Plan, including one or more of the following:

(i) Carrying out programs that provide support to both special education and regular education teachers of children with disabilities and principals, such as programs that—

(A) Provide training in how to teach and address the needs of children with different learning styles and children who are English learners;

(B) Involve collaborative groups of teachers, administrators, and, in appropriate cases, related services personnel;

(C) Provide training in methods of—

(I) Positive behavioral interventions and supports to improve student behavior in the classroom;

(II) Scientifically based reading instruction, including early literacy instruction;

(III) Early and appropriate interventions to identify and help children with disabilities;

(IV) Effective instruction for children with low-incidence disabilities;

(V) Successful transitioning to postsecondary opportunities; and

(VI) Classroom-based techniques to assist children prior to referral for special education;

(D) Provide training to enable personnel to work with and involve parents in their child’s education, including parents of low income and children with disabilities who are English learners;

(E) Provide training for special education personnel and regular education personnel in planning, developing, and implementing effective and appropriate individualized education programs (IEPs); and

(F) Provide training to meet the needs of students with significant health, mobility, or behavioral needs prior to serving those students;

(ii) Improve the knowledge of special education teachers, principals, and other relevant school personnel in conducting effective IEP meetings; and

(iii) Train administrators, principals, and other relevant school personnel in conducting effective individualized family service plan (IFSP) meetings.

(b) Professional Development Programs—Each SEA that receives a grant under this program must use the grant funds to support activities described in section 612(a)(14)(C) of IDEA, as amended by the ESSA; and

(i) Introduce curricula and instruction, including training to improve the ability to collect, manage, and analyze data to improve teaching, decision making, school improvement efforts, and accountability;

(ii) To enhance learning by children with disabilities; and

(iii) To effectively communicate with parents.

(c) Developing and implementing initiatives to promote the recruitment and retention of special education teachers who meet the qualifications described in section 612(a)(14)(C) of IDEA, as amended by the ESSA, particularly initiatives that have proven effective in recruiting and retaining teachers who meet those qualifications, described in section 612(a)(14)(C) of IDEA, as amended by the ESSA, including programs that provide—

(i) Teacher mentoring from exemplary special education teachers, principals, or superintendents;

(ii) Induction and support for special education teachers during their first three years of employment as teachers; or
(iii) Incentives, including financial incentives, to retain special education teachers who have a record of success in helping students with disabilities.

(5) Carrying out programs and activities that are designed to improve the quality of personnel who serve children with disabilities, such as—

(i) Innovative professional development programs (which may be provided through partnerships with IHEs), including programs that train teachers and principals to integrate technology into curricula and instruction to improve teaching, learning, and technology literacy and that are consistent with the definition of professional development in section 8101 of the ESEA, as amended by the ESSA; and

(ii) The development and use of proven, cost effective strategies for the implementation of professional development activities, such as through the use of technology and distance learning.

(6) Carrying out programs and activities that are designed to improve the quality of early intervention personnel, including paraprofessionals and primary referral sources, such as—

(i) Professional development programs to improve the delivery of early intervention services;

(ii) Initiatives to promote the recruitment and retention of early intervention personnel; and

(iii) Interagency activities to ensure that early intervention personnel are adequately prepared and trained.

(b) Other Activities—Each SEA that receives a grant under this program must use the grant funds to support activities in accordance with the State’s Personnel Development Plan, including one or more of the following:

(1) Reforming special education and regular education teacher certification (including re-certification) or licensing requirements to ensure that—

(A) The training and information necessary to address the full range of needs of children with disabilities across disability categories; and

(B) The necessary subject matter knowledge and teaching skills in the academic subjects that the teachers teach;

(ii) Special education and regular education teacher certification (including re-certification) or licensing requirements are aligned with challenging State academic content standards; and

(iii) Special education and regular education teachers have the subject matter knowledge and teaching skills, including technology literacy, necessary to help students with disabilities meet challenging State academic achievement standards.

(2) Programs that establish, expand, or improve alternative routes for State certification of special education teachers for individuals with a baccalaureate or master’s degree who meet the qualifications described in section 612(a)(14)(C) of IDEA, as amended by the ESSA, including mid-career professionals from other occupations, paraprofessionals, and recent college or university graduates with records of academic distinction who demonstrate the potential to become highly effective special education teachers.

(3) Teacher advancement initiatives for special education teachers that promote professional growth and emphasize multiple career paths (such as paths to becoming a career teacher, mentor teacher, or exemplary teacher) and pay differentials.

