Competitive – Federal Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) Project – State Fiscal Year 2021 (SFY21)

Instructions Section

TO: Minnesota local education agencies (LEAs) (i.e., school district and charter schools) and nonprofit early childhood education providers and organizations

FROM: Doug Paulson, Director, Academic Standards and Instructional Effectiveness
       Bobbie Burnham, Assistant Commissioner

ACTION: Signed and submitted applications must be received by (not postmarked by): May 22, 2020, 3:30 p.m. Central Time

Purpose and Outcome of the Grant Opportunity

Introduction

The Minnesota Department of Education makes the funding of the Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) grant available to Minnesota local education agencies (LEAs) (i.e., school district and charter schools), and nonprofit early childhood education programs. The purpose of the grant is to increase the literacy skills of all Minnesota students, especially those students with the highest needs, through the development of sustainable educational systems. These systems include coaching support to improve the capacity of educational leaders and core content educators to both implement evidence-based literacy practices and strengthen collaboration with families. Therefore, this grant funding prioritizes sites serving children who are living in poverty, learning multiple languages, have an Individual Education Plan (IEP), and children who identify as American Indian.

Sub-grants will be awarded in two age/grade bands: 1) Birth through Grade five, and 2) Grades 6-12. LEAs may apply for one or both of these age bands. All grades in the applied for age band must be served. Federal funding for sub-grants to eligible applicants is available in the amount of $35,912,560 from the CFDA 84.371C award entitled “Comprehensive State Literacy Development” (CSLD).

Project Information and Background

Minnesota’s CLSD sub-grants target improvement of core instruction by building staff capacity to deliver evidence-based literacy practices. Practices include literacy coaching, professional development and continuous improvement, as well as improvement in research-based family collaboration practices to support home
language and literacy development. Sub-grant funds provide for the hiring of local site-based literacy coaches and family literacy specialists.

(Local Education Agency) LEAs objectives

Objective 1:

Site leadership teams will engage in a continuous improvement process to build on effort, outcome and fidelity results each year.

In partnership with the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), each grantee will create a leadership team that will meet regularly to:

- Complete a needs assessment;
- Identify and prioritize the evidence-based practices as a result of the needs assessment on which staff will be coached to implement;
- Establish baseline data on the delivery of targeted literacy practices, set effort, outcome and fidelity improvement goals for the local literacy plan, and gather and analyze data to improve delivery of practices;
- Facilitate ongoing data analysis and interpretation to guide decision-making for action steps for the existing leadership and implementation teams;
- Reflect on implementation of the professional learning system;
- Establish regular communication with staff and other stakeholders to share progress on grant objectives and literacy goals;
- Oversee standards, assessments, and instructional strategies between age bands;
- Prioritize the work of both the literacy coach and family literacy specialist in order to meet the objectives and expectations for each role.

Objective 2:

Local literacy coaches will implement the MDE coaching process to build the capacity of core literacy instruction through the use of identified evidence-based practices, leading to improved student outcomes in literacy.

In partnership with MDE, each grantee will hire local literacy coaches to:

- Prioritize one-on-one coaching with core content teachers;
- Implement a coaching process as designed by MDE to support teacher implementation of evidence-based practices aligned with a local comprehensive needs assessment, local literacy plan, and site/agency overall improvement goals;
- Provide coaching that includes planning, modeling, observing, and giving specific feedback based on goals set in partnership with each teacher for their action plan;
- Collaborate with leadership;
- Establish and facilitate teacher team meetings with the express purpose of increasing knowledge and skills in data analysis, interpretation of assessment data, planning differentiated lessons, and increasing adherence to evidence-based practices; and
- Collaborate with the family literacy specialist, school psychologist, social worker, counselor, and other support services staff to build home-school literacy connections.
Objective 3:

**Family Literacy Specialists** will build the capacity of each site through the use of identified evidence-based practices, leading to improved family collaboration.

