Dated: April 16, 2014.

Kate Mullan,

Acting Director, Information Collection Clearance Division, Privacy, Information and Records Management Services, Office of Management.

[FR Doc. 2014–08982 Filed 4–18–14; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

[Docket No.: ED–2013–ICCD–0156]

Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission to the Office of Management and Budget for Review and Approval; Comment Request; Race to the Top—District Annual Performance Report

AGENCY: Office of the Secretary/Office of the Deputy Secretary (OS), Department of Education (ED).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. chapter 3501 *et seq.*), ED is proposing a new information collection.

DATES: Interested persons are invited to submit comments on or before May 21, 2014.

ADDRESSES: Comments submitted in response to this notice should be submitted electronically through the Federal eRulemaking Portal at *http://www.regulations.gov* by selecting Docket ID number ED–2014–ICCD–0156 or via postal mail, commercial delivery, or hand delivery. *Please note that comments submitted by fax or email and those submitted after the comment period will not be accepted.* Written requests for information or comments submitted by postal mail or delivery should be addressed to the Director of the Information Collection Clearance Division, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW., LBJ, Room 2E105, Washington, DC 20202–4537.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For questions related to collection activities or burden, please call Stephanie Valentine, 202–401–0526 or electronically mail *ICDocketMgr@ed.gov*. Please do not send comments here. We will ONLY accept comments in this mailbox when the regulations.gov site is not available to the public for any reason.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Department of Education (ED), in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA) (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)), provides the general public and Federal agencies with an opportunity to comment on proposed, revised, and continuing collections of information. This helps the Department assess the impact of its information collection requirements and minimize the public's reporting burden. It also helps the public understand the Department's information collection requirements and provide the requested data in the desired format. ED is soliciting comments on the proposed information collection request (ICR) that is described below. The Department of Education is especially interested in public comment addressing the following issues: (1) Is this collection necessary to the proper functions of the Department; (2) will this information be processed and used in a timely manner; (3) is the estimate of burden accurate; (4) how might the Department enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (5) how might the Department minimize the burden of this collection on the respondents, including through the use of information technology. Please note that written comments received in response to this notice will be considered public records.

Title of Collection: Race to the Top—District Annual Performance Report.

OMB Control Number: 1894–NEW.

Type of Review: A new information collection.

Respondents/Affected Public: State, Local, or Tribal Governments.

Total Estimated Number of Annual Responses: 21.

Total Estimated Number of Annual Burden Hours: 1,113.

Abstract: On May 22, 2012, the Secretary announced the Race to the Top District program, which is designed to build on the momentum of other Race to the Top competitions by encouraging bold, innovative reform at the local level. In FY 2012, the Department awarded approximately $383 million to 16 Race to the Top District grantees representing 55 local educational agencies (LEAs), with grants ranging from $10 to $40 million. Applications for the FY 2013 competition are currently under peer review and the Department plans to make awards in December 2013 for a total of approximately $120 million. FY 2013 grantees will utilize the same Annual Performance Report (APR) template as FY 2012 Race to the Top District grantees.

In order to fulfill our responsibilities for programmatic oversight and public reporting, the Department has developed a Race to the Top District Annual Performance Report (APR) that is tied directly to the FY 2012 and FY 2013 Race to the Top District selection criteria and priorities previously established and published in the **Federal Register**. The report is grounded in the key performance targets included in grantees approved Race to the Top District plans. Grantees will be required to report on their progress improving student outcomes and implementing personalized learning environments, including narrative sections on progress and key performance indicators. Each grantee district will submit a Race to the Top District APR on an annual basis. The first report for the 16 FY 2012 districts is anticipated to be collected during spring 2014 with FY 2013 grantees reporting for the first time in spring 2015. Districts will submit the narrative elements and quantitative measures via an online data collection platform that will then be converted into a transparent public display.

Dated: April 15, 2014 .

Stephanie Valentine,

Acting Director, Information Collection Clearance Division, Privacy, Information and Records Management Services, Office of Management.

[FR Doc. 2014–08960 Filed 4–18–14; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

[Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 84.063]

Annual Updates to the Income Contingent Repayment (ICR) Plan Formula for 2014—William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program

AGENCY: Federal Student Aid, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Secretary announces the annual updates to the ICR plan formula for 2014, as required by 34 CFR 685.209(a)(8), to give notice to Direct Loan borrowers and the public regarding how monthly ICR payment amounts will be calculated for the 2014–2015 year.

