

application as part of your binding commitments under the grant.

3. *Grant Administration:* Applicants approved for funding under this competition may be required to attend a one- or two-day Grants Administration meeting in Washington, DC during the first year of the grant. In addition, applicants should budget for one Project Directors meeting to be held in Washington, DC in each subsequent year of the grant. The cost of attending these meetings may be paid from Star Schools program grant funds or other resources.

4. *Reporting:* 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 multi-year award, you must submit an annual performance report that provides the most current performance and financial expenditure information as specified by the Secretary in 34 CFR 75.118. For specific requirements on grantee reporting, please go to <http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>.

5. *Performance Measures:* The Department is currently developing measures that will be designed to yield information on the effectiveness of grant-supported activities. If funded, applicants will be expected to participate in collecting and reporting data for these measures. We will notify grantees of the performance measures once they are developed.

VII. Agency Contacts

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Donald Fork or Jean Tolliver, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20202–5900. Telephone: (202) 205–5633 (Donald Fork) or (301) 925–8402 (Jean Tolliver) or by e-mail: Donald.Fork@ed.gov or Jean.Tolliver@ed.gov.

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), you may call the Federal Relay Service (FRS) at 1–800–877–8339.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain this document in an alternative format (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, or computer diskette) on request to the program contact persons listed in this section.

VIII. Other Information

Electronic Access to This Document: You may 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) on the Internet at the

following site: <http://www.ed.gov/news/fedregister>.

To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at this site. If you have questions about using PDF, call the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO), toll free, at 1–888–293–6498; or in the Washington, DC, area at (202) 512–1530.

Note: 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 on GPO Access at: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/nara/index.html>.

Dated: March 3, 2005.

Michael J. Petrilli,

Acting Assistant Deputy Secretary for Innovation and Improvement.

[FR Doc. 05–4441 Filed 3–7–05; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services; Overview Information; Technology and Media Services for Individuals with Disabilities-Steppingstones of Technology Innovation for Students with Disabilities; Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year (FY) 2005

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 84.327A.

Note: This notice includes one priority with two phases, and funding information for each phase of the competition.

DATES: *Applications Available:* March 9, 2005.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: See chart in the Award Information section in this notice.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: See chart in the Award Information section in this notice.

Eligible Applicants: State educational agencies (SEAs); local educational agencies (LEAs); public charter schools that are LEAs under State law; institutions of higher education (IHEs); other public agencies; private nonprofit organizations; outlying areas; freely associated States; Indian tribes or tribal organizations; and for-profit organizations.

Estimated Available Funds: \$3,000,000.

Funding information regarding each phase of the priority is listed in the chart (chart) in Section II. Award Information in this notice.

Maximum Award: The Secretary does not intend to fund a Phase 1 application

that proposes a budget exceeding \$200,000 for a single budget period of 12 months or a Phase 2 application that proposes a budget exceeding \$300,000 for a single budget period of 12 months.

Estimated Range of Awards: See chart.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: See chart.

Estimated Number of Awards: See chart.

Project Period: See chart.

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The purpose of the program is to: (1) Improve results for children with disabilities by promoting the development, demonstration, and use of technology, (2) support educational media services activities designed to be of educational value in the classroom setting to children with disabilities, and (3) provide support for captioning and video description that is appropriate for use in the classroom setting.

Priority: In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(v), this priority is from allowable activities specified in the statute (see sections 674 and 681(d) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)).

Absolute Priority: For FY 2005 this priority is an absolute priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), we consider only applications that meet this priority.

