

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.

Arizona EI Program (AzEIP)'s [Policy Manual](#) supports a commitment to equitable access by requiring the program implement a child find system that ensures all potentially eligible children are identified, located, and evaluated, including specified demographics that are most at risk of being underserved (Policy Manual 1.7.1 and 1.1.2.E-F). The policy also describes how this effort must be coordinated with other local entities that support Part C services in the state, including special education, maternal health, screening, referral, child safety, and Head Start programs.

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

Arizona continues to address challenges with remote/rural locations, including tribal, military, and religious communities with cultural barriers, poverty, distance, and technology limitations. These barriers can potentially impact referral rates, access to services, and receiving adequate levels and quality of services.

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?

As indicated in AzEIP's SSIP, a review of existing Family Outcomes survey data for representativeness by race, ethnicity, and geographical region is in process. To improve representativeness and ensure a clear picture, analysis by survey question and identification of potential concerns is completed and a plan to address identified concerns is developed. Current strategies include program monitoring, regular technical assistance and training, and a contracted deep-dive equity study with Arizona State University's (ASU) Children's Equity Project.

AzEIP engaged with stakeholders in 2021 for feedback on potential ARPA funding projects. Addressing Child Find/equity was one of the priorities identified which resulted in AzEIP contracting with ASU to conduct a study of underserved communities and compile additional demographic data to measure how effective AzEIP current policies and procedures are at providing equitable access to EI services. The report will identify gaps

and make recommendations on strategies to strengthen AzEIP’s capacity to reach all children and families in need of services. AzEIP has also recently hired a Tribal Relations Liaison position to support engagement and access efforts with tribal communities.

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

The ASU study will conclude by March 31, 2024, at which time AzEIP will use the report metrics and recommendations to formulate a plan with specific actions, milestones and timelines to enhance and build upon current activities that address gaps in equitable access to EI services.

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.

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Paperwork Burden Statement

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