In partnership with MDE, the state level family engagement literacy specialist (FELS) will support sub-grantee family literacy specialists to:

- Facilitate and encourage family engagement by leading a comprehensive, menu-based parent program that prioritizes the cultural and linguistic needs of the families to strengthen the partnership;
- Empower families to be active participants in the school, to create an environment of learning at home and to partner with teachers for academic success;
- Work to increase family engagement in children’s language and literacy education throughout the birth through grade 12 learning continuum;
- Ensure supports are in place for the planning, implementation and evaluation of language and literacy activities focused on the whole family in partnership with districts, charter schools, Tribal Nations and local service providers, as determined by local need;
- Provide coaching, learning opportunities and resources for supporting children’s language and literacy development at home;
- Collaborate with literacy coach, school psychologist, social worker, counselor, and other support services staff to build home-school literacy connections; and
- Collaborate with leadership.

Objective 4:

The grant age/grade bands are large and require alignment of standards, coaching and literacy practices in a vertical and horizontal alignment, with special attention to key transition points: Pre-K to Kindergarten and middle school to high school.

*MDE objectives*

**Objective 1:**

MDE will collaborate with CLSD sub-grantees to strengthen the work of their leadership team. The work will build infrastructure and capacity to implement and sustain standards, assessment, and identified evidence-based literacy practices within age/grade band at all levels.

**Objective 2:**

MDE will support local literacy coaches to implement the MDE coaching process, to build the capacity of core literacy instruction through the use of aligned standards and assessments, professional learning, and identified evidence-based practices for improved student outcomes in literacy.

**Objective 3:**

MDE will support family literacy specialists to build the capacity to improve family collaboration at each site through the use of identified evidence-based practices.
Minimum Eligibility Criteria

In order to apply for the grant, each applicant must meet the following criteria:

- Serve at least 20 percent population receiving free and reduced priced-lunch within the district.
- Serve specified age-bands (Birth-Grade 5 and/or Grades 6-12) – every level must be served within the grant application.
- Matching of 3 percent in other funding to support the grant eligible positions until October 1, 2020. This matching is required to allow for staffing to begin at the start of the 2020-21 school year while the federal grant funds are not available until October 1, 2020.

Eligible applicants must apply for one or both of the following age/grade bands in grant opportunity.

- Birth-Grade 5
- Grades 6-12

These age/grade bands may not be modified. Both age/grade band selections use the same application.

Local Literacy Plan

In addition to the eligibility requirements, LEAs must attach the district’s current Local Literacy Plan to your application. MDE will require the selected grantees to update their literacy plan during the first year of the grant and deliver the updated plan no later than May 1, 2021. All participating organizations, including partners, are required to have a Local Literacy Plan by the May 1, 2021 deadline. The revision must reflect the work of the CLSD grant, especially in the areas of leadership, age/grade band alignment, coaching, instruction, and family collaboration.

Funding Available

Federal funding for sub-grants to eligible applicants is available in the amount of $35,912,560 from the CFDA 84.371C award entitled “Comprehensive Literacy State Development” (CLSD).

This grant opportunity estimates that $35,912,560 is available to fund 12-20 grantees.

The state reserves the right to offer grant amounts that differ than the applicant’s request or the maximum identified above.

The state must ensure that no more than:

- 15 percent of the funds serve children from birth through age five.
- 40 percent of the funds serve students in kindergarten through grade 5.
- 40 percent of the funds serve students in grades 6-8 (middle school) and grades 9-12 (high school) with an equitable distribution of funds between middle and high school.
- 5 percent of the funds be used by MDE for administrative costs.

LEAs must ensure that grant funds be disbursed in the following manner:

- Birth to Grade 5 age/grade band
27 percent of the funds serve students in Birth through age 5.
73 percent of the funds serve students in Kindergarten through Grade 5.

- Grade 6 – 12 age/grade band
  - Equitable distribution between grade 6-8 and 9-12 with both bands served

**Additional Funding Opportunity for Districts to Participate in National Impact Study**

The U.S. Department of Education is conducting a national evaluation of CLSD to understand the implementation of the program and its impact on student literacy. On behalf of the U.S. Department of Education, the American Institutes for Research (AIR) invites districts interested in applying for CLSD grantee funding to participate in the impact study.

Each grantee participating in the evaluation will pick which schools receive CLSD funding as usual, but the timing of funding for the grantee’s participating *elementary schools* will be determined by random assignment (i.e., a lottery). About half of a grantee’s participating elementary schools will receive CLSD funding immediately and half will receive it after two years. The lottery ensures that differences in outcomes can be attributed to CLSD funding and not to features of the schools or their decisions to participate.