DATES: The adjustments to the income percentage factors for the ICR plan formula contained in this notice are effective from July 1, 2014, to June 30, 2015, for any borrower who enters the ICR plan or has his or her monthly payment amount recalculated under the ICR plan during that period.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ian Foss, U.S. Department of Education, 830 First Street NE., Room 113H2, Washington, DC 20202. Telephone: (202) 377–3681 or by email: *ian.foss@ed.gov.*

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

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Under the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (Direct Loan) Program, borrowers may choose to repay their loans (Direct Subsidized Loans, Direct Unsubsidized Loans, Direct PLUS Loans made to graduate or professional students, and Direct Consolidation Loans) under the ICR plan. The ICR plan bases the borrower's repayment amount on the borrower's income, family size, loan amount, and the interest rate applicable to each of the borrower's loans.

A Direct Loan borrower who repays his or her loans under the ICR plan pays the lesser of: (1) The amount that he or she would pay over 12 years with fixed payments multiplied by an income percentage factor or (2) 20 percent of discretionary income.

Each year, to reflect changes in inflation, we adjust the income percentage factor used to calculate a borrower's ICR payment. We use the adjusted income percentage factors to calculate a borrower's monthly ICR payment amount when the borrower initially applies for the ICR plan or when the borrower submits his or her annual income documentation, as required under the ICR plan. This notice contains the adjusted income percentage factors for 2014, examples of how the monthly payment amount in ICR is calculated, and charts showing sample repayment amounts based on the adjusted ICR plan formula. This information is included in the following three attachments:

- *Attachment 1—Income Percentage Factors for 2014*
- *Attachment 2—Examples of the Calculations of Monthly Repayment Amounts*
- *Attachment 3—Charts Showing Sample Repayment Amounts for Single and Married Borrowers*

In Attachment 1, to reflect changes in inflation, we have updated the income percentage factors that were published in the **Federal Register** on June 4, 2013 (78 FR 33395). Specifically we have revised the table of income percentage factors by changing the dollar amounts of the incomes shown by a percentage equal to the estimated percentage change between the not-seasonally-adjusted Consumer Price Index for all urban consumers for December 2013 and December 2014.

The income percentage factors reflected in Attachment 1 may cause a borrower's payments to be lower than they were in prior years, even if the borrower's income is the same as in the prior year. However, the revised repayment amount more accurately reflects the impact of inflation on the borrower's current ability to repay.

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

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 Adobe Portable Document Format (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.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1087 et seq.

Dated: April 15, 2014.

James W. Runcie,

Chief Operating Officer, Federal Student Aid.

Attachment 1--Income Percentage Factors for 2014

Income Percentage Factors for 2014			
Single		Married/ Head of Household	
Income	% Factor	Income	% Factor
$10,877	55.00%	$10,877	50.52%
$14,966	57.79%	$17,162	56.68%
$19,258	60.57%	$20,452	59.56%
$23,646	66.23%	$26,737	67.79%
$27,838	71.89%	$33,123	75.22%
$33,123	80.33%	$41,604	87.61%
$41,604	88.77%	$52,177	100.00%
$52,178	100.00%	$62,756	100.00%
$62,756	100.00%	$78,622	109.40%
$75,425	111.80%	$105,058	125.00%
$96,579	123.50%	$142,072	140.60%
$136,787	141.20%	$198,695	150.00%
$156,839	150.00%	$324,683	200.00%
$279,358	200.00%	-	-

Attachment 2—Examples of the Calculations of Monthly Repayment Amounts

General notes about the examples in this attachment:

- We have a calculator that borrowers can use to estimate what their payment amount would be under the ICR plan. The calculator is called the ''Repayment Estimator'' and is available at *StudentAid.gov/repayment-estimator.* This calculator provides a detailed, individualized assessment of a borrower's loans and repayment plan options, including the ICR plan.
- The interest rates used in the examples are for illustration only. The actual interest rates on an individual borrower's Direct Loans depend on the loan type and when the postsecondary institution first disbursed the Direct Loan to the borrower.
- The Poverty Guideline amounts used in the examples are from the 2014 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Poverty Guidelines for the 48 contiguous States and the District of Columbia. Different Poverty Guidelines apply to residents of Alaska and Hawaii. The Poverty Guidelines for 2014 were published in the **Federal Register** on January 22, 2014 (79 FR 3593).
- All of the examples use an income percentage factor corresponding to an adjusted gross income (AGI) in the table in Attachment 1. If your AGI is not listed in the income percentage factors table in Attachment 1, calculate the applicable income percentage by following the instructions under the heading later in this attachment.
- Married borrowers may repay their Direct Loans jointly under the ICR plan. If a married couple elects this option, we add the outstanding balance on the Direct Loans of each borrower and we add together both borrowers' AGIs to determine a joint ICR payment amount. We then prorate the joint payment amount for each borrower based on the proportion of that borrower's debt to the total outstanding balance. We bill each borrower separately.
- For example, if a married couple, John and Sally, has a total outstanding Direct Loan debt of $60,000, of which $40,000 belongs to John and $20,000 to Sally, we would apportion 67 percent of the monthly ICR payment to John and the remaining 33 percent to Sally. To take advantage of a joint ICR payment, married couples need not file taxes jointly; they may file separately and subsequently provide the other spouse's tax information to the borrower's Federal loan servicer.

