

OHIO DEANS COMPACT ON EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

May 1, 2019

Applications for New Incentive Grants:

Improving the Capacity of Ohio Institutions of Higher Education to Prepare All Educators to Better Meet the Needs of All Learners



DATED MATERIAL: OPEN IMMEDIATELY

RFA AVAILABLE:	May 1, 2019
BIDDERS CONFERENCE:	June 6, 2019, 10:00 to 11:30 am <i>(attendance is required as a condition for submitting a proposal; applications may be submitted beginning noon on June 6, 2019)</i>
CLOSING DATE:	July 12, 2019 <i>(applications must be received by 4:30 pm ET)</i>
NOTIFICATION OF AWARD:	ON OR BEFORE August 26, 2019
ANTICIPATED PROJECT PERIOD:	September 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020 <i>(Continuation funding will be made available per requirements of the RFA, July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021, contingent on available funds.)</i>

REQUESTS FOR APPLICATIONS (RFAs): IMPROVING THE CAPACITY OF OHIO INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER
EDUCATION TO PREPARE ALL EDUCATORS TO BETTER MEET THE NEEDS OF ALL LEARNERS

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REQUESTS FOR APPLICATIONS (RFAs): IMPROVING THE CAPACITY OF OHIO INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION TO PREPARE ALL EDUCATORS TO BETTER MEET THE NEEDS OF ALL LEARNERS

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

PURPOSE OF PROGRAM

The *Ohio Deans Compact on Exceptional Children* seeks proposals that implement sustainable improvements in Ohio's personnel preparation system for teachers and administrators that align closely with the strategic priorities of the Ohio Department of Education and the Ohio Department of Higher Education. Such improvements must contribute to the effectiveness of professional learning systems that build the individual and collective capacity of educators for meeting the instructional needs of all students, including those identified as students with a disability, students who are English Learners (EL), and other traditionally marginalized groups of learners. Justification for such improvement is provided below in the "Background" section of the RFA.

To build on knowledge and experience obtained through prior investments, the Compact proposes two priorities for redesigning to prepare educators who can use inclusive practices to promote high outcomes for learners with diverse needs, including disabilities; and the development of authentic partnerships between IHEs and PreK-12 school districts in Ohio.

Priority Areas: Applicant institutions of higher education (IHEs) may respond to one or more of the following priorities:

Priority Area #1: Development of Inclusive Teacher Preparation Programs (aka Dual Licensure Models)

Supports the implementation of viable models for restructuring existing general and special education teacher preparation programs to create merged (i.e., dual licensure) programs leading to licensure in a general content area (e.g., middle childhood) and an intervention specialist program area (e.g., mild/moderate educational needs). The models developed must result in candidates simultaneously eligible to receive both credentials within an acceptable period for undergraduate programs, or, for graduate programs, within the same amount of time required by the programs from which the merged/blended program was developed. The current competition seeks institutions willing to adopt or adapt one of the models and implement it locally. The focus is on actual implementation; the expectation is that program revisions that adhere to the specifications described above will be submitted to the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE) no later than six months following completion of all second-year activities.

Applicants must address the ways in which relevant knowledge, skills, and dispositions will be infused into general education coursework, and the strategies used to develop and sustain effective partnerships within the IHE, between the IHE and area school districts, and between the IHE and other partners (e.g., two-year institutions), resulting in graduates who are prepared and ready to meet the instructional needs of all students in inclusive settings, including students with disabilities. Applicants must also incorporate content that aligns with Ohio's improvement process (i.e., the Ohio Improvement Process) and essential practices delineated by the Ohio Leadership Advisory Council (OLAC) in *Ohio's Leadership Development Framework* (2nd edition).

Priority Area #2: Partnership Programs

The intent of priority area #2 is to support authentic, meaningful, and sustainable university-school district¹ partnerships to promote inclusive models of preparation and personnel development for educators (i.e., teachers, intervention specialists, related services providers, and administrators), improve equitable access to high-quality instruction and equitable outcomes for struggling learners, and fund development efforts that support shared inquiry into common problems of practice related to improving results for all learners.

Partnership efforts should result in products (e.g., on-line learning modules, recording webinars, field experience manuals, or publishable reports of inquiry projects) that can be used by Ohio four-year institutions of higher education (IHEs) to improve inclusive leadership preparation and, at the same time, by school districts to support the ongoing development of inclusive leadership models for educators in low resource areas of Ohio. Low resource areas, for purposes of this priority, are defined as partnerships that involve districts – or districts served by Educational Service Centers (ESCs) – with a free/reduced lunch rate of 50% or higher.

Partnership efforts implemented in response to this RFA should focus on one of the focus areas listed below. IHEs submitting more than one application under Priority #2 are limited to one submission per focus area. If more than one proposal is submitted for the same focus area by an institution, the first one received will be reviewed. Regional campuses, for purposes of this RFA, will be treated as separate IHEs.

Focus Area A: Clinical partnerships. The applicant IHE partners with one or more districts to establish authentic clinical partnerships that facilitate the development and implementation of inclusive teacher preparation programs (e.g., dual licensure models of teacher preparation).

Focus Area B: Media and/or curriculum materials. The applicant IHE partners with one or more districts to develop high-quality media and/or related curriculum materials in order to support inclusive teacher preparation (e.g., dual licensure models of preparation) and statewide professional development (PD) initiatives. Projects that emphasize academic learning will be given priority.

