



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF

EDUCATION

OSSE Announces Winners of the Special Education Enhancement Fund Competitive Grant

Six competitive grantees will use research-based strategies to help students with disabilities; OSSE also awarding formula grant to help DC schools improve special education citywide

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Media Contact: Fred Lewis, Fred.Lewis@dc.gov; (202) 412-2167

Today, the District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) announced the six winners of \$1.5 million in new competitive grant funding to help public schools improve their capacity to serve students with disabilities. The [Special Education Enhancement Fund \(SEEF\) competitive grant](#) was facilitated by the Special Education Quality Improvement Amendment Act of 2014 ([DC Code § 38-2613](#)), intended to provide further support for students with disabilities and improve educational outcomes. In addition to the competitive grant, OSSE is also awarding more than \$3.7 million in [SEEF formula grant](#) awards to support schools citywide to support transition to new requirements related to shorter initial evaluation timelines and a change in transition planning age from 16 to 14. This funding is being made available based on the number of students with disabilities served in each Local Education Agency (LEA).

The six successful competitive grant applicants include five LEAs and one non-profit provider, the DC Public Charter School Cooperative, working in partnership with four additional LEAs. In total, the competitive grant funding will help nine LEAs better serve their more than 1,500 students with disabilities, as follows:

SEEF Competitive Grantees
Capital City Public Charter School
DC Public Charter School Cooperative, in partnership with Bridges Public Charter School, City Arts and Prep Public Charter School, Inspired Teaching Demonstration Public Charter School, and Lee Montessori Public Charter School
KIPP DC
Perry Street Prep Public Charter School
Two Rivers Public Charter School

Washington Global Public Charter School

“Although DC students in public schools citywide have been making steady progress, we need to accelerate progress in academic outcomes for our students with disabilities,” said **State Superintendent of Education Hanseul Kang**. “The SEEF formula and competitive grants will help schools develop, implement, and disseminate high-impact strategies to ensure the success of our students with disabilities.”

Grant recipients are enthusiastic about the opportunity to better support students with disabilities:

"We are thrilled about the opportunities provided with this grant to expand transition supports for our high school students with special needs to ensure they will graduate from high school with the skills needed for postsecondary success," said Karen Dresden, head of school at Capital City Public Charter School.

“DC charters are committed to providing high quality special education services,” said Julie Camerata, Executive Director, DC Special Education Cooperative. “We believe this SEEF grant will elevate practice for our partner schools and generate innovative ideas for the city.”

“We are honored to have been selected as a winner of the SEEF grant competition,” said Susan Schaeffler, KIPP DC's Founder and CEO. “Educating all children is core to our mission at KIPP DC, and this funding will support the investments we are making to continue to improve academic achievement, graduation rates, and post-secondary success for students with disabilities.”

“We are thrilled to have received the SEEF grant and the opportunity it will afford us to be more innovative in the supports we offer students,” said Kelly Smith, Director of Operations at Perry Street Prep PCS. “This funding will allow us to augment our current special education program and services for all students to ensure students are receiving the provisions necessary to close the achievement gap.”

"Two Rivers is thrilled to be selected as a recipient of the Special Education Enhancement Fund competitive grant," said David Nitkin, Interim Executive Director of Two Rivers PCS. "With OSSE's generous support, we will expand our ability to support high needs students with disabilities in an inclusion setting by piloting an Early Childhood classroom fully co-taught by a special education and general education teacher. This grant will also enable us to build a state-of-the-art sensory/resource room to support the diverse needs of our students."

"Washington Global is honored to be awarded SEEF Competitive Grant funds to develop a state of the art Universal Design for Learning (UDL) technology space," said Elizabeth Torres, chief executive officer and founder at Washington Global Public Charter School. "Within the UDL technology space, special education students will engage in real-word digital applications to

support and extend the information that they are learning in the general education classroom. We are certain that the UDL technology space will positively impact student achievement."

The SEEF competitive grant is designed to support educational practices that will significantly improve academic outcomes, graduation rates, and postsecondary success for students with disabilities. Through an independent review process, OSSE prioritized awarding grants which:

- Convincingly demonstrated their project's ability to improve graduation, secondary transition, and post-secondary outcomes for students with disabilities.
- Demonstrated their project's ability to serve students with a broad range of special education needs within the public school LEAs, while providing special education students the most possible access to the general education curriculum, in accordance with the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and federal regulations.

SEEF competitive grant winners will engage in a number of high-impact strategies, such as implementation of research-based curricula, intensive academic and behavioral interventions for students with high needs, high quality special education professional development for educators and administrators, the expanded use of educational technology, targeted data analysis, and robust staffing and planning to support a full continuum of services. Full project summaries from the winning competitive grant applications can be found below.