

Webinar 1: Notice Inviting Applications

Scott: Hello, my name is Scott Stump, and I'm the Assistant Secretary for Career, Technical, and Adult Education at the United States Department of Education. Under the leadership of President Trump, the federal government has launched one of the most far-reaching regulatory reform agendas in American history. To provide greater freedom and opportunity to Americans, federal agencies across the government have been scrutinizing federal regulations, related non-regulatory guidance, data collections, and other burdensome requirements and removing those that are unnecessary.

Scott: Consistent with that agenda, Performance Partnership Pilots for Disconnected Youth, or P3, offers states, tribes, and local governments greater freedom to innovate in how they deliver services to the neediest youth. P3 enables the U.S. Department of Education and six other federal agencies to waive not just regulations, but also statutory requirements that are impeding effective service delivery. Stakeholders on the front lines who work directly with disconnected youth have let us know that they believe they could achieve better outcomes if they were given greater freedom and the flexibility to better align the multiple systems that serve youth.

Scott: P3 responds to those on the ground challenges by offering broad flexibility in exchange for better outcomes. P3 is the unique opportunity to dismantle program silos and to make big and bold reforms in how we address the needs of some of the most disadvantaged young people in our country. I encourage you to explore how you can take advantage of this opportunity to improve the lives and outcomes of these youth. Now you'll hear from the other federal partners to learn more about P3 and what it could mean for you.

Michelle: Thank you, Scott. Welcome to the bidders conference for the Round Four notice inviting applications for the Performance Partnership Pilots for Disconnected Youth, or what we call P3. We're very excited that you're interested in P3 and able to listen to this recorded webinar. This webinar is being hosted by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and Youth.gov on behalf of and in collaboration with the seven federal partners involved with P3, specifically the U.S. Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Justice and Labor, as well as the Corporation for National and Community Service and the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Michelle: My name is Michelle Boyd and I work for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and I'll be moderating and presenting during today's webinar. On this webinar, you're going to hear from a couple of other people at the partner departments and agencies, including representatives from the U.S. Departments of Education and Labor. During this webinar, we will explain P3 and the details of the Round Four notice inviting applications. Specifically, we'll go over the timeline, provide an overview of P3, and discuss eligibility, priorities, application requirements, selection criteria, and review and selection processes.

Michelle: We've posted responses to frequently asked questions or FAQs on Youth.gov/P3. If you have remaining questions after listening to this webinar and reviewing our posted

responses to FAQs, we encourage you to email us at disconnectedyouth@ed.gov so that we can provide answers as appropriate. Additional information may be made available at a subsequent date depending on the questions we receive. You'll be able to find any new information on Youth.gov/P3.

Michelle: After the presentation on the Round Four notice inviting applications, Jobs for the Future will present on the technical assistance tool they developed to help communities to identify, align, and integrate resources so they can strengthen systems and partnerships to design high impact programming for opportunity youth. Then two round one pilot sites will present on their P3 pilot activities and experiences. To cover the remaining topics on the Round Four notice inviting applications, you're going to also hear from Braden Goetz and Jeff Hunt. First, I'll turn it over to Braden Goetz from the U.S. Department of Education to provide the timeline and overview of P3.

Braden: Thanks, Michelle. My name is Braden Goetz, and I'm the director of the policy research and evaluation staff in the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education in the U.S. Department of Education. First the timeline: the P3 Round Four notice inviting applications has been published in the federal register and the application period is 90 days. Please consult the federal register notice and Youth.gov/P3 for more information on the specific dates. We hope you've had a chance to review the notice and since it provides detailed information about what we're going to discuss today.

Braden: The purpose of P3 is to give state, local, and tribal governments, in collaboration with their community partners, the opportunity to test innovative strategies to improve education, employment, and other outcomes for disconnected youth. Specifically, pilots will do this by using new flexibility to blend federal funds from youth serving programs and/or to seek waivers of program requirements for the programs that are involved. We can designate up to 10 pilots for fiscal year 2018 and up to 10 pilots for fiscal year 2019.

