



STATE OF ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Eric G. Mackey, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Education

April 17, 2024

Alabama
State Board
of Education

MEMORANDUM

Governor Kay Ivey
President

TO: City and County Superintendents of Education

Jackie Zeigler
District I

FROM: Eric G. Mackey *EGM*
State Superintendent of Education

Tracie West
District II
Vice President

RE: Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Special Education Services Application for Special Initiatives

Stephanie Bell
District III

The Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE), Special Education Services (SES) Section, is pleased to announce the opportunity to support projects that make a difference for children with disabilities throughout the state of Alabama. Local education agencies (LEAs) are eligible to receive additional funding support for FY 2024 for Project SEARCH, professional learning for Temporary Special Education Certificate (TSEC) teachers, preschool innovative projects, and by invitation only for school improvement training support.

Yvette M. Richardson, Ed.D.
District IV

The funding options are as follows:

Tonya S. Chestnut, Ed.D.
District V
President Pro Tem

1. Project SEARCH Support Funding – Fund Source *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA) 3290, Part B
2. Preschool Innovative Projects – Fund Source 3290 IDEA, Part B Preschool
3. Temporary Special Education Certificate (TSEC) – Fund Source 3290 IDEA, Part B
4. School Improvement Training Support (By Invitation Only) – Fund Source 3290 IDEA, Part B

Marie Manning
District VI

Project SEARCH Support Funding

Belinda McRae
District VII

Project SEARCH is a Transition-to-Work Program, a unique, business-led, one-year employment preparation program that takes place entirely at the workplace. Total workplace immersion facilitates a seamless combination of classroom instruction, career exploration, and hands-on training through worksite rotations. The program culminates in individualized job development.

Wayne Reynolds, Ed.D.
District VIII

The ALSDE is accepting applications from LEAs to cover reimbursement for Project SEARCH licensing fees (currently \$18,000.00), plus up to \$30,000.00 for materials and supplies or training expenses, including travel, for start-up programs. Project SEARCH programs that are being renewed are eligible for reimbursement for the renewal licensing fees (currently \$385.00) and up to \$15,000.00 for materials and supplies or training expenses, including travel. All reimbursement requests are only for Project SEARCH Licensing Fees and/or materials and supplies or training expenses to benefit a Project SEARCH program. To be considered for this grant, LEAs must complete the checklist and submit it with the Project SEARCH Application for Support Funding.

Eric G. Mackey, Ed.D.
Secretary and
Executive Officer

Preschool Innovative Projects

The ALSDE, SES, is committed to increasing the number of preschool-aged students (ages three through five, not kindergarten) who have access to high-quality preschool special education and related services in inclusive environments throughout the state and will make available a total of \$1,500,000.00 for one-time grant awards to further this effort. Grant applications up to \$50,000.00 per project will be accepted from LEAs for initiatives that are innovative and creative and that ultimately seek to increase access to high-quality inclusive special education and related services to preschool-aged students with disabilities. No more than two projects per LEA will be funded. The goal is to provide one-time grants to implement innovative proposals that exhibit the greatest chance of improving the lives of young children with disabilities. These grants can be used for items such as materials, supplies, equipment, technology, assistive technology, recruitment/retention, personnel development, and professional development. These preschool grants cannot be used to pay salaries or for contracting special education or related services, as these are time-limited funds.

Temporary Special Education Teacher Certificate (TSEC)

The collaborative partnership between LEAs that employ TSEC teachers and the ALSDE, SES, will provide valuable financial support to TSEC teachers as they work to empower and educate children with disabilities. The ALSDE, SES, is committed to supporting, increasing, and retaining individuals working through the TSEC alternative approach, and will provide participant fees to support the completion of six professional learning sessions per teacher at a rate of \$600.00 per completed session, not exceeding \$3,600.00 per participant, to LEAs interested in participating in this opportunity. Compensation will be made to TSEC teachers by your LEA and reimbursed to your district by the ALSDE. Participating personnel will: (a) complete a Microsoft Form in Schoology, (b) complete up to six special education professional learning modules, and (c) ensure all requirements for subsequent TSECs will be completed by September 30 and all professional learning must be completed outside of normal work hours.