Focus Area C: Inclusive instructional leadership. The applicant IHE partners with one or more districts that has/have participated or are participating in the Ohio Leadership for Inclusion, Implementation, and Instructional Improvement (OLI⁴) to identify and make necessary changes to existing educational leadership preparation programs by infusing core content in inclusive instructional leadership. Note: infusion of core content must align with key domains as defined by OLI⁴. For additional information, contact Dr. Pamela VanHorn at: pamela.vanhorn@uc.edu.

Focus Area D: Early literacy. The applicant IHE works with one or more low resource districts to establish field sites for testing the use of evidence-based early language and literacy strategies in conjunction with the district leadership team structures (i.e., teacher-based teams, building leadership teams, and district leadership team). The effort should be based on *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement* and include opportunities for demonstrating the use of evidence-based early language and literacy strategies with diverse learners in one or more schools in the partner district(s) in year one of the project (2019-2020), and the restructuring of the existing 12-hour reading core to

¹ School district for purposes of this RFA is defined broadly to include Ohio's educational service centers (ESCs).

align with a prototype curriculum developed by the Compact's Higher Education Literacy Steering Committee in year two of the project (2020-2021). The prototype is expected to be released in late summer/early fall 2019. For additional information about Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement, contact Dr. Melissa Weber-Mayrer at: Melissa.Weber-Mayrer@education.ohio.gov

Applicants must describe the nature of the partnership and the strategies used to develop and sustain the partnership between the IHE and the school district(s), and between other relevant partners (e.g., two-year institutions, state support teams, professional associations), the intended outcomes of the partnership (including all products), the goals and activities designed to meet intended outcomes, and the partners' plan for sustaining the partnership beyond the life of the grant (see *Application Requirements and Project Activities*). Additional points will be awarded for including a community college as a partner in the work.

BACKGROUND

The background section discusses the evidence supporting the Incentive Grant initiative. It provides information applicable to both priorities in this RFA. Applicants are encouraged to consider the ways in which their proposed activities respond to needs identified in this section.

In 2018, the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) released a strategic plan for improving results for each of its 1.7 million schoolchildren in the state. Grounded in a commitment to equity and partnership, *Each Child Our Future: Ohio's Strategic Plan for Education: 2019-2024*, outlines 10 strategies for "ensuring that each student is challenged, prepared and empowered for his or her future by way of an excellent prekindergarten through grade 12 (preK-12) education." (p. 4) Developing literacy skills across all ages, grades, and subjects; expanding access to quality early learning experiences; improving targeted supports and professional learning so teachers can deliver excellent instruction today, tomorrow and throughout their careers; and increasing the supply of highly effective teachers and leaders and provide supports to ensure they are effective or highly effective are a few of the strategies addressed in the plan (<http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/About/EachChildOurFuture/Final-Strategic-Plan-Board-Approved.pdf.aspx?lang=en-US>).

From 2007 to 2017, an increasing number of Ohio children are living in poverty, the student population is becoming more diverse (e.g., the state's English learner population grew by 85%) with more diverse learning needs, and more students are impacted by adverse childhood experiences (e.g., the percentage of children considered homeless has doubled; percentage of children in foster care has increased by more than 50%) (Ohio Department of Education, 2018).

Data from the Children's Defense Fund-Ohio are consistent with ODE's data, and paint a worrisome picture for Ohio's children and youth, particularly those living in urban and Appalachian areas of the state. Even though Ohio's population is getting older and experiencing a decline in child population, the percentage of children and young adults living in poverty is higher than that of working adults. In 2017, almost 20% of Ohio's children lived in poverty as compared to 18.4% nationwide, and more than 50 percent of Ohio's school children are characterized as economically disadvantaged. Approximately a third of Ohio's children, birth through age four, were children of color. One out of every 10 Ohio children have parents who have not received a high school diploma. For children of color, more than 20% of Hispanic or Latino children and more than 14% of Black children had parents without a high school diploma, limiting employment opportunities, economic well-being, access to resources, and the likelihood

that children will be “kindergarten ready” when starting school. Of the state’s 1,664,346 children attending school during 2017-18 (as reported by 608 Ohio school districts, only 61% met the third grade reading guarantee, 16% were chronically absent, and a little over half (i.e., 54.3%) met eighth-grade proficiency standards in math (Children’s Defense Fund, 2018).

Only 62% of Ohio kindergartners are on track at the beginning of the school year in language and literacy, leaving over 73,000 (about 38%) not on track, based on the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment. For some student subgroups, the percentage of students not on track is even higher (e.g., 50.9% of Ohio’s homeless students, 43.8% of Ohio’s English learners, 58.1% of Ohio’s students with disabilities) Without early intervention, we know these children these learners will continue to struggle (ODE, 2019). About 50% of Ohio’s students in eighth grade, for example, are not proficient in English/Language Arts, and of the 73% of Ohio graduates who took the ACT, only 54% met the benchmark (a remediation-free level) for reading.

Ohio’s plan commits to holding high expectations for all children and for the educators who teach and support them. And, expectations matter. According to the United States Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, over 35 years of research and experience have demonstrated that the education of children with disabilities can be made more effective by having high expectations and ensuring their participation and progress in the general education curriculum in inclusive settings² to the maximum extent possible (US DoE, OSEP, 2010).

The majority of the nation’s students with disabilities, ages 6-21, spend part or all of their school day in general education classrooms. In 2014, for example, over 62 percent spent 80% or more of their school day in general education classrooms (NCES, 2018). Ohio’s child count data as of December 1, 2017 indicate that this pattern holds true for Ohio’s 241,423 school-age students with disabilities.

