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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## **Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) Announces Maryland Elevates Grants Program to Narrow Achievement Gaps for Students in Special Education Programs**

***Grant Applications Open Monday, September 19 and Close  
October 21***

**BALTIMORE, MD (September 19, 2022)** – The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) announces the launch of the Maryland Elevates Grants Program, designed to enhance and sharpen the State’s steadfast focus to narrow gaps for infants and toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities and their families in a comprehensive system of early intervention and special education services, birth through age 21.

With heightened emphasis on the high-leverage strategies and evidence-based practices necessary to transform early intervention and special education, Maryland will break down silos to ensure communication and understanding between early and school-age education, general and special education, home and school services, and college, career, and community supports. Through an investment of \$4 million, Maryland Elevates seeks collaborative partners from across the State to work with MSDE’s Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services to move this critical work forward with a focus on innovation, creativity, effective implementation, and impact.

“Maryland Elevates serves as a call to action for the narrowing of gaps in school readiness, achievement and opportunity,” said State Superintendent of Schools Mohammed Choudhury. “With the implementation of these evidenced-based strategic focus areas, we will harness the collaboration and support of community organizations and education partners to provide inclusive learning opportunities that address individual developmental, academic, social-emotional, and behavioral needs within culturally-responsive learning environments.”

Maryland Elevates is centered on strategies targeted to meet disparities across a range of priority areas:

- Early Childhood for Children with Developmental Delays and Disabilities,
- Secondary Transition for Youth with Disabilities,
- Access, Equity, Progress,
- Innovative Supports for Youth with Sensory Impairments, and
- Families as Informed Partners in Special Education.

Eligible applicants include non-profit organizations, community-based partners, and Institutions of Higher Education, working individually or together with a local education agency and demonstrating a commitment to:

- Equitable and accelerated outcomes in inclusive and rich learning environments in a birth through age 21 continuum of special education supports and services;
- Implementation of processes grounded in evidence-based practices, equitable solutions, and data-driven outcomes; and
- Out of the box solutions for growing teacher capacity, instructional leadership and professional expertise.

The application window opens immediately today on September 19, 2022 and will close October 21, 2022. View <https://www.marylandpublicschools.org/programs/Pages/Special-Education/rmmb/Grants/Elevate/index.aspx> for updated information pertaining to the grant program, information sessions, and more.

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