Braden: The term disconnected youth has been defined in a number of different ways. Congress gave us a specific definition for the purposes of P3. For P3, disconnected youth includes individuals who are between the ages of 14 and 24 who are low income and either homeless, in foster care, involved in the juvenile justice system, unemployed, or not enrolled in or at risk of dropping out of an educational institution. One of the ways that P3 can support better outcomes is by enabling pilots to blend together funds from different youth serving programs. Blending funds means that multiple funding streams or portions of multiple funding streams can be merged together into one pot.

Braden: The purpose of blending funds together is to align the resources that otherwise may be in silos and difficult to use in a coordinated way. Funds that are blended lose the identity that was associated with their specific original award. Instead, these blended funds together are subject to a single set of reporting and other requirements. The requirements for the blended funds will still be consistent with the underlying purposes of the program, even with the flexibility that P3 offers.

Braden: Waivers are another important tool offered by P3. P3 includes broad waiver authority that allows agency heads to waive anything that they can already waive under their

existing authority and also to waive any statutory, regulatory, or administrative requirements that they are not otherwise authorized to waive, but in keeping with some important safeguards. Waivers have to be consistent with the statutory purposes of the relevant federal programs; be necessary to achieve the pilots outcome, but no broader in scope than is necessary; and result in either efficiencies by simplifying reporting burdens or reducing administrative barriers, or increasing the ability of individuals to obtain access to services they are provided under the relevant program.

Braden: Federal agencies also cannot waive requirements related to non-discrimination, wage and labor standards, and the allocation of funds to states and sub-state levels, which means that the processes that are used to distribute funds to states and within states cannot be changed. In addition, federal agency heads must determine that the agency's participation and the use of the proposed program funds in the pilot will not deny or restrict individual eligibility and will not adversely affect vulnerable populations.

Braden: We have posted on youth.gov/P3 a list of the waivers that agencies have granted in prior rounds of P3. The notice inviting applications also includes some illustrative examples of possible waivers. They include waiving the required and allowable uses of state level set aside funds to carry out other activities that aren't specified in the program statute, but that are consistent with the purpose of the program; or waiving eligibility requirements to serve a broader population, so long as that does not result in denying services to the population that's eligible in the program statute. Proposals from applicants must include at least two federally funded programs that target disconnected youth or are designed to help prevent youth from disconnecting.

Braden: Programs that serve youth and also other populations may still be eligible for inclusion, that is the programs don't only have to serve youth to be eligible programs. Of the programs that an applicant proposes to include in a pilot, at least one must be administered either completely or in part by a state, local, or tribal government. Also, the P3 authority is limited to discretionary programs and does not include entitlement programs like Temporary Assistance for Needy Families or Medicaid. In the Round Four notice inviting applications, we are soliciting applications involving funds from two fiscal years, Fiscal Year 2018 and Fiscal Year 2019. Applicants must indicate in their applications whether they are applying as a Fiscal Year 2018 or a Fiscal Year 2019 pilot.

Braden: Because Congress was still working on fiscal year 2019 funding for some agencies at the time the notice was published, there are some differences in what programs may be included in the 2018 and 2019 pilots. First I'll discuss the FY 2018 pilot. An applicant applying as a 2018 pilot must propose to include fiscal year 2018 funds from at least one eligible program from one of the seven federal agencies involved in P3. Those agencies are the U.S. Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Justice, and Labor, as well as the Corporation for National and Community Service and the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Braden: A 2018 pilot also may include fiscal year 2019 funds from eEducation, Health and Human Services, Labor, the Corporation for National and Community Service, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Legislation pending in Congress also would

authorize the inclusion of HUD homeless assistance grants and programs from the Office of Justice programs and the U.S. Department of Justice. If this legislation is enacted before the application deadline, Fiscal Year 2019 funds from these HUD and Justice programs also can be included in a FY 2018 pilot.