Despite the fact that the majority of students with disabilities do not have cognitive impairments and therefore can engage with more challenging coursework, only 21.2% of them are held to the same graduation requirements as their peers. Given the national emphasis on college and career readiness, graduation requirements have been increasing across the nation; however, graduation rates for students with disabilities continue to lag behind rates for other students (Thurlow, Albus, & Lazarus, 2015) even though many of them are excused from meeting some of Ohio’s requirements. In 2017, Ohio’s four-year on-time graduation rate was 84.1%. The rate for students with disabilities for the same class was 70.4. Putting students at even greater risk for limited economic independence is the fact that at least 20% of Ohio’s students with disabilities have dropped out of high school each year for three consecutive years, representing nearly 4,500 students statewide.

As students with disabilities, as well as other students with learning difficulties, spend more and more time in general education classrooms, it is imperative that all teachers and administrators have the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively address their diverse needs as part of district and school ongoing and continuous improvement efforts. Research shows that developing effective inclusive practices on a school-wide basis includes multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS)³, practices that support

² “Inclusive” or “inclusion” means an active commitment to equity for all students so as to maximize the participation of all learners, by making learning opportunities relevant and high quality (National Institute for Urban School Improvement (NIUSI) Leadscape, 2011).

³ MTSS refers to a continuum of evidence-based, system-wide practices to support academic and behavioral needs, with frequent data-based monitoring for instructional decision-making (Kansas State Department of Education, 2012).

the participation of students with disabilities with their non-disabled peers in academic and extra-curricular activities of the school, school-wide positive behavioral supports (SWPBS), and culturally responsive and universal design for learning principles, hold promise for improving outcomes for students with disabilities. All of these approaches require adults to work together across departmental and programmatic functions, and positional roles.

All students, including those with significant disabilities, benefit academically, behaviorally, and socially from practices that support inclusion (Copeland & Cosbey, 2009; Jameson, McDonnell, Johnson, Riesen, & Polychronis, 2007; Rea, McLaughlin, & Walther-Thomas, 2002), particularly when such practices are implemented within an MTSS context (Wanzek & Vaughn, 2010). The USDoE, OSEP cites the following as examples of successful practices that support inclusion:

1. Using collaborative teaching models (Friend, Cook, Hurley-Chamberlain, & Shamberger, 2010);
2. Providing time for consultation between general and special education teachers (Wallace, Anderson, & Bartholomay, 2002);
3. Promoting university-school partnerships (Causton-Theoharis, Theoharis, Bull, Cosier, & Dempf-Aldrich, 2011; Kozleski, Pugach, & Yinger, 2002);
4. Differentiating instruction (Hall, Strangman, & Meyer, 2003); and
5. Clearly defining roles for support staff to promote effective inclusion (Giangreco, Suter, & Doyle, 2010).

Recent research on school-wide positive behavior supports (SWPBS) indicates the need to apply culturally responsive principles within the context of MTSS and in conjunction with practices that enable effective inclusion. For example, SWPBS has been shown to reduce the overall number of office discipline referrals in a school, but not for African American students (Skiba, 2012). Culturally responsive principles promote the development and success of all students and can be incorporated in learning environments by communicating high expectations; reshaping the curriculum to reflect all students' experiences; and engaging students in activities that treat their background, knowledge, and experiences as assets (Gay, 2000; King, Artiles, & Kozleski, 2010). Applying universal design for learning principles within the context of MTSS in conjunction with practices that promote inclusion can also improve outcomes for students with disabilities (Hehir, 2009; Rose & Gravel, 2010). The key principles of universal design for learning include presenting information and content in various ways, allowing students to express what they know in various ways, and stimulating interest and motivation for learning (Rose & Meyer, 2006).

Meeting the diverse needs of students with disabilities and learning difficulties in inclusive classrooms and school settings requires a complex combination of knowledge and skills, including the use of evidence-based practices and the ability to use relevant data at the local level to support instructional decisions (Blanton, Pugach, & Florian, 2011; Voltz, Sims, & Nelson, 2010). To address this need, organizations such as the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) have developed model standards of essential knowledge and skills that they believe teachers need in order to customize learning and work effectively to improve student achievement, including the achievement of students with disabilities. Furthermore, resource materials prepared by CCSSO's Interstate Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) recommend that state education agencies (SEAs), professional organizations, and teacher education programs take a systemic

approach to using core teaching standards in developing policies and programs that prepare, license, support, and evaluate today's teachers.

An increasing number of authors and researchers (e.g., Darling-Hammond, L., 2010; David, 2008-09; DuFour & Marzano, 2011; Gallimore, et al., 2009; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008; McNulty & Besser, 2014; Schmoker, M., 2006; Louis, et al., 2010; Wahlstrom et al., 2010; Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008) advocate for the use of team structures to facilitate shared learning for instructional improvement. They note that no single person has all the necessary knowledge, skills, and talents to meet the needs of all children. This finding is reflective of the growing body of evidence in support of teachers working together to inform each other's instructional practice and to share meaningfully in school leadership functions (Gallimore, et al., 2009). This shift is evident in the work of the Ohio Leadership Advisory Council, which provides a foundation for Ohio's improvement process and associated structures.

The Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) standards hold IHEs accountable for ensuring that "candidates develop a deep understanding of the critical concepts and principles of their discipline and, by completion, are able to use discipline-specific practices flexibly to advance the learning of all students⁴ toward attainment of college and career-readiness standards." This standard builds on the 2008 NCATE standards foundational belief that all children can and should learn" and that "high quality education is a fundamental right of all children." CAEP standards⁵ also require educator preparation providers (EPPs) to ensure that "effective partnerships and high-quality clinical practice are central to preparation so that candidates develop the knowledge, skills and dispositions necessary to demonstrate positive impact on all P-12 students' learning and development." (p. 6) Likewise, EPPs must demonstrate "efforts to know and address community, state, national, or regional or local needs for hard to staff schools and shortage fields," including for example, students with disabilities (see, for example, Causton-Theoharis, Theoharis, Cosier, & Demph-Aldrich, 2011).

The National Network for Educational Renewal (NNER)⁶ offers an agenda for education in a democracy that is organized around the four purposes of educating children and youth, preparing educators, providing professional development, and conducting inquiry. Shared beliefs (e.g., a belief in social justice, an assurance that all learners have equitable access to knowledge) on the part of NNER partner schools is believed to be critical to the success of simultaneous renewal efforts.

A study of leaders in the Colorado Partnership for Educational Renewal (CoPER) conducted by Mantle-Bromley, Foster, Wilson, Kozleski, & Anderson-Parsons (2000) showed the importance of common vision and purpose, as well as upper-level administrative support, for accomplishing simultaneous educational renewal. Mantle-Bromely and associates (2000) also identified the following limitations to simultaneous educational renewal efforts, which included: inconsistent understandings and commitments, site specific and insufficient impact, insufficient reward structures, personality-dependent partnerships, one-sided agenda, and lack of documented impact.

In 2012, Bier, Horn, Campbell, Kazemi, Hintz, Kelly-Petersen, Stevens, Saxena, and Peck described a

⁴ "All students" is defined as children or youth attending P-12 schools including students with disabilities or exceptionalities, students who are gifted, and students who represent diversity based on ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, language, religion, sexual identification, and geographic origin (Draft Recommendations for the CAEP Board, 2013, p. 19).

⁵ See <file:///H:/Desktop/Downloads/caep-2013-accreditation-standards.pdf>

⁶ See <http://www.nnerpartnerships.org/>

model for creating shared opportunities for teacher and university faculty learning and development, defining the “sweet spot” as the “intersection of opportunities to learn by pre-service teachers, veteran teachers, and university teacher education faculty in a shared context which focused on analysis of P-12 student learning.” (p. 129) For partnership efforts built on a commitment to simultaneous renewal to be successful and sustainable, they must respond to and be aligned with the core mission and goals of both partners – the institution of higher education and the public school district.

Traditionally, SEAs have exerted influence over the operations and content of teacher and leader preparation programs through certification or licensure standards. However, while the content of teacher and leader preparation programs is determined in part by a state’s requirements for certification or licensure, the content also reflects the values and views of faculty in colleges of education and relevant disciplinary departments (e.g., special education, curriculum and instruction) (Committee on the Study of Teacher Preparation Programs in the United States, 2010).

Research suggests that aligning the curricula in teacher and leader preparation programs with State standards that reflect current knowledge and skills and the use of evidence-based practices will be more effective than revising standards alone (Augustine et al., 2009). Therefore, it is crucial that institutions of higher education (IHEs), local school districts, professional associations, and SEAs collaborate to ensure that all educators enter the teaching profession with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively teach students with disabilities. Even though current literature suggests that cooperation between SEAs and IHEs, districts, and other organizations is key to providing teachers and leaders with the critical knowledge and skills needed to improve student achievement (Blanton & Pugach, 2007; Darling-Hammond et al., 2005), there are few examples of such entities regularly engaging in these cooperative practices (Goe, 2009; Levine, 2005).

The United States Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (2010), asserts that our nation’s ability to compete successfully in the global community depends on the meaningful inclusion of all residents in our educational system, including students with disabilities. *In support of this assertion, the Ohio Deans Compact on Exceptional Children offers the following statement of beliefs. Such beliefs, grounded in research and authoritative opinion, are used to guide the Compact’s work:*

1. All students learn to higher levels when held to high expectations and provided the necessary services and supports, and when taught by adults with the necessary competencies and dispositions to support higher levels of learning for all students.
2. Student learning improves when adults who interact with them learn, and adult learning is most effectively fostered through peer-to-peer feedback and support that is provided through structured collaborative learning teams.
3. Effective implementation of targeted instructional practices is necessary for meaningful improvements in student learning and educator professional practice to be sustained.
4. Some instructional practices are more effective than others and all educators should be critical consumers able and willing to examine the effectiveness of practices used in supporting student learning.
5. The development of collective capacity and shared responsibility at all levels of the system is essential for continuous system learning and improvement.

6. Increased opportunities and outcomes for all students depend upon shared leadership across the district-wide system that serves to sustain core work in teaching and learning and prepare every learner for meaningful transitions to post-secondary endeavors.

In addition to reforming State teacher and leader certification or licensure standards and integrating these revised standards into preparation programs, States need to ensure that the knowledge and skills teachers and leaders develop in preparation programs help to improve P-12 outcomes for students with disabilities, and use relevant data to inform the development and reform of preparation programs that train teachers and leaders.

