

**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.

WV Birth to Three has policies in effect to ensure that appropriate early intervention services are available to all infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families as defined in the state plan. (WV State Plan, 1.2, 1.6, 1.9, 1.10, 1.12, 1.13, 2.2, 2.3, 6.1, 6.8, 7.31, 8.0, 9.0, 10.0, 12.2.)

WV Birth to Three has established a Mission and Key Principles highlighting best practices in the provision of early intervention services. All training is based on the mission and key principles. The WVBTT finance system authorizes services based on child and family need as determined through the IFSP process. Practitioners are unaware of the specific fund source supporting the service limiting bias in service decisions.

The WVBTT Online Data System provides information on referral sources, geographic regions, income level, eligibility status, length of stay in program and IFSP services to inform stakeholders in decision making when looking at a potential identification of underserved families.

The Regional Administrative Units conduct child find activities at the local/regional level and report quarterly on those activities. Data is utilized to identify where there are gaps in referrals to inform outreach activities.

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

WV is a very rural state with areas of the state that are very difficult to serve. Personnel shortages sometimes impact access to face-to-face services due to extensive travel time.

WV has a high rate of children who are in out of home placements as a direct result of parents who are experiencing substance use disorders. These children move frequently from placement to placement, may be home with parents who are hesitant to access services due to stigma and who are in recovery.

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?

In December of 2022, WV Birth to Three in collaboration with the Regional Administrative Unit (RAU) Directors met to conceptualize a Recruitment/Retention Implementation Team to address identified practitioner shortages. The purpose of the team is to look at practitioner needs across

the state, identify barriers in recruitment and retention, to design activities to address the issues and to evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented activities.

In September of 2022, WV Birth to Three launched the Building Resilience in Substance Exposed Children and Families Implementation Team. This team is charged with designing professional development activities and other resources to support the field in implementing evidence-based practices to support infants and toddlers who have experienced substance exposure and the caregivers who are raising them.

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

Recruitment/Retention Implementation Team

The Recruitment/Retention team will meet monthly for one year. At the end of the year, the team will review and revise their strategies based on feedback from the stakeholders participating on the team.

Building Resilience Implementation Team targeted activities.

The Building Resilience team will meet monthly for one year. At the end of the year, the team will review and revise their strategies based on feedback from the stakeholders participating on the team.

**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](mailto: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.