Braden: An applicant applying as a 2019 pilot must propose to include only fiscal year 2019 funds from Education, Health and Human Services, Labor, the Corporation for National and Community Service, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services. The pending legislation I spoke of earlier would also allow you to include fiscal year 2019 funds from HUD homeless assistance grants and programs from the Office of Justice Programs in the Department of Justice. If that legislation is enacted before the application deadline, fiscal year 2019 funds from these programs also may be included in 2019 pilots. We'll post on youth.gov/P3 updates on the status of this pending legislation.

Braden: The P3 law also requires that each pilot be governed by a performance agreement between a lead federal agency and the respective representatives of all the partners in the pilot. In general, the agreement identifies the federal funds that will be used in the pilot, the population that will be served, and the outcomes that will be achieved. That concludes our discussion of the timeline and the overview of P3.

Michelle: Thank you, Braden. We'll now turn it over to Jeff Hunt to describe eligibility and priorities for the current competition.

Jeff: Thanks, Michelle. My name is Jeff Hunt and I am a workforce analyst for the U.S. Department of Labor. While the pilots can include many partners, there does need to be a single lead applicant. The lead applicant must be a state, local, or tribal government entity represented by the head of that entity. In addition to formally submitting the application, the official representative of the lead applicant will serve as the primary official who is responsible for the pilot project, if selected. Although a non-profit organization may not serve as the lead applicant or the fiscal agents of the pilot implementation, it may still play a very significant role in the design and governance of a pilot.

Jeff: In addition to who are eligible applicants, we are often asked, "What are the programs that are eligible to be included in pilots?" In general, the answer is discretionary programs, which include certain formula and competitive grants. Certain programs might be particularly well-suited for blending if they have broad authority or a purpose that is well-aligned with that of P3, and therefore have a very low risk of violating the P3 statutory safeguards and protections. On the other hand, other programs may not be appropriate for a pilot if the federal agencies determine that their inclusion would infringe on the statutory protections or that inclusion would undermine important federal policies or objectives.

Jeff: To assist applicants in the application instructions, the federal agencies have identified three categories of risk and provided some examples of programs that fall into each category. The three categories are: (1) programs that have a low likelihood of adversely affecting vulnerable populations; (2) programs requiring significant review to ensure

that vulnerable populations are not adversely affected; and (3) programs that are likely inappropriate due to a high likelihood of adversely affecting vulnerable populations. These lists are not comprehensive lists of all programs that could be involved in a pilot and applicants may consider programs that are not on the list. Please note that Round Four applicants must propose to use some Fiscal Year 2018 and/or 2019 program funds.

Jeff: In addition, the Fiscal Year 2018 competitive grants that have already been awarded will merit special consideration on a case-by-case basis to determine whether the scope, objectives, and target populations of the existing competitive grant award are appropriately and sufficiently aligned with and enhance the scope, objectives, and target populations of the proposed pilot. The programs that are categorically not allowed by statute to be included are mandatory entitlement programs. This includes Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, most of Foster Care IV-E program, and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families. Where federal programs are not eligible or suitable for blending under P3, pilots may still consider how to braid or align them in ways that might promote more efficiency and improved outcomes. With braiding, the funding streams would maintain a separate identity and would remain subject to the requirements of each of the programs to which funds are appropriated.

Jeff: Now that I have discussed eligibility as it concerns applicants and programs, I'm going to review priorities for the current competition. Since effective strategies for serving disconnected youth may differ across environments, the federal agencies want to test P3 authority in a variety of settings. Stakeholder input has emphasized that certain communities can face unique challenges in effectively serving disconnected youth. As a result, the current competition has two absolute priorities, shown here. Improving outcomes for disconnected youth and doing so in communities that have experienced civil unrest. These absolute priorities constitute distinct funding categories.

Jeff: In selecting pilots, the agencies may consider high-ranking applications meeting absolute priorities separately to ensure that there is diversity among the pilots. Absolute priority one applies to applicants that have experienced civil unrest. To apply under absolute priority one, an applicant should describe the incidence or incidences of civil unrest, including (1) a description of the civil unrest that occurred in the community or communities it intends to serve, and (2) the date or dates the civil unrest occurred. The current notice inviting applications does not include the definition of the term civil unrest, however the notice identifies several examples of what might be considered civil unrest, such as large protests or instances of civil disobedience, increases in self-directed or interpersonal violence in concentrated areas, or civic disorder prompted by a public health agency. Applicants may apply under priority two if they propose to serve disconnected youth in communities that have not experienced civil unrest.

