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STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Read and Lead Maryland

Technical Assistance: Getting Started

Office of Teaching and Learning

Wednesday February 26, 2025

PRESENTED BY

Cristina Rodriguez, Manager of Literacy Programs and Initiatives

Presentation Outline

1. Overview of the CLSD Program

2. Building a Needs Assessment

3. Read and Lead MD Application and Award Process

4. Q&A

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Live FAQ

To submit questions throughout the CLSD portion of the presentation, please use the form below:

tinyurl.com/MD-CLSD-FAQ

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Overview of the Read and Lead Maryland Program

Vision

The vision of the Maryland Department of Education Office Literacy is to create and communicate a comprehensive state-level system of support to increase administrator literacy leadership, and teacher efficacy in literacy instruction thereby increasing student literacy outcomes.

Goals

1. Increase educator capacity to deliver research-based literacy instruction.

2. Increase access to effective literacy programming for all students with priority consideration given to LEAs with a high population of underserved students as defined by 86 FR 70612

https://marylandpublicschools.org/about/Pages/OFPOS/GAC/CLSD/index.aspx

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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

February 2025

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What is the Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant?

The Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) program is authorized under Sections 2222-2225 of the ESEA.

The purpose of the CLSD discretionary grants is to create a comprehensive literacy program to advance literacy skills, including pre-literacy skills, reading, and writing, for children from birth through grade 12, with an emphasis on disadvantaged children, including children living in poverty, English learners, and children with disabilities.

Maryland Awarded Funds: $40.1M

Milestone One: $3.8M awarded to approved LEAs by Spring 2025

Project Period: 60 months (5 years)

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CLSD Requirements

Example of the program requirements include (but are not limited to):

Birth through Pre-Kindergarten

Not less than 15 percent of the funds awarded to subgrantees must be used for State and local programs and activities pertaining to children from birth through kindergarten entry

Kindergarten through 5th grade

Not less than 40 percent of the funds awarded to subgrantees must be used for State and local programs and activities, allocated equitably among the grades of kindergarten through grade 5

6th grade through 12th grade

Not less than 40 percent of the funds awarded to subgrantees must be used for State and local programs and activities, allocated equitably among grades 6 through 12.

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Goal #1: From MSDE

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Increase educator capacity to deliver research-based literacy instruction.

1.1 Supporting LEA-Based Literacy Coaches: Leverage state and CLSD funds to develop, deliver, and evaluate high-quality professional learning (PL) experiences tailored for educators across Maryland

1.2 Signaling and Guidance from MSDE: The tasks that MSDE must undertake to signal the importance of this work and provide overarching guidance to the 24 LEAs in Maryland

1.3 Creating a Cadre of Informed Literacy Administrators: Provide PL for district literacy decision makers and provide an opportunity to bring leaders together to ensure that literacy remains a key-focus in educational decision-making

1.4 Supporting Early Childhood Education Centers With the Development of a PL Plan

1.5 Strengthening Educator Preparation Programs (EPP): Incorporating institutions of higher education (IHE) into PL initiatives to strengthen EPP

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Goal #2: From LEAs

Increase access to effective literacy programming for all students with priority consideration given to LEAs with a high population of underserved students.

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.

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Menu of Read and Lead Strategies

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

Multi-tiered Systems of Support

Supporting Multilingual Learners

Professional Learning Models

High Quality Instructional Materials

Partnerships with Institutions of Higher

Gifted and Talented Programming

Technical Assistance (TA) on the specific strategies will be provided in the following two TA sessions on 2/27 and 2/28.

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Eligible Applicants from ESEA

According to Section 2221(b) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), the eligible entities for the Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) program are:

(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 counted under Section 1124(c) of ESEA, compared to other local agencies in the state. (ii) Are among the local agencies with the **highest number or percentage of children reading/writing below grade level**, based on state assessment data. (iii) Serve a **significant number/percentage of schools implementing comprehensive/targeted support** and improvement activities under Section 1111(d) of ESEA. (CSI/TSI)

(B) **One or more early childhood education programs** serving low-income or disadvantaged children, including home-based literacy programs for preschoolers, that have a demonstrated record of providing comprehensive literacy instruction.