This priority is:

Technology and Media Services for Individuals With Disabilities—Steppingstones of Technology Innovation for Students With Disabilities

Applicants must—

(a) Describe a technology-based approach for improving the results of early intervention, or preschool, elementary, middle school, or high school education for children with disabilities. The technology-based approach must be an innovative combination of a new technology and additional materials and methodologies that enable the technology to improve educational or early intervention results for children with disabilities;

(b) Present a justification, based on scientifically rigorous research or theory that supports the potential effectiveness of the technology-based approach for improving the results of education or early intervention for children with disabilities. Results studied under this priority must focus on child outcomes, rather than on parent or professional outcomes. Child outcomes can include improved academic or pre-academic

skills, improved behavioral or social functioning, improved functional performance, *etc.*, provided that valid and reliable measurement instruments are employed. Technology-based approaches intended for use by professionals or parents are not appropriate for funding under this priority unless child-level benefits are clearly demonstrated. Technology-based approaches for professional development will not be funded under this priority;

(c) Provide a detailed plan for conducting work in one of the following two phases:

(1) Phase 1—Development: Projects funded under Phase 1 must develop and refine a technology-based approach, and test its feasibility for use with children with disabilities. Activities may include development, adaptation, and refinement of technology, materials, or methodologies. Activities must include formative evaluation of usability and feasibility. The primary product of Phase 1 should be a promising technology-based approach that is suitable for field-based evaluation of effectiveness in improving results for children with disabilities.

(2) Phase 2—Research on Effectiveness: Projects funded under Phase 2 must select a promising technology-based approach that has been developed and tested in a manner consistent with Phase 1, and subject the approach to rigorous field-based research to determine effectiveness in educational or early intervention settings. Approaches studied in Phase 2 may have been developed with previous funding under this priority or with funding from other sources. Phase 2 is primarily intended to produce sound research-based evidence that the approach can improve educational or early intervention results for children with disabilities in a defined range of real world contexts.

Phase 2 research is intended to pose a causal question and should employ randomized assignment to treatment and comparison conditions, unless a strong justification is made for why a randomized trial is not possible. In this case, the applicant must employ alternatives that substantially minimize selection bias or allow it to be modeled. These alternatives include appropriately structured regression-discontinuity designs and natural experiments in which naturally occurring circumstances or institutions (perhaps unintentionally) divide people into treatment and comparison groups in a manner akin to purposeful random assignment. Applicants proposing to use

an alternative system must, first, make a compelling case that randomization is not possible and, second, describe in detail how the procedures will result in substantially minimizing the effects of selection bias on estimates of effect size. Choice of randomizing unit or units (*e.g.*, students, classrooms, schools) must be grounded in a theoretical framework. Observational, survey, or qualitative methodologies may complement experimental methodologies to assist in the identification of factors that may explain the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the approach. Applications should provide research designs that permit the identification and assessment of factors impacting the fidelity of implementation. Mediating and moderating variables that are both measured in the practice or model condition and are likely to affect outcomes in the comparison condition should be measured in the comparison condition (*e.g.*, student time-on-task, teacher experience and time in position).

Phase 2 research must be of sufficient power to provide convincing evidence of the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the technology-based approach under study, at least within a defined range of settings. Applicants should provide documentation that available sample sizes, methodologies, and treatment effects are likely to result in conclusive findings regarding effectiveness of the technology based approach.

(d) Provide a plan for forming collaborative relationships with vendors and/or other dissemination or marketing resources to ensure that the technology-based approach is widely available if sufficient evidence of effectiveness has been obtained. Applicants should document the availability and/or participation of dissemination or marketing resources. Applicants are encouraged to plan these collaborative relationships early in their projects, even in Phase 1, but should refrain from widespread dissemination to practitioners until evidence of effectiveness has been obtained.

(e) Budget for an annual two-day Project Directors' meeting in Washington, DC, and another annual two-day trip to Washington, DC to collaborate with the Federal project officer and the other projects funded under this priority to share information, and discuss findings and methods of dissemination.

(f) If the project maintains a Web site, include relevant information and documents in a form that meets a government or industry-recognized

standard for accessibility. If the project produces instructional materials for dissemination, it must produce them in accessible formats, including complying with the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard (NIMAS) standards for textual materials.

Within this absolute priority, we intend to fund at least two projects led by a project director or principal investigator in the initial phase of his or her career. For purposes of this priority, the initial phase of an individual's career is considered to be the first three years after completing and graduating from a doctoral program (*i.e.*, for FY 2005 awards, projects may support individuals who completed a doctoral program and graduated no earlier than the 2001–2002 academic year). To qualify for this consideration, the applicant must explicitly state and document that the project director or principal investigator is in the initial phase of his or her career. At least 50 percent of the initial career researcher's time must be devoted to the project.

