Personnel Preparation in Special Education, Early Intervention, and Related Services
(CFDA No. 84.325K, Focus C)

Training Speech Language Pathologists in the Public Schools to Deliver Reliable Evidence-based Models of Technology Effectively (REMOTE)

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Abstract

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a lifelong neurodevelopmental disorder that significantly affects verbal and nonverbal communication, social-emotional interactions, and educational outcomes. Current estimates indicate that one in 88 children (or 11.3 per 1,000) have been identified with an ASD (Center for Disease Control, 2012). As fiscal constraints increase and the prevalence of Autism skyrockets, the responsibility to better assess, manage, and educate students with ASD from Pre-Kindergarten to grade 12 has been falling onto inadequately prepared school staff, especially related personnel, such as school Speech Language Pathologists (SLPs). Yet, there is a critical shortage of SLPs in this country. The demand for qualified SLPs exceeds the number matriculating with masters’ degrees in Communication Sciences and Disorders (American Speech-Language Hearing Association, 2004e). There is a vital need to build capacity of SLPs who are knowledgeable, skilled, and experienced as effective collaborators in the public schools to use technologies to improve achievement and educational outcomes of students with ASD, including children with ASD from racially and culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) backgrounds and English Language Learners (ELLs).

The focus of the REMOTE training project will be to expand the ASD personnel preparation training masters program in SLP at UMass-Amherst to include the use of technologies to deliver SLP services to students with ASD and/or acquired neurologic involvement, such as stroke. The objectives of the REMOTE project are to: 1) prepare a small cohort of SLP graduate fellows who will gain knowledge, skills, and experiences in a specialty-training program to be better serve the needs of children with Autism Spectrum Disorders and with neurodevelopmental disabilities; 2) expand our masters SLP specialty training program in collaboration with our grant–related faculty to include the use of technologies to deliver SLP services, collect empirical study to help demonstrate evidence-based practices utilizing technologies for management and remediation of neurologically-based communication disorders; 3) engage in inclusive and collaborative teaching environments; 4) provide professional development opportunities both on- or off-campus; 5) disseminate state-of-art knowledge and empirical data regarding the training of SLP specialists using evidence-based procedures through the use of technologies; and 6) build capacity of qualified SLP personnel to serve the needs of individuals with complex and multiple neurodevelopmental problems, such as ASD.
Contractual Obligation

U.S. Department of Education Training Grant
Preparation of Leadership Personnel
(CFDA 84.325K, Focus C)

Memorandum of Understanding

Training Speech Language Pathologists in the Public Schools to Deliver Reliable Evidence-based Models of Technology Effectively (REMOTE)

As a participant and scholarship recipient in training project, you are required to read and sign this document indicating that you fully understand the requirements of the project. According the U.S. Department of Education (DOE), the requirements for individuals who receive scholarship assistance from grantees funded under the CFDA 84.325K training grant must:

(a) Receive the training at the educational institution or agency designated in the scholarship. Student scholars who meet the inclusion require of the grant are required to complete the full-time masters program in Speech Language Pathology and the requirements of the U.S. DOE grant, Project REMOTE. Student scholars selected to participate in Project REMOTE will be funded for one-year on a NON-Working Fellowship. However, they will not be required to work as a condition of this training grant, unless the work is a condition of the Project REMOTE training program.

(b) Not accept payment for educational allowances from any other entity if that allowance conflicts with the scholar’s obligation under these Additional Requirements;

(c) Maintain satisfactory progress toward the degree, certificate, endorsement, or license as determined by the grantee in that students scholars must maintain a Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.0 or better each semester and must complete all grant requirements in a satisfactory manner and practice in a professional and collegial manner. Graduate Students funded on Project REMOTE must respect their peers and mentors and contribute to the learning environment and spirit of the grant and collaborate with peers and mentors in a collegial manner. Student scholars will not continue to be funded if they do not all complete grant-related requirements satisfactorily or maintain a GPE of 3.0 or better each semester.

(d) Upon entering the training program, you must complete and sign the Pre-Scholarship Agreement and upon completion of one year of funding on the grant or exiting the training program (upon completion of the Masters program in SLP
and Project REMOTE requirements) you must sign the Exit Certificate and under paragraph (a), subsequently maintain employment:

(1) On a full-time or full-time equivalent basis; and

(2) *For a period of at least two years for every academic year for which assistance was received.* This requirement can be completed up to (5) years following the end of the grace period of two years for every one year funded if there is a break in employment.

(e) In order to meet the requirements of paragraph (d)(1) and (2) noted above and for any project funded under section 662 of the Act, be employed in the capacity to which the individual was trained for the immediate post-graduation period as follows:

(1) A majority (51%) of the persons to whom the individual provides services are receiving special education, related services (Speech Language Pathology), or early intervention services from the individual;

(2) The individual spends a majority (51%) of his or her time providing special education or related services (Speech Language Pathology) to children with disabilities, including Autism Spectrum Disorder or other neurodevelopmental disabilities, or early intervention services to infants and toddlers with disabilities;

(3) If the position is supervisory, the individual(s) spends a majority of his or her time employed in a position performing work related to the individual’s preparation under section 662 of IDEA by providing one or both of the following:

(i) special education or related services (Speech Language Pathology) to children with disabilities or early intervention to infants and toddlers with disabilities, including Autism Spectrum Disorder or other neurodevelopmental disabilities, and;

(j) supervision to others on issues directly related to special education or related services (Speech Language Pathology) for children with disabilities or early intervention services for infants and toddlers, including Autism Spectrum Disorder or other neurodevelopmental disabilities.
Participant Statement of Voluntary Consent

I confirm that Dr. Mary Andrianopoulos, the Program Director, has explained to me verbally and/or in a formal letter or documentation the objectives of this U.S. DOE training project, **Training Speech Language Pathologists in the Public Schools to Deliver Reliable Evidence-based Models of Technology Effectively (REMOTE)**, including the conditions and terms of the grant. Therefore, I agree to participate in this training project under the requirements outlined for this scholarship.

________________________________________     _______________________
Participant’s Signature                          Date

________________________________________
Participant Name, Printed

________________________________________     _______________________
Signature of Witness to Signature              Date

________________________________________
Witness Name, Printed

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**Project Representative Statement:**

I have explained the purpose and objectives of the training project as well as requirements of the scholarship, and have answered any questions to the best of my ability.

________________________________
Study Representative Name (Print or Type)     Date

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Signature                                     Date