School Improvement Training Support (By Invitation Only)

The school improvement training support is for LEAs that have school(s) designated for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI), Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI), and Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI). The first opportunity to apply for this support is offered to those LEAs who were invited and agreed to participate in the *Inclusive Practices* training series. The training support covers specified training sessions and implementation planning meetings. The training support available includes registration costs, participant fees, substitute teacher reimbursement, in-state travel, and per diem according to state rules and regulations. The participant fees are for personnel not on contract during summer training and implementation planning meetings up to \$200 per day (or equivalent to Board policy, whichever is less) and employer's benefits and/or substitute teacher reimbursement and benefits for training sessions and implementation planning meetings up to \$150 per day (or equivalent to Board policy, whichever is less). Each training support opportunity is by invitation only and will include a specific number of days for which LEAs can apply.

Grant award allocation lists will be prepared for Options 1 through 3. Individual letters will be sent for Option 4 grant awards.

A separate application is required for each option. Awards will be made in rounds based on the following deadlines for submitting applications:

Application Submission Deadlines (Electronic Submission Date By)
Application Deadlines for Rounds 1 and 2 of Special Initiatives Awards: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• May 3, 2024• May 31, 2024

Any public school system in the state of Alabama that has enrolled a child with a disability determined eligible for special education and related services under existing federal and state law, may submit a grant application (see attached) to the ALSDE for financial assistance to support these special initiatives.

An electronic application must be submitted by the submission deadline of May 3, 2024. For Round 2 (based upon the availability of remaining funds after the first round of applications are received and processed), the deadline is May 31, 2024.

These funds are awarded for FY 2024 and are available immediately after approved submissions through September 30, 2024, with the official effective date designated upon award. Applications for supplemental funds must be submitted and approved prior to expenditures. Reimbursement to the LEA will be made upon receipt of a signed, itemized claim with supporting documentation. All funds awarded must be expended by September 30, 2024, and are not automatically awarded in subsequent years.

For consideration in the award allocation of these funds, the LEAs must comply with all application requirements. An LEA may apply to receive FY 2024 funds for special initiatives by completing and submitting an electronic application [here](#).

If you have questions or need clarification, please contact the ALSDE, SES, by email at sesgrants@alsde.edu or by telephone at 334-694-4782.

EGM/DC/BJ

Attachment

cc: Special Education Coordinators	Ms. Shavon Y. Harris
Chief School Financial Officers	Mrs. Erika Richburg
Mrs. Angela Martin	Ms. Alicia Hodge
Dr. Brandon T. Payne	Ms. Gwendolyn Preston
Mrs. Shanthia Washington	Mrs. Tiffany Moore
Dr. DaLee Chambers	Mrs. Stephanie F. Bear

FY24-2021

Special Education Services Application

Special Initiatives: Fiscal Year (FY) 2024

Financial assistance is available to any public school system in the state of Alabama that has enrolled an exceptional child with disabilities determined eligible for special education, and related services under the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA). Local education agencies (LEAs) may submit grant applications to the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) for financial assistance for Special Initiatives.

For FY 2024, there are three special initiatives for financial assistance options:

1. Project SEARCH Support – Fund Source 3290 IDEA, Part B
2. Temporary Special Education Certificate (TSEC) Teacher Support – Fund Source 3290 IDEA, Part B
3. Preschool Innovative Projects – Fund Source 3290 IDEA Part B Preschool
4. School Improvement Training Support (By Invitation Only) – Fund Source 3290 IDEA, Part B

For consideration in the award allocation of these funds, it is imperative that the LEA follows all application requirements.

These funds are awarded for FY 2024 and are available immediately after approved submissions through September 30, 2024, with the official effective date designated upon award. Applications for special initiatives must be submitted and approved prior to expenditures. All funds awarded must be expended by September 30, 2024, and are not automatically awarded in subsequent years.

If you have questions or need clarification, please contact the ALSDE, SES, by email at sesgrants@alsde.edu or by telephone at 334-694-4782.

