



Read and Lead Maryland: The Maryland Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) Grant

FY 2024-2025 Grant Information Guide (GIG)

Maryland State Department of Education,
Office of Teaching and Learning
Literacy Branch

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MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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Introduction to Read and Lead Maryland

Read and Lead Maryland: The Maryland Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant (CLSD) serves as a cornerstone initiative aimed at transforming literacy outcomes across the state. Designed and implemented by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), this grant focuses on addressing persistent literacy achievement gaps, fostering equitable access to high-quality literacy instruction, and equipping educators with the tools and knowledge necessary to deliver evidence-based teaching practices. This initiative seeks to elevate both educator capacity and student achievement, paving the way for academic success and lifelong learning.

MSDE's CLSD plan aims to ensure equitable literacy instruction across underserved student populations by improving access to high-quality literacy programming.








Objective 1: Expand literacy coaching models in elementary (K-5) and secondary (6-12) schools, ensuring support for struggling readers.

- **Objective 2:** Implement Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) to identify and support struggling students early.
- **Objective 3:** Promote the adoption of high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) that align with literacy best practices.
- **Objective 4:** Strengthen programs for multilingual learners (MLs) by integrating structured literacy approaches into classroom instruction.
- **Objective 5:** Support partnerships between LEAs and Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) to enhance literacy teacher preparation.
- **Objective 6:** Increase equity in advanced academic programs by identifying and supporting underserved students for gifted and talented education.

This grant operates through a competitive application process, encouraging Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to develop data-driven proposals aligned with state literacy priorities. LEAs will be evaluated on their ability to address the needs of underserved populations, including MLs, economically disadvantaged students, and students with disabilities. Successful applicants will propose strategies tailored to the needs of their students.

The Read and Lead grant is not just a funding opportunity but a catalyst for sustainable change. It provides LEAs with the flexibility to implement strategies that empower educators, strengthen instructional practices, and ensure equitable access to high-quality literacy education.

Subgrantees will select options from a menu of MSDE-approved evidence-based strategies but are encouraged to develop innovative programming within each to best address their unique literacy needs and goals. The strategy menu consists of:

	Literacy Coaching		High Quality Instructional Materials
	Multi-tiered Systems of Support		Partnerships with Institutions of Higher
	Supporting Multilingual Learners		Gifted and Talented Programming
	Professional Learning Models		

The Read and Lead grant funds are distributed through a reimbursement model, promoting accountability and adherence to the goals outlined in approved applications. The grant ensures equitable distribution by earmarking a minimum of 15% of funds for programs supporting children from birth through kindergarten entry, 40% for kindergarten through grade 5, and another 40% for grades 6 through 12. This tiered allocation strategy ensures that every developmental stage receives the attention and resources needed to cultivate strong literacy foundations and continued growth.

Ultimately, the Read and Lead grant is about more than just improving literacy rates—it is about closing opportunity gaps and building a brighter future for Maryland’s students. By focusing on equity, sustainability, and evidence-based strategies, this initiative positions Maryland as a leader in literacy education, ensuring that all students, regardless of background, are prepared to read, lead, and succeed in their academic and personal lives.

BREAKDOWN OF FUNDING (AS REQUIRED BY CLSD)

Grade Band	% of Funds	Total Amount (Year 1)	Total Amount (Over 5 Year Grant)
Birth-Age 5	15%	\$570,000	\$6,039,076.70
Grades K-5	40%	\$1,520,000	\$16,104,204.50
Grades 6-12	40%	\$1,520,000	\$16,104,204.50

Eligible Applicants

According to Section 2221(b) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), MSDE must ensure that funds are awarded to eligible entities. Section 2221(b) defines eligible entity for the CLSD program as an entity that consists of

