
LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

All children and youth in Louisiana deserve the opportunity to grow and thrive from birth to adulthood. The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) works to support children and youth, including those with disabilities, from early childhood to college, career, and/or independent living in adulthood. Seamless transitions both within and beyond the pre-K through grade 12 system can radically improve students' quality of life now and in the future. However, the challenge of supporting children and youth with disabilities throughout these transitions is significant.

The LDOE recognizes that those closest to children - parents and teachers - are best positioned to support students in transitions. Louisiana families require additional resources to navigate complex and disparate systems throughout critical transition periods for their children and youth with disabilities. This partnership with the LDOE will result in the creation of new resources that equip families of children and youth with disabilities to more effectively navigate early childhood and post-secondary transitions.

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

The Department is seeking to partner with an organization that can provide families of children and youth with disabilities access to a suite of high-quality, web-based, multimedia resources regarding key topics in early childhood and post-secondary transitions. This partnership will be funded beginning October 1, 2020 and through September 30, 2023.

PROGRAM PRIORITIES

The partner identified through this competitive opportunity will be expected to carry out the following responsibilities for both priorities below within the scope of a negotiated contract:

- Engage in extensive dialogue with families of children and youth with disabilities across Louisiana to assess needs for resources.
- Develop a suite of high-quality, web-based, multimedia resources, including written and video content, that provide clear, accessible, and Louisiana-specific information to families of children and youth with disabilities.
- Continually evaluate and improve web-based resources based on usage data, family feedback, and collaboration with the LDOE.

PRIORITY 1: Early Childhood Transition

Early disability identification, intervention, and support are critical for the success of children with disabilities. The partner will develop resources to support children with disabilities and their families in navigating:

- The child find process
- Rights under IDEA
- Accessing supports in early childhood programs
- Transitioning from early childhood to K-12
- Distance learning for early learners
- Other topics identified by families as areas of need

PRIORITY 2: Post-Secondary Transition

Louisiana has unique and varied opportunities for students with disabilities to develop skills, graduate from high school, and engage in college, career, and/or independent living opportunities. The partner will develop resources to support youth with disabilities and their families in navigating:

- The post-secondary transition process across life domains
- Rights and processes for receiving accommodations in post-secondary settings
- Organizations that assist families with transition planning and needs
- Preparation for and access to post-secondary education and employment opportunities available in Louisiana, including both traditional and distance learning opportunities
- Other topics identified by families as areas of need

APPLICATION AND TIMELINE

Release of the Transition Family Support RFA	April 30, 2020
Deadline to Submit Application	June 15, 2020
Notification of Award	July 6, 2020
Funding Period	October 1, 2020 - September 30, 2023

ELIGIBILITY AND FUNDING

The project will be funded using state-level IDEA funds. It is anticipated that one project will be funded for three years at a maximum of \$140,000 per year. The project will begin on October 1, 2020.

Organizations that have the ability to build web-based multimedia resources specific to both priority areas are eligible to apply.

Priority will be given to Louisiana-based organizations.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Organizations should send applications to specialeducation@la.gov by close of business June 15, 2020. The Department will review applications and make final selection by July 6, 2020.

The application should not exceed 10 pages and must address both priority areas. It should include the following components:

1. Application Cover Sheet
2. Background and experience of the organization and project staff members, including:
 - a. Demonstrated understanding of federal (IDEA) and state law and policy supporting children and youth with disabilities
 - b. Qualifications demonstrating the ability to provide wraparound information on transitional periods to families of children and youth with disabilities
3. A description of the scope and sequence for assessing the needs of families of children and youth with disabilities
4. Demonstrated ability to develop high-quality, web-based, multimedia resources that are based in key design principles and compliant with accessibility regulations
5. A description of the types of multimedia resources that will be created. At a minimum, this should include written and video resources.
6. A description of the processes for soliciting usage data and feedback on resources, and for incorporating these data into a continuous cycle of improvement
7. A description of the process for collaboration with the LDOE in approving topics for web-based resources, ensuring alignment to other LDOE family support resources, and collaborating to improve resources based on data

Organizations may submit samples of past work and/or sample wireframes to address the application components. These samples will not be included in the 10-page limit.

CRITERIA AND EVALUATION

Applications will be assessed on the below criteria.

Background and Experience

- Applicants have demonstrated understanding of federal (IDEA) and state law and policy supporting children and youth with disabilities
- Applicants have demonstrated qualifications to provide wraparound information on transitional periods to families of children and youth with disabilities

Program Design

- Application describes a concrete plan for assessing family information needs
- Application demonstrates an ability to develop high quality, web-based, multimedia resources
- Application includes example websites and/or wire-frames that demonstrate elements of key design principles and ADA compliance.
- Application describes types of resources that effectively carry out program goals
- Application describes a concrete process for soliciting data and feedback and iteratively improving resources
- Application describes a concrete process for collaboration with the LDOE

APPLICATION COVER SHEET

Application Cover Sheet	
Please provide the following information for the application:	
Organization Name:	
Point of Contact:	
Mailing Address:	
Telephone:	
Email Address:	