OEC has historically funded projects that support SEA and IHE collaboration to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. While these efforts resulted in meaningful changes to individual programs, OEC learned that for sustainable improvements to be made to Ohio's system of personnel preparation and development, preparation programs need to be redesigned to ensure that both general education teachers and special education teachers (aka intervention specialists) are better prepared for their roles and responsibilities in classrooms with respect to students with disabilities (Blanton & Pugach, 2007) and students with learning difficulties.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS & PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Applicants must indicate the applicable priority and focus area(s) on the applicant information page of the application:

- **Priority Area #1** (Development of Inclusive Teacher Preparation Programs – aka Dual Licensure Models)
- **Priority Area #2** (Partnership Programs)
 - **Focus Area A:** *Clinical Partnerships to Facilitate Inclusive Teacher Preparation Programs*
 - **Focus Area B:** *Development of Media/Curricular Materials to Support Inclusive Teacher Preparation and Professional Development*
 - **Focus Area C:** *Inclusive Instructional Leadership*
 - **Focus Area D:** *Early Literacy*

An applicant must include in its application the following components:

- A. A logic model, reflective of research-/evidence-based practice that depicts, at a minimum, the goals, activities, outputs, and outcomes of the proposed project. A logic model communicates how a project will achieve its outcomes and provides a framework for both formative and summative evaluation of the project.
- B. An implementation plan and schedule covering both year one and year two activities for accomplishing the activities described in the Quality of Project Services (Priority #1) or the Implementation, Management, & Evaluation of the Project (Priority #2) section of this priority.
- C. A plan, reflective of effective practice and linked to the project's logic model, for a formative evaluation of the proposed activities that relies on clear performance objectives and measures of

progress in implementing project activities, and describes how key partners, including school district representatives, will contribute to continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

- D. A description of the process used to restructure/redesign – or support the restructuring/redesign – of existing teacher preparation programs and/or course content under either of the two priorities, including the individuals internal and external to the IHE who will be involved in the implementation of project activities (Note: this description must address the ways in which the education department will collaborate with other departments within the IHE, and external partners, to improve teacher preparation in core academic areas).
- E. A description of the evidence-based content and practices, and dispositions, needed by teacher or administrator preparation candidates to effectively meet the needs of diverse learners, including students with disabilities, in inclusive settings; how such content will be used as the basis for the restructured or redesigned preparation program; the intended recipients (i.e., candidates) of the restructured or redesigned preparation program, and the resulting degree and/or credentials candidates in the restructured or redesigned preparation program will receive upon completion of the program.
- F. Letters of support from the applicant institution’s Provost or highest-ranking academic official, the Dean of the school/college of education, and the applicable Department Chairperson.
- G. A budget for an external evaluation to be conducted by an independent third party, and a signed assurance indicating that the applicant IHE will participate in Compact “centralized” evaluation activities. Note: Each project employs an evaluator to give formative feedback and to help write the end-of-year reports. The end-of-year reports (in aggregate) inform the summative (also known as centralized) evaluation.
- H. A budget for attendance at an annual two-day statewide conference of the Ohio Deans Compact on Exceptional Children during which successful applicants will be required to share their progress in implementing project activities; attendance at quarterly Ohio Deans Compact meetings (each held for one and a half days and requiring one overnight); and participation in quarterly phone conferences.

Applicant institutions must be represented at the bidders conference, scheduled for **June 6, 2019, from 10:00 to 11:30 am, at The Conference Center at OCLC, 6600 Kilgour Pl., Dublin, OH, 43017** as a condition of submitting one or more applications in response to this RFA (***Note: at least one representative of the applicant institution must attend; the representative need not be the prospective principal investigator***).

Deliverables

At the **end of the initial year** of funding, each project should provide:

- A. For ***Priority #1 awards***, a description of the restructured or redesigned course sequence, including all clinical learning experiences, and the specific competencies aligned with evidence-based practices that are targeted through each course or set of courses that form the basis of the restructured/redesigned preparation program. The description should include a crosswalk – or set of cross-walks – delineating the anticipated course sequence, its alignment with all applicable

standards [i.e., Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)], and its alignment with OIP and OLAC modules along with a detailed description of all intended field experiences. (**Note:** *applicants will be required to submit copies of all course syllabi*).

- B. For Priority #2 awards, the product(s) to be delivered through the grant (e.g., on-line learning module, webinar);
- C. A plan for sustaining the effort beyond the life of the grant;
- D. A fiscal impact statement signed by the applicant Dean, which provides an explanation of the fiscal impact of participation in the incentive grant initiative on the institution's current preparation program.
- E. An annual (end of year 1) and final (end of year 2) performance report, which includes all evaluation findings and information.

At the **end of the second year** of funding, each project should provide:

- A. For all Priority #1 awards and applicable Priority #2 awards, a complete curriculum including all course syllabi, all assessments, all field experience activities, all readings, all in-class activities (e.g., simulations, case studies, debates, data-analysis projects).⁷
- B. For all Priority #1 awards and applicable Priority #2 awards, a description of the breadth and depth of experiences in clinical settings that will be used in the restructured program and that the applicant IHE believes would be essential for any IHE undergoing a similar restructuring effort [Note: the ways in which desired dispositions on the part of teacher candidates will be developed and assessed must be included].
- C. For Priority #2 awards, the final product(s) to be delivered through the grant (e.g., on-line learning module, webinar).

Other Requirements

Recipients of awards under this request are required to participate in the following activities:

- A Compact-sponsored Community of Practice (CoP), held during quarterly meetings;
- An annual Compact statewide conference (2-3 days);
- Quarterly Compact meetings (1.5 days/meeting); and
- Quarterly Compact phone conferences for incentive grantees.

Recipients of awards under this RFA must share evaluation information with the Ohio Deans Compact.

