MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE

GRANT INFORMATION GUIDE

FY23 Rural and Low-Income School Program

Maryland State Department of Education
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21211

Deadline
February 13, 2023
No later than 5:00 p.m. EST

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Mohammed Choudhury
State Superintendent of Schools
Secretary-Treasurer, Maryland State Board of Education

Sylvia A. Lawson, Ph.D.
Deputy Superintendent, Organizational Effectiveness

Mary Gable
Assistant State Superintendent, Division of Student
Support, Academic Enrichment, and Educational Policy

Wes Moore
Governor

MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Clarence C. Crawford
President, Maryland State Board of Education

Susan J. Getty, Ed.D. (Vice President)

Shawn D. Bartley, Esq.

Gail Bates

Chuen-Chin Bianca Chang

Charles R. Dashiell, Jr., Esq.

Vermelle Greene, Ph.D.

Jean C. Halle

Dr. Joan Mele-McCarthy

Rachel L. McCusker

Lori Morrow

Brigadier General Warner I. Sumpter (Ret.)

Holly C. Wilcox, Ph.D.

Merin Thomas (Student Member)

Table of Contents

Program Description

The Rural and Low-Income School Program (RLIS) is one of three programs authorized under the Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP) in Title V, Part B, Subpart 2 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by The Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA). The program is designed to supplement funding to help rural local education agencies (LEAs) increase student academic achievement. Dorchester County Public Schools is the only LEA in Maryland that qualifies for the grant per the United States Department of Education.

NAME OF GRANT PROGRAM

FY 2023 Rural and Low-Income School Program

PURPOSE

To address the unique needs of rural school districts that frequently: 1) lack the personnel and resources needed to compete effectively for federal competitive grants; and 2) receive formula grant allocations in amounts too small to be effective in meeting their intended purposes. Grant funds awarded to LEAs under this subpart shall be used for any of the following activities:

- Activities authorized under Title I, Part A
- Activities authorized under Title II, Part A
- Activities authorized under Title III
- Activities authorized under Title IV, Part A
- Parental Involvement Activities

AUTHORIZATION

The U.S. Department of Education's Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP) in Title V, Part B, Subpart 2 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by The Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015.

DISSEMINATION

This grant program was released on January 11, 2023.

DEADLINE

The grant application is due no later than 5 p.m. on February 13, 2023.

GRANT PERIOD

July 1, 2022 – September 30, 2023

FUNDING AMOUNT AVAILABLE

There is $113,170.00 funding available.

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF GRANTS

One (1)

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

The FY23 Rural and Low-Income Schools Program Grant Renewal Application can be downloaded from the MSDE grants page. A signed electronic copy in PDF format must be submitted by email to Renee.Neely@maryland.gov.

STATE RESPONSIBILITIES

MSDE will monitor grantee progress through project updates, financial reports, and an evaluation of outcomes based on grant goals.

PROGRAM CONTACT

Dr. Renee Neely
Comprehensive Planning Specialist
Division of Student Support, Academic Enrichment, and Educational Policy
Maryland State Department of Education
Renee.Neely@maryland.gov
410-767-0294 (office)

Eligibility

The U.S. Department of Education determines LEA eligibility based on these criteria and send the State a pre-populated spreadsheet for verification by the State. Currently, Dorchester County is the only LEA in Maryland that meets the criteria. This is not a competitive grant.

- **Low Income:** 20 percent or more of the children ages five to seventeen served by the LEA must be from families with incomes below the poverty line, based on data from the U.S. Census Bureau's Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE). Rural non-geographic LEAs for which SAIPE data are not available that are eligible based on the same State-derived equivalent of SAIPE data that the State uses to make allocations under Part A of Title I of the ESEA, consistent with 34 C.F.R. § 200.72, are also eligible for RLIS funds.

- **Rural:** To be considered rural, all schools comprising the LEA must have a school locale code of 32, 33, 41, 42, or 43, assigned by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), or be in an area of the State defined as rural by a governmental agency of the State. Locale code is a measure of a school's location relative to populous areas. The metro-centric locale codes developed and used by NCES include eight categories that range from large city to rural.

