

Grant Information Guide and Application for Participation

Maryland Special Education State Steering Committee Mini-Grant SFY 2026

Maryland State Department of Education  
200 West Baltimore Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Deadline  
April 22, 2025  
No later than 5:00 p.m. EDT

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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State Superintendent of Schools

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# Program Description

**The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is committed to supporting the work of the eight steering committees in Maryland. Existing statewide steering committees are made up of national advisors, state and local stakeholders, and service providers (representation from each local education agency (LEA)/public agency across steering committees which include Secondary Transition, Behavior, Vision, Teachers of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Occupational Therapy/Physical Therapy, Adapted Physical Education, Speech/Language Pathology, and Assistive Technology). To support and sustain steering committee activities, a mini-grant of $4,000 per steering committee is available.**

This mini-grant focuses on the following key areas:

* Researching current national, state, and local evidence-based strategies that impact student outcomes and to address problems of practice for staff and their students with disabilities.
* The development of accessible resources, training modules, and/or toolkits to be used statewide by teachers, service providers, and families to improve student outcomes.
* Attending conferences, building leadership capacity, and/or holding conferences to build LEA capacity to meet the needs of specific student populations.

Authorization  
  
[Public Law 108-446, Part B of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act IDEA](https://ies.ed.gov/ncser/pdf/pl108-446.pdf)

## Grant overview

### Name of Grant Program

Maryland Special Education State Steering Committee Mini-Grant SFY 2026

### Purpose

### Under this grant program, MSDE is inviting existing Maryland State Steering Committees to apply for funding for initiatives that support steering committee initiatives and improve service delivery to special student populations.

### Dissemination

This Grant Information Guide (GIG) was released on March 7, 2025

### Deadline

Proposals are due no later than 5:00 p.m. on April 22, 2025

### Grant Period

July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026

### Funding Amount Available

The total amount of funding available is $32,000. Awards in the amount of up to $4,000 per steering committee.

Estimated Number of Grants

MSDE anticipates awarding grants to eight (8) steering committees.

### Eligibility

Funding eligibility is limited to Maryland State Steering Committees. Only existing steering committees within the State of Maryland are eligible to apply for this funding opportunity.

Submission Instructions   
This funding opportunity can be found on the MSDE Grants [webpage](https://www.marylandpublicschools.org/about/Pages/OFPOS/GAC/GrantPrograms/index.aspx). Grant applications must be submitted by 5:00 p.m.   
April 22, 2025 via email to [EI&SEgrantsubmissions.msde@maryland.gov](mailto:deisesgrantsubmissions.msde@maryland.gov).

## PROGRAM CONTACT

**Dr. Paige Bradford**

Section Chief, Specialized Instruction

Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services

Phone: (410) 767-3186

[paige.bradford@maryland.gov](mailto:paige.bradford@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 committee 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:

* Professional development for staff aligned to steering committee initiatives
* Professional development for families
* Resource development
* Conference attendance
* Holding conferences

### Funds may not be used for:

* Food purchases;
* Activities or materials not reasonable and necessary;
* Activities that supplant the responsibilities of the LEA;
* Activities mandated through local and state legislation; and/or
* Activities not related to state steering committee work.

# Project Proposal

## **Grant Application**

As a requirement for this program, applicants must address all areas in the grant application template found later in this document.

### Project Description

The Project Description should be factual, brief, and focused on the steering committee’s selected project. The Project Description should cover the core aspects of the proposed project, such as the populations served, a brief description of the goals, the strategies to meet identified goals, and intentional integration across departments. The Project Description should be one page or less.

Extent of Need  
  
Identify a clearly defined problem, and how the use of these funds will address the problem. Applicants should include a brief overview of the target audience and expected outcomes. A compelling proposal will have a clearly defined problem supported by a needs assessment.

### Goals and Measurable Outcomes

State the overall goal(s) of the project. The goal(s) should address the main problem identified at the beginning of the needs assessment. Include all relevant groups and individuals in the target population. While there should be at least one goal, it is possible to have multiple goals; however, the more goals established the more complex the project becomes. Goals must have long-term deadlines. Think about how to measure the change projected in each objective. If there is no way to measure a goal, it is not measurable and should be rewritten. Measurable Outcomes are the anticipated outcomes to be accomplished for the term of the project and must be related to the goal(s).

