MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE

GRANT INFORMATION GUIDE

Ready for Kindergarten (R4K)

Grant Program

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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Program Description

The Ready for Kindergarten (R4K) Grant is a program administered by the Division of Early Childhood at the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). The Early Childhood Assessment System includes the Ready for Kindergarten assessment system and the Early Learning Assessment (ELA), which aligns with the new Maryland Early Learning Standards. Data from the R4K are used to inform teachers, families, and schools about the learning needs of students as they enter Kindergarten. The R4K Grant provides funding for professional learning initiatives, the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential for Prekindergarten Assistant Teachers, the planning for a coordinated Prekindergarten mixed delivery enrollment process, as well as accreditation in the Maryland EXCELS program.

Grant funds must be used to support initiatives for continuous improvement using the R4K comprehensive assessment system for Prekindergarten and Kindergarten. This includes the fidelity of the administration and professional development focused on the reliability of the assessment, data-based instructional decision-making, and research-based content and pedagogical best practices.

Authorization

House Bill 1300 Blueprint for Maryland's Future, Education Article §5–230

GRANT OVERVIEW

Name of Grant Program

Ready for Kindergarten Grant

Purpose

Provide support for the administration of the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) and professional learning activities to improve teacher practices in order to increase Prekindergarten students' readiness for Kindergarten and to support Kindergarten students' learning. R4K Grant funds also support program credentialing and coordinate with private childcare providers.

Dissemination

This Grant Information Guide (GIG) was released on July 31, 2023.

Deadline

Proposals are due no later than 5:00 p.m. on August 31, 2023

Grant Period

July 1, 2023 – December 30, 2024

Funding Amount Available

$4 million

Estimated Number of Grants

24

Grant Amount

All LEAs are eligible for a base award of $125,000. Additional funds are calculated using a formula based on the number of Prekindergarten and Kindergarten students served in each LEA as compared to the state total. Grant amounts range from $102,370 to $266,696. See the LEA Funding Allotment chart in the appendix.

Submission Instructions

The R4K Grant Application can be downloaded from the MSDE Office of Grants Administration and Compliance website. Complete the application and save it as "Name of LEA_R4K24 Grant Proposal." A signed electronic copy in PDF format must be emailed to nykia.washington@maryland.gov by 5:00 p.m. on August 28, 2023. When you send the email, the subject line should be: "R4K FY24 Grant Proposal."

State Responsibilities

MSDE is responsible for providing required information, data, documentation, and technical assistance to facilitate the grantee's performance of the work and will provide additional assistance when requested.

Program Contact

Nykia Washington
Pre-K Program Manager
(410) 767-0088
nykia.washington@maryland.gov

Eligibility

Local education agencies are eligible to apply for funding.

Use of Funds

Funds may be used for:

- Salaries, wages, and fringe benefits

- Equipment, materials, and supplies that directly support grant activities.

- Technology costs (may not exceed 10% of the total fund request) and must be related to grant activities.

- Contracted services must include a description or scope of work.

- Instructional assistants to earn a Child Development Associate (CDA) or Associate's Degree (funds are capped at $500 per Instructional Assistant and may only be used to cover the cost of the CDA course or coursework towards an associate's degree).

- Up to 10% of funds can be used to purchase classroom supplies and materials aligned with EXCELS and accreditation requirements.

Funds may not be used for:

- Supplanting existing services

- Classroom supplies and materials not related to professional learning goals and initiatives.

- Purchase of any technology software or third party to develop an operational online enrollment system.

- Out-of-state travel

Funding Initiatives

Applicants have access to funding to support the following initiatives within the Blueprint for Maryland's Future:

- Professional Learning to support Early Learning Assessment and instruction – Funds may provide support for Instructional assistants to obtain a Child Development Associates (CDA). By 2027-2028, Instructional assistants must have at least a CDA. Formula funds will be calculated to support LEAs by funding $500 per Prekindergarten Instructional Assistant who registers for the course to obtain the CDA credential. These funds must go towards paying the course fee. Additionally professional development opportunities may include both public and private Prekindergarten and Kindergarten staff.

- Maryland EXCELS rating and Accreditation– Funds may support the planning, development and monitoring of schools pursuing an EXCELS rating and Accreditation in order to meet the Blueprint for Maryland's Future Prekindergarten requirements.