Within this absolute priority, we also intend to fund at least two projects focusing on technology-based approaches for children with disabilities, ages birth to age 3.

Waiver of Proposed Rulemaking: Under the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) (5 U.S.C. 553), the Department generally offers interested parties the opportunity to comment on proposed priorities. However, section 681(d) of the IDEA makes the public comment requirements of the APA inapplicable to the priority in this notice.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1474 and 1481.

Applicable Regulations: The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 74, 75, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 84, 85, 86, 97, 98, and 99.

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: \$3,000,000.

Maximum Award: The Secretary does not intend to fund a Phase 1 application that proposes a budget exceeding \$200,000 for a single budget period of 12 months or a Phase 2 application that proposes a budget exceeding \$300,000 for a single budget period of 12 months.

STEPPINGSTONES OF TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES APPLICATION NOTICE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2005

CFDA number and name	Deadline for transmittal of applications	Deadline for intergovernmental review	Estimated available funds	Estimated range of awards	Estimated average size of awards	Estimated number of awards
84.327A—Steppingstones of Technology Innovation for Students With Disabilities:						
Phase 1—Development	May 6, 2005	July 5, 2005	\$1,200,000	\$100,000–\$200,000	\$200,000	6
Phase 2—Research on Effectiveness	May 6, 2005	July 5, 2005	1,800,000	200,000–300,000	300,000	6

Project Period: Projects funded under Phase 1 will be funded for up to 24 months. Projects funded under Phase 2 will be funded for up to 24 months unless a compelling rationale is provided for funding up to 36 months.

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

III. Eligibility Information

1. *Eligible Applicants:* SEAs; LEAs; public charter schools that are LEAs under State law; IHEs; other public agencies; private nonprofit organizations; outlying areas; freely associated States; Indian tribes or tribal organizations; and for-profit organizations.

2. *Cost Sharing or Matching:* This competition does not involve cost sharing or matching.

3. *Other: General Requirements—(a)* The projects funded under this competition must make positive efforts to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities (see section 606 of the IDEA).

(b) Applicants and grant recipients funded under this competition must involve individuals with disabilities or parents of individuals with disabilities ages birth through 26 in planning, implementing, and evaluating the projects (see section 682(a)(1)(A) of the IDEA).

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. *Address To Request Application Package:* Education Publications Center (ED Pubs), P.O. Box 1398, Jessup, MD 20794–1398. Telephone (toll free): 1–877–433–7827. FAX: (301) 470–1244. If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), you may call (toll free): 1–877–576–7734.

You may also contact ED Pubs at its Web site: <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/edpubs.html> or you may contact ED Pubs at its e-mail address: edpubs@inet.ed.gov.

If you request an application from ED Pubs, be sure to identify this competition as follows: CFDA Number 84.327A.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain a copy of the application package in an alternative format (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) by contacting the Grants and Contracts Services Team listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** in section VII of this notice.

2. *Content and Form of Application Submission:* Requirements concerning the content 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 the equivalent of no more than 50 pages, using the following standards:

- A “page” is 8.5” x 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, references, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs.

- Use a font that is either 12 point or larger or no smaller than 10 pitch (characters per inch).

The page limit does 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 one-page abstract, the resumes, the bibliography, the references, or the letters of support. However, you must include all of the application narrative in Part III.

We will reject your application if—

- You apply these standards and exceed the page limit; or
- You apply other standards and exceed the equivalent of the page limit.

3. *Submission Dates and Times:*
Applications Available: March 9, 2005.
Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: See chart.

Applications for grants under this competition may be submitted electronically using the Grants.gov Apply site (Grants.gov), or in paper format by mail or hand delivery. For information (including dates and times) about how to submit your application electronically, or by mail or hand delivery, please refer to section IV. 6. *Other Submission Requirements* in this notice.