- Staggering the rollout of CLSD funds to schools over time will help districts learn about and apply lessons from early implementers to other schools.
- Districts will receive up to $15,000 per participating elementary school.

For additional information about the impact study, please see [the impact study webpage](#).

**Grant Amount and Period**

We *estimate* offering 12-20 grant awards with award amounts from $400,000 to 900,000 for an initial grant period of October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021. There are options for three, one-year continuation awards. Continuation awards are contingent upon progress made during the initial grant period, continued federal funding and priorities of the department. Total grant periods may not extend beyond four years with an end date of September 30, 2024.

Multiple LEA sites may apply as a partnership or consortia based on location and/or similar needs. An LEA forms a consortium by talking with other districts and determining if they would benefit from combining resources to meet their literacy goals. The consortium will need to meet regularly during the design and implementation of the application. One LEA would be selected to be the fiscal host of the grant but each LEA should complete a partnership agreement for the financial and program expectations.

The state reserves the right to award more or fewer grant awards and in amounts that differ from the amount requested by the applicant or the maximum identified. The state also reserves the right to grant awards in a manner that provides geographic diversity. If a partner application is submitted, only the primary applicant’s (the organization receiving and administering the funds on behalf of both) geographic area should be provided on the application coversheet.
Note: Continuation award means additional federal funding for additional grant periods, not just extensions in time or amendments without additional funding.

**Reporting Requirements**

If selected for a grant, you will be required to submit to MDE regular reports, as will be outline in the Official Grant Notification Award (OGAN)

**Evaluation Plan**

The state is committed to funding services that produce a measurable result, outcome and/or product for the targeted population identified in your application and the people of Minnesota. Evaluations help demonstrate a project’s effectiveness and information for future improvements. Evaluations use quantitative data and qualitative data, and sometimes, interviews.

For the state evaluation plan, student data to be collected may include, but is not limited to:

Demographic information, including participants’ gender, race/ethnicity, age, school/program, age/grade level, student ID, LEP/English learner status, special education/Individual Education Program status, and poverty code (free and reduced-price meal eligibility), Title I status and other poverty measures.

Academic information, including performance on state achievement exams, performance on national achievement exams, local assessments, and standardized end of grade and end of course test scores. All early childhood and elementary programs through grade 3 must use the TS Gold assessment and report results to MDE.

Adult effort data to be collected may include, but is not limited to:

1. Time and effort logs indicating time spent on various coaching methods and evidence-based practices
2. Action plans indicating goals, and progress toward goals in various contexts (1:1 coaching, Professional Learning Community (PLC), Leadership teams)
3. Surveys to measure quality of coaching and family literacy specialist, fidelity of implementation, and support for coaching of educators and families
4. Professional Learning Community notes and agendas
5. Leadership team agendas
6. Literacy observation walk through data
7. Literacy improvement benchmarks to measure progress toward high-quality literacy instruction
8. Individual, site-based goals for supporting literacy instruction
9. Family survey to gather stakeholder input

Neither the state nor the federal government will publicly report any personally identifiable information.

More information will become available in the future with regard to data submission and reporting.
State’s Right to Cancel

This grant opportunity does not obligate the state to award a contract and the state reserves the right to cancel the solicitation if it is considered to be in its best interest due to lack of funding, agency priorities or other considerations.

General Information Section

Competitive Priority Points

Priority points will be given to programs who serve a high number of children living in poverty, English learners, children who identify as American Indian, and children with disabilities. In the application section, all applicants are required to provide the data requested for each site involved in the grant project; this includes a partnering applicant. Priority Points will be awarded based on the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority Point Categories</th>
<th>0 Points</th>
<th>2 Points</th>
<th>4 Points</th>
<th>6 Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Free and Reduced-Price Meal Priority Points</td>
<td>Up to 40%</td>
<td>Between 40% - 60%</td>
<td>Between 60% - 80%</td>
<td>Over 80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Students with Disabilities Priority Points</td>
<td>Up to 20%</td>
<td>Between 20% - 40%</td>
<td>Between 40% - 60%</td>
<td>Over 60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of English Learners Priority Points Point Ranges</td>
<td>Up to 20%</td>
<td>Between 20% - 40%</td>
<td>Between 40% - 60%</td>
<td>Over 60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of American Indian students</td>
<td>Up to 20%</td>
<td>Between 20% - 40%</td>
<td>Between 40% - 60%</td>
<td>Over 60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Optional Impact Study Priority Points – Number of Elementary Schools

We will award additional points below for districts that indicate their interest in participating will in the optional impact study.