Use of Funds

This FY 2023 grant is to support programs to supplement any of the Activities listed above as follows:

- Program Supplies
- Salaries and Fringe
- Stipends
- Other Operating Costs
- 5% Administrative Cost
- Indirect Cost

Funds may not be used for:

- Construction, renovation, or repair of any school facility, except as authorized under SEC. 8526. [20 U.S.C. 7906],
- Transportation unless otherwise authorized under this SEC. 8526. [20 U.S.C. 7906],
- Developing or distributing materials, or operating programs or courses of instruction directed at youth, which are designed to promote or encourage sexual activity, whether homosexual or heterosexual,
- Distributing to or aiding in, the distribution by any organization of legally obscene materials to minors on school grounds,
- Providing sex education or HIV-prevention education in schools unless that instruction is age appropriate and includes the health benefits of abstinence, or
- Operating a program of contraceptive distribution in schools.

Program Requirements

The RLIS is authorized by Title VI, Part B of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Under the RLIS program, grants are made to SEAs with eligible school districts. State Education Agencies (SEAs) subgrant RLIS funds to eligible school districts to pay for activities authorized under Titles I-IV of the ESEA, as well as parental involvement activities.

Application

COVER PAGE

The cover page includes all contact information and grant partnership information including the total amount of the grant and the organization's Employer Identification Number (EIN) and Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number.

EXTENT OF NEED

Identify a clearly defined problem, and how the use of these funds will address the problem. Applicants should include the target audience and expected outcomes.

- What is the problem that needs to be resolved or addressed?
- How will these funds be used to support the needs of schools and/or student groups that have been identified in your Local ESSA Consolidated Strategic Plan as experiencing challenges based on assessment results (i.e., Performance Based Assessment, etc.) or other local data?
- Who are the targeted recipients of the initiative?

GOALS AND MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

Indicate the ESSA performance goal(s) to which resources provided by this grant will be targeted. Include measurable objectives and strategies. Articulate clear goals and related near, mid, and long-term outcomes that will drive achievement of the grant program goals. Goals should be specific and aligned to the needs identified in the applicant's needs assessment.

PLAN OF OPERATION

Discuss the strategies and activities to be used to accomplish the outcomes. Strategies are broad approaches (methods, procedures, techniques) employed to accomplish outcomes. Include in this section a justification as to why the strategies were chosen and how they will help to achieve the outcomes. How will grant funds support these strategies and how many students will be served? In the application, please list, in chronological order, all major management actions necessary to implement the project during the funding cycle. Indicate on the worksheet key personnel responsible for accomplishing each action and the estimated timeline for completion. Specifically address the following:

- What data sources were used and analyzed to identify the problem or need?
- What evidence-based practices/programs will be used to achieve the intended outcome?
- What were the rationale/criteria used for selecting the initiative/evidence-based practices?
- How will the LEA coordinate and integrate the funded activities with activities provided through other federal, State, and local programs?

EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

Describe how the proposed plan and strategies being implemented are evidence-based and will lead to the desired impact. Include a description of the organization's experience in terms of effective practices (research-based strategies) leading to the desired outcomes.

- What evaluation strategies will be used to determine if progress toward ESSA goals has been made? (i.e., how will the achievement outcomes be measured?)
- What outcome(s) are expected (i.e., levels of performance or achievement, changes in professional practice, goals)?

EVALUATION AND DISSEMINATION

Grantees are required to submit an annual evaluation report and quarterly progress reports that are consistent with the project's goal and objective(s). Keep in mind that the final evaluation will consider the entire project, beginning to end. It should not be viewed as what is done after the project's completion, but as an integral element in the project's planning, design, and implementation.

MANAGEMENT PLAN AND KEY PERSONNEL

Applicants must provide a clear discussion of partners, respective roles in the project, the benefits each expects to receive, and the specific contributions each will make to the project (financial, equipment, personnel, or other resources). It is essential that partner commitments be documented. A signed partnership agreement must be included that outlines the roles, responsibilities, and contributions of each partner.

Grantees are required to include a list of the staff or personnel responsible for the successful implementation and monitoring of the grant requirements. New teachers and assistant teachers hired under this program must meet the degree/credential requirements. Attach a one-page resume for new staff only. Applicants are required to complete the following management plan chart as part of the proposal.