- Development of Prekindergarten Mixed Delivery System – Funds may support plans that address the requirements within the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the LEA and the eligible private providers in their jurisdiction. See education statute §7–1A–05 for requirements of the MOU. Funds may be used to:

  - Collaborate with eligible private providers and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), guided by the vision of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, to provide technical assistance and consultation services related to kindergarten readiness, curriculum development, professional development, and school readiness for student subgroups.

  - Empower eligible private provider teachers and instructional assistants with transformative professional development opportunities, aligned with the goals of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. These opportunities foster continuous growth, equipping them with the knowledge and skills needed for exceptional early childhood education.

  - Facilitate a smooth transition from the prekindergarten program offered by eligible private providers to kindergarten in the local education agency (LEA), in accordance with the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, by providing information about Child Find and coordinating comprehensive services for 3-year-old or 4-year-old children and their families.

  - Conduct English language proficiency screenings, guided by the principles of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, to ensure that children entering kindergarten receive appropriate support and services for their English language learning.

  - Foster a culture of open communication between eligible private providers and the public school system, echoing the collaborative spirit of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. By nurturing strong partnerships, we create a supportive environment for students and families, enhancing their educational experiences.

Program Requirements

Applications must provide professional learning opportunities to new and returning Kindergarten teachers, prekindergarten teachers, as well as other certified teachers who are responsible for the readiness of students for Kindergarten.

Application Requirements

COVER PAGE

Applications must include the Proposal Cover Page provided in the application for participation that includes a project statement. The project statement should briefly describe the project's outcome(s) and strategies (i.e., what the project will do, and how it will be accomplished). Do not exceed the 100-word limit. The Proposal Cover Page should be printed and signed by the Head of Agency and should not contain any graphics.

PROJECT ABSTRACT (1 PAGE)

In the Project Abstract, introduce the project to the reader. The abstract should be factual, brief, and focused on the organization's efforts. Do not assume the reader is familiar with the proposed project. The project abstract should cover the core aspects of the proposed project, such as the populations served, a brief description of the goals, the strategies to meet them, and the roles of the partners.

PROJECT NARRATIVE

The project narrative consists of the following sections. These sections will be scored by reviewers.

- Extent of Need (35 Points)

- Goals, Measurable Outcomes and Milestones (20 Points)

- Plan of Operation, Key Personnel, and Project Timeline (20 Points)

- Evaluation and Evidence of Impact (15 Points)

EXTENT OF NEED

Describe the scope of needs in the existing program and how the use of these funds will address these needs. Applicants should make use of relevant data that adds context to stated needs, describe the populations which need greater services, and address what outcomes may be expected. The Extent of Need should also discuss how funds will be used to support the program, children, families, and staff as appropriate.

KRA DATA AND ANALYSIS

The KRA is an important tool to measure the student readiness for Kindergarten. Applicants will be required to provide the past 3 years of KRA data and discuss the breakdown of how students performed within the four domains of the KRA, as well as the breakdown of students demonstrating readiness for kindergarten based on race/ethnicity, gender, low-income status, children with disabilities, and English Learners.

GOALS, MEASURABLE OUTCOMES AND MILESTONES

Applicants are required to set an overall goal for how many students will demonstrate readiness for kindergarten as measured by the KRA. When developing an outcome, applicants must choose one or more student groups and domains within the KRA to focus on, as determined by the KRA data analysis.

Milestones must be set that measure progress towards meeting the objective and the goal. Determining the program goals and outcomes is an important part of the next step of evaluating your program.

PLAN OF OPERATION, KEY PERSONNEL, AND TIMELINE

Applicants must address the following three components in their implementation plan:

- Component A: Professional Learning

- Component B: Maryland EXCELS and Accreditation

- Component C: Development of a Prekindergarten Mixed Delivery System

Component A: Professional Learning

KRA Professional Learning

It is a requirement that applicants must have a plan for Professional Learning around the KRA. The KRA is a developmentally appropriate assessment tool administered to incoming public-school kindergarteners. Administered by kindergarten teachers at the start of the school year, the KRA looks at the knowledge, skills, and behaviors necessary to be successful in kindergarten, broken down into four domains: social foundations; language and literacy; mathematics; and physical well-being and motor development. There are three different levels of school readiness indicated by the KRA:

- Demonstrating Readiness: A child demonstrates the foundational skills and behaviors that prepare them for curriculum based on the kindergarten standards;

- Approaching Readiness: A child exhibits some of the foundational skills and behaviors that prepare them for curriculum based on the kindergarten standards; and

- Emerging Readiness: A child displays minimal foundational skills and behaviors that prepare them for curriculum based on the kindergarten standards.