(4) Developing and implementing mechanisms to assist LEAs and schools in effectively recruiting and retaining special education teachers who meet the qualifications described in section 612(a)(14)(C) of IDEA, as amended by the ESSA.

(5) Reforming tenure systems, implementing teacher testing for subject matter knowledge, and implementing teacher testing for State certification or licensure, consistent with title II of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1021 et seq.).

(6) Funding projects to promote reciprocity of teacher certification or licensing between or among States for special education teachers, except that no reciprocity agreement developed under this absolute priority may lead to the weakening of any State teacher certification or licensing requirement.

(7) Assisting LEAs to serve children with disabilities through the development and use of proven, innovative strategies to deliver intensive professional development programs that are both cost effective and easily accessible, such as strategies that involve delivery through the use of technology, peer networks, and distance learning.

(8) Developing, or assisting LEAs in developing, merit-based performance systems and strategies that provide differential and bonus pay for special education teachers.

(9) Supporting activities that ensure that teachers are able to use challenging State academic content standards and student academic achievement standards, and State assessments for all children with disabilities, to improve instructional practices and improve the academic achievement of children with disabilities.

(10) When applicable, coordinating with, and expanding centers established under section 2113(c)(18) of the ESEA, as such section was in effect on the day before the date of enactment of the ESSA, to benefit special education teachers.

(c) Contracts and Subgrants—An SEA that receives a grant under this program—

(1) Must award contracts or subgrants to IHEs, IHEs, parent training and information centers, or community parent resource centers, as appropriate, to carry out the State Personnel Development Plan; and

(2) May award contracts and subgrants to other public and private entities, including the lead agency under Part C of IDEA, to carry out the State plan.

(d) Use of Funds for Professional Development—An SEA that receives a grant under this program must use—

(1) Not less than 90 percent of the funds the SEA receives under the grant for any fiscal year for the Professional Development Activities described in paragraph (a); and

(2) Not more than 10 percent of the funds the SEA receives under the grant for any fiscal year for the Other Activities described in paragraph (b).

Additional SPDG Requirements

Projects funded under this program must—

(a) Budget for a three-day project directors’ meeting in Washington, DC, during each year of the project;

(b) Budget $4,000 annually for support of the SPDG Program Web site currently administered by the University of Oregon (www.signetwork.org); and

(c) If a project receiving assistance under this program authority maintains a Web site, include relevant information and documents in a form that meets a government or industry-recognized standard for accessibility.

Competitive Preference Priority: For FY 2017 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, this priority is a competitive preference priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i), we award three additional points to an application that meets this priority.

This priority is:

Evidence of Promise Supporting Methods To Improve Outcomes for Children With Disabilities

State plans that are supported by evidence of promise must meet the
conditions set out in the definition of “evidence of promise” (as defined in this notice). The Secretary gives priority to plans that improve the knowledge of special education and regular education teachers and principals and, in appropriate cases, paraprofessionals, concerning effective instructional practices, through the provision of training in any of the following areas, described in section 654(a)(3)(B)(iii) of IDEA, if the methods used are supported by evidence of promise (3 points):

(1) Positive behavioral interventions and supports to improve student behavior in the classroom;
(2) Reading instruction, including early literacy instruction, supported by evidence;
(3) Early and appropriate interventions to identify and help children with disabilities;
(4) Effective instruction for children with low incidence disabilities;
(5) Successful transitioning to postsecondary opportunities; and
(6) Using classroom-based techniques to assist children prior to referral for special education.

Note: An applicant addressing this competitive preference priority must identify up to two study citations that meet the evidence of promise standard and clearly mark them in the reference list of the proposal.

Definitions

The following definitions are from the NFP and 34 CFR 77.1, as marked.

Evidence of promise (34 CFR 77.1) means the empirical evidence to support the theoretical linkage(s) between at least one critical component and at least one relevant outcome presented in the logic model for the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice.

Logic model (34 CFR 77.1) means a detailed description that depicts, at a minimum, the goals, activities, outputs, and outcomes of the proposed State plan. A logic model communicates how a State will achieve its outcomes and provides a framework for both the formative and summative evaluations of the plan. Section 77.1(c) of EDGAR contains a definition for “logic model” that incorporates the term “conceptual framework” into that definition. In these SPDG program priorities, the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) has chosen to keep the two concepts separate in an effort to promote a fuller description of both the theory behind the proposed program and how that theory is operationalized in a logic model that depicts how the program will work. The following Web sites provide more information on logic models: www.osepideasthatwork.org/logicModel and www.osepideasthatwork.org/resources-grantees/program-areas/ta-ta/tad-project-logic-model-and-conceptual-framework.