- (A) one or more local education agencies that serve a high percentage of high-need schools and
 - (i) have the highest number or proportion of children who are counted under sections 1124(c) of the ESEA, in comparison to other local education agencies in the State;
 - (ii) are among the local educational agencies in the State with the highest number or percentages of children reading or writing below grade level, based on the most currently available State academic assessment data under section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA; or
 - (iii) serve a significant number or percentage of schools that are implementing comprehensive support and improvement activities and targeted support and improvement activities under section 1111(d) of the ESEA;
- (B) one or more early childhood education programs serving low-income or otherwise disadvantaged children, which may include home-based literacy programs for preschool-aged children, that have a demonstrated record of providing comprehensive literacy instruction for the age group such program proposes to serve; or
- (C) a local educational agency, described in subparagraph (A), or consortium of such local educational agencies, or an early childhood education program, which may include home-based literacy programs for preschool-aged children, acting in partnership with 1 or more public or private nonprofit organizations or agencies (which may include early childhood education programs) that have a demonstrated record of effectiveness in—
 - (i) improving literacy achievement of children, consistent with the purposes of participation under this subpart, from birth through grade 12; and
 - (ii) providing professional development in comprehensive literacy instruction.

Specifically, for “Read and Lead Maryland” the following types of applicants are eligible to apply for CLSD grants:

- Individual school districts (Larger districts of more than 35,000 students must identify a feeder system(s) of schools to focus on.
- A consortium of more than one district if each individual school district is small and serve fewer than 10,000 students.

LEAs are not required to submit projects for all three grade-level groups—Birth–PreK, K–5, and Grades 6–12.

- LEAs may choose to focus their application on one or more specific grade-level groups based on their identified literacy needs and capacity to implement impactful initiatives.

The grant review process will evaluate and select the best project proposals within each grade-level group. This strategy will ensure that high-quality, innovative initiatives addressing literacy challenges across all grade levels are supported and that:

- 15% of funds go to projects focused on children birth-PreK,
- 40% of funds go to projects focused on students in grades K-5, and
- 40% of funds go to projects focused on students in grades 6-12.

Application Preference Priorities

In awarding subgrants for birth through kindergarten entry, MSDE is required to give priority to an eligible entity that serves children from birth through age 5 who are from families with income levels at or below 200 percent of the Federal poverty line or is a local educational agency serving a high number or percentage of high-need schools, and give priority to an eligible entity that will use the grant funds to implement evidence-based activities.

In awarding subgrants for kindergarten through grade 12, MSDE is required to give priority to an eligible entity serving students in grades K-5 or grades 6-12 that will use the grant funds to implement evidence-based activities.

Additionally, the State of Maryland will be giving preference priority to the following applicants:

- **Preference Priority #1: (3 bonus points)** Applicants that are a district or feeder system where 50% or more of their schools meet one or more of the following criteria:
 - Serve 8% or more students with disabilities,
 - Have experienced a 1% or greater increase in the enrollment of multilingual learners between 2020 and 2024,
 - Serve 45% or more students classified as 'economically disadvantaged,' or
 - Serve 45% or more students of color.
- **Preference Priority #2: (7 bonus points)** Applicants that include a strong sustainability plan for after the grant period ends.
- **Preference Priority #3: (6 bonus points)** Show evidence of strong collaboration across different LEA offices such as ELA, Early Childhood Education, Special Education, Multilingual Learners (ML), MTSS, etc.

Read and Lead Maryland Timeline and Due Dates

Activity	Date
Technical Assistance Sessions	Week of February 25, 2025
Release of Request for Application (RFA) All applications will be uploaded to a Grant Application Submission Form via Smartsheets.	March 3, 2025
Intent to Apply Due	March 10, 2025
Applications Due	April 28, 2025 at 5pm
Application Review Period	April 28 – May 30, 2025
Awards Announced	May 30, 2025
End of Planning Year (Year 1)	September 30, 2025

CLSD Statutory Requirements

Requirement for Serving Communities with High Needs

CLSD funds must be used to support *high-needs schools* as defined by Section 2221(b)(3)(A) of ESEA:

The term “high-need school” means (i) an elementary school or middle school in which not less than 50 percent of the enrolled students are children from low-income families; or (ii) a high school in which not less than 40 percent of the enrolled students are children from low-income families, which may be calculated using comparable data from the schools that feed into the high school.