Professional Learning opportunities funded under this program must focus on:

- The administration of the KRA and data analysis, including:

  o How to administer and implement the KRA with fidelity. This includes training and support for Instructional assistants who support administration as a Test Proctor; and

  o The analysis of KRA data and the design of instruction in order to address identified performance gaps, including areas identified where loss of learning impacted kindergarten readiness using Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) trend data; and

- The domains of the KRA, including:

  o Strategies that are evidence-based; and

        o   Articulation of data and curriculum expectations among the school team of early childhood educators.

Early Learning Assessment Professional Learning

Applicants have the option to use professional learning funds to address the Early Learning Assessment (ELA). The ELA is a formative tool designed to assess the progress of children between the ages of 36-72 months of age. The ELA is organized into seven domains: social foundations; language and literacy; mathematics; physical well-being and motor development; science; social studies; and fine arts. Applicants may wish to use funds for initial training of Prekindergarten teachers and instructional assistants and/or for continuous professional learning opportunities.

The initial training must cover:

- How to administer the ELA, including training and support for instructional assistants in formative assessment data collection practices in collaboration and support of the certified teacher of record;

- How to align prekindergarten and kindergarten readiness outcomes; and

- How to analyze data and design instruction based on learning trajectories.

Continuous professional learning opportunities may include:

- Training that addresses entering ratings, analyzing student data and reports, and planning instruction in response to student data; or

- Participation in the Virtual ELA Implementation Academy, which provides professional learning and coaching for high-quality local early learning teams to develop and execute an implementation plan that increases the fidelity of ELA implementation at your site and improves outcomes for children and families.

Child Development Associates (CDA)

With the passing of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, instructional assistants in Prekindergarten classrooms must have at least a Child Development Associate (CDA) certificate or an associate degree by 2027-2028 (see education statute §7-1A-04). Applicants may wish to utilize grant funds for instructional assistants to register and complete the coursework for the CDA. Applicants must include $500 for each instructional assistant in the budget to pay for the cost of the course. If grant funds are not utilized for this activity, it is required that the LEAs address in the application how they plan to address this requirement using other funding that may apply.

Component B: Maryland EXCELS and Accreditation

Maryland Accreditation is a process in which early education programs commit to continuous quality improvement. Maryland accreditation is a part of the broader Maryland EXCELS system, in which programs earn quality ratings in targeted areas and commit to continuous quality improvement for the children they serve. Maryland EXCELS participants receive a rating from 1 to 5. A rating of 1 is awarded to providers and programs that successfully meet initial requirements, while a rating of 5 is awarded to those that have achieved the highest quality rated programs that demonstrate competence in areas such as staffing and professional development, accreditation, developmentally appropriate practice, compliance with licensing regulations, and administrative policies. Schools with Prekindergarten classrooms in the

Maryland State Prekindergarten Program are required to achieve a quality rating level of 5 within 5 years (see education statute §7-1A-04.

Applicants may use grant funds for classrooms or schools to pursue a level 5 rating within the Maryland EXCELS program and Accreditation. If grant funds are not utilized for this activity, it is required that the LEAs address in the application how they plan to address this requirement using other funding that may apply.

Component C: Development of a Prekindergarten Mixed Delivery System

With the passing of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, LEAs are required to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with each eligible private provider participating in publicly funded prekindergarten. See education statute §7–1A–05 for requirements of the MOU. Applicants may request up to $100,000 to meet the requirements within the MOU between the LEA and the eligible private providers in their jurisdiction. LEAs must identify the goal, outcomes(s) and milestones, identify the eligible private providers that are listed in the MOU, describe the activities, timeline and how the implementation of the mixed delivery system will be evaluated. Additionally, a budget narrative is required that details all related expenses in an itemized budget and a description of the sustainability of the plan.

Applicants wishing to fund the development of the plans with the participating eligible private providers in their jurisdiction to meet the requirements of the MOU must describe the collaborative activities that will be held with the private providers, the timeline for accomplishing these activities, and how these activities will be sustained in subsequent years. If grant funds are not utilized for this activity, it is required that the LEAs address in the application how they plan to address this requirement using other funding that may apply.

