

providers, vocational educators, related service providers, paraprofessionals);

(3) Local-level administrators (*e.g.*, associations of elementary, middle, and secondary school principals; regular and special education administrators; and administrators of private schools); and

(4) Families (*e.g.*, associations of parents and family members of students in general, special education students, and infants with disabilities, and disability organizations representing individuals with disabilities).

(b) Through the project director and other relevant staff of the partnership, collaborate with appropriate OSEP and other federally funded researchers and technical assistance providers, including the parent training and information centers. OSEP supports a number of research programs and technical assistance efforts that produce findings, information, instructional approaches, and products that could bear upon the successful implementation of IDEA. The project must also share information with the OSEP-funded Dissemination Center.

(c) Include information in its application on an assessment it has conducted to identify the needs of partners regarding the implementation of IDEA, including Part C.

(d) Establish an advisory panel that includes representation from each of its member organizations.

(e) Report results of the needs assessment described in its application to the advisory panel during the first three months of the award.

(f) Based on the results of the needs assessment, with input from the advisory panel, develop joint annual plans for training, technical assistance, dissemination, and outreach to reach the partners' grass roots constituencies in an efficient and timely manner. The plans, which must be submitted to OSEP for approval, must address:

(1) How partners intend to reach members at both State and local levels;

(2) How partners will implement research-based practices to effectively implement IDEA, including Part C, and NCLB;

(3) How trainers, who are members of partner organizations, will be compensated for their training time;

(4) How partners will use project funds to supplement their ongoing efforts to improve results for children with disabilities; and

(5) How the project will leverage other resources to support planned activities.

(g) Convene the advisory panel, at a minimum, on a semi-annual basis to assess the implementation of the plan.

(h) With input from the advisory panel, develop strategies to address the

fragmentation and facilitate the integration of regular and special education. Examples of such strategies could include, but are not limited to, technical assistance activities designed to help States and districts develop seamless accountability systems.

(i) Create opportunities for the project's member organizations to engage in meaningful dialogue and problem solving designed to identify supports and impediments to improved results for children with disabilities. The project must develop strategies to eliminate the impediments.

(j) Prior to developing any new product, whether paper or electronic, submit for approval a proposal describing the content and purpose of the product to OSEP's Dissemination Center for which OSEP plans to fund this year. However, product development is not a primary function of this project.

(k) When OSEP has funded a technical assistance center in the content area of the proposed product, but no product currently exists that will meet the needs of the project's partners, work with that center to ensure that the content of the product is of the highest quality.

(l) Before submitting a new product to OSEP's Dissemination Center for review, have that product thoroughly reviewed by individuals representing each of the four constituency groups represented in the partnership.

(m) Review the new product for technical accuracy and clarity by vetting through an approach determined in consultation with OSEP.

(n) Establish:

(1) A toll free telephone number;

(2) A Web site with links to other information and technical assistance providers;

(3) A database of products and activities; and

(4) Regular information updates to keep partner organizations abreast of new developments in the law.

(o) Employ an information specialist to answer questions and mail materials upon request.

(p) Make all information products accessible electronically and available in alternative formats.

(q) Conduct an evaluation of project activities that is based on clear, measurable performance objectives that include measures of collaboration and, if possible, are clearly linked to improving results.

(r) Conduct OSEP-specified technical assistance to States. This effort may include participation in: (1) Collaborative Web-based technical assistance activities, (2) coordination of

and participation in State-to-State communities of practice, or (3) direct technical assistance to OSEP-specified States through partnerships between OSEP and selected States. Staff time and project resources dedicated to provide technical assistance to OSEP-specified States will be negotiated with OSEP as part of the cooperative agreement within 30 days of the project award (OSEP anticipates that technical assistance to OSEP-specified States could average approximately \$40,000 per year. Budgets should be developed with this in mind).

#### Fourth and Fifth Years of Project

In deciding whether to continue this project for the fourth and fifth years, the Secretary will consider the requirements of 34 CFR 75.253(a) for continuation awards.

The Secretary will also consider the following:

(a) The recommendation of a review team consisting of experts selected by the Secretary. The team will conduct its review in Washington, DC during the last half of the project's second year. A project must budget for the travel associated with this one-day intensive review;

(b) The timeliness and effectiveness with which all requirements of the negotiated cooperative agreement have been or are being met by the project;

(c) The degree to which the project is making a positive contribution—and its strategies are demonstrating the potential for disseminating significant knowledge to State and local constituencies—to improve collaboration and the implementation of IDEA; and

(d) Evidence of the degree to which the project's activities have contributed to changed practice and improved student outcomes.

#### Competitive Preference

Within this absolute priority, we will give the following competitive preference points under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i) to applicants that are otherwise eligible for funding under this priority:

Ten points will be awarded to any application that is submitted from a national association or national membership organization.

Therefore, for purposes of this competitive preference applicants can be awarded a total of 10 points in addition to those awarded under the published selection criteria for this priority. That is, an applicant meeting this competitive preference could receive a maximum possible score of 110 points.