II. AWARD INFORMATION

Information about the estimated number of awards, the maximum award amount, and the project period is provided in the table below. The Compact will reject and will not consider an application that proposes a

⁷ The only significant curriculum components that will not be required are lecture notes and PowerPoint slides.

budget exceeding the maximum amount for any single budget period under this request for applications. Applicants should note that successive year funding would be provided contingent on available funds and in accordance with the requirements outlined in the request for application (RFA).

Year 2 (i.e., July 1, 2020-June 30, 2021) will also be contingent on awardees meeting the goals outlined in their initial plan for year one.

FUNDING:

Incentive Grants to Ohio IHEs					
PRIORITY AREA	AWARD RANGE/ MAXIMUM	ESTIMATED NUMBER OF AWARDS	ANTICIPATED DURATION	PROJECT PERIOD	INDIRECT COSTS
1 <i>Inclusive Teacher Prep aka Dual Licensure Models</i>	Up to \$125,000	6	22 months	Yr. 1: Sept 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020 Yr. 2: July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021	Limited to 8% of applicable direct costs
2 <i>(Partnerships: Focus Area A)</i>	Up to \$40,000	10	22 months	Yr. 1: Sept 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020 Yr. 2: July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021	Limited to 8% of applicable direct costs
2 <i>(Partnerships: Focus Area B)</i>	Up to \$40,000		22 months	Yr. 1: Sept 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020 Yr. 2: July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021	Limited to 8% of applicable direct costs
2 <i>(Partnerships: Focus Area C)</i>	Up to \$40,000		22 months	Yr. 1: Sept 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020 Yr. 2: July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021	Limited to 8% of applicable direct costs
2 <i>(Partnerships: Focus Area D)</i>	Up to \$40,000		22 months	Yr. 1: Sept 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020 Yr. 2: July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021	Limited to 8% of applicable direct costs
2 <i>(Partnerships: Focus Area D)</i>	Up to \$40,000		22 months	Yr. 1: Sept 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020 Yr. 2: July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021	Limited to 8% of applicable direct costs

NOTES:

- 1 Ohio institutions of higher education (IHEs) submitting applications under priority 2 are limited to one submission per focus area. If more than one proposal is submitted for the same focus area by an institution, the first one received will be reviewed. An exception will be made for regional campuses, which, for the purpose of this RFA will be treated as separate IHEs.
- 2 Awards will be made annually with the understanding that successive year funding will be provided contingent on available funds and in accordance with the requirements outlined in the request for application (RFA):
 - **Priority #1:** Year 2 funding of up to \$100,000 will follow the state fiscal year time line of July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021.
 - **Priority #2 (Focus Area A-D):** Year 2 funding of up to \$35,000 will follow the state fiscal year time line of July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Eligible Applicants

Accredited four-year institutions of higher education (IHE) in Ohio.

Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost sharing/matching is not required.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Page and Format Limitations

Applications submitted in response to this request for applications must be limited to 35 double-spaced pages. This page limitation applies to all material presented in the application narrative (i.e., the section where applicants address selection criteria). Use the following standards in developing the application narrative:

- 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.
- Use a font that is either 12 point or larger or no smaller than 10 pitch (characters per inch). Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial. An application submitted in any other font (including Times Roman or Arial Narrow) will not be accepted.

The page limit applies only to the application narrative. It does **not** apply to the online applicant information page, the required budget components (including the narrative budget justification), the one-page abstract, or appendices. Additionally, the page limit does **not** apply to staff vitae, instruments to be used, partnership agreements (e.g., agreements between the IHE and partners such as area school districts), and letters of support/cooperation.

Staff vitae should include each person's title and role in the proposed project and contain only information that is relevant to this proposed project's activities and/or publications. Vitae for consultants and advisory committee members should be similarly brief.

Letters of support/cooperation should be specific, indicating agreement with a particular aspect of the proposed project. Proposals submitted under Priority #2 must include a letter of commitment from a minimum of one partner school district that meets the requirements described under the Purpose of the Program section of this RFA.

The application narrative should be organized to follow the exact sequence of the components in the selection criteria used to evaluate applications. The selection criteria are listed under **Section V Application Review Information** for each of the priorities addressed in this request. The abstract should precede the table of contents and application narrative.

The Compact will reject, and will NOT consider an application that fails to adhere to the page limit requirements, or the standards delineated above, for the competition.

Submission Dates and Times

Applications Available: **May 1, 2019**

Required Bidders Conference: **June 6, 2019, 10:00 am to 11:30 am**

Deadline for Receipt of Applications: **July 12, 2019, 4:30 pm ET**

(Note: applications will not be accepted before noon on June 6, 2019)

Notification of Award: **on or before August 26, 2019**

Submission Process

Applications for grants in response to this request must be submitted electronically using the Ohio Deans Compact web site at www.ohiodeanscompact.org. The following application components must be uploaded as PDF documents to the web site: (1) Abstract; (2) Application Narrative; (3) Appendix A; (4) Other Appendices; (5) Project Budget; and (6) Budget Narrative Justification. An application information page and project budget template must be downloaded from the website, completed, and uploaded in PDF format as part of the required components.

Appendix A should be used to provide the following required components (see Application Requirements & Project Activities in this RFA): (1) project logic model, (2) implementation plan and schedule, (3) plan for formative evaluation of proposed activities, and (4) other data, charts, and/or tables referenced in the Application Narrative. Other Appendices should include, at a minimum, letters of support (see Application Requirements & Project Activities, Item F).

Applications that do not comply with the deadline requirements will not be accepted.

Questions regarding this RFA should be submitted online through the Compact website. Responses to questions will be posted through this site to ensure that all interested applicants receive the same information.

