![Maryland State Department of Education logo]

Grant Information Guide

Public Schools Opportunities Enhancement Program

Maryland State Department of Education

200 West Baltimore Street

Baltimore, Maryland 21201

DEADLINE

July 30, 2025

No later than 5:00 p.m. EDT

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Carey M. Wright, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

Geoff Sanderson
Chief of Accountability
Office of Accountability

Mary L. Gable
Assistant State Superintendent
Division of Student Support and Federal Programs

Wes Moore
Governor

MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Joshua L. Michael, Ph.D. (President)

Monica Goldson, Ed.D. (Vice President)

Chuen-Chin Bianca Chang, MSN, PNP, RN-BC

Alverne "Chet" Chesterfield

Kenny Clash

Clarence C. Crawford (President Emeritus)

Abhiram Gaddam (Student Member)

Nick Greer

Dr. Irma E. Johnson

Dr. Kim Lewis

Dr. Joan Mele-McCarthy, D.A., CCC-SLP

Rachel L. McCusker

Xiomara V. Medina, M.Ed.

Samir Paul, Esq.

Table of Contents

Program Description

The Public School Opportunities Enhancement Program (PSOEP) Grant to be administered by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). The grant program assists local education agencies (LEAs), public community schools, and nonprofit [501(c)(3)] organizations in the State to establish partnerships designed to expand or create extended day and summer enhancement programs and support existing educational programming during the school day. Programs must be developed and implemented in active collaboration with the school that the students attend.

Extended day and summer enhancement programs are educational and recreational enrichment programs for children between the ages of four and 19 that take place:

- Before and after the school day;

- On weekends and holidays; and

- During vacations and summer breaks.

Proposed activities must target specific local school systems, nonprofit [501(c)(3)] organizations, and Community Schools (currently in Baltimore City and Prince George's County). Each LSS (listed below) has at least 50 percent of public school students that qualify for free lunch under the National School Lunch Program.

- Allegany County

- Baltimore City

- Baltimore County

- Caroline County

- Cecil County

- Charles County

- Dorchester County

- Garrett County

- Kent County

- Prince George's County

- Somerset County

- Talbot County

- Washington County

- Wicomico County

- Worcester County

- SEED

AUTHORIZATION

The PSOEP program, introduced as House Bill 1402 during the 2016 legislative session and enacted under Article II, section 17(b) of the Maryland Constitution - Chapter 32, established a Public School Opportunities Enhancement (PSOEP) grant to be administered by MSDE. Pursuant to Section § 7-1701 through 1706 of the Education Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, the PSOEP grant authorized MSDE to award grants to LEAs, community schools, and non-profit organizations. These grants are used to expand or create extended day and summer enhancement programs.

GRANT OVERVIEW

Purpose

The purpose of the PSOEP is to expand or create an extended day and summer enhancement program; expand or create a summer enhancement program; or establish new educational or recreational partnerships with specified entities.

The extended day, educational day, or summer enhancement program must include an educational component that aligns with the Maryland College and Career Readiness Standards.

Dissemination

The Grant Information Guide (GIG) was released on June 18, 2025.

Deadline

Applications are due no later than 5 p.m. on July 30, 2025.

Grant Period

Length of Grants: Four Years

- Year I: July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026

- Year II: July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027

- Year III: July 1, 2027 – June 30, 2028

- Year IV: July 1, 2028 – June 30, 2029

MSDE will award grants for a total of 48 months which are subject to funding and successful completion of grant requirements. Following the initial award of 12 months, subsequent award years will be contingent upon:

- Availability of funding from the specific funding authority;

- Satisfactory performance by the grantee as evaluated by the MSDE; and

- Compliance with all grant requirements and meeting all conditions set forth within the PSOEP proposal.

Summer enhancement programs will execute a pre-implementation planning year during Year 1 (July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026) of the four-year grant term. Years 2 , 3, and 4 require summer enhancement program implementation. Year 4 awards will have an end date of November 30, 2029.

Funding Amount Available

$2,500,000 (FY 2026)

- Minimum Amount: $50,000 per year

- Maximum Amount: $250,000 per year

Eligibility

The eligible entities are:

1. LEAs;

2. Nonprofit [501(c)(3)] organizations (the MSDE shall give priority to Maryland-based non-profit organizations); or

3. Community Schools.

The Local Education Agency (LEA)/School Participation Agreement identifies the partner schools with principal names, and a signature from the local superintendent. The signed agreement must be submitted at the time of the application.

MSDE shall give priority to Maryland-based, applicants when awarding grants to nonprofit organizations, the:

1. Not-for-profit organizations; and

2. Not-for-profit organizations operating in Maryland on or before July 1, 2016.

The grant program must serve LEAs with at least 50% of public-school students that qualify for free lunch under the National School Lunch Program.

Students Served

The applicant is responsible for identifying the total monthly number of students to be served.

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 through the grant performance period.

Annual Award Analysis

MSDE will use the standards in the Uniform Guidance to impose specific or "high risk" conditions on applicants selected for funding, including but not limited to applicant or recipient history or failure to comply with the general or specific terms and conditions of the grant, failure to meet expected performance goals and may impose additional specific award conditions as needed (See Uniform Guidance section 200.207). MSDE will assess the risks facing the applicant entity as it seeks to achieve its objectives. This assessment will provide the basis for determining awards for high-risk applicants.