Application Submission Deadlines (Electronic Submission Date By)

Application Deadlines for Rounds 1 and 2 of Special Initiatives Awards:
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- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• May 3, 2024• May 31, 2024 |
|--|

Option 1: Project SEARCH Support

The ALSDE is accepting applications from LEAs to cover reimbursement for Project SEARCH licensing fees (currently \$18,000.00) plus up to \$30,000.00 for materials and supplies or training expenses, including travel, for start-up programs. Project SEARCH programs that are being renewed are eligible for reimbursement for the renewal licensing fees (currently \$385.00) and up to \$15,000.00 for materials and supplies or training expenses, including travel. All reimbursement requests are only for Project SEARCH licensing fees and/or materials and supplies or training expenses to benefit a Project SEARCH program. To be considered for this grant, LEAs must complete the checklist and submit it with the Project SEARCH Application for Support Funding.

[\(Project SEARCH Frequently Asked Questions\)](#)

Option 2: Preschool Innovative Projects

The ALSDE, SES, is committed to increasing the number of preschool-aged students (ages three through five, not kindergarten) who have access to high-quality preschool special education and related services in inclusive environments throughout the state and will make available a total of \$1,500,000.00 for one-time grant awards to further this effort. Grant applications up to \$50,000.00 per project will be accepted from LEAs for initiatives that are innovative and creative, and that ultimately seek to increase access to high-quality inclusive special education and related services to preschool-aged students with disabilities. No more than two projects per LEA will be funded. These grants can be used for items such as materials, supplies, equipment, technology, assistive technology, recruitment/retention, personnel development, and professional development. These preschool grants cannot be used to pay salaries or for contracting special education or related services as these are time-limited funds.

Option 3: Temporary Special Education Certificate (TSEC) Teacher Support

The ALSDE, SES, is committed to supporting, increasing, and retaining individuals working through the TSEC alternative approach, and will provide participant fees to support the completion of six professional learning sessions per teacher at a rate of \$600.00 per completed session, not exceeding \$3,600.00 per participant, to LEAs interested in participating in this opportunity. Compensation will be made to TSEC teachers by your LEA and reimbursed to your district by the ALSDE. Participating personnel will: (a) complete a Microsoft Form in Schoology, (b) complete up to six special education professional learning modules, and (c) ensure all requirements for subsequent TSECs will be completed by September 30 and all professional learning must be completed outside of normal work hours.

Option 4: School Improvement Training Support (By Invitation Only)

The school improvement training support is for LEAs that have school(s) designated for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI), Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI), and Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI). The training support covers specified training sessions and implementation planning meetings. The training support available includes registration costs, participant fees, substitute teacher reimbursement, in-state travel, and per diem according to state rules and regulations. The participant fees are for personnel not on contract during summer training and implementation planning meetings up to \$200.00 per day (or equivalent to Board policy, whichever is less) and employer's benefits and/or substitute teacher reimbursement and benefits for training sessions and implementation planning meetings up to \$150.00 per day (or equivalent to Board policy, whichever is less). Each training support opportunity is by invitation only and will include a specific number of days for which LEAs can apply.

Special Initiatives: Fiscal Year (FY) 2024

The LEA may choose to complete multiple applications for each option. LEAs are eligible for up to two awards under Option 2. Each application shall be submitted for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024.

Select one option per application:

Option 1: Project Search Support

Option 2: Preschool Innovative Projects

Option 3: Temporary Special Education Certificate (TSEC) Teacher Support

Option 4: School Improvement Training Support (By Invitation Only)

Special Education Services Application for Special Initiatives

SECTION 1: LEA APPLICANT INFORMATION

School Year: 2023-2024

LEA: _____

LEA Code: _____

LEA Mailing Address: _____

Superintendent: _____

Email Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Special Education Coordinator: _____

Email Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Chief School Financial Officer: _____

Email Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Signature of Superintendent

Date

Signature of Special Education Coordinator

Date

Signature of Chief School Financial Officer

Date

Project SEARCH Support

SECTION 2: PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS CHECKLIST & PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION

1. Complete the Program Requirements Checklist.
2. Complete the Plan for Implementation.
3. Complete the Budget Information (Section 3).