A *low-income family* is defined according to Section 2221(b)(3)(B) as follows:

The term “low-income family” means a family (i) in which the children are eligible for a free or reduced-price lunch under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1751 et seq.); (ii) receiving assistance under the program of block grants to States for temporary assistance for needy families established under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.); or (iii) in which the children are eligible to receive medical assistance under the Medicaid program under title XIX of the Social Security Act.

Supplement, Not Supplant

CLSD grantees must adhere to the “supplement, not supplant” provision under Section 2301 of the ESEA, which states that “funds made available under this title shall be used to supplement, and not supplant, non-federal funds that would otherwise be used for the activities authorized under this title.”

Please note: The CLSD federal grant cannot be used to purchase resources or implement practices that are mandated through Maryland legislation. As legislation changes, allowable grant purchases may change. CLSD funds should supplement and not supplant previous purchases. The supplement, not supplant, provision requires grantees to use state or local funds for all services required by state law or local policy and prohibits those funds from being diverted for other purposes when federal funds are available. Federal funds must supplement—add to, enhance, expand, increase, extend—the programs and services offered with state and local funds. Federal funds cannot be used to supplant—take the place of, replace—the state and local funds used to offer those programs and services.

Evidenced-based Activities

All CLSD funded activities and materials must adhere to the *evidenced based* requirement as outlined in Section 8101(21)(A):

The term 'evidence-based', when used with respect to a State, local educational agency, or school activity, means an activity, strategy, or intervention that— (i) demonstrates a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes or other relevant outcomes based on— (I) strong evidence from at least 1 well designed and well-implemented experimental study; (II) moderate evidence from at least 1 well designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental study; or (III) promising evidence from at least 1 well designed and well-implemented correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias.

The “Read and Lead Maryland Grant” will only fund projects that contain activities that have strong or moderate evidence.

Assurances

To be considered for a competitive subgrant award, LEAS must agree to the following assurances, ensuring compliance with federal and state regulations and alignment.

Objectives

1. LEAs must implement of evidence-based literacy practices
2. LEAs must prioritize CLSD funds for underserved students, including multilingual learners, students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, and students of color.

Fiscal Responsibility and Compliance

1. LEAs must use CLSD funds to supplement, not supplant, existing funding sources.
2. LEAs must maintain accurate financial records and comply with federal, state, and local auditing requirements.
3. LEAs must submit all required financial and programmatic reports to MSDE on time.
4. LEAs agree to ongoing monitoring and compliance reviews conducted by MSDE.
5. LEAs will participate in technical assistance sessions, site visits, and grant oversight meetings.
6. LEAs understand that failure to meet grant expectations may result in loss of funding.

Data Collection, Program Evaluation, and Reporting

1. LEAs must agree to evaluate implementation of Read and Lead Maryland funds by utilizing tools to be created in collaboration with MSDE that will assess program impact and fidelity. These tools will be designed specifically to the needs of the subgrantee's project plan.
2. LEAs must collect and report student literacy outcomes, educator professional learning participation and evaluation data, and instructional quality data.
3. LEAs must submit semi-annual progress reports detailing:
 - Program implementation updates.
 - Literacy intervention effectiveness.
 - Challenges and corrective actions taken.

Alignment with District Comprehensive Literacy Plan (CLP)

1. LEAs must align their project proposal to the overall goals and/or outcomes of their district's Comprehensive Literacy Plan (CLP). If their current CLP does not align with the proposed CLSD-funded initiative, the LEA must revise the CLP to ensure it reflects the findings, strategies, and goals of the project plan.
2. LEAs must ensure that all activities funded by CLSD support the district's literacy vision and promote systemic literacy improvements across schools.