Calculating the Monthly Payment Amount Using a Standard Amortization and a 12-Year Repayment Period.

The formula to amortize a loan with a standard schedule (in which each payment is the same over the course of the repayment period) is as follows:

$M = P \times \langle (I \div 12) \div [1 - \{1 + (I \div 12)\} - -N] \rangle$

In the formula—

- M is the monthly payment amount;
- P is the outstanding principal balance of the loan at the time the calculation is performed;
- I is the annual interest rate on the loan, expressed as a decimal (for example, for a loan with an interest rate of 6.8 percent, 0.068); and
- N is the total number of months in the repayment period (for example, for a loan with a 12-year repayment period, 144 months).

For example, assume that Billy has a $10,000 Direct Unsubsidized Loan with an interest rate of 6.8 percent.

Step 1: To solve for M, first simplify the numerator of the fraction by which we multiply P, the outstanding principal balance. To do this divide I, the interest rate, as a decimal, by 12. In this example, Billy's interest rate is 6.8 percent. As a decimal, 6.8 percent is 0.068.

- $0.068 \div 12 = 0.005667$

Step 2: Next, simplify the denominator of the fraction by which we multiply P. To do this divide I, the interest rate, as a decimal, by 12. Then, add one. Next, raise the sum of the two figures to the negative power that corresponds to the length of the repayment period in months. In this example, because we are amortizing a loan to calculate the monthly payment amount under the ICR plan, the applicable figure is 12 years, which is 144 months. Finally, subtract one from the result.

- 0.068 ÷ 12 = 0.005667
- 1 + 0.005667 = 1.005667
- 1.005667 ∧ −144 = 0.44319544
- 1 − 0.44319554 = 0.55680456

Step 3: Next, resolve the fraction by dividing the result from step one by the result from step two.

- 0.005667 ÷ 0.55680456 = 0.01017772

Step 4: Finally, solve for M, the monthly payment amount, by multiplying the outstanding principal balance of the loan by the result of step 3.

- $10,000 × 0.01017772 = $101.78

The remainder of the examples in this attachment will only show the results of the formula.

Example 1. Brenda is single with no dependents and has $15,000 in Direct Subsidized and Unsubsidized Loans. The interest rate on Brenda's loans is 6.80 percent, and she has an AGI of $27,838.

Step 1: Determine the total monthly payment amount based on what Brenda would pay over 12 years using standard amortization. To do this, use the formula that precedes Example 1. In this example, the monthly payment amount would be $152.67.

Step 2: Multiply the result of Step 1 by the income percentage factor shown in the income percentage factors table (see Attachment 1 to this notice) that corresponds to Brenda's AGI. In this example, an AGI of $27,838 corresponds to an income percentage factor of 71.89 percent.

- 0.7189 × $152.66 = $109.75

Step 3: Determine 20 percent of Brenda's discretionary income and divide by 12 (discretionary income is AGI minus the HHS Poverty Guideline amount for a borrower's family size and State of residence). For Brenda, subtract the Poverty Guideline amount for a family of one from her AGI, multiply the result by 20 percent, and then divide by 12:

- $27,838 − $11,670 = $16,168
- $16,168 × 0.20 = $3,233.60
- $3,233.60 ÷ 12 = $269.47

Step 4: Compare the amount from Step 2 with the amount from Step 3. The lower of the two will be the monthly ICR payment amount. In this example, Brenda will be paying the amount calculated under Step 2 ($109.75).

Example 2. Joseph is married to Susan and has no dependents. Joseph has a Direct Loan balance of $10,000, and Susan has a Direct Loan balance of $15,000. The interest rate on all of the loans is 6.80 percent.