Jeff: Now that I have reviewed the two absolute priorities, I want to tell you about the competitive preference priority for this competition. This competitive preference priority allows applicants to receive extra points for satisfying certain criteria. This competition has one competitive preference priority, which is for projects that are designed to increase educational opportunities by reducing academic or non-academic barriers to economic mobility by aligning federal, state, or local funding streams to

promote economic mobility of low-income individuals. The notice inviting applications highlights how P3 flexibilities may be useful in economically distressed communities such as communities with qualified opportunity zones. Applicants may receive 15 extra points for this priority. This concludes our discussion of the eligibility and priorities.

Michelle: Thank you, Jeff. I'll now describe application requirements and selection criteria. Again, my name is Michelle Boyd and I work for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation. Based on public input, over time, we've taken steps to improve the competition and reduce burden on applicants. For instance, several of the application requirements from the rounds one to three notices were eliminated or streamlined. We'll first review the application requirements for P3.

Michelle: Applicants should respond to the application requirements and the related selection criteria in the application narrative. The application narrative must not exceed 15 pages total using the formatting standards listed in the application instructions. Since the round two notice, we collect some of the information sought from applicants in table form in order to simplify how applicants provide these data. That is the case for most application requirements this round.

Michelle: The first application requirement for this competition is an executive summary. The executive summary should briefly describe the proposed pilot, the flexibilities being sought, and the interventions or system changes that would be implemented by the applicant and its partners. The next application requirement for this competition is specifying the target populations for the pilot, including the age range of youth who'll be served and the estimated number of youth who'll be served over the course of the pilot. The defined target population for this competition must be consistent with the populations identified in the law. As a reminder, for P3, disconnected youth includes individuals who are between the ages of 14 and 24 who are low income and either homeless, in foster care, involved in the juvenile justice system, unemployed, or not enrolled in or at risk of dropping out of an educational institution.

Michelle: The next application requirement is an identification of the federal flexibilities being sought that are needed to implement the proposed pilot and to improve outcomes for the target populations. Applicants must describe the specific federal, statutory, regulatory, or other requirements for which they are seeking flexibility. As a reminder, the applicant must identify two or more discretionary federal programs that will be included in the pilot, at least one of which must be administered in whole or in part by a state, local, or tribal government. The applicant must identify one or more program requirements that would inhibit implementation of the pilot and request that the requirements be waived in whole or in part. Examples of potential waiver requests or other requests for flexibility include, but are not limited to, blending of funds, changes to eligibility requirements, allowable uses of funds, and performance reporting.

Michelle: Successful implementation of proposals may also depend on flexibility related to requirements imposed at the state, local, or tribal level. Federal agencies do not have the authority to waive non-federal requirements, therefore applicants must identify the

specific state, local, or tribal policies, regulations, or other requirements that may impede the pilot's ability to achieve its goals. We feel as if the federal and non-federal components of the pilots need to be aligned to support effective implementation of the pilot.

Michelle: Top-scoring applicants then must provide written assurance of the state, local, or tribal government with authority to grant any needed non-federal flexibility has approved or will approve such flexibility within 60 days of an applicant's designation as a pilot finalist or the applicant needs to confirm that the non-federal flexibility is not needed in order to successfully implement the pilot, or the applicant needs to confirm that the non-federal flexibility is not needed in order to successfully implement the pilot. Top-scoring applicants will have 21 days after their notification by the U.S. Department of Education to submit this written assurance.

Michelle: The next application requirement is the budget and budget narrative. For each federal program, the applicant must provide one, the grantee; second, the amount of funds to be blended or braided; third, the percentage of total program funding received by the grantee that the amount to be blended or braided represents; four, the federal fiscal year of award; and five, whether the grant has already been awarded. In addition, the applicant must indicate the total amount of funds from all federal programs that will be blended or braided under the pilot.

