

NOTICE TO ALL APPLICANTS: EQUITY FOR STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, AND OTHER PROGRAM BENEFICIARIES

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) ([20 U.S.C. 1228a](#)) applies to applicants for grant awards under this program.

ALL APPLICANTS FOR NEW GRANT AWARDS MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IN THEIR APPLICATIONS TO ADDRESS THIS PROVISION IN ORDER TO RECEIVE FUNDING UNDER THIS PROGRAM.

Please respond to the following requests for information:

1. Describe how your entity's existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.

Alabama's Department of Rehabilitation Services existing mission is "One Department. One Mission." Our mission is to enable Alabama's children and adults with disabilities to achieve their maximum potential. To ensure Alabama's children with disabilities can accomplish this, we are committed to reaching all potential children with disabilities through the Child Find system.

Project/Activity: Alabama's Early Intervention participates in the Collective Impact Model for Part C (CIM-C) project. This project study will provide developmental screening procedures, culturally responsive communication, increase multi-sector collaboration, expand Local Child Find Teams (LCFT) to more community programs, and increase referral rates to Part C services of traditionally underserved or under-identified infants and toddlers.

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

Alabama's Early Intervention System (AEIS) is closing the referral gap through CIM-C project; however, AEIS is struggling with recruiting and retaining qualified personnel to serve infants and toddlers. Due to this barrier, high turnover rates and burnout are frequently occurring. Another barrier is having an adequate developmental screening or process in rural communities. 55 out of 67 Alabama counties are considered rural. It is difficult for some rural families to access and afford quality care, which leads to referrals not being made adequately.

3. Based on the barriers identified, what steps will you take to address such barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity?

Alabama has launched an initiative to recruit and retain highly qualified personnel through community collaboration and partnerships. To continue to work with the CIM-C project to improve the infrastructure to ensure equitable screening and referral practices, both in-person and remotely.

4. What is your timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers?
CIM-C is a five-year project cycle. This project began in 2022 and will end in 2027. Year 2-4 we will use referral and tracking systems to reflect stakeholder input and ensure referral rates to Part

C of traditionally underserved or under-identified infants and toddlers are more than Year 1 of the project.

Public awareness committees will target universities, local community agencies, job fairs, health fairs, etc. on a continuously basis to recruit highly qualified personnel to serve infants and toddlers in Alabama.

Notes:

1. Applicants are not required to have mission statements or policies that align with equity in order to submit an application.
2. Applicants may identify any barriers that may impede equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity, including, but not limited to, barriers based on economic disadvantage, gender, race, ethnicity, color, national origin, disability, age, language, migrant status, rural status, homeless status or housing insecurity, pregnancy, parenting, or caregiving status, and sexual orientation.
3. Applicants may have already included some or all of this required information in the narrative sections of their applications or their State Plans. In responding to this requirement, for each question, applicants may provide a cross-reference to the section(s) and page number(s) in their applications or State Plans that includes the information responsive to that question on this form or may restate that information on this form.

Paperwork Burden Statement

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1894-0005. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 3 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering, and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain a benefit. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate or suggestions for improving this individual collection, send your comments to ICDocketMgr@ed.gov and reference OMB Control Number 1894-0005. All other comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual form may be addressed to either (a) the person listed in the FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT section in the competition Notice Inviting Applications, or (b) your assigned program officer.