

Equitable Access Screen Guidance

Information requested on this screen applies to ALL grant sources included in the Consolidated Application.

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) allows applicants discretion in developing the required description. The statute highlights six barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age. Based on local circumstances, applicants should determine how these, or other barriers may prevent students, teachers, parents, and other beneficiaries from accessing or participating in the Federally funded programs.

How to complete this screen:

A GEPA statement should consist of a specific explanation of:

1. your school district's proposed use(s) of grant funds
2. identification of a specific barrier or barriers to equitable participation
3. how your school district will use grant funds in a way that addresses the identified barrier to ensure access and participation in the funded programs

A generic, "catch-all" statement about non-discrimination is not sufficient.

The narrative in the three sections of the Description of Equitable Access screen refers to ALL grant sources in the Consolidated Application. Therefore, a set of properly worded descriptions for each category of stakeholders might read as indicated below; however, **Do Not** copy these. They are examples only.

Equitable Access for Students

Barriers must be identified that could hinder equitable access of students to Federally funded programs and activities.

Common Types of Barriers for Students

Gender: Identity, stereotyping, bullying, clothing and dress, hair, and policies and procedures

Race/color and national origin: Discrimination, low expectations, stereotyping

Disability: Low expectations, lack of understanding

Age: Assumptions about ability, over-aged

The following two examples (a and b) show how a district might complete this box to address barriers to student participation; however, each district must describe its specific situation and criteria.

- a) Our district will use grant funds to purchase robots as part of the computer science coding program. In addition, because a significant portion of our students are from families where Spanish is the primary language spoken at home, we will provide user coding instructions for the robots both in Spanish and in English.

- b) Our district will use grant funds to strengthen its district-wide STEM initiative. Since STEM-related classes tend to disproportionately attract boys, we are implementing outreach strategies to encourage more girls to participate in our STEM initiative.

Equitable Access for Staff

Barriers must be identified that could hinder equitable access of staff to Federally funded programs and activities.

Common Types of Barriers for Staff

Gender – Stereotyping, job assignments, advanced opportunities

Race, color, and national origin - Lack of diversity, advanced opportunities

Disability – Location of meetings, assignments, handicapped accessibility

Age – Policies and procedures, discrimination, hiring, firing, forced resignations, stereotyping of abilities.

The following two examples (a and b) show how a district might complete this box to address barriers to staff participation; however, each district must describe its specific situation and criteria.

- a) Our district will use grant funds to send staff to training to improve K-3 Early Literacy. Because some staff have disabilities that impede their ability to drive, we will provide transportation as needed to enable all staff the ability to get to off-site professional development opportunities at times beyond the school day.
- b) Our district will use grant funds to hire a guidance counselor to provide added support for our low-income families/special needs/ESL population. Because cultural proficiency is key to being able to perform the duties of this job, we will ensure that proper training is available to the counselor to ensure that any eligible applicants will be equipped with the skills needed to perform the duties regardless of gender, race, national origin, disability, socioeconomic status, or age.

Equitable Access for Parents and Families

Barriers must be identified that could hinder equitable access of parents and families to Federally funded programs and activities.

Common Types of Barriers for Parents and Families

Gender – Lack of communication with fathers, non-custodial parents, and extended families, and policies and procedures

Race, color, and national origin – Discrimination, language barriers, communication

Disability – Lack of transportation, handicapped accessibility

Age – Discrimination towards young and older parents and grandparents, accessibility

The following two examples (a and b) show how a district might complete this box to address barriers to parent participation; however, each district must describe its specific situation and criteria.

- a) Our district will use grant funds to do a variety of parental outreach activities. Because some of our families speak a language other than English as their primary language, we will offer translators at the outreach activities to ensure parents can participate.
- b) Our district will use grant funds to host a parent night activity. In addition, because a significant portion of our students are at or below the poverty level, we will provide funds for teacher training that will assist staff in understanding poverty and how to engage effectively with parents from different socioeconomic backgrounds during and after this activity.

The preceding examples are intended to distinguish Assurances from Descriptions of Equitable Access. They should not be viewed as the only way to word the respective three categories addressing students, staff, and parents/families. Each description should reflect the local circumstances and specify how equitable access will be ensured in both programs and services for stakeholder groups included in the budget detail of the Consolidated Application. Adherence to these guidelines will make it less likely the reviewing Regional Education Consultant will have to return the Consolidated Application for Modifications in this Section.