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

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: See chart.

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. *Other Submission Requirements:* Applications for grants under this competition may be submitted electronically or in paper format by mail or hand delivery.

a. *Electronic Submission of Applications.*

We have been accepting applications electronically through the Department's e-Application system since FY 2000. In order to expand on those efforts and comply with the President's Management Agenda, we are continuing to participate as a partner in the new government wide Grants.gov Apply site in FY 2005. Steppingstones of Technology Innovation for Students with Disabilities—CFDA Number 84.327A is one of the competitions included in this project.

If you choose to submit your application electronically, you must use the Grants.gov Apply site (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 e-mail an electronic copy of a grant application to us. We request your participation in Grants.gov. You may access the electronic grant application for the Steppingstones of Technology Innovation for Students with Disabilities—CFDA Number 84.327A competition at: <http://www.grants.gov>. You must search for the downloadable application package

for this program by the CFDA number. Do not include the CFDA number's alpha suffix in your search.

Please note the following:

- Your participation in Grants.gov is voluntary.
- 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 time and date stamped. Your application must be fully uploaded and submitted with a date/time received by the Grants.gov system no later than 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. We will not consider your application if it was received by the Grants.gov system later than 4:30 p.m. on the application deadline date. When we retrieve your application from Grants.gov, we will notify you if we are rejecting your application because it was submitted after 4:30 p.m. on the application deadline date.
- If you experience technical difficulties on the application deadline date and are unable to meet the 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, deadline, print out your application and follow the instructions in this notice for the submission of paper applications by mail or hand delivery.
- 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 application 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 your application is submitted timely to the Grants.gov system.
- To use Grants.gov, you, as the applicant, must have a D-U-N-S Number and register in the Central Contractor Registry (CCR). You should allow a minimum of five business days to complete the CCR registration.
- You will not receive additional point value because you submit your application in electronic format, nor will we penalize you if you submit your application in paper format.
- You may submit all documents electronically, including all information typically included on the Application for Federal Education Assistance (ED 424), Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs (ED 524), and all

necessary assurances and certifications. Any narrative sections of your application should be attached as files in a .DOC (document), .RTF (rich text) or .PDF (Portable Document) format.

- Your electronic application must comply with any page limit requirements described in this notice.
- After you electronically submit your application, you will receive an automatic acknowledgement from Grants.gov that contains a Grants.gov tracking number. The Department will retrieve your application from Grants.gov and send you a second confirmation by e-mail that will include a PR/Award number (an ED-specified identifying number unique to your application).
- We may request that you provide us original signatures on forms at a later date.

b. *Submission of Paper Applications by Mail.*

If you submit your application in paper format by mail (through the U.S. Postal Service or a commercial carrier), you must mail the original and two copies of your application, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the applicable following address:

By mail through the U.S. Postal Service: U.S. Department of Education, Application Control Center, Attention: (CFDA Number 84.327A), 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20202-4260; or

By mail through a commercial carrier: U.S. Department of Education, Application Control Center—Stop 4260, Attention: (CFDA Number 84.327A), 7100 Old Landover Road, Landover, MD 20785-1506.

Regardless of which address you use, you must show proof of mailing consisting of one of the following:

- (1) A legibly dated U.S. Postal Service postmark,
- (2) A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the U.S. Postal Service,
- (3) A dated shipping label, invoice, or receipt from a commercial carrier, or
- (4) 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:

- (1) A private metered postmark, or
- (2) A mail receipt that is not dated by the U.S. Postal Service.

If your application is postmarked after the application deadline date, we will not consider your application.

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.

c. *Submission of Paper Applications by Hand Delivery.* If you submit your application in paper format by hand delivery, you (or a courier service) 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 84.327A), 550 12th Street, SW., Room 7041, Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC 20202-4260.

The Application Control Center accepts hand deliveries daily between 8 a.m. and 4:30 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 4 of the Application for Federal Education Assistance (ED 424) the CFDA number—and suffix letter, if any—of the competition under which you are submitting your application.