Individuals with disabilities who need an accommodation or auxiliary aid in connection with the application process should contact the person listed under **Section VII Contact Information** of this request. If an individual with a disability receives an accommodation or auxiliary aid in connection with the application process, the individual's application remains subject to all other requirements and limitations in this request.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

Review and Selection Process

In reviewing applications under this request for applications, the Ohio Deans Compact on Exceptional Children may consider the past performance of the applicant in carrying out a previous award from the Compact, such as the applicant's timely use of funds, the applicant's attendance at required Compact meetings and events, achievement of project objectives, and compliance with grant conditions. The Compact may also consider whether the applicant failed to submit a timely performance report or submitted a report of unacceptable quality.

Additionally, in making a competitive grant award, the Compact requires various assurances including those applicable to federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving financial assistance. These assurances and additional certifications will be required of any institution recommended for funding and as a condition of receiving funding under this request. One of these assurances includes a detailed expenditure plan. Projects that do not expend the funds they receive probably did not need those funds in the first place.

Upon completion of the review process, individual reviewer scores and applications will be ranked. The higher ranked, approved applications will be funded first. There may be lower ranked, approved applications that do not receive funding. It is possible that a small number of applications that are approved and fall next in rank order (after those projects selected for funding) will be placed on hold. If dollars become available as a result of negotiations, or if a higher ranked applicant declines the award, the projects on hold may receive funding. If applicants receive a letter stating their application will not receive funding, then their project has neither been selected for funding nor placed on hold. Copies of reviewer comments will be mailed to all applicants.

Selection Criteria by Priority

PRIORITY #1 Criteria

Abstract

An **abstract**, not to exceed one page, should precede the application narrative, and should include the title of the program and the applicable priority and focus areas. Additionally, the abstract should include the purpose of the project, its proposed outcomes, the names/affiliations of key collaborators, the degree and credential(s) individuals receive upon completion of the program, and the type of program offered.

Significance (10 points)

In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Compact considers the following factors:

- (1) The potential contribution of the proposed project to increased knowledge or understanding of educational problems, issues, or effective strategies;
- (2) The likelihood that the proposed project will result in system change or improvement;
- (3) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population;
- (4) The likely utility of the products (such as information, materials, processes, or techniques) that will result from the proposed project, including the potential for their being used effectively by other IHEs in Ohio; and
- (5) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project.
- (6) The likelihood that project funds will be used effectively to support efforts that otherwise would not be possible.

Quality of Project Services (25 points)

In determining the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project, the Compact considers the quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. Additionally, the Compact considers:

- (1) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project are appropriate to the needs of the intended recipients or beneficiaries of those services;

- (2) The extent to which entities that are to be served by the proposed project demonstrate support for the project;
- (3) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice;
- (4) The likely impact of the services to be provided by the proposed project on the intended recipients of those services;
- (5) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project involve the collaboration of appropriate partners in using resources to maximize the effectiveness of project services; and
- (6) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project involve the use of efficient strategies, including the use of technology, as appropriate, and the leveraging of non-project resources.

Quality of Project Personnel (15 points)

In determining the quality of project personnel, the Compact considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In addition, the Compact considers the following factors:

- (1) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel; and
- (2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of project consultants or subcontractors.

Applicants should include the proposed time commitments for all project personnel. A person-loading chart is useful and may be used to show project personnel and their time commitments to individual activities. The following example shows major activities by number of days spent by each key person involved in each activity.

EXAMPLE: PERSON LOADING CHART —TIME IN DAY(S) BY PERSON*

Activity	Time in Day(s) by Person			
	Person A	Person B	Person C	Person D
Library Research	0	0	0	0
Prepare Materials	0	0	0	0
Data Collection	0	0	0	0
Data Analysis	0	0	0	0
Dissemination	0	0	0	0

*Note: All figures represent FTE for the grant year.

Adequacy of Resources (10 points)

In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Compact considers the following factors:

- (1) The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant organization;
- (2) The extent to which the budget is adequate to support the proposed project; and
- (3) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served and to the anticipated results and benefits.

Quality of the Management Plan (20 points)

In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Compact considers the following factors:

- (1) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks;
- (2) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project;
- (3) The adequacy of mechanisms for ensuring high-quality products and services from the proposed project;
- (4) The extent to which the time commitments of the principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project; and
- (5) How the applicant will ensure that diverse perspectives are brought to bear in the operation of the proposed project, including those of parents, teachers, the business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients or beneficiaries of services, or others, as appropriate.

Quality of Project Evaluation (20 points)

In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Compact considers the following factors:

- (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.
- (2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes
- (3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide timely guidance for quality assurance.
- (4) The extent to which the evaluation will provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings.
- (5) The extent to which the methods of evaluation provide for examining the effectiveness of project implementation strategies.
- (6) The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.

- (7) The clear agreement that local evaluators will share information with any related centralized evaluation effort undertaken by the Ohio Deans Compact.

PRIORITY #2 Criteria

Abstract

An **abstract**, not to exceed one page, should precede the application narrative, and should include the title of the program. Additionally, the abstract should include the intended outcome, and goals and activities of the project, how the proposed project meets Compact priorities for simultaneous renewal, and the names and affiliations of the partners.

Relationship of Partnership Effort to Compact Priority (25 points)

In determining the relationship of the proposed project to the Compact's priority under this RFA, the Compact considers the following factors:

- (1) The intended outcomes of the project (i.e., what will be different as a result of the project)?
- (2) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, and the likely impact of the product(s) to be developed on the intended recipients.
- (3) The potential contribution of the proposed project to increased knowledge or understanding of educational problems, issues, or effective strategies;
- (4) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population.

