

years. Floodwaters in 1973, 1976, 1979, 1989, and 1994 substantially damaged residences along the creek. Heavy rains from Tropical Storm Allison in 2001 resulted in severe flooding along Clear Creek and prompted the buyout of approximately 300 flood-prone homes. However, flooding is not only a problem associated severe rain events, but has become increasingly more frequent along Clear Creek, even with moderate amounts of rainfall. Local authorities have made limited channel improvements to address specific flood concerns, but those efforts have contributed little to resolving the current large-scale flooding problem. The Clear Creek Federal flood control project was authorized by Congress in the Flood Control Act of 1968 (Pub. L. 91-611, Section 221). The authorized project extended 31 miles from Clear Lake to the Fort Bend County line. Plans included deepening, widening, and realigning the creek channel. The congressional authorization for this project only allows the consideration of reducing flood damage caused by rainfall runoff along the main channel of Clear Creek and not coastal flooding caused by tropical storm systems. In 1982 the Phase I General Design Memorandum, including the Final Environmental Impact Statement, was signed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Southwest Division Engineer, thus authorizing the detailed design. Due to concerns regarding its design, the project's non-Federal sponsors, Galveston County and Harris County Flood Control District, with input from the public and governmental entities, requested reevaluation of the design. In 1997, the sponsors requested the USACE adopt changes to the plans. The changes requested by the non-Federal sponsors were beyond the discretionary authority of the USACE Southwest Division Commander to approve. As a result, in February 1999, the USACE decided a general reevaluation study would be needed. In April 1999, the non-Federal sponsors agreed to accept the USACE recommendation to conduct the general reevaluation study. The general reevaluation study reconsidered the previously authorized project as well as non-Federal sponsor-proposed alternatives and other alternatives that were deemed reasonable. Brazoria County Drainage District #4 joined the non-Federal sponsors in this effort by June 1999.

(2) *Alternatives.* The construction alternatives that will be evaluated are: (1) Constructing 15.2 miles of 130 ft to 240 ft wide high flow channel in two

separate sections of Clear Creek. (2) Detention of 485 acre feet of flood water in the high flow channel of Clear Creek where it diverges from the low flow channel. (3) Detention of 1,750 acre feet of flood water in a 160 acre basin adjacent to Clear Creek. (4) Construction of a grass-lined channel on 2.4 miles of Turkey Creek to its confluence with Clear Creek. (5) Construction of a concrete-lined channel for 0.8 mile of Mud Gully in the reach which is located between the northbound and southbound lanes of Beamer Rd. (6) Detention of 1,515 acre feet of flood water in a 120 acre basin between Clear Creek and Mud Gully. (7) Construction of a 2.1 mile grass-lined channel on Mary's Creek. (8) Detention of 857 acre feet of flood water in two detention basins totaling 120 acres along Mary's Creek.

(3) *Scoping.* Scoping meetings were held on March 15, 2001 at the Friendswood High School in Friendswood, TX, on March 15, 2001 in Friendswood, TX, on May 3, 2001 in League City, TX, and on May 9, 2001 in Pearland, TX. The scoping process involved Federal, State and local agencies, and other interested persons and organizations. Comments were received for 30 days following each scoping meeting. Comments will be considered during preparation of the EIS. At this time, there are no plans for an additional scoping effort.

(4) *Coordination.* Further coordination with environmental agencies will be conducted under the National Environmental Policy Act, the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, the Endangered Species Act, the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Essential Fish Habitat), and the Coastal Zone Management Act under the Texas Coastal Management Program.

(5) *DEIS Preparation.* It is estimated that the DEIS will be available to the public for review and comment in March 2009.

**Richard Medina,**

*Chief, Planning and Environmental Branch.*

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**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**Notice of Proposed Information Collection Requests**

**AGENCY:** Department of Education.

**SUMMARY:** The IC Clearance Official, Regulatory Information Management

Services, Office of Management, invites comments on the proposed information collection requests as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

**DATES:** Interested persons are invited to submit comments on or before August 25, 2008.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Section 3506 of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35) requires that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) provide interested Federal agencies and the public an early opportunity to comment on information collection requests. OMB may amend or waive the requirement for public consultation to the extent that public participation in the approval process would defeat the purpose of the information collection, violate State or Federal law, or substantially interfere with any agency's ability to perform its statutory obligations. The IC Clearance Official, Regulatory Information Management Services, Office of Management, publishes that notice containing proposed information collection requests prior to submission of these requests to OMB. Each proposed information collection, grouped by office, contains the following: (1) Type of review requested, e.g. new, revision, extension, existing or reinstatement; (2) Title; (3) Summary of the collection; (4) Description of the need for, and proposed use of, the information; (5) Respondents and frequency of collection; and (6) Reporting and/or Recordkeeping burden. OMB invites public comment.

The Department of Education is especially interested in public comment addressing the following issues: (1) Is this collection necessary to the proper functions of the Department; (2) will this information be processed and used in a timely manner; (3) is the estimate of burden accurate; (4) how might the Department enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (5) how might the Department minimize the burden of this collection on the respondents, including through the use of information technology.

Dated: June 18, 2008.

**Angela C. Arrington,**

*IC Clearance Official, Regulatory Information Management Services, Office of Management.*

**Federal Student Aid**

*Type of Review:* Revision.