Relevant outcome (34 CFR 77.1) means the student outcome(s) (or the ultimate outcome if not related to students) the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice is designed to improve; consistent with the specific goals of a program.

Strong theory (34 CFR 77.1) means a rationale for the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice that includes a logic model.


The following definitions are from the NFP:

Fidelity means the delivery of instruction in the way in which it was designed to be delivered.

High-need LEA means, in accordance with section 2102(3) of the, an LEA—

(a) That serves not fewer than 10,000 children from families with incomes below the poverty line (as that term is defined in section 8101(41) of the ESEA, as amended by the ESSA), or for which not less than 20 percent of the children served by the LEA are from families with incomes below the poverty line; and

(b) For which there is (1) a high percentage of teachers not teaching in the academic subjects or grade levels that the teachers were trained to teach, or (2) a high percentage of teachers with emergency, provisional, or temporary certification or licensing.


Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations in 34 CFR parts 75, 77, 79, 81, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98, and 99. (b) The Office of Management and Budget Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3485. (c) The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3474. (d) The NFP.

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

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 86 apply to IHEs only.

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Discretionary grants.

Estimated Available Funds: The Administration has requested $41,630,000 for the SPDG program for FY 2017, of which we intend to use an estimated $24,350,000 for this competition. The actual level of funding, if any, depends on final congressional action. However, we are inviting applications to allow enough time to complete the grant process if Congress appropriates funds for this program.

Contingent upon the availability of funds and the quality of applications, we may make additional awards in FY 2018 from the list of unfunded applications from this competition.

Estimated Range of Awards: $500,000–$2,100,000 (for the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico). In the case of outlying areas (United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands), awards will be not less than $80,000.

Note: We will set the amount of each award after considering—

(1) The amount of funds available for making the grants;
(2) The relative population of the State or outlying area;
(3) The types of activities proposed by the State or outlying area;
(4) The alignment of proposed activities with section 612(a)(14) of IDEA, as amended by the ESSA;
IV. Application and Submission

606 of IDEA).

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

Project Period: Not less than one year and not more than five years.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants: An SEA of one of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or an outlying area (United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands).

Note: Public Law 95–134, which permits the consolidation of grants to the outlying areas, does not apply to funds received under this competition.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching: This program does not require cost sharing or matching.

3. Eligible Subgrantees: (a) Under 75.708(b) and (c) a grantee may award subgrants—to directly carry out project activities described in its application—to the following types of entities: LEAs, IHEs, parent training and information centers, community parent resource centers, and other public and private entities.

(b) The grantee may award subgrants to entities it has identified in an approved application.

4. Other General Requirements: The projects funded under this program must make positive efforts to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities (see section 606 of IDEA).

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package: You can obtain an application package via the Internet, from the Education Publications Center (ED Pubs), or from the program office.

To obtain a copy via the Internet, use the following address: www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/grantapps/index.html. To obtain a copy from ED Pubs, write, fax, or call: ED Pubs, U.S. Department of Education, P.O. Box 22207, Alexandria, VA 22304. Telephone, toll free: 1–877–433–7827. FAX: (703) 605–6794.

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) or a text telephone (TTY), call, toll free: 1–877–576–7734.

You can contact ED Pubs at its Web site, also: www.EDPubs.gov or at its email address: edpubs@inet.ed.gov.

If you request an application package from ED Pubs, be sure to identify this competition as follows: CFDA Number 84.323A.

To obtain a copy from the program office, contact the person listed under For Further Information Contact in section VII of this notice.

Individuals with disabilities can obtain a copy of the application package in an accessible format (e.g., braille, large print, audiotape, or compact disc) by contacting the person or team listed under Accessible Format in section VIII of this notice.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission: Requirements concerning the content and form of an application, together with the forms you must submit, are in the application package for this competition. Page Limit: The application narrative (Part III of the application) is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application. You must limit Part III to no more than 60 pages, using the following standards:

- A “page” is 8.5” × 11”, on one side only, with 1” margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.
- Double space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative, including titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, reference citations, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, graphs, and screen shots.
- Use a font that is either 12 point or larger.
- Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial. An application submitted in any other font (including Times Roman or Arial Narrow) will not be accepted.
- The page limit and double-spacing requirements do 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 (follow the guidance provided in the application package for completing the abstract), the table of contents, the list of priority requirements, the resumes, the reference list, the letters of support, or the appendices. However, the page limit and double-spacing requirements do apply to all of Part III, the application narrative, including all text in charts, tables, figures, graphs, and screen shots.

