



## UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Indian Education  
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### General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) Section 427 Statement

The Bureau of Indian Education (“BIE”) understands that the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) Section 427 (20 U.S.C. § 1228(a)) requires each applicant for funds 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. While the BIE and the U.S. Department of Education (“ED”) are still discussing the extent of GEPA’s applicability to the BIE, if any, BIE provides the description below as part of its FFY 2024 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”) application.

GEPA Section 427 highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age. BIE’s current policies and practices have been established with the intent to eliminate barriers that may prevent its students, teachers, and employees from such access or participation in its programs, including in services funded by IDEA.

As part of the government-to-government relationship with Indian Tribes, the United States has a trust and treaty responsibility to provide eligible Indian students, including students with disabilities, with a quality education that reflects the unique cultural, geographic, and socio-economic circumstances of Indian Country. The BIE serves as the principal government agency in upholding the United States’ educational obligations to Indian Tribes and their eligible Indian students. As stated in Title 25 CFR Part 32.3, BIE’s mission is to provide quality education opportunities from early childhood through life in accordance with a Tribe’s needs for cultural and economic wellbeing, in keeping with the wide diversity of Indian Tribes and Alaska Native villages as distinct cultural and sovereign governmental entities.

BIE will fully enforce all federal laws and regulations designed to ensure equitable access to all program beneficiaries and to overcome barriers to equitable participation. BIE will take steps necessary to achieve these goals.