It is ideal to have one year for the planning team to work together for a successful implementation. The process of planning and implementation takes about nine months. Project SEARCH programs follow the local school calendar and begin operation in late August, so a planning team should start meeting, by January of the year they want to begin. It is suggested that you identify a Steering/Planning Team that meets at least monthly. All partner organizations should be represented (especially the host business once they are committed). The team may also include a young adult with a disability, a family member, a disability agency, and other community members such as the Workforce Investment Board, University Center for Excellence, etc.

Please complete the checklist and submit it with Project SEARCH Application for License Funding.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Project SEARCH Program Requirements
	Program Partners:
	Education: Local school district, career technical school, educational service center, and/or collaboration of neighboring school districts.
	Vocational Rehabilitation: Both local counselor and area supervisor, if possible.
	Community Rehabilitation Partner (CRP): Provider of skills training and job development. In states where the skills trainer is hired directly by vocational rehabilitation (VR), this agency is not required unless it is a long-term support agency.
	State or County Developmental Disabilities (DD) Agency, Managed Care Agency, or Mental Health Provider: Long-term follow along services.
	Host Business: The planning process can begin before a host business is identified but should include them as soon as they are secured.
	Workforce Investment Board/Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA): Agencies in your community.
	Representation: A disability advocacy organization for families.
	Complete the Project SEARCH licensing agreement and contract for on-site technical assistance. For more information, contact the Project SEARCH business office at ProjectSEARCHbusinessoffice@cchmc.org .
	Develop a work plan for program planning and implementation.
	Evidence all local partners (proposed host business leaders and managers) have been educated with an in-depth program overview. This includes the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist with the development of high-quality internship sites at the selected business and offer disability awareness/education for the staff who will be involved in the internships and other aspects of the Project SEARCH program. • Provide learning about other components of the Project SEARCH model, including student intern recruitment and selection, employability skills curriculum, creation of the Business Advisory Committee, and development of an employment search process. • Deliver Project SEARCH trainings that assist with the implementation of a successful Project SEARCH site, such as Teaching and Training for Success, Aspirational Job Development, etc. Provide additional individualized training depending on the needs of the host business site and partners.
	Project SEARCH Application for support funding submitted to the ALSDE, SES.

PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION

In the space below, explain the plan for implementing a Project SEARCH program, including any barriers to successful implementation.

Preschool Innovative Projects

SECTION 2:

1. In the space below, provide a detailed description of the proposed project.
 - a. Please include the following in the proposal:
 - i. Executive summary.
 - ii. Detailed description of the scope and plan for implementation of the proposed project.
 - iii. Proposed timeframe for implementation.
 - iv. How the project is expected to favorably affect preschool children with disabilities.
 - v. How many preschool children (both with and without disabilities) are expected to be favorably impacted by this project.
 - vi. How any expected progress or success resulting from the project will be measured at the completion of the project.

2. Complete the Budget Information (Section 3).

Temporary Special Education Certificate (TSEC) Teacher Support

SECTION 2:

Participating personnel will: (a) complete a Microsoft Form in Schoology, (b) complete up to six special education professional learning modules, and (c) ensure all requirements for subsequent TSEC will be completed by September 30, 2024, and all professional learning must be completed outside of normal work hours.

Number of TSEC teachers employed: _____

School Improvement Training Support

SECTION 2:

1. In the space below, provide a detailed description of the proposed project.
 - a. Please include the following in the proposal:
 - i. Executive summary.
 - ii. Detailed description of the scope and plan for implementation of the proposed project.
 - iii. Proposed timeframe for implementation.
 - iv. How the project is expected to favorably affect outcomes for children with disabilities.
 - v. How any expected progress or success resulting from the project will be measured at the completion of the project.

Budget Information

SECTION 3: BUDGET INFORMATION - REQUIRED FOR OPTIONS 1, 2, & 4

Provide a detailed proposed budget, including the proposed budget amount(s), the category of expenditure(s), a brief description of expenditure(s), and an account code(s) for the **total amount of the requested funding** indicated. Local prorated amounts, when applicable, should be used for the proposed expenditures where services provided are for multiple students.

Category of Expenditure (e.g., special education services, related services, other costs)	Description of Expenditure	Account Code	Proposed Budget Amount
		Total	\$