- 0-1 Elementary Schools participating – award 0 points
- 2 Elementary Schools participating – award 1 point
- 3 Elementary Schools participating – award 2 points
- 4+ Elementary Schools participating – award 3 points

Districts with four or more elementary schools are best positioned to participate in the optional impact study.

Expectations and Commitments of Grantees

Fiscal Commitments

- Submit financial reporting forms and progress reports by the dates indicated in the Official Grant Award Notification.
• Maintain a ledger to track the grant budget expenditures and payment reimbursements, plus documentation that supports your budget line item expenses.
• If you are a Minnesota public school district or charter school, you must use the Uniform Financial Accounting and Reporting Standards (UFARS) and any other financial reporting forms provided by the department.
• If subcontracting is an allowable expenditure in your budget, follow applicable state and federal procurement laws and select responsible vendors who are not debarred or suspended, not engaged in unlawful practices and who are qualified.
• Prior to executing the award document and if the grant award is over $25,000, the MDE will need to conduct a pre-award risk assessment to consider the applicant's financial capacity.
• For a grant award over $50,000, we are required to monitor your grant once during the grant period. If your grant amount is over $250,000, we are required to monitor your grant annually.
• Matching of 3% in other funding to support the grant eligible positions until October 1st, 2020.

Programmatic Commitments

Sub-grantees must use funds under this program to supplement and not supplant. Each sub-grantee must use funds to hire one or more literacy coaches and a family literacy specialist. The number of teacher full-time equivalents (FTEs) to be supported by the grant will determine how many literacy coaches are necessary. In addition, if you are an applicant applying with another LEA/nonprofit program, you would consider both LEA school/nonprofit program site environments and the combined number of supported teacher FTEs. An estimate of $100,000 per year for each full-time literacy coach and each full-time family literacy specialist position is considered reasonable, but we understand that these amounts vary slightly depending on the geographic area and school district.

The applicant must commit to:

• Identifying each site leader/administrator to participate in the grant application process, and commit to ensuring the content of the site’s application is implemented as approved.
• Establishing and maintaining an active leadership team to engage in the continuous improvement process across the entire age/grade band that will:
  o Oversee grant application and implementation.
  o Build readiness among site leadership and staff to actively participate in a coaching and continuous improvement process for the duration of the grant.
  o Participate in a needs assessment process.
  o Align and set literacy goals to include the evidence-based practices that address the needs as identified by the needs assessment.
  o Refine local literacy plan to include the literacy goals determined by the need assessment process.
  o Prioritize the CLSD goals as the work of the LEA during the grant period.
  o Ensure implementation of MDE’s CLSD coaching service delivery process.
• Hiring or contracting with one or more literacy coaches as described in the table below, who focus solely on coaching core classroom teachers, and are competent in:
  o Coaching practices such as planning, observing, and modeling, providing feedback, and facilitating team meetings.
  o Data collection, analysis and interpretation.
  o Establishing rapport, facilitating goal setting and action planning.
o Knowledge of the foundations of reading processes and instruction (even if they are going to be working with secondary teachers).
o Using a wide range of instructional practices, approaches, methods, and curriculum materials to support literacy instruction.
o Using a variety of assessment tools and practices to plan and evaluate effective literacy instruction.
o Creating a literate environment that fosters independent reading and writing.
o Applying knowledge and experience in working with adult learners.
o Working with classroom and content area teachers in core instruction.
o Demonstrating understanding of Minnesota’s K-12 Academic Standards in English Language Arts, as well as B-5 Early Childhood Indicators of Progress.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLSD Required Continuous Age Bands</th>
<th>Age Band</th>
<th>1 Literacy Coach</th>
<th>2 Literacy Coaches</th>
<th>3 Literacy Coaches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birth to Grade 5</td>
<td>Birth to age 5</td>
<td>1-7 FTEs</td>
<td>8-15 FTEs</td>
<td>More than 15 FTEs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth to Grade 5</td>
<td>Kindergarten through grade 5</td>
<td>1-15 FTEs</td>
<td>16-30 FTEs</td>
<td>More than 30 FTEs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades 6-12</td>
<td>Middle School, Grades 6-8</td>
<td>1-25 FTEs</td>
<td>26-50 FTEs</td>
<td>More than 50 FTEs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades 6-12</td>
<td>High School, Grades 9-12</td>
<td>1-25 FTEs</td>
<td>26-50 FTEs</td>
<td>More than 50 FTEs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Hiring or contracting with one family literacy specialist per grantee that is competent in:
o Understanding educational systems for the age band.
o Communication skills.
o Elements of family engagement for the age band and reflecting the community of the families.
o Knowledge and experience in working with diverse cultures that match school student populations.
o Experience in effective interactions with students and families in a variety of situations.
o Working knowledge of Title I programs and family engagement expectations.
o Ability to effectively collaborate as a team member in a school environment.
o Ability to effectively present information in one-on-one or small group situations.
o Ability to write correspondence, create flyers and reports.
o Ability to read and write in a second language preferred but not required; good oral communication skills in second language preferred.
o Ability to maintain cooperative working relationships with those contacted in the performance of duties, to include all other school staff, parents and stakeholders.