### Plan of Operation, Key Personnel, and Timeline

The Plan of Operation includes the strategies and activities that will be implemented to achieve the project’s goals, outcomes, and milestones. Describe a plan of operation that addresses, at a minimum, the key components of the program’s implementation or expansion. Include a timeline and the key personnel associated with the plan of operation. Ensure that all administrative and key personnel responsible for the successful implementation and monitoring of the grant requirements are included.

### Strategies

Strategies are broad approaches (methods, procedures, techniques) employed to realize outcomes and accomplish goals. Applicants should begin this section with a justification as to why specific strategies were chosen, how they will help in accomplishing the stated goals, and the key personnel responsible for each strategy. What strategies will be used to reach project milestones, accomplish outcomes, and achieve project goals? Discuss how and why these strategies were chosen. Applicants should describe the targeted populations to be impacted by the strategies chosen and how they will be impacted.

### Evidence of Impact

Discuss your organization’s history of impact on the target population, what has worked, what has not worked, and your track record in effectuating change. Document current or past efforts to address the problem. Show why those efforts failed or are inadequate to address the total need. Discuss how past performance has informed the proposed activities, and the future impact your proposed key activities are likely to have on the target population. Briefly identify new or other proposed evidence-based strategies that will be implemented and how they will be measured to determine the impact on the target population.

# 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.

Provide content justifying any line-item expenses that are not obvious from the project narrative. Discuss and align line-item activities in the budget narrative. Explain how the estimated cost of each line item was derived if the rationale is not obvious. An MSDE [Grant Budget C-1-25](https://www.marylandpublicschools.org/about/Pages/OFPOS/GAC/Forms.aspx) form must also be completed, signed, and submitted as an appendix.

Following the budget narrative, include a line-item description. Group line items according to the following categories: Salaries and Wages, Contracted Services, Supplies and Materials, Other Charges, Equipment, and Transfers (indirect costs). Total each category. Each line must be detailed and specific. General expenses should be broken down into specific line items. There is no page limit for the budget, so be as detailed as possible. Here is an example of the budget and budget narrative template.

### 1. Salaries and Wages (list each position separately)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Line item** | **Calculation** | **Requested** | **In-Kind** | **Total** |
|  |  | $ | $ | $ |
|  |  | $ | $ | $ |
|  |  | $ | $ | $ |
|  |  | $ | $ | $ |
|  | Total for Salaries and Wages: | $ | $ | $ |

Using the space below, explain how the costs for salaries and wages above are necessary, reasonable, and cost-effective.

|  |
| --- |
| Type response here. |

# 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. Applications not meeting all pre-screen requirements may be returned to the applicant for revisions.

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.

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

MSDE reserves the right to take into consideration geographic distribution when making awards.

# Maryland State Steering Committee Mini-Grant Scoring Rubric

## Extent of Need

| **Level 3 Exceeds Criteria** | **Level 2 Meets Criteria** | **Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| The main problem and contributing factors are clear, concise, and demonstrate considerable understanding of the issues.  The proposal details who is affected by the problem, and when and where the problem exists, including historical impacts on the target population(s). | The main problem is clear and concise.  The proposal identifies who is affected by the problem and when the problem exists.  Data supports the identified problem. Local data is referenced to document the problem and includes demographic and other statistics. | The main problem is missing or is not clear.  The proposal does not accurately identify the target population(s).  Data has not identified or does not support the problem stated.  The proposal lacks details of how the funds will address the problem. |

## Goals and Measurable Outcomes

| **Level 3 Exceeds Criteria** | **Level 2 Meets Criteria** | **Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| The goal(s) are measurable, clearly aligned to the extent of need, and ambitiously focused on effectuating change.  Realistic and attainable outcomes illustrate a distinguishable effort to significant progress. | The goal(s) are measurable and aligned to the extent of need.  Outcomes are realistic and attainable. | The goal(s) are not measurable are not clearly aligned to the extent of need.  Outcomes are not realistic or attainable. |