(C) A local education agency described in **(A), a consortium of such agencies, or an early childhood program, acting in partnership with one or more public/private nonprofit organizations** that have a demonstrated record of:(i) Improving literacy achievement from birth through grade 12. (ii) Providing professional development in comprehensive literacy instruction.

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Eligible Applicants from Read and Lead MD

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.

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 *(see GIG page 8 for definition)*. **The "Read and Lead Maryland Grant" will only fund projects that contain activities that have strong or moderate evidence.**

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NOTE:

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.

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Funding by Grade Band:

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.

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

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Application Preference Priorities:

- **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.

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Assurances (1/5)

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

Assurances must be agreed upon and signed by applicants' Superintendent, Chief Academic Officer/Assistance Superintendent, and any district staff who are identified in the application as leading grant work.

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.

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Assurances (2/5)

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

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.

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Assurances (3/5)

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

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.

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Assurances (4/5)

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

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.

Assurances (5/5)

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

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.

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Activities Ineligible for Read and Lead Funding

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

Live FAQ:
tinyurl.com/MD-CLSD-FAQ

Building a Needs Assessment

Technical assistance for applicants on how to build a strong needs assessment that is required by Read and Lead MD.

Overview of how to conduct a comprehensive literacy needs assessment.

Your needs assessment <u>MUST </u>do these things...

- Demonstrate the rationale for your choice of school(s) for targeting funds
- Demonstrate your rationale for your choice in focus areas and strategies
- Align to your comprehensive literacy plan (USE YOUR FEEDBACK FROM LAST YEAR)
- Lead to SMART objectives

Your needs assessment <u>MUST </u>include some student assessment data, specifically:

- Ready to Read Act and/or MCAP assessment data (depending on grade levels)
- Subgroup data - demonstrate you are serving students who need it
- Comparison - demonstrate you are serving schools who need it

Your needs assessment MAY include varied forms of data that shows student needs, school needs, and/or professional needs, such as:

- Additional assessments such as MAP, DIBELS, IDEL, or other validated assessments for screening/progress monitoring
- Other student data, such as identification rate data for SLD in Reading
- Other school or district data, such as rates of access to professional learning for various staff roles

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Data Type	Description	Data Source	Findings (Enter Data and Trends)
State Literacy Assessments (MCAP)	Student achievement data by grade level and subgroup	MCAP reports	
Local Formative and Summative Assessments	District/school-based assessments	District testing reports	
Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA)	Early literacy skills at school entry	KRA reports	
Intervention Progress Monitoring Data	Student growth in intervention programs	RTI/MTSS data systems	
Multilingual Learner (ML) Proficiency Data	Literacy levels for ML students	WIDA ACCESS reports, screener data	
Teacher Observation & Instructional Practice Data	Trends in literacy instruction and professional learning	Walkthrough data, coaching logs	
Professional Learning Evaluation Data	Effectiveness of training in improving literacy instruction	Post-training surveys, coaching logs, teacher feedback	

Comprehensive Literacy Needs Assessment Tool

Data Type	Description	Data Source
State Literacy Assessments (MCAP)	Student achievement data by grade level and subgroup	MCAP reports
Local Formative and Summative Assessments	District/school-based assessments	District testing reports
Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA)	Early literacy skills at school entry	KRA reports
Intervention Progress Monitoring	Student grown in intervention programs	RTI/MTSS data systems
Multilingual Learner (ML) Proficiency Data	Literacy levels for ML students	WIDA ACCESS reports, screener data
Teacher Observation & Instructional Practice Data	Trends in literacy instruction and professional learning	Walkthrough data, coaching logs
Professional Learning Evaluation Data	Effectiveness of training in improving literacy	Post-training surveys, coaching logs, teacher feedback

Identifying and analyzing student literacy gaps using state/local data. student literacy gaps using state/local data.

Key questions to consider when considering what data to present and how

- What is the purpose of presenting the data?
- Which subgroups are most relevant to your goals?
- What is the context of the data?
- How can the data be presented clearly and effectively?
- Are there potential ethical concerns?
- How will you ensure the data is accurate and complete?
- Who is the intended audience?
- What is the impact of the data?