Joseph and Susan have a combined AGI of $78,622 and are repaying their loans jointly under the ICR plan (for general information regarding joint ICR payments for married couples, see the fifth and sixth bullets under the heading "General notes about the examples in this attachment").

Step 1: Add Joseph's and Susan's Direct Loan balances to determine their combined aggregate loan balance:

- $10,000 + $15,000 = $25,000

Step 2: Determine the combined monthly payment amount for Joseph and Susan based on what both borrowers would pay over 12 years using standard amortization. To do this, use the formula that precedes Example 1. In this example, the combined monthly payment amount would be $254.44.

Step 3: Multiply the result of Step 2 by the income percentage factor shown in the income percentage factors table (see Attachment 1 to this notice) that corresponds to Joseph and Susan's combined AGI. In this example, the combined AGI of $78,622 corresponds to an income percentage factor of 109.40 percent.

- 1.094 × $254.44 = $278.36

Step 4: Determine 20 percent of Joseph and Susan's combined discretionary income (discretionary income is AGI minus the HHS Poverty Guideline amount for a borrower's family size and State of residence). To do this subtract the Poverty Guideline amount for a family of two from the combined AGI, multiply the result by 20 percent, and divide by 12:

- $78,622 − $15,730 = $62,892
- $62,892 × 0.20 = $12,578.40
- $12,578.40 ÷ 12 = $1,048.20

Step 5: Compare the amount from Step 3 with the amount from Step 4. The lower of the two will be Joseph and Susan's joint monthly payment amount. Joseph and Susan will jointly pay the amount calculated under Step 3 ($278.36).

Step 6: Because Joseph and Susan are jointly repaying their Direct Loans under the ICR plan, the monthly payment amount calculated under Step 4 applies to both Joseph and Susan's loans. To determine the amount for which each borrower will be responsible, prorate the amount calculated under Step 4 by each spouse's share of the combined Direct Loan debt. Joseph has a Direct Loan debt of $10,000 and Susan has a Direct Loan Debt of $15,000. For Joseph, the monthly payment amount will be:

- $10,000 ÷ ($10,000 + $15,000) = 40 percent
- 0.40 × $278.36 = $111.34

For Susan, the monthly payment amount will be:

- $15,000 ÷ ($10,000 + $15,000) = 60 percent
- 0.60 × $278.36 = $167.02

Example 3. David is single with no dependents and has $60,000 in Direct Subsidized and Unsubsidized Loans. The interest rate on all of the loans is 6.80 percent, and David's AGI is $33,123.

Step 1: Determine the total monthly payment amount based on what David would pay over 12 years using standard amortization. To do this, use the formula that precedes Example 1. In this example, the monthly payment amount would be $610.66.

Step 2: Multiply the result of Step 1 by the income percentage factor shown in the income percentage factors table (see Attachment 1 to this notice) that corresponds to David's AGI. In this example, an AGI of $32,552 corresponds to an income percentage factor of 80.33 percent.

- 0.8033 × $610.66 = $490.54

Step 3: Determine 20 percent of David's discretionary income and divide by 12 (discretionary income is AGI minus the HHS Poverty Guideline amount for a borrower's family size and State of residence). To do this subtract the Poverty Guideline amount for a family of one from David's AGI, multiply the result by 20 percent, then divide by 12:

- $33,123 − $11,670 = $21,453
- $21,453 × 0.20 = $4,290.60
- $4,290.60 ÷ 12 = $357.55

Step 4: Compare the amount from Step 2 with the amount from Step 3. The lower of the two will be David's monthly payment amount. In this example, David will be paying the amount calculated under Step 3 ($357.55).

Interpolation. If an income is not included on the income percentage factor table, calculate the income percentage factor through linear interpolation. For example, assume that Joan is single with an income of $50,000.

Step 1: Find the closest income listed that is less than Joan's income ($50,000) and the closest income listed that is greater than Joan's income ($50,000).

Step 2: Subtract the lower amount from the higher amount (for this discussion we will call the result the ''income interval''):

- $52,178 − $41,604 = $10,574

Step 3: Determine the difference between the two income percentage factors that correspond to the incomes used in Step 2 (for this discussion, we will call the result the ''income percentage factor interval''):

- 100.00 percent − 88.77 percent = 11.23 percent

Step 4: Subtract from Joan's income the closest income shown on the chart that is less than Joan's income of $50,000:

- $50,000 − $41,604 = $8,396

Step 5: Divide the result of Step 4 by the income interval determined in Step 2:

- $8,396 ÷ $10,574 = 79.40 percent

Step 6: Multiply the result of Step 5 by the income percentage factor interval:

- 11.23 percent × 79.40 percent = 8.917 percent

Step 7: Add the result of Step 6 to the lower of the two income percentage factors used in Step 3 to calculate the income percentage factor interval for $50,000 in income:

- 8.917 percent + 88.77 percent = 97.69 percent (rounded to the nearest hundredth)

The result is the income percentage factor that we will use to calculate Joan's monthly repayment amount under the ICR plan.