We suggest your application if you exceed the page limit in the application narrative section, or if you apply standards other than those specified in this notice and the application package.

3. Submission Dates and Times:


Applications for grants under this competition must be submitted electronically using the Grants.gov Apply site (Grants.gov). For information (including dates and times) about how to submit your application electronically, or in paper format by mail or hand delivery if you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, please refer to Other Submission Requirements in section IV of this notice.

We do not consider an application that does not comply with the deadline requirements.

Individuals with disabilities who need an accommodation or auxiliary aid in connection with the application process should contact the person listed under FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT in section VII of this notice. If the Department provides an accommodation or auxiliary aid to an individual with a disability in connection with the application process, the individual’s application remains subject to all other requirements and limitations in this notice.


4. Intergovernmental Review: This program is subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. Information about Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs under Executive Order 12372 is in the application package for this competition.

5. Funding Restrictions: We reference regulations outlining funding restrictions in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice.

6. Data Universal Numbering System Number, Taxpayer Identification Number, and System for Award Management: To do business with the Department of Education, you must—

a. Have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and a Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN);

b. Register both your DUNS number and TIN with the System for Award Management (SAM), the Government’s primary registrant database;

c. Provide your DUNS number and TIN on your application; and

d. Maintain an active SAM registration with current information while your application is under review by the Department and, if you are
awarded a grant, during the project period.

You can obtain a DUNS number from Dun and Bradstreet at the following Web site: http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform. A DUNS number can be created within one to two business days.

If you are a corporate entity, agency, institution, or organization, you can obtain a TIN from the Internal Revenue Service. If you are an individual, you can obtain a TIN from the Internal Revenue Service or the Social Security Administration. If you need a new TIN, please allow two to five weeks for your TIN to become active.

The SAM registration process can take approximately seven business days, but may take upwards of several weeks, depending on the completeness and accuracy of the data you enter into the SAM database. Thus, if you think you might want to apply for Federal financial assistance under a program administered by the Department, please allow sufficient time to obtain and register your DUNS number and TIN. We strongly recommend that you register early.

Note: Once your SAM registration is active, it may be 24 to 48 hours before you can access the information in, and submit an application through, Grants.gov.

If you are currently registered with SAM, you may not need to make any changes. However, please make certain that the TIN associated with your DUNS number is correct. Also note that you will need to update your registration annually. This may take three or more business days.

Information about SAM is available at www.SAM.gov. To further assist you with obtaining and registering your DUNS number and TIN in SAM or updating your existing SAM account, we have prepared a SAM.gov Tip Sheet, which you can find at: http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/sam-faqs.html.

In addition, if you are submitting your application via Grants.gov, you must (1) be designated by your organization as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR); and (2) register yourself with Grants.gov as an AOR. Details on these steps are outlined at the following Grants.gov Web page: www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html.

7. Other Submission Requirements: Applications for grants under this competition must be submitted electronically unless you qualify for an exception to this requirement in accordance with the instructions in this section.

a. Electronic Submission of Applications.

Applications for grants under the SPDG competition, CFDA number 84.323A, must be submitted electronically using the Governmentwide Grants.gov Apply site at www.Grants.gov. Through this site, you will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it offline, and then upload and submit your application. You may not email an electronic copy of a grant application to us.

We will reject your application if you submit it in paper format unless, as described elsewhere in this section, you 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. Further information regarding calculation of the date that is two weeks before the application deadline date is provided later in this section under Exception to Electronic Submission Requirement.

You may access the electronic grant application for the SPDG competition at www.Grants.gov. You must search for the downloadable application package for this competition by the CFDA number. Do not include the CFDA number’s alpha suffix in your search (e.g., search for 84.323, not 84.323A).