• District, program and site leaders actively support and participate in the training of coaches and family literacy specialists.
• District, program and site leaders actively and visibly support and participate in the expectations of the grant, including but not limited to webinars, phone calls, face-to-face meetings, trainings, or site visits.
• Maintaining a data system and generating reports of professional development efforts, fidelity of practices, student outcomes, and all required measures, as requested.

• Birth through age 5 and kindergarten through grade 3 will be required to use the TS Gold assessment.

• Sustaining focus on targeted grant activities which include:
  o Protecting the coaches’ time to deliver coaching services; non-coaching duties are not permitted. 80 percent of coaches' time will be working directly with teachers in one of the coaching modalities (planning, co-teaching and modeling, observing, or giving feedback).
  o Protecting the Family Literacy Specialists’ time will build the capacity of each site through the use of identified evidence-based practices, leading to improved family collaboration.
  o Supporting collection, use and reporting of data to MDE using the same measure for the duration of the grant.
  o Limiting CLSD training and coaching to the targeted list of evidence-based literacy practices or requisite knowledge and skills for delivering the evidence-based practices (EBPs).
  o Expanding coaching knowledge of adult learning theory and skills in motivation, engagement and relationship building.
  o Convening regular implementation meetings, which include examination of student progress, and capacity data.
  o Completing capacity measures and carrying out action planning activities as described in the evaluation plan.

• Budgeting for and participation in the following professional development activities held at the Minnesota Department of Education unless otherwise noted:
  o Grant Manager and Office Manager – one webinar per year.
  o Leadership Team (organizational leaders, site administrators/directors, literacy coaches, family literacy specialists, and teacher leaders) – one face-to-face and three webinars per year.
  o Grantee literacy coaches and family literacy specialists – three face-to-face trainings per year, and weekly webinars.
  o MDE reserves the right to offer and require grantee participation in additional professional development as opportunities arise.

Multiple LEA sites may apply as a partnership or consortia based on location and/or similar needs. An LEA forms a consortium by talking with other districts and determining if they would benefit from combining resources to meet their literacy goals. The consortium will need to meet regularly during the design and implementation of the application. One LEA would be selected to be the fiscal host of the grant but each LEA should complete a partnership agreement for the financial and program expectations.

Resources for Applicants

UFARS Reporting

Minnesota school districts and charter schools must report their expenditures under the guidelines in the Uniform Financial Accounting and Reporting System (http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/schfin/fin/UFARS).

Capital Assets

**State Travel Plan**

Commissioner’s Travel Reimbursement Plan ([http://www.mmd.admin.state.mn.us/commissionersplan.htm](http://www.mmd.admin.state.mn.us/commissionersplan.htm)).