Attachment 3—Charts Showing Sample Repayment Amounts for Single and Married Borrowers

BILLING CODE 4000–01–P

Sample First-Year Monthly Repayment Amounts for a Single Borrower at Various Income and Debt Levels										
	Family Size = 1									
	Direct Loan Debt									
Income	$10,000	$20,000	$30,000	$40,000	$50,000	$60,000	$70,000	$80,000	$90,000	$100,000
$10,000	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
$12,500	$14	$14	$14	$14	$14	$14	$14	$14	$14	$14
$15,000	$56	$56	$56	$56	$56	$56	$56	$56	$56	$56
$17,500	$60	$97	$97	$97	$97	$97	$97	$97	$97	$97
$20,000	$63	$125	$139	$139	$139	$139	$139	$139	$139	$139
$22,500	$66	$132	$181	$181	$181	$181	$181	$181	$181	$181
$25,000	$69	$139	$208	$222	$222	$222	$222	$222	$222	$222
$30,000	$77	$153	$230	$306	$306	$306	$306	$306	$306	$306
$35,000	$84	$167	$251	$335	$389	$389	$389	$389	$389	$389
$40,000	$89	$177	$266	$355	$444	$472	$472	$472	$472	$472
$45,000	$94	$188	$282	$376	$470	$556	$556	$556	$556	$556
$50,000	$99	$199	$298	$398	$497	$597	$639	$639	$639	$639
$60,000	$102	$204	$305	$407	$509	$611	$712	$806	$806	$806
$70,000	$109	$217	$326	$435	$543	$652	$760	$869	$972	$972
$80,000	$116	$233	$349	$465	$582	$698	$815	$931	$1,047	$1,139

$90,000	$122	$244	$366	$488	$610	$732	$854	$976	$1,098	$1,220
$100,000	$127	$254	$382	$509	$636	$763	$891	$1,018	$1,145	$1,272

Sample repayment amounts are based on an interest rate of 6.80%

Sample First-Year Monthly Repayment Amounts for a Married or Head-of-Household Borrower at Various Income and Debt Levels

	Family Size = 3									
	Direct Loan Debt									
Income	$10,000	$20,000	$30,000	$40,000	$50,000	$60,000	$70,000	$80,000	$90,000	$100,000
$10,000	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
$12,500	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
$15,000	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
$17,500	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
$20,000	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4	$4
$22,500	$45	$45	$45	$45	$45	$45	$45	$45	$45	$45
$25,000	$67	$87	$87	$87	$87	$87	$87	$87	$87	$87
$30,000	$73	$146	$170	$170	$170	$170	$170	$170	$170	$170
$35,000	$79	$159	$238	$254	$254	$254	$254	$254	$254	$254
$40,000	$87	$174	$260	$337	$337	$337	$337	$337	$337	$337
$45,000	$93	$186	$280	$373	$420	$420	$420	$420	$420	$420
$50,000	$99	$198	$298	$397	$496	$504	$504	$504	$504	$504
$60,000	$102	$204	$305	$407	$509	$611	$670	$670	$670	$670
$70,000	$106	$212	$318	$425	$531	$637	$743	$837	$837	$837
$80,000	$112	$224	$337	$449	$561	$673	$785	$897	$1,004	$1,004
$90,000	$118	$236	$355	$473	$591	$709	$827	$945	$1,064	$1,170
$100,000	$124	$248	$373	$497	$621	$745	$869	$993	$1,118	$1,242

Sample repayment amounts are based on an interest rate of 6.80%

[FR Doc. 2014–08966 Filed 4–18–14; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000–01–C

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Applications for New Awards; Personnel Development to Improve Services and Results for Children With Disabilities—Leadership Consortia in Sensory Disabilities and Disabilities Associated With Intensive Service Needs

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

ACTION: Notice.

Overview Information

Personnel Development to Improve Services and Results for Children with Disabilities—Leadership Consortia in Sensory Disabilities and Disabilities Associated with Intensive Service Needs

Notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year (FY) 2014.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 84.325H.