Semi-Annual Leadership Meetings

1. LEAs must agree to a semi-annual meeting between:
 - The LEA(s) Superintendent and/or Chief Academic Officer (CAO)
 - The ELA Supervisor(s)
 - The LEA's Grant Lead(s)
 - A representative of MSDE

The purpose of these meetings is to:

- Conduct a literacy program self-assessment.
- Review grant program implementation challenges and successes.
- Ensure alignment of CLSD initiatives with district literacy goals.

Activities Ineligible for Read and Lead Funding

This section provides examples of expenses ineligible for CLSD funding to ensure compliance with federal and state guidelines. Awarded applicants will follow a reimbursement process and receive technical assistance on allowable fund usage.

READ AND LEAD FUNDS MAY NOT BE USED FOR:

- Supplanting existing funding (e.g., replacing local, state, or federal funds already allocated for literacy coaching, professional learning, or ML support)
- Non-essential expenses (e.g., unnecessary technology, travel, accommodations, meals, gifts, rewards, incentives)
- Universal screeners for students in grades K-3 (as mandated by the Ready to Read Act)
- PK-3 science of reading training (as mandated by the Ready to Read Act)
- Language translation services not directly tied to literacy goals
- Salaries for staff not involved in CLSD-related literacy instruction or intervention
- General multilingual programs that do not specifically improve literacy outcomes

MSDE Provided Technical Assistance

LIVE VIRTUAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (TA) SESSIONS

MSDE will provide live virtual technical assistance sessions focused on different components of the application process. Registration links will be provided for each session, and recordings will be posted for asynchronous access. Attendance at the TA sessions are not required, but are strongly encouraged.

Date	Topic	Link to Register
February 26, 2025 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.	Overview of Grant and Release of Grant Information Guide	Registration Link
February 27, 2025 2:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.	Developing a Strong Literacy Project Proposal for Birth – Age 5 and Grades K-5	Registration Link
February 28, 2025 1:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m.	Developing a Strong Literacy Project Proposal for Grades 6-12	Registration Link
REQUEST FOR APPLICATION (RFA) RELEASED MARCH 3, 2025		
March 4, 2025 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.	Application TA Webinar	Registration Link Intent to Apply Link
INTENT TO APPLY BY MARCH 10, 2025		
Miscellaneous Dates from March 4 – April 18, 2025	Office Hour Appointments (see below for more information)	Sign Up for Office Hours Appointment
APPLICATIONS DUE TUESDAY, APRIL 28, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.		

ASYNCHRONOUS RESOURCES & TOOLKIT

To supplement live TA sessions, MSDE will provide:

- **Recorded TA Webinars** – All live TA sessions will be recorded and publicly shared for on-demand access.
- **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Document** – Continuously updated based on live session discussions.
- **The Read and Lead Maryland Toolkit** – A one-stop shop that provides research and published artifacts that can be used in the planning and writing stages of project planning.

OFFICE HOURS

MSDE will offer flexible, scheduled office hours where LEAs can choose from available times to meet with MSDE staff for customized support in developing their CLSD grant applications. During these sessions, LEAs can expect:

- **One-on-One Support:** LEAs can schedule **individual meetings** with MSDE literacy and grant staff.
- **Customized Guidance:** LEAs can receive **tailored advice** on their specific project ideas, literacy strategies, and grant requirements.
- **Q&A and Troubleshooting:** LEAs can ask **questions** about the application process, eligibility, funding allocations, and sustainability planning.
- **Project Development Sounding Board:** MSDE staff will serve as a **thought partner** to help refine ideas, strengthen project design, and ensure proposals align with CLSD priorities.

Appointments will be available from March 4 – April 16, 2025. LEAs can select from open time slots using a scheduling link that will be provided by MSDE in the GIG and shared in the live TA sessions.

Strategy Menu Reference Guide

This section contains guidance for each strategy. Each of the seven (7) strategy reference guides below will have the following sections:

MSDE'S CLSD OBJECTIVES

These sections outline the key instructional and programmatic priorities, based on MSDE's initial CLSD grant application to the U.S. Department of Education. All proposed projects must align with these at least one of these objectives in their chosen strategies to ensure consistency with the grant's overarching goals and evidence-based practices.