**State Grant Management Policies**

The Minnesota Office of Grant Management Policies ([http://mn.gov/admin/government/grants/policies-statutes-forms](http://mn.gov/admin/government/grants/policies-statutes-forms)).

**Federal Guidance**

Please refer to Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Title 2, Part 200, for uniform guidance, crosswalks and cost principles for state, local, Indian Tribes, institutions of higher education, and nonprofit organizations. You can access the information at [electronic code of federal regulations](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200_main_02.tpl).

**Indirect Rates for Minnesota Public Schools plus Charter Schools and Education Cooperatives**

For information on school district and local educational agency (LEA) current fiscal year federal, indirect cost rates are available on MDE’s [Indirect Cost Rates webpage](http://www.mde.k12.mn.us/financialservices/financialpolicy/indirectcostrates.asp).

**Grant Application Components Section**

**Application Coversheet**

The coversheet must include:

1. An original signature from the identified official with authority (IoWA) to sign on behalf of the applicant. If a fiscal agent is representing a consortia, only the fiscal agent applicant must sign. The fiscal agent and the organization represented should have a letter of agreement on file with MDE.
2. Contact information for the agency, agency head, the program contact and the accounting or business office manager.
3. The application must be developed with the participation of the school district’s leadership team and representatives from each participating site’s leadership team. The representative of each participating sites’ leadership teams must be identified and sign the application acknowledging the committee’s participation in the development of the application materials.

**Required Identification Numbers**

You must provide the following identification numbers on the application coversheet.

It is likely your organization already has these numbers; check with your business office.

a. If you are a fiscal agent applicant, the SWIFT vendor number included must be for the fiscal agent who will be receiving and administering the grant funds.

b. Get a SWIFT Vendor Number (https://supplier.systems.state.mn.us/psc/fmssupap/SUPPLIER/ERP/c/NUI_FRAMEWORK.PT_LANDINGPAGE.GBL?&).

2. Federal Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number.
   a. All organizations applying for federal funding must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS). A DUNS is a unique nine-character ID number that is used to track how the federal grant is allocated.
   b. Register for or verify a DUNS number (http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/displayHomePage.do).

3. MDE Organization Site Number (required for school districts and charter schools. Not required for private, nonprofit, or nongovernmental).
   a. Obtain an MDE organization number (http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/datasub/SiteVerif/).

Assurances – Standard

When you sign the application, you certify that you have read the application and that you will comply with the approved application, the assurances here and in the OGAN, and all other applicable federal regulations, state statutes, and local policies. The application needs to include a way for districts to indicate their willingness to participate in the study, and identify which schools.

Impact study directions

Additional Funding Opportunity for Districts in CLSD Grantee States

The U.S. Department of Education is conducting a national evaluation of CLSD to understand the implementation of the program and its impact on student literacy. Each sub grantee participating in the evaluation will pick which schools receive CLSD funding as usual, but the timing of funding for the sub grantee’s participating elementary schools will be determined by random assignment (i.e., a lottery). About half of a sub grantee’s participating elementary schools will receive CLSD funding immediately and half will receive it after 2 years. The lottery ensures that differences in outcomes can be attributed to CLSD funding and not to features of the schools or their decisions to participate.

Impact Study Benefits for District Subgrantees include:

- Staggering the rollout of CLSD funds to schools over time will help districts learn about and apply lessons from early implementers to other schools.
- Districts will receive up to $15,000 per participating elementary school.

District participation in the impact study is voluntary but strongly encouraged. By completing the information in this section of your application and indicating your willingness to participate in the impact study, MDE will award up to an additional three points to an application, depending on how well you address this priority. Districts with four or more elementary schools are best positioned to participate in the impact study. Districts that indicate willingness to include four or more elementary schools in their CLSD sub grant and participate in the impact
study, if awarded a CLSD sub grant, will receive the full additional three points on their application. Districts that include three elementary schools will receive two points and districts that include two elementary schools will receive one point. Districts that include only one or no elementary schools will not be eligible for additional points.

For additional information about the impact study, please see the National Evaluation of the Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant Program webpage.

**Narrative Components and Budget**

In the application section, develop your narrative responses to the following components. Label each narrative component with a header in the application. Total points possible is 100.