Please note the following:
• When you enter the Grants.gov site, you will find information about submitting an application electronically through the site, as well as the hours of operation.
• Applications received by Grants.gov are date and time stamped. Your application must be fully uploaded and submitted and must be date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system no later than 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. Except as otherwise noted in this section, we will not accept your application if it is received—that is, date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system—after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. We do not consider an application that does not comply with the deadline requirements. When we retrieve your application from Grants.gov, we will notify you if we are rejecting your application because it was date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date.
• The amount of time it can take to upload an application will vary depending on a variety of factors, including the size of the application and the speed of your Internet connection. Therefore, we strongly recommend that you do not wait until the application deadline date to begin the submission process through Grants.gov.
• You should review and follow the Education Submission Procedures for submitting an application through Grants.gov that are included in the application package for this competition to ensure that you submit your application in a timely manner to the Grants.gov system. You can also find the Education Submission Procedures pertaining to Grants.gov under News and Events on the Department’s G5 system home page at www.G5.gov. In addition, for specific guidance and procedures for submitting an application through Grants.gov, please refer to the Grants.gov Web site at: www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html.
• You will not receive additional point value because you submit your application in electronic format, nor will we penalize you if you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, as described elsewhere in this section, and submit your application in paper format.
• You must submit all documents electronically, including all information you typically provide on the following forms: The Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424), the Department of Education Supplemental Information for SF 424, Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs (ED 524), and all necessary assurances and certifications.
• You must upload any narrative sections and all other attachments to your application as files in a read-only, non-modifiable Portable Document Format (PDF). Do not upload an interactive or fillable PDF file. If you upload a file type other than a read-only, non-modifiable PDF (e.g., Word, Excel, WordPerfect, etc.) or submit a password-protected file, we will not review that material. Please note that this could result in your application not being considered for funding because the material in question—for example, the application narrative—is critical to a meaningful review of your proposal. For that reason it is important to allow yourself adequate time to upload all material as PDF files. The Department will not convert material from other formats to PDF. Additional, detailed information on how to attach files is in the application instructions.
• Your electronic application must comply with any page-limit requirements described in this notice.
If you submit an application after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date, please contact the person listed under For Further Information Contact in section VII of this notice and provide an explanation of the technical problem you experienced with Grants.gov, along with the Grants.gov Support Desk Case Number. We will accept your application if we can confirm that a technical problem occurred with the Grants.gov system and that the problem affected your ability to submit your application by 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. We will contact you after we determine whether your application will be accepted.

Note: The extensions to which we refer in this section apply only to the unavailability of, or technical problems with, the Grants.gov system. We will not grant you an extension if you failed to fully register to submit your application to Grants.gov before the application deadline date and time or if the technical problem you experienced is unrelated to the Grants.gov system.

Exception to Electronic Submission Requirement: You qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, and may submit your application in paper format, if you are unable to submit an application through the Grants.gov system because—

- You do not have access to the Internet; or
- You do not have the capacity to upload large documents to the Grants.gov system;

and

- No later than two weeks before the application deadline date (14 calendar days or, if the fourteenth calendar day before the application deadline date falls on a Federal holiday, the next business day following the Federal holiday), you mail or fax a written statement to the Department, explaining which of the two grounds for an exception prevents you from using the Internet to submit your application.

If you mail your written statement to the Department, it must be postmarked no later than two weeks before the application deadline date. If you fax your written statement to the Department, we must receive the faxed statement no later than two weeks before the application deadline date. Address and mail or fax your statement to: Jennifer Coffey, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW., Room 5134, Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC 20202–5108.

Your paper application must be submitted in accordance with the mail or hand delivery instructions described in this notice.

b. Submission of Paper Applications by Mail

If you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, you may mail (through the U.S. Postal Service or a commercial carrier) your application to the Department. You must mail the original and two copies of your application, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the following address: U.S. Department of Education, Application Control Center, Attention: (CFDA Number 84.323A), LBJ Basement Level 1, 400 Maryland Avenue SW., Washington, DC 20202–4260.

You must show proof of mailing consisting of one of the following:

- A legibly dated U.S. Postal Service postmark.
- A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the U.S. Postal Service.
- A dated shipping label, invoice, or receipt from a commercial carrier.
- Any other proof of mailing acceptable to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.

If you mail your application through the U.S. Postal Service, we do not accept either of the following as proof of mailing:

- A private metered postmark.
- A mail receipt that is not dated by the U.S. Postal Service.

Note: The U.S. Postal Service does not uniformly provide a dated postmark. Before relying on this method, you should check with your local post office.

