

Special Education Leaders for a Diverse Society (SELDS)

Personnel Development to Improve Services and Results for Children with Disabilities:

Preparation of Leadership Personnel

CFDA 84.325D –Type A Program

The Department of Special Education/Communication Disorders at New Mexico State University proposes a five year doctoral preparation program designed to prepare five (5) special education leaders who can conduct research and prepare teachers to work with students with disabilities from pre-school to transition from high school, with particular focus on preparation of Ph.D. students who aspire to faculty positions in special education. Trainees will develop expertise through a series of courses, doctoral seminars, research and teaching practica, and a set of specific competencies to be demonstrated prior to graduating. Graduates of the program will be prepared to provide inservice and preservice preparation for teachers of special education students, to conduct and publish scholarly research that furthers the knowledge base and improves practice, and to occupy positions of leadership in universities and at the local, state, or national levels.

The unique features of the program reflect the strong commitment of the faculty to provide doctoral training that emphasizes inquiry, problem solving, scholarship, and professionalism through work that is rooted in the cultural and linguistic diversity in southern New Mexico. This program is built on three assumptions: (1) that the development and advancement of a field relies on collaborative innovation and creative problem solving; (2) that inquiry, analysis, and technology are fundamental to the development of leadership-level problem solving; (3) that the diversity of the population of the USA is reflected in the communities and public school districts located in southern New Mexico which provide rich opportunities for research that can generalize to other culturally and linguistically diverse communities across the United States.

The goal of this project is to produce five leadership personnel with a dual focus on research and teaching aimed at the needs of multicultural students with disabilities in public schools. To meet this goal **88%** of the budget is allocated for student support. This goal will be achieved through the following four objectives: (1) To recruit, prepare, retain, and graduate five special education leaders with a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Special Education with knowledge and expertise in research methods and university teaching over the course of the project, (2) To develop and implement a multidisciplinary training program to provide effective instruction, including evidence based practices in special education teacher preparation programs, (3) To initiate research on topics related to the nature and needs of multicultural students with disabilities in public schools or the effectiveness of their educational programs, (4) To evaluate the effectiveness of various components of the training program in achieving intended outcomes and the success of the graduates from the project in their professional careers, and (5) To disseminate information about the project data, results, and outcomes at state and national conferences.