POTENTIAL USE OF FUNDS

The list of examples of potential uses of funds provided in this document is not exhaustive. Applicants are encouraged to think creatively in their project planning and explore evidence-based practices that best align with their goals.

ADDITIONAL REQUIRED ASSURANCES

Additional specific assurances may be required based on the menu choices the district selects as part of their proposed project plan. Projects that have additional assurances are:

- Literacy Coaching
- Multi-Tiered Systems of Support
- Supporting Multilingual Learners
- Professional Learning Models
- High-Quality Instructional Materials

Maryland Comprehensive Literacy
State Development Grant

Literacy Coaching

Launch initiatives to develop or expand a literacy coaching model that supports elementary (K-5) or secondary (6-12) schools.



MSDE'S CLSD OBJECTIVES

- Establishing systems to support job-embedded professional development for educators
 - Providing mentorship and coaching for classroom instruction
 - Supporting evidence-based literacy practices
-

POTENTIAL USES OF FUNDS

- Hiring and training dedicated literacy coaches
 - Funding stipends or salaries for part-time or full-time literacy coaches
 - Providing resources and materials to support the coaches' work, such as literacy toolkits, technology, and data collection systems
 - Developing resources (i.e., manuals, guides, and online modules) to ensure that coaching practices are sustainable after grant funding ends
-

REQUIRED ADDITIONAL ASSURANCES FOR THIS STRATEGY

- LEAs must commit to sending their district/school-based literacy coaches to all MSDE coaching symposiums.
- LEAs must collect targeted baseline data to assess the impact and effectiveness of literacy coaching.
- Literacy coaching models must:
 - require job embedded professional learning for classroom teachers;
 - emphasize support for struggling students;
 - support literacy practices across content areas;
 - aid in effective MTSS implementation; and
 - include job-embedded professional learning for literacy coaches.

Maryland Comprehensive Literacy
State Development Grant



Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

Launch initiatives to refine or develop MTSS models



MSDE'S CLSD OBJECTIVES

- Establishing early identification and intervention for struggling readers
- Implementing tiered support systems for literacy
- Training educators on evidence-based interventions

POTENTIAL USES OF FUNDS

- Contracting with external vendors or consultants to assist in the design, training, and implementation of MTSS
- Establishing data systems or digital platforms to track student progress
- Training on Tier 2 or 3 interventions
- Training on differentiated learning (GT, twice exceptional, meeting the needs of SWD, etc.)
- Hiring interventionists or paraprofessionals who will provide student intervention
- Hiring MTSS Coordinators

REQUIRED ADDITIONAL ASSURANCES FOR THIS STRATEGY:

- The MTSS model must (but is not limited to):
 - identify and support struggling students early;
 - include evidence-based reading interventions;
 - address student attendance; and
 - train educators on its use.

Maryland Comprehensive Literacy
State Development Grant

Supporting Multilingual Learners

To support the needs of multilingual learners by procuring and delivering professional learning to general educators and English Language Development (ELD or ESOL) teachers.



MSDE'S CLSD OBJECTIVES

- Supporting ML educators with professional learning
- Adapting literacy instruction for multilingual learners
- Providing culturally responsive materials and scaffolding strategies

POTENTIAL USES OF FUNDS

- Professional Development
 - Training general educators on evidence-based literacy instruction tailored to the needs of multilingual learners
 - Training for teachers of English Language Development (ELD or ESOL) in the science of reading (SoR), co-teaching, etc.
- Bilingual literacy coaches to provide targeted professional development and coaching for educators on evidence-based literacy instruction tailored to MLs
- ELD/ESOL teachers with expertise in literacy to implement structured literacy interventions, small group reading instruction, and scaffolded language development strategies
- Reading interventionists with ML expertise to deliver research-based literacy support, assist with progress monitoring, and collaborate with general education teachers to strengthen literacy outcomes for MLs
- Organizing family engagement programs for families of MLs (translation services or additional wraparound services related to literacy instruction)

REQUIRED ADDITIONAL ASSURANCES FOR THIS STRATEGY

If applicable, LEAs must collect targeted baseline data to assess the impact and effectiveness of professional learning.