Management Plan Worksheet

Person Responsible	Title, Organization	Responsibilities	Time devoted

PROJECT TIMELINE

A Project Timeline tells the reader when key activities will take place during the grant period. Applicants should consider all the key tasks or activities that need to be carried out to implement the program successfully, whether each task can realistically begin and end in the proposed time frame, and how long each task will take to complete. It should contain three sections: management, implementation, and evaluation. See sample below:

Key Activities	Individual Responsible	Time Frame
Management Activity		
Implementation Activity		
Evaluation Activity		

BUDGET AND BUDGET NARRATIVE

The project's budget should detail all related project expenses in a separate itemized budget. It should demonstrate the extent to which the budget is reasonable, cost-effective, and integrates other sources of funding. All costs described in the project narrative should appear in the budget narrative and must have a corresponding entry in the itemized budget for that year. Reviewers should be able to see a clear connection between the project activities and the budget line items.

Each line must be detailed and specific. General expenses should be broken down into specific line items. For example, "meeting expenses" can be broken down into room rental, photocopying, and refreshments. There is no page limit for the budget, so be as detailed as possible. See a sample budget below:

1. **Salaries & wages (list separately for each position)**

Line item	Calculation	Requested	Total
Total for salaries & wages:			

2. Contracted Services

Line item	Calculation	Requested	In-Kind	Total
Total for contracted services:	$	$	$

3. Activities

Funding from the RLIS Program may be used for a wide variety of activities authorized under various titles of Every Student Succeeds Act [ESSA, Title V, Part B, Subpart 1, Section 5222(a)]. Please complete the table below indicating the amount of your allocation that you will be applying to the authorized activities and measurable outcomes.

Activity	Amount
Activities authorized under Title I, Part A (Basic Programs Operated by Local Education Agencies)	$
Activities authorized under Title II, Part A (Improving Teacher Quality State Grants)	$
Activities authorized under Title III, Part A (Language Instruction for English Learners and Immigrant Students)	$
Activities authorized under Title IV, Part A (Student Support and Academic Enrichment)	$
Parent Involvement Activities	$
Total:	$

APPENDIX

The following appendices must be included but not apply to the page limit of the Project Narrative. Include other appendices as deemed necessary.

- A signed C-1-25 MSDE budget form
- A signed recipient assurances page

The Review Process

The review of proposals will be a three-part process:

1. Written applications screened for submission requirements and inclusion of all required sections.

2. A review committee established by the MSDE will evaluate applications using the scoring rubric. The scoring rubric is tailored to the grant program, its intent, and intended impact on the target population.

3. Final approval of the scope of work and budget alignment will be determined by the review committee.

Project Narrative (90 Points)			
Plan Criteria	**Level 3** **Exceeds Criteria**	**Level 2** **Meets Criteria**	**Level 1** **Does Not Meet Criteria**
Extent of Need (30 Points)	The extent of need section is exemplary and includes both quantitative and qualitative data specific to the target population and the school(s) the program will serve. Data sources are described, and collection methods are logical and rational. 30-26	The extent of need for the project adequately defines the problem or obstacle the RLIS Grant will address. 25-12	The extent of need for the project section fails to define the problem or obstacle the RLIS Grant will address. 12-0
Goals and Measurable Outcomes (20 Points)	The application articulates multiple exemplary measurable goals, and outcomes. Outcome statements align with the problem need and tell how the project's target population would improve. 20-16	The application lists goals and outcomes and includes measures of progress towards meeting the goal. Outcome statements align to the problem/need. 15-17	The application includes an incomplete identification of goals and outcomes. Statements are vague and not measurable. 7-10

Plan of Operation, Key Personnel, and Project Timeline (20 Points)	The plan of action clearly and significantly addresses items identified in the statement of need and provides a complete timeline that addresses each goal that is listed. 20-16	There is a detailed plan of operation that addresses items identified in the statement of need. 15-17	The plan of operation provided does not address the items identified in the statement of need. 7-0
Evidence of Impact (10 Points	The application extensively describes how all proposed strategies are evidence and research-based and thoroughly explains how the evidence will lead to desired outcomes. 10-8	The application adequately describes how proposed strategies are evidence and research based. 7-5	The application does not describe the evidence of impact. 4-0
Evaluation (10 Points)	The application clearly and significantly identifies measurable program improvements, the data that will be reviewed, and includes a plan to collect, evaluate, and report on outcomes. . 10-6	The application adequately identifies measurable program improvements and the data that will be reviewed, 7-5	The application does not identify measurable program improvements. There is a limited plan to report on outcomes. 2-0