## plan of operation, key personnel, and timeline

| **Level 3 Exceeds Criteria** | **Level 2 Meets Criteria** | **Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| All requirements listed in the meets criteria are listed and the applicant provides additional information. | The plan is clear and concise. There is a timeline and experienced personnel (with percentage of time) for all key activities. Names and titles are present. | The plan of operation provided does not address the items identified in the extent of need. |

## Strategies

| **Level 3 Exceeds Criteria** | **Level 2 Meets Criteria** | **Level 1 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. 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.  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.  Applicant only states some of the strategies, but does not include the necessary methods, procedures, or techniques for implementing. |

## evidence of impact

| **Level 3 Exceeds Criteria** | **Level 2 Meets Criteria** | **Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| The application identifies how proposed strategies are evidence-based and will lead to the desired impact and lists success data for their existing program. They also provide information on students who have graduated from their program. | The applicant describes how the proposed program goals are research-based. There is data on how students in the program have progressed in prior years, and a description of what the intended impact of the proposed activities will be on the target population. | The application does not identify evidence of impact. |

## Budget and Budget Narrative

| **Level 3 Exceeds Criteria** | **Level 2 Meets Criteria** | **Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| The budget is detailed and comprehensive of all activities for successful implementation. The budget aligns to the proposal and does not rely entirely on grant funds. There are no mathematical errors, and all expenses are cost effective and appear necessary. | The budget 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 costs that are not reasonable or allowable, or has several mathematical errors. |

# Timeline and Reporting Requirements

| **Date** | **Timeline Event** |
| --- | --- |
| March 7, 2025 | The Grant Information Guide and the application for participating are released. |
| March 18, 2025  April 8, 2025  April 10, 2025 | MSDE will hold virtual open virtual office hours for interested applicants. |
| April 22, 2025 | The grant application is due. |
| July 1, 2025 | MSDE will notify applicants of the award status. |
| July 1, 2025 | The grant period begins. |
| June 30, 2026 | The grant period ends. |

| **Date** | **Reporting Requirement** |
| --- | --- |
| Ongoing | Fiscal and programmatic monitoring |
| January 31, 2026 | Interim Progress Report (C-1-25C) and Interim Progress & Cumulative Variance reports are due. |
| August 31, 2026 | Final Progress Report (C-1-25D) and final Progress & Cumulative Variance reports are due. |

**Note**: Any requests for amendments must be submitted at least 45 days before the grant period ends, and must be submitted using the C-1-25B form found in the Grant Forms Workbook on the MSDE Grants [webpage](https://www.marylandpublicschools.org/about/Pages/OFPOS/GAC/Forms.aspx).

# 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.

# 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:

Tuesday, March 18, 2025  
11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.  
Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/jsk-zawe-gwe>

‬‬‬‬‬‬‬‬‬‬MSDE staff will also hold virtual open office hours on:

Tuesday, April 8, 2025  
9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.  
Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/jsk-zawe-gwe>

**Thursday, April 10, 2025**

10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/jsk-zawe-gwe>

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:

**Dr. Paige Bradford**

Section Chief, Specialized Instruction

Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services

Phone: (410) 767-3186

[paige.bradford@maryland.gov](mailto:paige.bradford@maryland.gov)

# Grant Application – Proposal Cover Page

Institution/Agency/Jurisdiction Name:

Project Title:

Date of Submission:

Name of Contact Person:

Institution/Agency Address:

Contact Person Phone:

Contact Person Email:

UEI Number and SAM.gov registration screenshot:

Amount of the request for grant period (July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026): $

(Should agree with Proposed Budget)

Signature of Applicant Date

# Grant Application – Project Proposal

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Project Proposal Refer to the Project Proposal section of this document for guidance. | |
| Project Description: |  |
| Extent of Need: |  |
| Goals and Measurable Outcomes: |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Goal | Identified Need | Milestone | Expected Outcome |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

|  |
| --- |
| Plan of Operation, Key Personnel, and Timeline: |
|  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Timeline | Strategy | Person Responsible and Tasks | FTE% |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

|  |
| --- |
| Strategies: |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Evidence of Impact:** |
|  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Signatures | |
|  |  |
| Steering Committee Representative Name and Title | Steering Committee Representative Signature |

# Grant Application - Budget and Budget Narrative

Please provide a detailed description of the requested funds that will be spent by using the categories listed below. Add more rows if needed. An MSDE [Grant Budget C-1-25](https://www.marylandpublicschools.org/about/Pages/OFPOS/GAC/Forms.aspx) form must also be completed, signed, and submitted as an appendix.