MSDE'S CLSD OBJECTIVES

- Guaranteeing collaborative teacher learning focused on literacy improvement
 - Ensuring professional learning (PL) is aligned with the state's curriculum standards and instructional goals, including training on the use of high-quality instructional materials and resources
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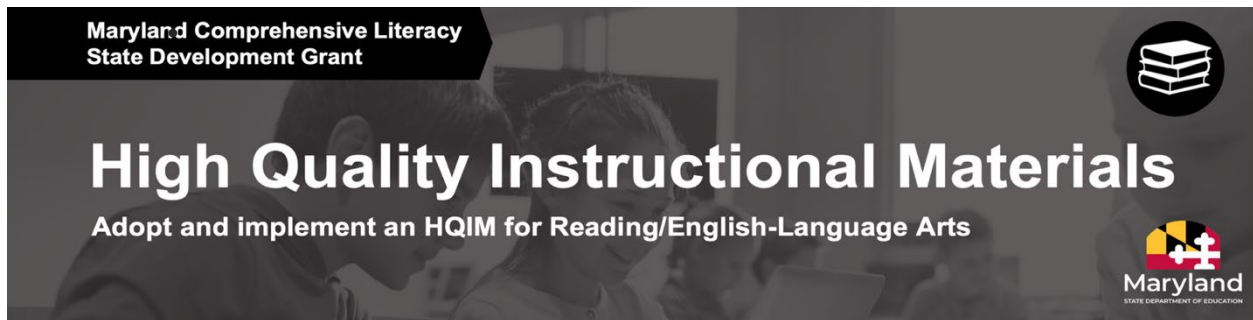
POTENTIAL USES OF FUNDS

- Developing a PL model that addresses the needs of educators at all levels (administrators, coaches, classroom teachers, specialists, para-educators, etc.)
 - Contracting with vendors on specialized professional learning opportunities (i.e., SoR for teachers in grades 4-12, coaching for administrators, etc.)
 - Training teacher leaders to sustain and expand PL models district-wide
 - Funding coverage for classroom teachers to facilitate teacher collaboration through workshops, peer observation, and PLCs
 - Sustaining PL models by developing resources (e.g., guides, toolkits, online modules)
-

REQUIRED ADDITIONAL ASSURANCES FOR THIS STRATEGY

- LEAs must collect targeted baseline data to assess the impact and effectiveness of professional learning opportunities.
- To align with Maryland's vision for high-quality professional learning, all professional learning models must include:
 - a needs assessment and data analysis;
 - collaborative learning communities;
 - leadership development;
 - alignment with curriculum and standards;
 - evaluation and feedback;
 - equity and cultural competence; and
 - sustainability and scalability.

See "Objective 2.4: Implementing a Comprehensive Professional Learning Model" in MSDE's CLSD grant application to the U.S. Department of Education.

**DISCLAIMER:**

Due to the timeframe of this grant, the MSDE review process of instructional materials will not have been completed for core instructional materials (IM). As a result, LEAs may use these funds to acquire grade-level and standards aligned materials with the understanding that the IM may not meet the expectations of quality based on the [MSDE ELA/Literacy Instructional Materials Rubric](#) in the future.

Due to the fact that no core instructional materials have yet been reviewed for quality in Maryland, all purchased materials must be green-rated by [EdReports](#). MSDE suggests using the [MSDE ELA/Literacy Instructional Materials Rubric](#) in conjunction with EdReports when considering the purchase of any core instructional materials.

MSDE also encourages using these funds to acquire instructional materials focused on foundational skills because MSDE will not be reviewing IM focused only on foundational skills in the near future.