KEY PERSONNEL

Applicants must provide the roles and responsibilities of key personnel and staff involved in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of grant activities. Additionally, applicants will be asked to describe how grant activities will continue in the case of staff turnover.

TIMELINE

Applicants must provide a timeline for all proposed activities using the chart provided in the application. See a sample timeline below:

Timeline	Proposed Activity/Strategy
July 30, 2023	Prekindergarten classrooms are chosen to participate in the EXCELS program
August 29, 2023	New Kindergarten teachers will participate in the KRA training.
August 29, 2023	Returning Kindergarten teachers will participate in the KRA Online Refresher Training

EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

The Evidence of Impact should involve an in-depth discussion of the applicant's history of implementing evidence- and/or research-based practices and achieving designated outcomes and goals based upon them. Pertinent data should be discussed to establish a firm connection between these practices and goals. If prior work did not achieve intended outcomes, applicants should discuss what they have learned from these experiences, how that informs current practices, and what impact that has had in developing the goals and outcomes established in this application. Additionally, applicants are expected to identify how the goals and outcomes established are evidence- or research-based and will lead to the desired impact.

EVALUATION AND DISSEMINATION

Evaluation

Grantees are required to submit annual evaluation reports and quarterly progress reports that are consistent with the project's goal and outcome(s). Applicants must evaluate the following required measures and set a goal of how success will be measured:

Evaluation Measure	Goal
Component A. Percentage of students demonstrating readiness on the KRA in the identified student groups and domains	
Component A. Number of Instructional assistants supported to earn a CDA (optional)	
Component B. EXCELs rating and accreditation status of each school participating in the Maryland State Prekindergarten Program	
Component C. Number of participating private providers in the mixed delivery system and percentage of participation of each provider in the collaborative activities.	

Dissemination

Details on how the evaluation results will be disseminated to major stakeholders and individuals interested in the project. Information, requirements, and dissemination methods differ from stakeholder to stakeholder. Will information be posted on the Internet? Will presentations be made at important national conferences to present lessons from the project? How and when will demonstrations of the project be provided? Descriptions of the types of reports and other by-products developed during the course of the project may be made available.

Budget and Budget Narrative

The project's budget (10 points) should be submitted on [MSDE's C-1-25 budget form](). The budget narrative 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.

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.

Clearly show the requested funds and in-kind contributions for each line item if applicable. Indicate the source of the in-kind contribution. Both requested and in-kind funds must be reasonable with current market prices. Show how the expenses were calculated for each line item. Reviewers will use this information to determine if the budget is reasonable and cost-effective. See a sample budget below:

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

Line item	Calculation	Requested	Total
Teacher stipend for PreK and K articulation on KRA results (after school hours)	$25/hr. x 2 hrs. x 80 teachers	$4,000	$4,000
Total for salaries & wages:		$4,000	$4,000

2. Other Charges

Line item	Calculation	Requested	Total
40 IAs to earn CDA by taking CDA courses, cost $500	40 IAs x $500	$20,000	$20,000
Total for other charges:		$20,000	$20,000

LEA Funding Allocation

LEA	% Prekindergarten & Kindergarten Enrollment in Maryland	Formula Allocation	Base Award	Total Funding Allocation
Allegany County	1.1%	$11,460	$125,000	$136,440
Anne Arundel County	9.3%	$93,473	$125,000	$218,473
Baltimore City	10.3%	$103,278	$125,000	$228,278
Baltimore County	12.8%	$127,574	$125,000	$252,574
Calvert County	1.6%	$16,291	$125,000	$141,291
Caroline County	0.8%	$7,558	$125,000	$132,558
Carroll County	2.5%	$25,269	$125,000	$150,269
Cecil County	1.9%	$19,410	$125,000	$144,410
Charles County	3.0%	$30,334	$125,000	$155,334
Dorchester County	0.6%	$6,250	$125,000	$131,250
Frederick County	5.3%	$52,808	$125,000	$177,808
Garrett County	0.5%	$4,853	$125,000	$129,853
Harford County	4.3%	$42,924	$125,000	$167,924
Howard County	5.8%	$58,118	$125,000	$183,118
Kent County	0.2%	$2,370	$125,000	$127,370