Michelle: Partnership capacity and management is the next application requirement. Applicants must identify the proposed partners, including any and all state, local, and tribal entities and non-governmental organizations that would be involved in implementation of the pilot.

Michelle: Now I'll turn to the two selection criteria for the P3 applications which are tied to the application requirements. The points in the header of the slide are the total points available for that criterion, which may be broken out among sub-criterion. Applicants can get a maximum of 100 points under the selection criteria. Criterion A is the need for the project worth 35 points. The defined target population to be served must be based on data and analysis demonstrating the need for services within the relevant geographic area. The applicant's executive summary must present data that demonstrates how the target population lags behind other groups in achieving positive outcomes and the specific risk factors for this population.

Michelle: These data must be based on a needs assessment that was conducted or updated within the past three years using representative data on youth from the jurisdictions proposing the pilot. We encourage applicants to disaggregate data according to relevant demographic factors. Applicants do not need to include a copy of the needs assessment within the application package, but must identify when the needs assessment was conducted. Reviewers will consider the magnitude of the need of the target population as evidenced by the applicant's analysis of data.

Michelle: Criterion B is a need for the requested flexibility, including blending of funds and other waivers, which includes two sub-criteria for a total of 65 points. Reviewers will consider

the strength and clarity of the applicant's justification that each of the specified federal requirements for which the applicant is seeking flexibility hinders implementation of the proposed pilot, and the strength and quality of the applicant's justification of how each request for flexibility will increase efficiency or access to services and produce significantly better outcomes for the target populations.

Michelle: To conclude the details of the Round Four competition, we want to provide an overview of the review and selection process. In collaboration with the partner agencies, the U.S. Department of Education is going to lead the review and selection process. We will work together to identify federal reviewers with knowledge and expertise on issues that are related to improving outcomes for disconnected youth. We'll use a thorough screening process to prevent any potential conflicts of interest and ensure that we have a fair and competitive review. Reviewers will be organized into panels, each panel of reviewers will be assigned a number of applications to read. For each application, reviewers will prepare a written evaluation and assign a technical score using the selection criteria. Reviewers will use a scoring rubric as a tool to promote consistency across and within the various review panels that will be scoring applications.

Michelle: Once all the applications have been scored, we will rank order them based on their scores. We will then conduct a review of the requested flexibilities, including waivers, and the top scoring applications. Once all the applications have been scored, we will rank order them based on their scores. We will then conduct a review of the requested flexibilities, including waivers in the top-scoring applications, specifically representatives from the federal agencies that administer the programs under which flexibility in the federal requirements is being sought will evaluate whether the flexibility that is being requested meets statutory requirements for P3 and is otherwise appropriate. As a reminder, applicants can consult the frequently asked questions, section C about the conditions concerning waivers. For example, if an applicant is seeking flexibility under programs that are administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Labor, then its request for flexibility will be reviewed by officials from those two departments.

Michelle: We may also ask applicants to participate in an interview during this review and selection process in order to clarify any requests for flexibility and any other aspects of proposals. Federal agency officials may recommend the selection of up to 10 projects as P3 pilots for Fiscal Year 2018 and up to 10 additional projects as pilots for Fiscal Year 2019. We'll negotiate a performance agreement with each finalist. If a performance agreement cannot be settled, then an alternative applicant may be selected as a finalist, replacing the previous finalist.

Michelle: This concludes our webinar on the Round Four notice inviting applications. On behalf of the seven federal agency partners, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and youth.gov would like to thank you for listening to this webinar.

Michelle: If you have remaining questions after listening to this webinar and reviewing our posted responses to FAQs, we encourage you to email us at disconnectedyouth@ed.gov so that we can provide answers as appropriate. Additional information may be made available

at a subsequent date depending on the questions we receive. You'll be able to find any new information on youth.gov/P3. If you have any questions about the program after viewing the application package and information on youth.gov/3, please contact the program managers Braden Goetz and Cori Sauri.