MSDE'S CLSD OBJECTIVES

- Ensuring educators receive comprehensive training for instructional materials in use
- Ensuring effective implementation of instructional materials

POTENTIAL USES OF FUNDS

- Acquiring and implementing instructional materials (IM)
- Convening committees or hiring consultants to review and select IM aligned with state standards and recommendations
- Providing comprehensive training on the IM for all educators (teachers, coaches, administrators, and paraeducators)
- Purchasing and implementing digital tools and platforms that support literacy instruction and integrate with IM

REQUIRED ADDITIONAL ASSURANCES FOR THIS STRATEGY:

- LEAs must commit to developing a transparent method of communicating the adopted HQIM used in each grade band.



MSDE'S CLSD OBJECTIVES

- Strengthening teacher preparation programs
- Aligning educator training with literacy best practices
- Developing collaborative initiatives to enhance literacy instruction

POTENTIAL USES OF FUNDS

- Providing training aligned to the science of reading (SoR) for IHE faculty, supervising teachers, and/or pre-service teachers
- Pre-service teacher engagement:
 - Develop before or after-school tutoring programs utilizing pre-service teachers
 - Incorporate pre-service teachers into structured, evidence-based literacy interventions
 - Design and pilot professional learning modules for pre-service and in-service teachers
 - Induction support from Educator Preparation Programs
- Career Pathways:
 - Offer guaranteed interviews or hiring opportunities to specific pre-service teachers
 - Create pathways for pre-service teachers to transition seamlessly into district teaching roles
 - Continued Education opportunities for in-service teachers



MSDE'S CLSD OBJECTIVES

- Expanding access to advanced literacy opportunities for GT students
- Providing training for educators on differentiating instruction for GT learners
- Developing challenging and engaging literacy resources
- Closing the “excellence gap” which highlights the difference in percent of low-income versus high-income students who reach advanced levels of academic performance

POTENTIAL USES OF FUNDS

- Developing or purchasing advanced, evidence-based literacy curricula for GT students
- Training educators to use differentiated literacy instruction tailored to the unique needs of gifted learners
- Providing advanced or accelerated reading materials that align with grade-level standards and the science of reading
- Developing or funding enrichment programs focused on book clubs, advanced writing workshops, and project-based literacy learning activities
- Funding summer reading programs or after-school programs for gifted students to advance their literacy skills
- Identifying and supporting underserved or underrepresented gifted students in literacy programs (PL, advanced assessments, etc.)

Application Review

All applications will be uploaded to a Grant Application Submission Form via Smartsheets. This form will be released with the Request for Application (RFA) on March 3, 2025.

REVIEW PROCESS

An application scoring rubric will be used to evaluate applications for the Read and Lead Maryland Grant. Applications will be reviewed by a grant selection committee that will consist of at least three MSDE staff or select experts in the field of literacy. The committee will use this rubric to guide its deliberations.

SCORING DEFINITIONS

- **Exemplary (9 - 10 points)** – The response is clear, well-developed, and strongly aligned with grant priorities. It provides comprehensive evidence, specific data, and a detailed implementation plan.
- **Proficient (7 - 8 points)** – The response is complete and aligned with grant priorities but lacks some specificity or minor details. Data and implementation plans are adequate.
- **Developing (5 - 6 points)** – The response meets basic requirements but lacks depth, specificity, or alignment with the grant's strategic focus. Implementation and impact are not clearly defined.
- **Needs Improvement (0 - 4 points)** – The response is incomplete, lacks alignment with the grant's objectives, or fails to provide supporting evidence.

APPLICATION REVIEW RUBRIC

Application Component	Total Available Points
1. Requirements and Priorities	None
2. Literacy Needs Assessment	___/40
3. Program Site(s) Selection	___/20
4. Project Goals and Outcomes	___/30
5. Comprehensive Project Plan	___/40
6. Comprehensive Budget and Budget Narrative	___/30
7. BONUS: Preference Priorities	BONUS ___/16
TOTAL AVAILABLE POINTS (Excluding Bonus Points)	___/160