Step 2: Identify Target Gaps in Literacy Achievement

GAP ANALYSIS TABLE

Enter literacy proficiency data for different student subgroups.

Grade Band	Overall Proficiency (%)	ML Proficiency (%)	SWD Proficiency (%)	Economically Disadvantaged Proficiency (%)	Teacher Effectiveness (Based on PD Evaluations)
Birth – Age 5					
Grade K					
1st Grade					
2nd Grade					
3rd Grade					
4th Grade					
5th Grade					
6th Grade					
7th Grade					
8th Grade					

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Strategies for ensuring equity in literacy support, particularly for multilingual learners, students with disabilities, and economically disadvantaged studzents.

Consider your Comprehensive Literacy Plan and Implementation Feedback and questions to consider:

- Where did you see opportunities to support MLLs, SWD, economically disadvantaged students?

- How are your teachers and leaders supported in making sense of student data to best serve all students? What do teachers know about student data? Where can CLSD-supported strategies support these system-wide efforts?

- How to translate a needs assessment that prioritizes strategies that will close literacy gaps and support all learners
  - Example: Core/Tier 1 Instruction

How to use the Comprehensive Literacy Plan submitted to MSDE in June 2024 as a foundation

- Use the EPIS framework
  - Where did your feedback indicate earlier stages of implementation?
  - What were identified areas of improvement?

- Review your recommendations and opportunities. Where can you find alignment with CLSD priorities? (examples coming next!)

- Consider how your recommendations and potential strategies will lead to articulation of SMART objectives

How to use the Comprehensive Literacy Plan submitted to MSDE in June 2024 as a foundation

Example from literacy plan implementation review: "The district would like to provide more teachers and support staff with training in structured literacy, but lack funding"

CLSD strategies might include:
- Developing a PL model that offers PL to educators at all levels (admin, coaches, classroom teachers, specialists, para-educators, etc.)
- Contracting with vendors on specialized professional learning opportunities

Example from literacy plan implementation review: "Teachers stated that they would like more help with multi-lingual learners"

CLSD strategies might include:
- 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, co-teaching, etc.

Comprehensive Literacy Plan Feedback - EXAMPLE

3.0 Multi-tiered Support Systems

Grades K-5

While the district emphasizes tiered interventions, there may be disparities in access to interventions for students from diverse backgrounds. Addressing resource limitations and ensuring equitable access to interventions for all students is essential to support diverse learning needs.

Continuous professional development opportunities are essential to building staff capacity and implementing MTSS effectively. Training sessions and workshops on data analysis, intervention strategies, and progress monitoring can empower teachers to meet their students' diverse needs.

Exploring alternative funding sources and reallocating resources to prioritize interventions for students with the greatest needs can help address these constraints.

Grades 6-12

It is suggested that the district evaluate how the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) training supports instructional acceleration and aligns with the overall instructional focus. The district should continue with its current plan while assessing the effectiveness of procedures in identifying at-risk students and ensuring equitable access to intervention services. Additionally, it is recommended that the district establish clear feedback cycles for intervention teachers at the secondary level to facilitate continuous improvement and support in instructional practices. This comprehensive approach will enhance the district's ability to meet the diverse needs of its student population.

- DIBELS and progress monitoring allow for data-driven instruction, ensuring skill-based procedures are tailored to address specific student needs and support language comprehension.
- Turn and talk discussion strategies were observed in several grades 2-5 classrooms.
- Intentional words for direct instruction were observed in several classrooms across K-5.
- Explicit instruction and practice responding to literal questions using evidence from the text were observed in classrooms in grades 2-5.
- Student background activation and connection to new content is evidenced in some classrooms, grades K-5.

Opportunities and Questions:

- It is crucial to provide sufficient resources, especially for SpED and MLL students. Ensuring all students have access to evidence-aligned instructional and culturally sustaining materials for language comprehension can help bridge gaps in learning.
- More targeted resources and materials are needed for MLLs. This includes access to comprehension materials in students' dominant languages, culturally sustaining materials, and additional scaffolding in English.