We will not consider applications postmarked after the application deadline date.

c. Submission of Paper Applications by Hand Delivery

If you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, you (or a courier service) may deliver your paper application to the Department by hand. You must deliver the original and two copies of your application by hand, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the following address: U.S. Department of Education, Application Control Center, Attention: (CFDA Number 84.323A), 550 12th Street, SW., Room 7039, Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC 20202–4260.

The Application Control Center accepts hand deliveries daily between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, except Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal holidays.

Note for Mail or Hand Delivery of Paper Applications: If you mail or hand
deliver your application to the
Department—
(1) You must indicate on the envelope
and—if not provided by the
Department—in Item 11 of the SF 424
the CFDA number, including suffix
letter, if any, of the competition under
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 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
1. Selection Criteria: The selection
criteria for this program are from 34 CFR
75.210 and are listed in the application
package.
2. Review and Selection Process: We
remind potential applicants that in
reviewing applications in any
discretionary grant competition, the
Secretary may consider, under 34 CFR
75.217(d)(3), the past performance of the
applicant in carrying out a previous
award, such as the applicant’s use of
funds, achievement of project
objectives, and compliance with grant
conditions. The Secretary may also
consider whether the applicant failed to
submit a timely performance report or
submitted a report of unacceptable
quality.

In addition, in making a competitive
grant award, the Secretary requires
various assurances, including those
applicable to Federal civil rights laws
that prohibit discrimination in programs
or activities receiving Federal financial
assistance from the Department of
Education (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4,
108.8, and 110.23).

3. Additional Review and Selection
Process Factors: In the past, the
Department has had difficulty finding
peer reviewers for certain competitions
because so many individuals who are
eligible to serve as peer reviewers have
conflicts of interest. The standing panel
requirements under section 682(b) of
IDEA also have placed additional
constraints on the availability of
reviewers. Therefore, the Department has
determined that, for some
discretionary grant competitions,
aplications may be separated into two
or more groups and ranked and selected
for funding within specific groups. This
procedure will make it easier for the
Department to find peer reviewers by
ensuring that greater numbers of
individuals who are eligible to serve as
reviewers for any particular group of
applicants will not have conflicts of
interest. It also will increase the quality,
independence, and fairness of the
review process, while permitting panel
members to review applications under
discretionary grant competitions for
which they also have submitted
applications.

4. Risk Assessment and Special
Conditions: Consistent with 2 CFR
200.205, before awarding grants under
this competition the Department
conducts a review of the risks posed by
applicants. Under 2 CFR 3474.10, the
Secretary may impose special
conditions and, in appropriate
circumstances, high risk conditions on a
grant if the applicant or grantee is not
financially stable; has a history of
unsatisfactory performance; has a
financial or other management system
that does not meet the standards in 2
CFR part 200, subpart D; has not
fulfilled the conditions of a prior grant;
or is otherwise not responsible.

5. Integrity and Performance System:
If you are selected under this
competition to receive an award that
over the course of the project period
may exceed the simplified acquisition
threshold (currently $150,000), under 2
CFR 200.205(a)(2), we must make a
judgment about your integrity, business
ethics, and record of performance under
Federal awards—that is, the risk posed
by you as an applicant—before we make
an award. In doing so, we must consider
any information about you that is in the
integrity and performance system
(currently referred to as the Federal
Awardee Performance and Integrity
Information System (FAPIIS)),
accessible through SAM. You may
review and comment on any
information about yourself that a
Federal agency previously entered and
that is currently in FAPIIS.

Please note that, if the total value of
your currently active grants, cooperative
agreements, and procurement contracts
from the Federal government exceeds
$10,000,000, the reporting requirements
in 2 CFR part 200, Appendix XII, require
you to report certain integrity
information to FAPIIS semiannually.
Please review the requirements in 2 CFR
part 200, Appendix XII, if this grant
plus all the other Federal funds you
receive exceed $10,000,000.

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); or we may send you an email
containing a link to access an electronic
version of your 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: (a) If you apply for a
grant under this competition, you must
ensure that you have in place the
necessary processes and systems to
comply with the reporting requirements
in 2 CFR part 170 should you receive
funding under the competition. This
does not apply if you have an exception
under 2 CFR 170.110(b).

(b) 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 multiyear 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 www.ed.gov/
fund/grant/apply/appforms/
apforms.html.

(c) Under 34 CFR 75.250(b), the
Secretary may provide a grantee with
additional funding for data collection
analysis and reporting. In this case the
Secretary establishes a data collection
period.

