



General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)

Requirement

Section 427 of the United States Department of Education's General Education Provisions ACT (GEPA) requires each applicant for funds (other than an individual person) to include in its application a description of the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally-assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs.

Local school districts or other eligible applicant that apply for Federal ESSER funding (including CARES, CRRSA, & ARP) must provide this description in their application. The Montana OPI is responsible for ensuring that the school district or other local entity has submitted a sufficient section 427 statement.

For more information visit: The [OMB Notice describing the requirements under the General Education Provisions Act](https://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/gepa427.pdf) at: <https://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/gepa427.pdf>

Writing a GEPA statement

The GEPA provision allows applicants discretion in developing the required description. The statute highlights six types of barriers that may impede equitable access or participation: *gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age*. Based on local circumstances, districts should determine whether these or other barriers may prevent students, teachers, etc. from such access to, or participation in, the Federally-funded project or activity.

Format

The description(s) provided in an application need not be lengthy. Applicants may provide a clear and succinct description of how the district will address the barriers, as applicable to the district's local context, which may impede equitable access or participation in the district's Federal programs. In addition, the information may be provided in a single narrative, or, if appropriate, may be discussed in connection with related topics in the application.

GEPA Responses (Policies/Practices Statement + Narrative)

Example Policies/Practices Statement:

_____ School District understands the statute highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age. The District's current policies (*list relevant policies here such as nondiscrimination policies, gender equity policies, equitable employment policies, accessibility policies etc.*) and practices have been established to eliminate barriers that may prevent their students, teachers, district employees, etc., from such access or participation in the Federally-funded project or activities submitted in the attached CARES, CRRSA, ARP sub-grant application.

Example Narratives

- An applicant may identify a lack of student participation in an advanced STEM course for secondary students and is concerned that female students may be less likely than male students to enroll in the course. If the applicant utilizes their Federal funds to increase outreach efforts to female students to encourage enrollment and participation in the advanced STEM course, a description of how this activity will be implemented would address a barrier to equitable participation for students based on gender, thereby satisfying the GEPA requirement.
- An applicant may identify the disproportionate use of exclusionary discipline practices (removing or excluding students from the classroom), specifically in regard to Native American students, as a root cause of low student attendance and engagement. If the applicant utilizes their Federal funds to reduce the use of discipline practices that remove students from the classroom, a description of how this activity will be implemented would address a barrier to equitable participation for students of color, thereby satisfying the GEPA requirement.
- An applicant may identify the low participation of low-income parents in grant funded activities in the evening at a local school because a lack of transportation or child-care. If the applicant utilizes their Federal funds to increase parent participation in the grant-funded activities, a description of how this activity will be implemented would address a barrier to equitable participation for low-income parents, thereby satisfying the GEPA requirement.