Budget (10 Points)			
Plan Criteria	**Level 3** **Exceeds Criteria**	**Level 2** **Meets Criteria**	**Level 1** **Does Not Meet Criteria**
Budget Narrative and Worksheet (10 Points)	The application includes an exemplary budget narrative that lists budget categories showing how the cost of each item was calculated, and a detailed description of personnel working on the project. 0-6	The application includes an adequate budget narrative that lists budget categories showing how the cost of each item was calculated. 5-3	The application lacks a budget narrative or lacks detail and is not itemized. Budget contains errors. 2-0

AWARD NOTIFICATION

Notification of awards will be sent by email within 30 days of the deadline to submit proposals. Approved proposals may begin implementing the program as soon as the award notification letter is received. The Notice of Grant Award (NOGA) will be forthcoming within three weeks of the approval letter.

Reporting Requirements

Grantees must comply with the following reporting requirements:

Date	Reporting Requirements
Ongoing	Fiscal and program monitoring
January 30, 2023	Q1: Grant Application
February 28, 2023	Q1: Quarterly Project Updates (Narrative and Fiscal)
April 15, 2023	Q2: Quarterly Project Updates
July 15, 2023	Q3: Quarterly Project Updates
September 30, 2023	Q4: Quarterly Project Updates
September 30, 2023	Grant Period Ends
October 30, 2023	Final Evaluation Report (Narrative and Fiscal)

Notes: Any requests for programmatic amendments must be submitted at least 45 days before the grant period ends, and must be submitted using the C-125-B form found in the Grant Budget Forms Workbook on the MSDE webpage. Final invoices must be submitted no later than 60 days after the grant period.

Non-Discrimination Statement

The Maryland State Department of Education does not discriminate on the basis of age, ancestry/national origin, color, disability, gender identity/expression, marital status, race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation in matters affecting employment or in providing access to programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. For inquiries related to Department policy, please contact:

Equity Assurance and Compliance Office
Office of the Deputy State Superintendent for Operations
Maryland State Department of Education
200 W. Baltimore Street - 2nd Floor Baltimore, Maryland 21201-2595
410-767-0123 - voice
410-767-0431 - fax
410-333-6442 - TTY/TDD

The General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), Section 427

Each application must develop and describe the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the project or activity to be conducted with such assistance, by addressing the special needs of students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries in order to overcome barriers to equitable participation.

Customer Service Support Session

The MSDE will provide customer service support to Dorchester County Board of Education regarding the completion of the application on Tuesday, January 17, 2023. During this session, MSDE personnel will provide an overview of the grant funding, the requirements, and the application process.

Questions

If you have questions about the application or the process, please contact the Program Monitor:

Dr. Renee Neely
Comprehensive Planning Specialist
Division of Student Support, Academic Enrichment, and Educational Policy
Maryland State Department of Education
renee.neely@maryland.gov
410-767-0294 (office)

A list of frequently asked questions (FAQ) and answers will be posted to the RLIS website following customer service support sessions.

Grant Timeline

This funding opportunity, including all attachments and updates, are found on the MSDE website.

Date	Program Milestone
January 11, 2023	MSDE disseminates the grant information and opens the application submission window
January 17, 2023	The MSDE will hold an information session from 1-2 pm to answer questions and provide customer service and support
February 13, 2023	The grant application period closes – Application and all attachments are due to MSDE
February 17, 2023	MSDE completes application review and notifies awardee
July 1, 2022 – September 30, 2023	Grant Period
October 30, 2023	Final Evaluation and Report (Narrative and Fiscal)

Submission

Proposals for funding must include a completed application with all required components and attachments. Applications must be submitted in pdf format by email to the program contact at renee.neely@maryland.gov and due by 5:00 p.m. on February 13, 2023.

Attachments

- MSDE Recipient Assurances page
- MSDE Itemized Budget Form (C-1-25)