**Statement of Need**

Review and analyze all relevant learner outcome data (e.g., screening, surveys, classroom/common assessment, Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment, etc.) as well as adult effort and fidelity data, to determine literacy needs for the targeted learner population. Include the following:

- Identify the targeted learner populations to be served by the grant for each site represented in the application.
- Provide all relevant data and other information that supports your determination of the need.
- Identify barriers that present challenges for this targeted learner group and explain how the work of this grant will remove these barriers.

Points Possible: 25 points

**Capacity of the Applicant**

Describe your capacity for and commitment to administering the CLSD grant successfully. Identify the following:

- Primary project staff funded with the grant and their role in the project activity/activities
- Staff not funded with the grant that may have a role in the project
- Previous experience with developing systems that support leadership, administration, coaching on evidence based practices, and family engagement activities
- Methods to ensure your approaches are inclusive and consider the needs of targeted learner populations
- If applying as a partnership or consortium, specifics of how resources or staff will be shared or distributed among each district in the consortium

Points Possible: 30 points

**District Goals, Activities, Outcomes, and Estimated Timelines**

Outline the goals with activities that will achieve the expected outcomes; include responsible parties and timelines. Review the grant objectives on pages 2-4, as well as the general expectations and activities found on pages 7-8.
Use the format below when completing the application.

Grant Objective #1 – Leadership
District Goal(s):
Activities:
Expected Outcome andBenefiting Party:
Person Responsible for Activity:
Estimated Timeline:

Grant Objective #2 – Literacy Coaches
District Goal(s):
Activity:
Expected Outcome and Benefiting Party:
Person Responsible for Activity:
Estimated Timeline:

Grant Objective #3 – Family Engagement
District Goal(s):
Activity:
Expected Outcome and Benefiting Party:
Person Responsible for Activity:
Estimated Timeline:

Grant Objective #4 – Alignment
District Goal(s):
Activity:
Expected Outcome and Benefiting Party:
Person Responsible for Activity:
Estimated Timeline:

Points Possible: Goals, Activities, Outcomes and Estimated Timelines – 40 points

**Excel Budget with Descriptions**

Complete the Excel budget for the first year of the grant. Detail all *necessary and reasonable* expenditures anticipated during the grant period that align with the grant goals and activities, using the budget codes available.

*Necessary* means it is important to the success of the project. *Reasonable* means you are paying fair market price for the item or services.

The narrative must address the following:

- Provide sufficient narrative description for budget line item entries.
- Reviewers should be able to determine if the budget aligns with the grant activities and primary purpose of the funding.
- Budget estimates for one family literacy specialist per application, and literacy coaches per the description on page 9 appear to correspond with reasonable approximations of the activities to be performed.
- Determine if the budget planned expenses appear necessary and reasonable for the success and purpose of the grant.
- For age/grade band Birth to Grade 5, explain the budget distribution between the two age bands with a minimum of 73 percent in elementary (kindergarten through grade 5) and 27 percent in early childhood (Birth through age five).
- Matching of 3 percent in other funding to support the grant eligible positions until October 1, 2020.

Points Possible: Excel Budget with Descriptions – 5 points

UFARS Source Code 01F499

Unallowable Expenditures, although not limited to: food, intervention materials, furniture, curriculum purchases, out of state travel, field trips, positions beyond coach and family literacy specialists.

Applicant Questions

The following program representative is available to provide additional information or answer questions.

Jennifer Wazlawik, MDE Literacy Specialist at jennifer.wazlawik@state.mn.us

Questions must be emailed to the program contact by May 13, 2020. A question and answer document will be published on the grant opportunity site after May 18, 2020. The document will be published on the grant announcement page.

Questions related to the grant opportunity may be answered only by MDE’s program representative identified above or his/her successor. Information received from an unauthorized source is not binding and could result in misinformation.

Application Submission and Signature

Applications must be received by May 22, 2020, at 3:30 p.m. Central Time to be considered. Late applications will not be accepted.

