# GRANT INFORMATION GUIDE

## Maryland Project A.W.A.R.E. Fiscal Year 2025

**Maryland State Department of Education**

200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

**Deadline**

August 30, 2024
No later than 5:00 p.m. EDT

## MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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State Superintendent of Schools

**Geoff Sanderson**
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# Program Description

**In Fiscal Year 2020, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) authorized grant funds for Project A.W.A.R.E. (Advancing Wellness and Resilience in Education) to State Education Agencies (SEAs). The grant seeks to build or expand the capacity of SEAs in partnership with State Mental Health Agencies (SMHAs) overseeing school-aged youth with three local education agencies (LEAs).**

## AUTHORIZATION

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration [520A (290bb-32) of the PHS Act](#), As Amended

## GRANT OVERVIEW

### Name of Grant Program

Maryland Project A.W.A.R.E. Fiscal Year 2025

### Purpose

To increase the SEA's capacity in collaboration with State Mental Health Agencies overseeing school-aged youth with three LEAs to:

- Increase awareness of mental health issues among school-aged youth;

- Provide training for school personnel and other adults who interact with school-aged youth to detect and respond to mental health issues; and

- Connect school-aged youth who may have behavioral health issues (including serious emotional disturbance - SED) or serious mental illness (SMI) and their families to needed services.

SAMHSA expects that this program will focus on partnerships and collaboration between state and local systems to promote the healthy development of school-aged youth and prevent youth violence.

### Dissemination

This Grant Information Guide (GIG) was released on June 28, 2024.

### Deadline

Proposals are due no later than 5:00 pm on August 30, 2024.

### Grant Period

September 30, 2024 -September 29, 2025

### Funding Amount Available

$1,664,789.30

### Estimated Number of Grants

Seven (7)

## Eligibility

This is a continuation grant and only those who received the Years 1-3 award are eligible to reapply.

## Submission Instructions

The Fiscal Year 2025 Maryland Project A.W.A.R.E. Grant Renewal Application can be downloaded from the MSDE grants webpage. A signed electronic copy in PDF format must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. August 30, 2024, via email to Renee Neely at renee.neely@maryland.gov.

## PROGRAM CONTACT

**Dr. Renee Neely**
Comprehensive Planning Specialist
Division of Student Support and Federal Programs
(410) 767-0294
renee.neely@maryland.gov

## State Responsibilities

MSDE is responsible for providing required information, data, documentation, and technical assistance to facilitate the grantee's performance of the work. MSDE program staff will be available and make every effort to support on demand additional assistance when requested throughout the grant period. In addition, MSDE will monitor program implementation throughout the grant performance period to ensure each grantee is on target to meet its goals and fully expend its awarded program resources.

# Use of Funds

The following are examples of approved uses for the grant funds in accordance with the purpose of the grant. Other costs not listed here may be presented to the grant manager for determination of allowable expenditures.

**FUNDS MAY BE USED FOR:**

- Personnel salaries (non-research)

- Fringe benefits

- Travel

- Supplies

- Contractual services

- Indirect costs

**FUNDS MAY NOT BE USED FOR:**

- Construction of temporary or permanent structures.

- Purchase of apparel or giveaway promotional items like mugs, pens, shirts, folders, lanyards, or bags.

# Application Requirements

## PROPOSAL COVER PAGE

Proposals must include a completed Proposal Cover Page provided in the application for participation. The cover page should not contain any graphics or additional information. The applicant should provide their contact information, grant partnership information, and the organization's Employer Identification Number (EIN) and Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number, if available. The Proposal Cover Page should be printed and signed by the Superintendent of Schools/ Head of Grantee Agency.

## PROJECT ABSTRACT

In the Project Abstract, the applicant should 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. Do not exceed the one-page limit.

## EXTENT OF NEED

Describe the conditions or needs to be addressed through the Fiscal Year 2024 Maryland AWARE grant program. Include a clearly defined problem supported by a needs assessment and supporting data. Describe how the grant funds will address the problem and show how those efforts are effective.

## EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

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

## GOALS, MEASURABLE OUTCOMES, AND MILESTONES

Applicants are required to set an overall goal for the project. Determining the program goal is an important part of evaluating your program. Applicants must complete the chart with SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-Bound) program goals that must be aligned with the Plan of Operation and the Blueprint Pillar 4 Objective 5.

## STRATEGIES

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

## MANAGEMENT PLAN

Submit a detailed and time-specific management plan with pre-assigned responsibilities to avoid the following common errors:

- Failure to submit required reports.

- Failure to regularly monitor performance of the project during implementation.

- Failure to start the project on time.

- Failure to keep adequate project documentation.

- Failure to assure continuity and quality of the project considering personnel turnover.

- Changing without approval from MSDE the overall project from that described in the grant proposal.

- Submission of biased or incomplete project evaluation data.

- Having no approved project fiscal procedure in place.

- Disposal of project supplies, equipment, or other assets in unauthorized ways.

- Budget deviations due to unauthorized transfers from one budget category to another.

- Failure to manage inherent conflicts of policies, perspectives, and philosophies between project's host agency and the funder.

- Failure to form partnerships in which all members recognize and fulfill their clearly defined roles, responsibilities, and contributions to the project.

- Failure to complete the project in a timely fashion.

## EVALUATION

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

## SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

Describe plans for continuing the project beyond the funding cycle. Answer questions such as how the project will be sustained after funding ends, what are the plans for maintaining the project's partnerships, and how are transitions of key personnel planned for and their impact on the effectiveness of the grant implementation.

# Budget and Budget Narrative

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

Begin the budget with a narrative, justifying any line-item expenses that are not obvious from the project narrative. Explain how the estimated cost of each line item was derived if the rationale is not obvious.

Following the budget narrative, include a line-item description using the format in the example below. Group line items according to the following categories: Salaries & Wages, Contracted Services, Supplies & Materials, Other Charges, Equipment, and Transfers. Total each category. 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. Clearly show the requested funds and in-kind contributions for each line item. Indicate the source of the in-kind contribution. Both requested and in-kind funds must be reasonable with current market prices. Show how the expense was calculated for each line item. Reviewers will use this information to determine if the budget is reasonable and cost-effective. There is no page limit for the budget, so be as detailed as possible.

Use the format indicated by the following excerpt from a sample Budget Narrative.

## SALARIES AND WAGES (LIST SEPARATELY FOR EACH POSITION)

| Line item | Calculation | Requested | In-Kind | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Project Manager | $50/hr. x 40 hrs. per week x 52 weeks | $83,200 | $20,800 | $104,000 |
| **Total for salaries & wages:** | | $83,200 | $20,800 | $104,000 |

# Appendices

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

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:

1.  Written applications will be pre-screened for submission requirements and inclusion of all required sections. Applications not meeting all pre-screen requirements may be returned to the applicant for revisions.

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

3.  Final approval for awards will be determined by the review committee.

## REVIEW COMMITTEE

The committee will be composed of representatives from MSDE and will assign numerical scores to each proposal based on the criteria on the scoring rubric. Each application will be reviewed and scored based on all documents submitted. Applications may be returned to the applicant if some or all criteria do not meet the criteria standard.

# Maryland Project A.W.A.R.E. Scoring Rubric

## PROJECT ABSTRACT

| Level 3<br>Exceeds Criteria | Level 2<br>Meets Criteria | Level 1<br>Does Not Meet Criteria |
|---|---|---|
| The project abstract outlines a concise and comprehensive summary of the target population, goals, strategies, and partnerships. | The project abstract addresses the required components. | The project abstract is missing or does not address the required components. |

