Name of Grant Program: Special Education: Program Improvement  
Fund Code: 274

Group 1
Priority 4: Promoting Student Self-Determination

Background
This grant has been developed to improve educator practice and student outcomes by generating professional development activities that are in alignment with state, district, school and/or educator goals and priorities, including educator evaluation.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s (ESE) goal is to prepare all students for success after high school. As noted in Technical Assistance Advisory SPED 2013-1, “a growing body of research indicates that teaching students with disabilities to be self-determined increases their chances of achieving positive adult outcomes.” The Massachusetts Student-Driven Secondary Transition Model also underscores the central importance of fostering student self-determination skills in order to promote positive adult outcomes. Students who are self-determined have a good understanding of their strengths, needs, preferences, interests, rights, and responsibilities, and are prepared in a meaningful way to lead lives as contributing citizens in the worlds of postsecondary education, employment, and independent living.

Description:
Professional development (PD) activities funded under this priority will advance improved outcomes for students with disabilities by affording educators the knowledge and skills they need in order to support students to become self-determined. Please select at least two of the following options as a focus for your district's PD under this priority. Educators will learn how to:

- Teach key student self-determination skills such as choice- and decision-making, goal setting and attainment, self-regulation, self-advocacy, self-efficacy, and self-knowledge, across all school settings, in the classroom and the life of the school.
- Help students to engage in self-reflection and futures planning throughout the school year, using tools which might include but are not limited to: Individual Learning Plans (ILPs), portfolios, Person-Centered Planning, Massachusetts Career Information System (MassCIS), or Your Plan for the Future.
- Communicate and partner with parents in a culturally competent way to foster student self-determination skills.
- Implement an array of targeted, stepwise strategies and practices that enable students to lead their own IEP meetings.

Examples of Possible Activities
Activities for evidenced-based PD (conducted before, during, and/or after school hours) may include, but are not limited to:

- Ongoing, on-the-job training and mentoring to help educators promote student self-determination skills.
- Training for teachers, guidance counselors, and/or related service providers on the development and use of ILPs, portfolios, Person-Centered Plans, etc.
- Ongoing mentoring for educators who work collaboratively with parent partners to develop culturally competent, easily understood practices and/or resources in the area of student self-determination/student-led IEP meetings.
- Training and consultative services to support educators in developing strategies and practices that enable students to lead their own IEP meetings.
- Workshops
- Courses
- Other PD activities related to this priority

Note: 274 funds should not be expended solely in the creation of products such as handbooks, curricula, etc. These PD funds must be used for activities that clearly align with the Massachusetts Standards for High Quality Professional Development.
Demonstration of Proficiency
A requirement of high quality PD is that educators apply their learning and demonstrate subsequent proficiency in the relevant subject area. The proposal for PD activity(ies) funded under this grant program must include a description of the evaluation process that will be used, i.e., how the district will assess and measure the changes in educator knowledge, skills, and/or practices resulting from the proposed PD to ensure that it is meeting the targeted goals relevant to the desired student outcomes.

Educators may demonstrate proficiency in this priority area through means such as:
- increasing numbers of students who lead their IEP meetings
- creating documented protocols and practices for student-led IEP meetings
- developing self-determination curricula
- supporting students to create tools such as portfolios, journals, ILPs, or career plans
- teaching colleagues how to foster key student self-determination skills across all school settings

In order to better disseminate promising practices statewide, ESE may request that districts share products and outcomes resulting from this PD.

Training and Networking Opportunities
ESE may offer districts the opportunity to attend one or more statewide networking meetings in 2015-2016 related to these priorities. These meetings may include opportunities for focused training and technical assistance, collaboration, and the sharing of best practices in this priority area and the others identified in the RFP. More information about these meetings will be announced in the fall of 2015.

OVERVIEW OF FUND CODE 274 NARRATIVE REQUIREMENTS
Professional Development Assurances Statement
A. Overview: Please select one of the following FY2016 priorities. All professional development (PD) in this application must align with the selected priority below.
   1. Which priority will the proposed PD address?
   2. Choose the topic(s) that best aligns with the proposed professional development.

B. Propose the activity(ies) to be funded through the 274 grant:
   1. Identify and briefly describe the proposed PD activity(ies).
   2. Identify the goals and objectives for the proposed PD.
      Note: Goal(s)/objective(s) must target improvement in educator practice and demonstrate a relationship to student outcomes. For the priority selected, the proposal must identify one SMART Goal for student learning outcomes and one for educator learning outcomes. If more than one activity is intended to be funded under this priority, outcomes must be aligned as described in the SMART Goals.
      a. SMART Goal – Learning outcomes for students with disabilities
         (Smart Goal Definition: Specific and strategic; measurable; action-oriented; rigorous, realistic, results-focused; timed/tracked)
      b. SMART Goal – Learning outcomes for Educators
         (Smart Goal Definition: Specific and strategic; measurable; action-oriented; rigorous, realistic, results-focused; timed/tracked)
      c. Does the proposed PD support any state, district, school, and/or educator goals or priorities? Please Explain.
   3. For each activity, provide a proposed timeline, including the number of contact hours and the name(s) of provider(s).
      Note: If you are proposing individualized, rather than school or district-wide PD and have yet to identify a provider(s), please describe the type of provider you will be seeking and how you will ensure that the selected professional development will be aligned with the above priority and contribute to district professional development goals.
   4. Describe the job embedded activities or plans for participants to apply their learning to the particular content and/or context.
   5. Identify the professional role(s) of targeted participants
      • District Level Administrators
      • Special Education Teachers
• Principals
• Parents
• Teachers
• Paraprofessionals
• Related Service Providers
• Other____________________

C. Data-based Rationale for PD Activities:

1. What data did you analyze that led you to this proposed PD?
   • IDEA Part B State Performance Indicator Data
   • IDEA Part B Determination Level Data
   • Performance Data
   • MCAS Results
   • Teacher Surveys
   • Conditions for School Effectiveness Data
   • School Safety Discipline Report
   • Other____________________

2. Based on the data you analyzed, what is the rationale for the proposed PD?

D. Outcomes and Evaluation: How will you assess and measure the changes in educator knowledge, skills, and/or practices resulting from the proposed PD to ensure that it is meeting the targeted goals relevant to the desired student outcomes?