Nature & Focus of the Partnership (20 points)

In determining the quality of the proposed partnership activities, the Compact considers the following factors:

- (1) The shared beliefs (e.g., all learners should have equitable access to grade-level content) on which the partnership is built.
- (2) The partners who will be involved in implementing grant activities and each partner's specific roles and responsibilities with regard to the project.
- (3) The extent to which entities that are to be served by the proposed project demonstrate support for the project (include letters of support from the applicant institution's Dean of the school/college of education, and the applicable Department Chairperson, and the superintendent/CEO of the partnering school district).
- (4) The strategies used to develop and sustain effective partnerships between the IHE and the school districts/educational service center, and between other relevant partners (e.g., two-year institutions), resulting in graduates who are prepared and ready to meet the instructional needs of all students, including students with disabilities, in inclusive settings.
- (5) The relevant knowledge, skills, and dispositions that will be developed through the project and the extent to which the project reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice.

- (6) The project will incorporate content that aligns with Ohio's improvement process (i.e., the Ohio Improvement Process) and essential practices delineated by the Ohio Leadership Advisory Council (OLAC) in *Ohio's Leadership Development Framework* (2nd edition); and, as applicable, *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement*.

Implementation, Management, & Evaluation of the Project (25 points)

In determining the quality of the plan for implementing, managing, and evaluating project activities to meet stated goals, the Compact considers:

- (1) The goals of the project.
- (2) The activities that will be implemented to achieve the goals and the associated time lines for accomplishing all activities.
- (3) The product(s) to be developed and how it/they will be used by each partner to improve the capacity of educators to work together to improve instructional capacity and student learning.
- (4) The ways in which implementation will be monitored and evaluated, the procedures for ensuring regular and frequent communication and among partners, and the mechanisms for ensuring that high-quality products result from the project.
- (5) The extent to which partnership will involve the use of efficient strategies, including the use of technology, as appropriate, and the leveraging of non-project resources.
- (6) The evaluation methods to be used, the extent to which they are feasible and appropriate to the intended goals and outcomes of the project.
- (7) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide timely guidance and performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

Adequacy of Resources & Project Personnel & (10 points)

In determining the adequacy of resources, including project personnel, for implementing the proposed project, the Compact considers the following factors:

- (1) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.
- (2) The time commitments for all project personnel, and the extent to which the time commitments of the principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to implement the proposed activities as planned.
- (3) The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant organization.

Sustainability (20 points)

In determining the likelihood that the project will result in sustainable partnerships that build on activities implemented through the project, the Compact considers the following factors:

- (1) The ways in which the partners will use the product(s) beyond the life of the grant.

- (2) The ways in which the partners will sustain the partnership beyond the life of the grant.
- (3) How the project would be continued/extended beyond the life of the grant.
- (4) The likely utility of the product(s) that will result from the proposed project, including the potential for their being used effectively by other IHEs in Ohio.

Reporting Requirements

Applicants receiving awards must submit annual and final performance reports describing their implementation of project activities, findings, and other relevant information in accordance with procedures established by the Compact and the University of Cincinnati.

Performance Measures

Applicants must include clear and measurable performance measures for implementation objectives identified by the applicant. In addition, the Compact requires all applicants responding to Priority 1 to address the following program performance measure in their application:

- *By the end of the second project year, 100% of the courses comprising the restructured or newly developed program have been designed/redesigned to incorporate identified evidence-based competencies needed by all teacher candidates to support higher levels of learning for all students, including students with disabilities.*

VI. REQUIRED BUDGET COMPONENTS

Applicants are required to complete a project budget template and budget narrative justification. The template must be downloaded from the website, completed, and uploaded in PDF format as part of the required components. The budget narrative justification describing all costs identified in the project budget must be uploaded in PDF format as part of your required application. Please refer to www.ohiodeanscompact.org for submission instructions.

In developing your project budget, please note the following:

- Applicants must specify the level of effort on the part of the principal investigator and other key personnel contributing to the project. Applicants are encouraged to incorporate PI effort at no less than .25 FTE (one to two course releases per year depending on IHE-specific workload policies).
- Applicants must include plans for both the year 1 and 2 award. Please refer to **Section II. Award Information** (note # 2) in this RFA.
- Faculty buy-out for summer terms is allowable.
- Equipment purchases, defined as equipment that has a useful life of one year or more and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more, are permitted if their purchase is necessary to support implementation of approved project activities. Other property purchases necessary to support project implementation are allowable and should be included with *materials and services* costs.

- Travel within the US is allowable when it relates to the expressed goals of the project. Requests for travel to international conferences/events will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- For applications submitted in response to this request, the indirect cost rate may not exceed 8% of the direct costs. Applicable Education Department General Administrative Regulations apply to training grants.
- Tuition costs are allowable if related to the employment of a graduate research assistant to support project implementation.

Successful applicants recommended for funding under this competition will be required to complete additional certifications and assurances as a condition of receiving an award. Funding may be withheld from institutions that do not follow the requirements specified in this RFA or the certification and assurance documents.

VII. CONTACT INFORMATION

For further information, contact:

Deborah Telfer, PhD, Project Director
 Ohio Deans Compact on Exceptional Children
 Telephone: (614) 897-0020 x 102
 Email: deborah.telfer@ohiodeanscompact.org

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Note: sections of this Request for Application were modified from several notices issued by the USDoE, Office of Special Education Programs.