*Title:* Federal Family Education Loan, Direct Loan, and Perkins Loan Discharge Applications.

*Frequency:* On Occasion.

*Affected Public:* Individuals or household.

*Reporting and Recordkeeping Hour Burden:**Responses:* 29,543.*Burden Hours:* 14,774.

*Abstract:* These forms serve as the means by which eligible borrowers in the FFEL, Direct Loan, and Perkins Loan programs apply for discharge of their loans based on school closure (FFEL, Direct Loan, and Perkins Loan program loans), or false certification of student eligibility (FFEL, and Direct Loan program loans only). The holders of FFEL, Direct Loan, and Perkins Loan program loans use the information collected on these forms to determine whether a borrower meets the eligibility requirements for a closed school or false certification loan discharge.

Requests for copies of the proposed information collection request may be accessed from <http://edicsweb.ed.gov>, by selecting the "Browse Pending Collections" link and by clicking on link number 3743. When you access the information collection, click on "Download Attachments" to view.

Written requests for information should be addressed to U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., LBJ, Washington, DC 20202-4537. Requests may also be electronically mailed to [ICDocketMgr@ed.gov](mailto:ICDocketMgr@ed.gov) or faxed to 202-401-0920. Please specify the complete title of the information collection when making your request.

Comments regarding burden and/or the collection activity requirements should be electronically mailed to [ICDocketMgr@ed.gov](mailto:ICDocketMgr@ed.gov). Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339.

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## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

### Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services; Overview Information; Personnel Development To Improve Services and Results for Children With Disabilities—National Center To Improve the Recruitment and Retention of Qualified Personnel for Children With Disabilities; Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year (FY) 2008

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 84.325C.

*DATES:*

*Applications Available:* June 24, 2008.

*Deadline for Transmittal of*

*Applications:* July 24, 2008.

*Deadline for Intergovernmental Review:* September 22, 2008.

## Full Text of Announcement

### I. Funding Opportunity Description

*Purpose of Program:* The purposes of this program are to (1) help address State-identified needs for highly qualified personnel—in special education, related services, early intervention, and regular education—to work with infants, toddlers, and children with disabilities; and (2) ensure that those personnel have the necessary skills and knowledge, derived from practices that have been determined through scientifically based research and experience, to be successful in serving those children.

*Priority:* In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(v), this priority is from allowable activities specified in the statute, or otherwise authorized in the statute (see sections 662 and 681(d) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)). 20 U.S.C. 1462 and 1481(d).

*Absolute Priority:* For FY 2008 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applicants from this competition, this priority is an absolute priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), we consider only applications that meet this priority.

This priority is:

*National Center to Improve the Recruitment and Retention of Qualified Personnel for Children With Disabilities (84.325C).*

### Background

Under Part B of IDEA, section 612(a)(14) requires States to ensure that special education teachers and related services personnel providing services are appropriately and adequately prepared and trained. In implementing this requirement, States must ensure that local educational agencies (LEAs) take measurable steps to recruit, hire, train, and retain highly qualified special education teachers and related services personnel to serve children with disabilities. Likewise, under Part C of IDEA, section 635(a)(8) and (9) requires States to maintain comprehensive systems of personnel development that include strategies to prepare, recruit, and retain early intervention service providers who are fully and appropriately qualified to provide early intervention services.

States and LEAs report challenges in recruiting and retaining highly qualified special education teachers, which could affect their ability to meet the Federal personnel requirements under IDEA. Throughout the United States, there is a chronic and pervasive shortage of special education teachers and this shortage is expected to increase over

time (McLeskey, Tyler, & Flippin, 2004). In addition, there is a severe shortage of special educators from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds that reflects the lack of diversity in the teacher population as a whole (McLeskey *et al.*, 2004; NCES, 2003).

Nationwide, there is a growing shortage of qualified school-based related services personnel, including audiologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, and speech-language pathologists (Center on Personnel Studies in Special Education, 2004). Part C early intervention and Part B preschool programs also report significant personnel shortages across disciplines serving infants, toddlers, and preschoolers with disabilities and their families (Center to Inform Personnel Preparation Policy and Practice in Early Intervention and Preschool Education, 2007).

The current personnel shortage has multiple causes, including increases in (a) the number of positions created to meet the growing population of infants, toddlers, and children with disabilities, and (b) the number of special education personnel moving out of direct service roles to other positions in the field, switching to regular education, or leaving the profession altogether (McLeskey *et al.*, 2004). Uncertified or inadequately prepared personnel, as well as younger and inexperienced personnel, are more likely to leave their positions than their certified and more experienced colleagues (Billingsley, 2004; McLeskey *et al.*, 2004).

To address these on-going challenges effectively, States must adopt evidence-based and comprehensive strategies to recruit new special education teachers, related services personnel, and early intervention personnel, retain the current workforce, and improve the skills of uncertified and inadequately prepared personnel. In 2003, the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) funded the National Center for Special Education Personnel and Related Services Providers (Personnel Center) to help States develop and implement strategies to recruit and retain sufficient numbers of highly or fully qualified personnel. (Information on the work of the Personnel Center is available at <http://www.personnelcenter.org>) To further enhance the capacity of States and LEAs to recruit and retain sufficient numbers of highly or fully qualified personnel, the Secretary is proposing to establish a National Center to Improve the Recruitment and Retention of Qualified Personnel for Children With Disabilities.