Include one copy of the signed application coversheet, assurances, and application narrative in one document (in PDF format) and one copy of the completed budget (in Excel format) to mde.compgrants@state.mn.us with the subject line CLSD Project, then the name of your organization. You should title all documents with the name of your organization, then the name of the document. Example: if ABC Public Schools were to submit an application, then the names of the submitted documents should be as follows:

1. ABC Public Schools Application
2. ABC Public Schools Budget
3. ABC Public Schools Literacy Plan
4. ABC Public Schools Consortium or Partnership Agreement (only if applicable)
We will not accept applications via fax, through the SERVS system, or saved as Google docs.

Costs associated with preparing the application must be borne by the applicant. The burden of proof of timely submission is on the applicant.

**Application Screening and Review**

This section explains the screening and scoring of the applications.

**Phase 1: Screening**

Applications that meet the following criteria will be forwarded for further consideration and review.

1. Received by (not postmarked by) the due date and time.
2. Application includes a narrative and budget.
3. Applicant has applied for one or both of the continuous age/grade bands. (Birth to grade 5, Grade 6 to grade 12, or both)
4. Applicant has a free and reduced-priced lunch population of at least 20 percent.
5. Applicant included a copy of the current literacy plan.

**Phase 2: Application Components Scored**

Applications will be reviewed by an equal number of reviewers. Reviewers will apply a score to each component below. Total points possible for this initiative are 100.

- Statement of Need – 25 points
- Capacity of Applicant – 30 points
- Goals, Activities, Outcomes and Estimated Timelines – 40 points
- Excel Budget with Descriptions – 5 points

Grant Services may contact reviewers to obtain clarification of their feedback, during this phase, after the grant review is complete. This final score will be determined by a combination of the average score of all reviewers involved, with the addition of any priority points as assigned by MDE.

**Phase 3: Review of Outcomes and Notifications to Applicants**

Grant Services will present agency program staff and management the results from the first two phases of this review. As a standard practice, those applications with the largest score are offered grant awards contingent upon clarification and negotiations. Programs may offer grant award amounts that differ than the applicant’s grant request or the maximum grant amount identified by the department. During this phase or the next, agency program staff or grant services staff may contact you to obtain clarifications for one or more sections of your application. Please note that you will not be authorized to spend money until you receive the full executed OGAN in phase 5. All funding decisions made by MDE are final.
**Phase 4: Pre-Award Risk Assessment and Review of Prior Performance**

After notifying the applicants of our decisions, but before executing of the OGAN, and if awards exceed $25,000, MDE will conduct a pre-award risk assessment on the financial capacity of our selected grantees as well as review prior performance in prior grants administered by MDE and/or any other state agency. Further information, such as financial audits, may be requested at this time.

**Phase 5: Execution of OGAN or Other Grant Documentation**

After the funds are awarded, along with the pre-award risk assessment, additional clarifications and negotiations, your grants specialist will draft an OGAN or other grant documentation to be encumbered and signed by MDE. It is the policy of MDE to reimburse you for any grant-related expenses only after the OGAN or other grant documentation is complete. If selected for a grant and you begin work on the grant prior to the OGAN or other grant documentation’s full execution, those expenses will be your sole responsibility to pay. MDE will not reimburse you for those expenses.

**Appeals**

If we disapprove your application under applicable state statute or federal programs, you may submit an appeal to the state with regard to the disapproval by filing a notice and stating the state or federal statutes violated. Refer to Title 34 CFR 76.401, for more information. Please remember that this is an appeal of the process; funding decision are not subject to appeal.

You should contact the Grant Services coordinator, Tim Larson, at timothy.e.larson@state.mn.us, if you have questions about the process or wish to file an appeal.

**Delays**

The following may result in a delay of preparation of any grant awards:

- Clarifications to the budget or work plan
- Missing or invalid DUNS (if federal)
- Missing ZIP code
- Invalid state Vendor ID Number
- Pre-Award Risk Assessment Review

The agency anticipates the review to be completed by early June 2020. Applicants are expected to be notified within two weeks after the review has been completed. Review feedback is considered public, but not until the competitive grant process is complete, which is upon execution of the OGAN.
T: 651-582-8200
TTY: 651-582-8201

https://education.mn.gov

Information on this website can be made available in alternative formats by calling 651-582-8651. Persons with a hearing or speech disability may contact the Minnesota Relay Service by dialing 711 or 800-627-3529.

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