DATES: *Applications Available:* April 21, 2014.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: June 5, 2014.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: August 4, 2014.

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The purposes of this program are to (1) help address State-identified needs for highly qualified personnel in special education, related services, early intervention, and regular education to work with children, including infants and toddlers, with disabilities; and (2) ensure that those personnel have the necessary skills and knowledge, derived from practices that have been determined through scientifically based research and experience, to be successful in serving those children.

Priorities: This competition has one absolute priority with two focus areas. In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(v), the absolute priority is from allowable activities specified in the statute (see sections 662 and 681 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)).

Absolute Priority: For FY 2014 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applicants from this competition, this priority is an absolute priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), we consider only applications that meet this priority.

This priority is:

Personnel Development to Improve Services and Results for Children With Disabilities—Leadership Consortia in Sensory Disabilities and Disabilities Associated with Intensive Service Needs

Background

Over the last two decades, the need for leadership personnel who are prepared at the doctoral level to fill faculty positions in special education, early intervention, and related services has increased (Sindelar & Taylor, 1988; Smith & Lovett, 1987; Smith, Pion, & Tyler, 2004; Smith, Robb, West, & Tyler, 2010; Woods & Snyder, 2009). The need is even greater for faculty focusing on sensory disabilities or disabilities associated with intensive service needs. In many cases, the difficulty of recruiting doctoral-level faculty to fill vacant positions, combined with the high cost to universities of maintaining highly specialized programs, often put even long-standing programs at risk of being closed (Dilka, Haydon, & Mertens, 2007; Evans, Elliot, Hood, Driggs, Mori, & Johnson, 2005; Huebner, Merk-Adam, Stryker, & Wolfe, 2004; Johnson, 2003). Faculty members in these programs are responsible for teacher and service provider preparation as well as conducting research on best practices. These faculty shortages will reduce the supply of effective teachers and service providers for this high-need group of infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities while also restricting the evidence base on best practices for supporting these populations.

Doctoral-level personnel are also needed to serve in administrative positions in State educational agencies (SEAs), local educational agencies (LEAs), lead agencies (LAs), and early intervention services programs (EIS programs), where they supervise and evaluate the implementation of evidence-based interventions and instructional programs to make sure that State or local agencies are meeting the needs of children with disabilities. A shortage of doctoral-level personnel preparing service providers, conducting research on best practices, and serving as administrators at the State and local level can negatively affect the provision of services to children with sensory impairments and intensive service needs.

Few university programs include specialized training in sensory disabilities and few have training programs to address students with disabilities with intensive service needs. Those universities that have these programs often have only one faculty position because of shortages of highly skilled doctoral-level personnel and the high cost of maintaining these programs. Single-faculty programs are limited in the number of scholars they can prepare and mentor, and they are limited in the range of the academic curriculum and the diversity of opportunities available to scholars. The scarcity of specialized training programs in turn limits the opportunity for scholars to pursue doctoral degrees in these high-need areas. Often, these programs only admit a small number of scholars each year due to faculty constraints.

The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) has funded leadership preparation consortia in sensory disabilities (blind and visually impaired, deaf-blind, and deaf and hard of hearing) since 2004. The academic and career outcomes of consortium scholars are exceptional. The national median time to complete a doctorate in education is 11.7 years, while median time to completion for consortium scholars is 3.1 years (U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, 2013). Nationally, reported rates of attrition vary from 40–70 percent for doctoral programs in education (Washburn-Moses, 2008), compared to the consortia rate of 6 percent. Further, all consortium scholars were immediately employed in leadership positions following completion of their degrees. Additional information about the consortia, the scholars, and program outcomes is located at the following Web sites: *www.salus.edu/nclvi/* and *www.salus.edu/nlcsd/*.

The purpose of this priority is to support two leadership training consortia to prepare doctoral-level leaders in special education, early intervention, and related services. Each university consortium will prepare doctoral-level leaders with highly specialized skills, knowledge, and expertise in sensory disabilities or students with disabilities with intensive service needs, respectively. The consortia will prepare leaders who can act effectively in leadership positions in universities, SEAs, LEAs, LAs, EIS programs, or schools.

Priority

The purpose of the Leadership Consortia in Sensory Disabilities and Disabilities Associated with Intensive Service Needs [1] priority is to increase

[1] For the purpose of this absolute priority ''intensive service needs'' or ''intensive, specialized service areas,'' refer to cases where infants, toddlers, preschoolers and children have a complex