LEA	% Prekindergarten & Kindergarten Enrollment in Maryland	Formula Allocation	Base Award	Total Funding Allocation
Montgomery County	16.7%	$166,696	$125,000	$291,696
Prince George's County	15.8%	$157,741	$125,000	$282,741
Queen Anne's County	0.9%	$8,855	$125,000	$133,855
St. Mary's County	2.0%	$19,857	$125,000	$144,857
Somerset County	0.4%	$4,450	$125,000	$129,450
Talbot County	0.7%	$7,010	$125,000	$132,010
Washington County	2.8%	$28,411	$125,000	$153,411
Wicomico County	2.1%	$20,998	$125,000	$145,998
Worcester County	0.9%	$9,325	$125,000	$134,325
TOTALS:	103%	$1,025,314	$3,000,000	$4,025,314

Source: The percentage of total Prekindergarten and Kindergarten enrollment is based off of the total enrollment from the September 30, 2022 **Maryland Public School Enrollment Report**

Appendices

The following Appendices must be included in the proposal for funding, but do not apply to the page limit of the Project Narrative:

Appendix A: A signed recipient assurances page

Appendix B: A signed C-1-25 MSDE budget form

The Review Process

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

- Written applications will be pre-screened for submission requirements and inclusion of all required sections. Applicants not meeting all pre-screen requirements will not be reviewed.

- Applications will be evaluated by MSDE Staff using the scoring rubric. The scoring rubric is tailored to the grant program, its intent, and intended impact on the target population.

- All revised proposals and budgets must be resolved by conclusion of the first quarter or risk forfeiture of award.

REVIEW COMMITTEE

Grant applications will be reviewed in the Early Learning Branch of the Early Childhood Department using the R4K scoring rubric.

Ready for Kindergarten Grant Fund Scoring Rubric

Areas	Level 3 Exceeds Criteria	Level 2 Meets Criteria	Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria
Extent of Need	The Extent of Need clearly establishes existing needs exist. The unique needs of specific populations are discussed in depth, aligned with evidence- or research-based strategies, and outcomes discussed. The section includes both quantitative and qualitative data. Data sources are described, and collections methods are logical and rational.	The Extent of Need for the project adequately defines current needs within the program. The unique needs of specific populations are addressed, and all outcomes are discussed in detail. There is a clear alignment to evidence or research-based strategies. The section references relevant data.	The Extent of Need for the project section does not adequately define existing needs, address the unique needs of specific populations, or possible beneficial outcomes. Data is not appropriately used, or no data is provided.
Goals, Outcomes, and Milestones	The application articulates multiple exemplary measurable goals, outcomes, and milestones. All goals are directly aligned to the Blueprint. Additional information is provided where applicable.	Program goals are clear, measurable, support the problem identified in the extent of needs and align with the Blueprint. Program outcomes identify the steps to achieving the goal, and milestones measure progress towards meeting the goal(s).	Program goals, outcomes, and milestones are not clear, measurable, or attainable. Goals, outcomes, and milestones do not align with the Blueprint.
Plan of Operation, Key Personnel, and Timeline	The Plan of Operations clearly addresses the issues identified in the Extent of Need with detailed strategies for ensuring equitable access to programs. Activities detailed flow naturally	The Plan of Operations addresses the issues identified in the Extent of Need. Stated goals, outcomes, and activities align with Components A,	The Plan of Operations does not sufficiently address the Extent of Need. At least some of the stated goals, outcomes, and activities detailed within the application are

Areas	Level 3 Exceeds Criteria	Level 2 Meets Criteria	Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria
	from stated goals, outcomes, are a fluid extension of existing programs, and all activities align with Components A, B, and C detailed within the application. The application includes existing highly qualified key personnel, detailing individual responsibilities to account for the full scope of proposed grant activities. The proposed timeline falls within the grant period. It is achievable and ambitious.	B, and C detailed within the application. All key personnel information is provided and responsibilities generally algin with proposed grant activities. The proposed timeline is achievable and falls within the grant period.	unaccounted for in the narrative. Key personnel information is missing, and responsibilities do not align well with proposed grant activities. The proposed timeline is not achievable and/or does not fall within the grant period.
Evidence of Impact	The applicant includes effective practices leading to desired outcomes and demonstrates a history of utilizing evidence- and/or research-based practices effectively and adapting as necessary for programs to progress. Supporting data is utilized as a tool for continuous assessment of impact.	The applicant includes practices leading to desired outcomes and/or demonstrates knowledge of utilizing evidence- and/or research-based practices Supporting data is included as applicable.	The applicant does not adequately demonstrate that they have a history of engaging in programming that leads to attainment of desired outcomes nor in utilizing evidence- or research-based practices. No data is included.
Evaluation and Dissemination	The application clearly and significantly identifies measurable program improvements, the data that will be reviewed, and includes a plan to collect, evaluate, and regularly report on outcomes.	The application adequately identifies measurable program improvements and how data will be reviewed. There is a plan to communicate findings and other significant	The application does not identify measurable program improvements. There is a limited plan to report on outcomes. There is not an adequate plan to communicate