(2) The Application Control Center will mail a grant application receipt acknowledgment to you. If you do not receive the grant application receipt acknowledgment 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

Selection Criteria: The selection criteria for this competition are from 34 CFR 75.210 of EDGAR and are listed in the application package.

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). We may also notify you informally.

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:* 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 multi-year award, you must submit an annual performance report that provides the most current performance and financial expenditure information as specified by the Secretary in 34 CFR 75.118.

4. *Performance Measures:* Under the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), the Department is currently developing measures that will yield information on various aspects of the Technology and Media Services to Improve Services and Results for Children with Disabilities program (e.g., the extent to which projects are of high quality and are relevant to the needs of children with disabilities). Data on these measures will be collected from the projects funded under this competition.

Grantees will also be required to report information on their projects' performance in annual reports to the Department (34 CFR 75.590).

We will notify grantees of the performance measures once they are developed.

VII. Agency Contact

For Further Information Contact: Dave Malouf, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 4078, Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC 20202-2550. Telephone: (202) 245-7427.

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), you may call the Federal Relay Service (FRS) at 1-800-877-8339.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain this document in an alternative format (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) on request by contacting the following office: The Grants and Contracts Services Team, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC 20202-2550. Telephone: (202) 245-7363.

VIII. Other Information

Electronic Access to This Document: You may 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) on the Internet at the following site: <http://www.ed.gov/news/fedregister>.

To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at this site. If you have questions about

using PDF, call the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO), toll free, at 1-888-293-6498; or in the Washington, DC, area at (202) 512-1530.

Note: 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 on GPO Access at: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/nara/index.html>.

Dated: March 2, 2005.

John H. Hager,

Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.

[FR Doc. 05-4440 Filed 3-7-05; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services; Overview Information; Technical Assistance and Dissemination To Improve Services and Results for Children With Disabilities—Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center; Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year (FY) 2005

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 84.326J.

DATES: *Applications Available:* March 9, 2005.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: April 22, 2005.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: June 21, 2005.

Eligible Applicants: State educational agencies (SEAs), local educational agencies (LEAs), public charter schools that are LEAs under State law, institutions of higher education (IHEs), other public agencies, private nonprofit organizations, outlying areas, freely associated States, Indian tribes or tribal organizations, and for-profit organizations.

Estimated Available Funds: \$5,200,000.

Maximum Award: The Secretary does not intend to fund an application that proposes a budget exceeding \$800,000 for a single budget period of 12 months for year one of the project period, and \$1,100,000 for a single budget period of 12 months for years two through five of the project period.

Number of Awards: 1.

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

Project Period: Up to 60 months.

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: This program promotes academic achievement and

improves results for children with disabilities by supporting technical assistance, model demonstration projects, dissemination of useful information, and implementation activities that are supported by scientifically based research.

Priority: In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(v), this priority is from allowable activities specified in the statute (see sections 663 and 681(d) of the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)).

Absolute Priority: For FY 2005 this priority is an absolute priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), we consider only applications that meet this priority.

This priority is:

Technical Assistance and Dissemination to Improve Services and Results for Children With Disabilities—Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center

Background

The secondary transition of students with disabilities is a complex process for youth, their families, and school personnel. IDEA requires transition planning for students at age 16, including a description of their postsecondary goals and needed transition services in their Individualized Education Programs. Adding to the complexity, transition planning and services require a multi-agency approach to address the multiple needs of youth with disabilities as they move from high school to further education, employment, and where appropriate, independent living and adult services.

Although recent findings of the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (2004) and data from States' Annual Performance Reports indicate that the experiences of students with disabilities have significantly improved over the past decade, students in some disability categories, such as emotional disturbance, continue to experience poor academic and social outcomes. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates that in 2002, only 31 percent of civilian non-institutionalized youth with disabilities, ages 18-24, were employed, compared to 85 percent of those without a disability. More extensive efforts, therefore, are needed to improve transitions from high school to postsecondary education, employment, independent living, and adult services. Efforts must begin in the early years of schooling to help students make a successful transition to meaningful employment and financial independence (Center on Education Policy, 2002). To ensure full