## EXTENT OF NEED

| Level 3<br>Exceeds Criteria | Level 2<br>Meets Criteria | Level 1<br>Does Not Meet Criteria |
|---|---|---|
| The extent of need section includes multiple problems (e.g., lack of awareness of mental health issues among school-aged youth, lack of training for staff in school, no connection source for students that the Project AWARE program will address and provides a needs assessment and supporting data. | The extent of need for the project adequately defines at least one problem (e.g., lack of training for school personnel and other adults who interact with school-aged youth to detect and respond to mental health issues) that the Project AWARE program will address and provides a needs assessment and supporting data. | The extent of need for the project section fails to define the problem or obstacle the Project AWARE program will address. |

## EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

| Level 3<br>Exceeds Criteria | Level 2<br>Meets Criteria | Level 1<br>Does Not Meet Criteria |
| --- | --- | --- |
| The application significantly describes how all proposed strategies are evidence and research-based and explains how the evidence will lead to desired outcomes. They provide a link to research data and provide data on how students in their program have progressed in prior years. They can share ongoing progress with students who previously participated in the Project AWARE program. | The application adequately describes how proposed strategies are evidence and research based. They provide a link to research data and provide data on how students in their program have progressed in prior years. | The proposal does not describe the future impact of the activity/project. |

## GOALS, MEASURABLE OUTCOMES, AND MILESTONES

| Level 3<br>Exceeds Criteria | Level 2<br>Meets Criteria | Level 1<br>Does Not Meet Criteria |
| --- | --- | --- |
| The goal(s) are measurable, clearly aligned to the extent of need, and ambitiously focused on effectuating change.<br><br>Realistic and attainable outcomes illustrate a distinguishable effort to significant progress.<br><br>Milestones for each intended outcome ensure continued monitoring for success and include response to meeting targets. | The goal(s) are measurable and aligned to the extent of need.<br><br>Outcomes are realistic and attainable.<br><br>Milestones are provided for measuring progress of each intended outcome. | The goal(s) are not measurable are not clearly aligned to the extent of need.<br><br>Outcomes are not realistic or attainable.<br><br>Milestones are not provided or do not align to outcomes. |

## STRATEGIES

| Level 3<br>Exceeds Criteria | Level 2<br>Meets Criteria | Level 1<br>Does Not Meet Criteria |
|---|---|---|
| The proposal provides several rationales for selecting specific, evidence-based strategies, and precisely how they will be implemented to ensure outcomes are achieved.<br><br>Multiple broad strategies are identified with detailed and systematic methods, procedures, or techniques for successful implementation. | The proposal provides a clear rationale for selecting a specific strategy and how it will help achieve the outcome.<br><br>Applicant provides broad strategies and includes the methods, procedures, techniques for implementation. | No rationale for selecting specific strategies and how they will help achieve the outcome.<br><br>Applicant only states some of the strategies, but does not include the necessary methods, procedures, or techniques for implementing. |

## MANAGEMENT PLAN

| Level 3<br>Exceeds Criteria | Level 2<br>Meets Criteria | Level 1<br>Does Not Meet Criteria |
|---|---|---|
| There is a detailed plan of operation that addresses items identified in the statement of need. Key personnel are listed, and a breakdown of the FTE and their salary is assigned to the grant. There is a project timeline that lists which staff members will complete each task and when. | There is a detailed plan of operation that addresses items identified in the statement of need. Key personnel are listed, and a project timeline established. | The plan of operation provided does not address the items identified in the statement of need. Key personnel are listed but no project timeline is provided. |

## EVALUATION

| Level 3<br>Exceeds Criteria | Level 2<br>Meets Criteria | Level 1<br>Does Not Meet Criteria |
|---|---|---|
| The application includes an evaluation plan that includes evaluation questions, strategy, and a description of proposed data instruments, collection processes, and analytic methods that are consistent with the project's goal and objectives. They also list who is assigned to this task and the timeline to complete. | The application includes an evaluation plan that includes evaluation questions, strategy, and a description of proposed data instruments, collection processes, and analytic methods that are consistent with the project's goal and objectives. | The application does not include an evaluation plan, or it doesn't include all the areas addressed in the grant information guide. |

## SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

| Level 3<br>Exceeds Criteria | Level 2<br>Meets Criteria | Level 1<br>Does Not Meet Criteria |
|---|---|---|
| Applicant provides a comprehensive plan for ensuring the ongoing success of the proposal beyond the funding cycle that includes identification of additional resources. A detailed plan for maintaining partnerships and their contribution to sustainability is described. | Applicant provides a continuation plan beyond the funding cycle and describes how partnerships will be maintained. | The application does not include a plan to exist after the funding cycle. |

## BUDGET AND BUDGET NARRATIVE

| Level 3<br>Exceeds Criteria | Level 2<br>Meets Criteria | Level 1<br>Does Not Meet Criteria |
|---|---|---|
| The budget narrative is detailed and comprehensive of all activities necessary for successful implementation of proposal. The budget aligns directly to the proposal and does not rely entirely on grant funds for successful implementation. There are no mathematical errors, and all expenses are cost effective and appear necessary. | The budget narrative is complete. The budget aligns to the proposal and is free of mathematical errors. Expenses are reasonable and allowable. | Budget does not align with the proposal, includes cost that are not reasonable or allowable, or has several mathematical errors. |

# Reporting Requirements

Grantees must comply with the following reporting requirements:

| Date | Reporting Requirements for Each Year |
|---|---|
| Ongoing | Fiscal and program monitoring; all invoices must be accompanied with supporting documentation. |
| January 15, 2025 | First interim deliverables (progress narrative, C-1-25-C and invoices/draw-down documentation) reflecting the months of October, November and December are due. |
| April 15, 2025 | Second interim deliverables (progress narrative, C-1-25-C and invoices/draw-down documentation) reflecting the months of January, February and March are due. |
| July 15, 2025 | Third interim deliverables (progress narrative, C-1-25-C and invoices/draw-down documentation) reflecting the months of April, May and June are due. |
| October 15, 2025 | Fourth interim deliverables (progress narrative, C-1-25-C and invoices/draw-down documentation) reflecting the months of July, August and September are due. |
| On or before 60 days after the grants ends | A final project evaluation (see evaluation section) must be received by MSDE on or before 60 days after the grant end date, September 30, 2025. |

Notes: Any requests for 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.

# Grant Application Timeline

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

| Date | Timeline Event |
| --- | --- |
| June 28, 2024 | The Grant Information Guide and the application for participating are released. |
| July 10, 2024 | MSDE will hold a virtual customer service support session for interested applicants. |
| July 17, 2024 | MSDE will hold a virtual customer service support session for interested applicants. |
| July 24, 2024 | MSDE will hold a virtual customer service support session for interested applicants. |
| August 30, 2024 | The grant application period closes. |
| September 3, 2024 | MSDE begins reviewing applications for completeness and minimum requirements. |
| September 3, 2024- September 17, 2024 | MSDE Review Committee will evaluate proposals. |
| September 24, 2024 | MSDE will notify applicants of the award status. |
| September 29, 2024 | The grant period begins. |
| September 30, 2025 | The grant period ends. |

# 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 Finance and Operations**

Maryland State Department of Education
200 W. Baltimore Street - 2nd Floor
Baltimore, Maryland 21201-2595

(410) 767-0123 - voice
(410) 767-0431 - fax
Deaf and hard of hearing use Relay.

# The General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) Sect 427

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

# 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 application process. The sessions will be on:

**Wednesday, July 10, 2024**
1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Video call link: https://meet.google.com/kuf-ighq-frt

**Wednesday, July 17, 2024**
1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Video call link: https://meet.google.com/hbu-kbvi-wkb

**Wednesday, July 24, 2024**
11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Video call link: https://meet.google.com/zds-rdnk-qyt

MSDE staff will also be available to provide technical assistance throughout the grant application process. If you have questions about the application or the process, please contact:

**PROGRAM CONTACT**

**Dr. Renee Neely**
Comprehensive Planning Specialist
Division of Student Support and Federal Programs
(410) 767-0294
renee.neely@maryland.gov

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

**Attachment**

Maryland Project A.W.A.R.E. Fiscal Year 2025 Application for Funding