Areas	Level 3 Exceeds Criteria	Level 2 Meets Criteria	Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria
	There is a specific and detailed plan that explains how findings and significant information will be communicated successfully to pertinent stakeholders and the public.	information to stakeholders and the public.	findings or other significant information.
Budget and Budget Narrative	All requirements under Meets Criteria have been met and an additional worksheet is included.	The application includes a detailed budget narrative that groups budget categories and shows how the cost of each item was calculated. The budget form C-1-25 aligns with the program narrative and budget narrative. There are no mathematical errors. There is a justification for costs, and they are reasonable, allowable, and allocable.	The application lacks an adequate budget narrative or lacks detail and is not itemized. Budget form C-1-25 doesn't agree with budget narrative. Budget contains mathematical errors.

Reporting Requirements

Grantees must comply with the following reporting requirements:

Date	Reporting Requirements for Each Year
Ongoing	Standard invoicing using the Accounting and Financial Reporting system (AFR), including supporting documentation to support expenditures
November 15, 2023	Amendment requests (if applicable)
Spring 2024	Annual Review Meeting and Site Visits
March 15, 2024	Interim progress reports: MSDE form C-1-25-C An R4K interim and final progress reporting tool will be provided to grantees at a later date.
February 28, 2025	Final progress and financial reports: MSDE form C-1-25-C An R4K interim and final progress reporting tool will be provided to grantees at a later date.

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-1-25-B form found in the Grant Budget Forms Workbook on the MSDE grants webpage.

- Final invoices must be submitted no later than 60 days after the grant period ends.

- When submitting an amendment request, include the grant number in the subject line and name the document Name of LEA_R4K24 Grant #Amendment Request.

- When submitting the interim progress report, include the grant number in the subject line and name the document Name of LEA_R4K24 Grant #Interim.

- When submitting the final progress reports, include the grant number in the subject line and name the document Name of LEA_R4K24 Grant #Final.

The General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)

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 to overcome barriers to equitable participation.

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

Customer Service Support Sessions

MSDE will hold three customer service support sessions for interested applicants. During these sessions, MSDE personnel will provide an overview of the Grant Information Guide, and proposal requirements, and provide an opportunity for LEAs to ask questions. Early Learning Supervisors and Coordinators will be invited to attend. To register for a session, send an email to nykia.washington@maryland.gov. See dates and times below:

Tuesday, August 8, 2023
10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Tuesday, August 15, 2023
10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Tuesday, August 22, 2023
10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

A list of Frequently Asked Questions and answers will be posted to the R4K website following the customer service support sessions.

MSDE staff will also be available to provide technical assistance throughout the grant application process. Contact Nykia Washington at nykia.washington@maryland.gov with questions related to the Ready for Kindergarten (R4K) Grant Program.

This funding opportunity, including all attachments and updates, can be downloaded from the MSDE Office of Grants Administration and Compliance website.

Attachment

Ready for Kindergarten (R4K) Grant Program Application for Funding

Grant Timeline

This funding opportunity, including all attachments and updates, are found on the R4K website.

Date	Program Milestone
July 31, 2023	The Grant Information Guide and the application are released
August 8, 2023	MSDE will hold a virtual customer service support session for interested applicants
August 22, 2023	MSDE will hold a virtual customer service support session for interested applicants
August 31, 2023	The grant application period closes
September 15, 2023	MSDE begins reviewing applications for completeness and minimum requirements
September 29, 2023	MSDE will notify applicants of decision
July 1, 2023	The grant period begins
December 30, 2024	The grant period ends