4. Performance Measures: The goal of
the SPDG Program is to reform and
improve State systems for personnel
preparation and professional
development in early intervention,
educational, and transition services in
order to improve results for children
with disabilities. Under the Government
Performance and Results Act of 1993
(GPRA), the Department has established
a set of performance measures,
including long-term measures, that are
designed to yield information on
various aspects of the effectiveness and
quality of the SPDG Program. These
measures assess the extent to which:

Projects use professional
development practices supported by evidence to support the attainment of identified competencies.
Participants in SPDG professional development demonstrate improvement in implementation of SPDG-supported practices over time.

Projects use SPDG professional development funds to provide activities designed to sustain the use of SPDG-supported practices.

Special education teachers who meet the qualifications described in section 612(a)(14)(C) of IDEA, as amended by the ESSA, that have participated in SPDG-supported special education teacher retention activities remain as special education teachers two years after their initial participation in these activities.

Each grantee funded under this competition must collect and annually report data related to its performance on these measures in the project’s annual and final performance report to the Department in accordance with section 653(d) of IDEA and 34 CFR 75.590. Applicants should discuss in the application narrative how they propose to collect performance data for these measures.

5. **Continuation Awards:** In making a continuation award under 34 CFR 75.253, the Secretary considers, among other things: Whether a grantee has made substantial progress in achieving the goals and objectives of the project; whether the grantee has expended funds in a manner that is consistent with its approved application and budget; and, if the Secretary has established performance measurement requirements, the performance targets in the grantee’s approved application.

In making a continuation award, the Secretary also considers whether the grantee is operating in compliance with the assurances in its approved application, including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

**VII. Agency Contact**


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

**Electronic Access to This Document:** 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 via the Federal Digital System at: www.gpo.gov/fdsys. At this site you can view this document, as well as all other documents of this Department published in the Federal Register, in text or PDF. To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at the site.

You may also access documents of the Department published in the Federal Register by using the article search feature at: www.federalregister.gov. Specifically, through the advanced search feature at this site, you can limit your search to documents published by the Department.

Dated: February 8, 2017.

Ruth E. Ryder,
Delegated the duties of the Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.

**BILLODJ CODE: 4000–01–P**

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**Request for Comments on Review of Accrediting Agencies**

**AGENCY:** Accreditation Group, Office of Postsecondary Education, U.S. Department of Education.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** This notice provides information to members of the public on submitting written comments for accrediting agencies currently undergoing review for purposes of recognition by the U.S. Secretary of Education. This solicitation of third-party comments concerning the performance of accrediting agencies under review by the Secretary is required by the Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965, as amended.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Herman Bounds, Director, Accreditation Group, Office of Postsecondary Education, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW., Room 6C115, Washington, DC 20202, telephone: (202) 453–7615, or email: herman.bounds@ed.gov.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Agencies under Review and Evaluation:** Below is a list of agencies currently undergoing review and evaluation by the Accreditation Group, including their current and requested scopes of recognition:

**Applications for Renewal of Recognition**

1. American Occupational Therapy Association, Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education, Scope of Recognition: The accreditation of occupational therapy educational programs offering the professional master’s degree, combined baccalaureate/master’s degree, and occupational therapy doctorate (OTD) degree; the accreditation of occupational therapy assistant programs offering the associate degree or a certificate; and the accreditation of these programs offered via distance education.

2. Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education, Scope of Recognition: The accreditation and preaccreditation, within the United States, of professional degree programs in pharmacy leading to the degree of Doctor of Pharmacy, including those programs offered via distance education.

3. Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, Inc., Scope of Recognition: The accreditation of both clinical pastoral education (CPE) centers and Supervisory CPE programs located within the United States and territories.

4. Association for Biblical Higher Education, Scope of Recognition: The accreditation and preaccreditation (“Candidate for Accreditation”), at the undergraduate level, of institutions of biblical higher education in the United States offering both campus-based and distance education instructional programs.

5. American Dental Association, Commission on Dental Accreditation, Scope of Recognition: The accreditation of predental educational programs (leading to the D.D.S. or D.M.D. degree), advanced dental education programs, and allied dental education programs that are fully operational or have attained “Initial Accreditation” status, including programs offered via distance education.

6. Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, Scope of Recognition: The accreditation of nursing education programs in the United States, at the baccalaureate, master’s and doctoral degree levels, including programs offering distance education.

7. Distance Education Accrediting Commission, Scope of Recognition: The accreditation of postsecondary institutions in the United States that...