1.3 Curriculum addresses the five core components (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and

Factors **observed** in Effective Implementation:

- High-Quality Instructional Materials
  - Foundational Skills
  - Comprehension and Knowledge Building
  - Writing and expression
- Aligned trainings for teachers, administrators, and support staff
- Professional development enhanced with instructional supports, making connections between evidence and practice
- Strong, responsive cultures of literacy leadership
- Consistent communications with families and teachers
- Interventionists, instructional coaches, and specialists are available to provide appropriate supports
- Ample time allocated for literacy instruction and intervention

Key Findings

- All LEAs have provided training on SoR and evidence-based practices
  - Inconsistent access to training (grades 3-5, ESOL, support staff)
- All LEAs (plan to) use HQIM in foundational skills/knowledge building
  - Explicit writing and expression varies particularly in 3-5
- Transition issues for effective literacy instruction from grades 3-5
- Districts are implementing MTSS, however challenges in:
  - Flipped Triangles
  - Differentiating core (Tier I) instruction
  - Providing tiered intervention due to personnel and training
  - Supports and scaffolds for MLLs/ELLs
- Strong leadership across the state in literacy
  - Variability in communication and sharing of data and goals
- All districts engaging families and communities
  - School specific often based on Title I/community school funding
 - Need for better communication and outreach to families
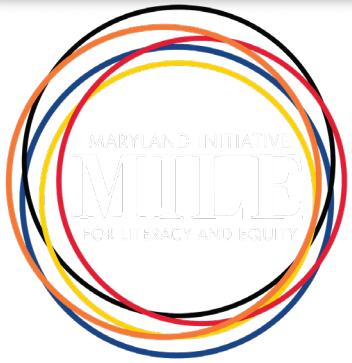
Barriers to effective implementation:

- Lack of sustained and consistent training for all professionals
- Inadequate or inconsistent training on tiered intervention approaches
- Inadequate capacity for data analysis to drive key instructional decisions
- Lack of training, quality materials, or instructional supports for multilingual learners
- Misperceptions or simplification of structured literacy

- Shortened literacy and intervention time blocks
- Inconsistent or inaccessible communication with families and lack of effective and/or inclusive family engagement

Secondary (Adolescent) Literacy
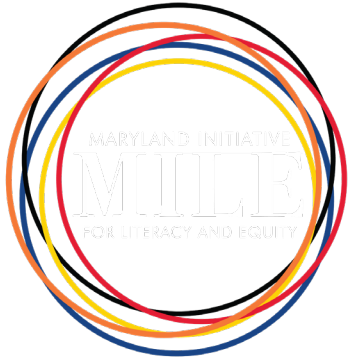
Where implementation of literacy plans has been most effective, several factors were often observed:

- Beginning professional development around how content area teachers need to understand basics of SoR (ex: vocabulary, morphology, and writing)
    - Culture shift around "science of learning/reading" vs. content specialists
- Align high quality instructional materials in grades 4-8/10
- Establish MTSS for literacy in intermediate and secondary to intervene and remediate reading and writing skills
    - Culture shifts around *access to the curriculum* vs. *intervention and remediation of skills*
    - Build in intervention blocks
    - Sharing of data

Broader Issues

- Grades 4-12 have been less engaged in "SoR" and shift to evidence-based practices and teachers do not see themselves as "Reading teachers".
- Misunderstanding of "science of reading" and "culturally-responsive" practices (limited resources)
- Difficulty aligning culturally-responsive teaching strategies with evidence-based literacy strategies
- Loss of literacy coaches/interventionists
- New teachers ill-prepared for teaching literacy whether from traditional TPPs or alternative certification pathways (working with IHEs)
- Siloed administrative structures (ELA, SPED, ESOL, School Leadership) impacting implementation

Read and Lead MD Application and Award Process

Technical assistance on how to apply for the grant and what the award process will look like.

Read and Lead MD 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

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Application Review (1/3)

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.

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Application Review (2/3)

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.

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Application Review (2/3)

APPLICATION REVIEW RUBRIC

A more detailed rubric will be available in the RFA released on March 3rd.

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**

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Q&A