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OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT *of* EDUCATION

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**OSDE Announces Nearly \$10 Million Pathways to Partnership Grant
to Assist Oklahoma Youth with Disabilities**

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma – The Oklahoma State Department of Education has been awarded a nearly \$10 million competitive grant from the United States Department of Education Rehabilitation Services Administration to support increased efforts in partnership to provide, improve, and expand services that address the transition needs of Oklahoma youth with disabilities.

“This grant will enable OSDE to continue exploring innovative ways to serve young Oklahomans with disabilities,” said State Superintendent Ryan Walters. “Despite lies from the teachers unions and comments from some misinformed legislators, my administration is fully engaged in investing dollars in education that benefit kids, are transparent, and have no leftist strings. I am proud to have won this competitive grant focused on creating innovative solutions for our disabled students. This Department and I are committed to leading the way in service to our most vulnerable communities, and I know Oklahoma’s educators will rise to the challenge.”

This project will operate over five years (October 1, 2023- September 30, 2028) and support two goals:

- To expand capacity of statewide interagency partnerships to provide coordinated transition services
- To expand access and effectiveness of transition programming for youth with significant disabilities and youth with disabilities in rural, high-need settings.

Additional information about the grant:

- From U.S. Department of Education Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA)
- Roughly \$9,992,000 awarded

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- Will provide coaching support to regional teams for new transition program implementation
- Will provide over \$5 million in subgrants to districts and community partners to implement new quality transition

The grant was written by OSDE's Lori Chesnut, Kristen Perez-Rickels, Madison Pollock, and Claudia Beckner in partnership with grant partners including the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services (ODRS), Oklahomans for Independent Living [a Center for Independent Living (CIL)], and the University of Oklahoma's National Disability Center for Education and Training (NCDET).

At the conclusion of grant funding, there will be model demonstration regions who have implemented quality transition programming through multi-agency teams and partnerships.

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