### 1. Salaries and Wages (list each position separately)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Line item** | **Calculation** | **Requested** | **In-Kind** | **Total** |
|  |  | $ | $ | $ |
|  |  | $ | $ | $ |
|  |  | $ | $ | $ |
|  |  | $ | $ | $ |
|  | Total for Salaries and Wages: | $ | $ | $ |

Using the space below, explain how the costs for salaries and wages above are necessary, reasonable, and cost-effective.

|  |
| --- |
| Type response here. |

### 2. Contracted Services

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Line item** | **Calculation** | **Requested** | **In-Kind** | **Total** |
|  |  | $ | $ | $ |
|  |  | $ | $ | $ |
|  |  | $ | $ | $ |
|  |  | $ | $ | $ |
|  | Total for Contracted Services: | $ | $ | $ |

Using the space below, explain how the costs for contracted services above are necessary, reasonable, and cost-effective.

|  |
| --- |
| Type response here. |

### 3. Supplies and Materials

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Line item** | **Calculation** | **Requested** | **In-Kind** | **Total** |
|  |  | $ | $ | $ |
|  |  | $ | $ | $ |
|  |  | $ | $ | $ |
|  |  | $ | $ | $ |
|  | Total Supplies and Materials: | $ | $ | $ |

Using the space below, explain how the costs for supplies and materials above are necessary, reasonable, and cost-effective.

|  |
| --- |
| Type response here. |

### 4. Other Charges

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Line item** | **Calculation** | **Requested** | **In-Kind** | **Total** |
|  |  | $ | $ | $ |
|  |  | $ | $ | $ |
|  |  | $ | $ | $ |
|  |  | $ | $ | $ |
|  | Total for Other Charges: | $ | $ | $ |

Using the space below, explain how the costs for other charges above are necessary, reasonable, and cost-effective.

|  |
| --- |
| Type response here. |

### 5. Equipment

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Line item** | **Calculation** | **Requested** | **In-Kind** | **Total** |
|  |  | $ | $ | $ |
|  |  | $ | $ | $ |
|  |  | $ | $ | $ |
|  |  | $ | $ | $ |
|  | Total for Equipment: | $ | $ | $ |

Using the space below, explain how the costs for equipment above are necessary, reasonable, and cost-effective.

|  |
| --- |
| Type response here. |

### 6. Transfers (indirect costs)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Line item** | **Calculation** | **Requested** | **In-Kind** | **Total** |
|  |  | $ | $ | $ |
|  |  | $ | $ | $ |
|  |  | $ | $ | $ |
|  |  | $ | $ | $ |
|  | Total for Transfers: | $ | $ | $ |

Using the space below, explain how the costs for transfers (indirect costs) above are necessary, reasonable, and cost-effective.

|  |
| --- |
| Type response here. |

|  |
| --- |
| **Total amount requested: $** |

# Grant Application - The General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) Section 427

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

[Section 427 of the GEPA Form](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/files/Grants-Part-C-GEPA-Section-427-Form.pdf)

[Section 427 of the GEPA Notice to All Applicants](https://oese.ed.gov/files/2021/10/General-Education-Provisions-Act-GEPA-Requirements-Section-427-ED-GEPA-427-Form.pdf)

# Grant Application - Appendices

Appendix A: [A signed recipient assurances page](https://www.marylandpublicschools.org/about/Documents/Grants/GrantRecipientAssurances.pdf)

Appendix B: [A signed C-1-25 MSDE budget form](https://www.marylandpublicschools.org/about/Pages/OFPOS/GAC/Forms.aspx)

Appendix C: A completed [GEPA Section 427 Statement](https://marylandpublicschools.org/about/Documents/OFPOS/GAC/GrantPrograms/ConsolidatedEntitlement/GEPA427.PDF)

Appendix D: Signed Certification Regarding Lobbying, Debarment, Suspension, Other Responsibility Matters, and Drug-Free Workplace

Appendix E: A copy of the W-9 form (applicable for first time grant applicants and/or grantees requiring a change of address/contact)