Grant amounts each year will be funded at 100% of the original award contingent on the availability of funding and satisfactory performance. Programs selected for funding will be level funded the same

amount for all four years of programming unless a lesser amount is specified for subsequent years. In those cases, the lesser amount will be awarded. In addition, awards may be reduced based on the grantee's inability to meet the goals and performance measures set forth in this grant. This includes participation numbers consistently lower than projected in the bidder's application. Awards may also be reduced based on fiscal or programmatic concerns or findings during the grant period. Any award reductions will be discussed with the applicant in advance of the reduction.

MSDE reserves the right to continue or discontinue the program(s) for reasons defined in 2 CFR § 200.208 and for non-compliance of the requirements listed below:

3. Demonstrate adequate progress toward achieving all measurable objectives;

4. Meet or exceed 85% average monthly attendance of the proposed level of students served, as indicated in the original PSOEP application, or the Grant Renewal Application for the most recent year of operation;

5. Attend required out-of-school (OST) national and regional conferences, MSDE grantee meetings and training;

6. Submit required documentation in a timely manner during the project year as requested and/or required by MSDE, such as:

    a. Monitoring components (Start-Up, Interim, Grant Renewal Application, End of Year Reports, and Critical Elements Monitoring)

    b. Corrective action(s)

    c. Monthly Reimbursement Expenditure Report submission

    d. Detailed local narrative evaluation report reflecting the growth and progress of the program;

7. Participate fully in statewide evaluation activities; and

8. Comply with all applicable state statutory and regulatory requirements.

Grant funds must be expended in the grant year they were awarded. Funds that are not expended prior to the expiration of such funds will no longer be available to the grantee. MSDE does not allow PSOEP grant funds to be carried over into the following grant year. Final expenditure reports are due 60 days after the end of the grant period. Expenditure reports submitted more than 60 days after the end of the grant period will not be processed.

Submission Instructions

Grant applications must be submitted electronically using Qualtrics by 5:00 p.m. on or before July 30, 2025.

PROGRAM CONTACT
Mr. Reginald Burke

Executive Director, Office of Federal Programs
Division of Student Support and Federal Programs
Phone: (410) 767-0313
reginald.burke@maryland.gov

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 program office for determination of allowable expenditures.

EXAMPLES OF ALLOWABLE EXPENSES (NOT AN INCLUSIVE LIST)

1. Intervention, strategies, and curriculum purchases (must meet the Every Student Succeeds Act evidence criteria).

2. Salaries and fringe benefits for PSOEP out-of-school time staff;

3. Professional development and PSOEP training;

4. Consultants, subcontractors, and evaluators providing allowable services/activities;

5. Classroom materials and supplies for PSOEP classes;

6. Remedial educational activities and academic enrichment learning programs, including providing additional assistance to students to allow the students to improve their academic achievement;

7. Core academic subject educational activities;

8. Arts and music education activities;

9. Entrepreneurial education, college, and career readiness programs;

10. Tutoring services (including those provided by senior citizen volunteers) and mentoring programs;

11. Programs that provide OST activities for limited English proficient students that emphasize language skills and academic achievement;

12. Recreational activities;

13. Telecommunications and technology education programs;

14. Expanded library service hours;

15. Drug and violence prevention programs;

16. Counseling programs; and

17. Character education programs.

EXAMPLES OF UNALLOWABLE EXPENSES (NOT AN EXCLUSIVE LIST)

1. Preparation of the proposal: Costs to develop, prepare, and/or write the PSOEP proposal cannot be charged to the grant directly or indirectly by either the agency or contractor;

2. Pre-award costs: Pre-award costs may not be charged against the grant;

3. Funding for activities conducted and costs incurred before the start date of the grant;

4. Entertainment, refreshments, and snacks;

5. A field trip without the approved academic support (will be considered entertainment);

6. End-of-year celebrations or food associated with parties or socials;

7. Game systems and game cartridges;

8. Unapproved out-of-state or overnight field trips, including retreats and lock-ins;

9. Incentives (e.g., plaques, trophies, stickers, T-shirts, give-a-ways);

10. Advertisements, promotional, or marketing items;

11. Decorative items;

12. Purchase of facilities, vehicles (e.g., Buses, Vans, or Cars), or Land acquisition;

13. Capital improvements, permanent renovations;

14. Supplanting federal, state, local funds, or other non-federal funds (e.g., using grant dollars to fund summer school classes previously offered and paid for by currently existing LEA or other funds);

15. Direct charges for items or services that the indirect cost rate covers;

16. Dues to organizations, federations, or societies for personal benefit; and

17. Any costs not allowable for federal programs per Uniform Guidance 2 CFR§ 200.400.

Applicant Requirements

The State of Maryland has identified the following Absolute and Competitive Priorities for the PSOEP program. Absolute Priorities are priorities that must be addressed by all applicants; failure to do so will disqualify the application from receiving funding.

ABSOLUTE PRIORITIES

Each eligible entity that receives an award from the state may use the funds to carry out a broad array of activities to advance student achievement. These activities include:

1. Expand or create an extended day or an extended day and summer enhancement program;

2. Expand or create a summer enhancement program; or

3. Establish new educational or recreational partnerships with:

    a. Local parks and recreation departments

    b. Recreation councils

    c. Local public schools

    d. Public libraries

    e. Institutions of higher education

    f. Private sector businesses

    g. Other nonprofit [501(c)(3)] organizations and foundations

MSDE shall award applications that meet the established criteria to incorporate features that will have positive measurable impact on the conditions of well-being for children and youth as identified by Maryland OST standards.

1. All applications for extended day programs must:

    1. Integrate an educational component that assists students in meeting academic requirements on grade level;

2. All applications for summer enhancement programs must:

    1. Provide learning and enrichment activities that will assist students in achieving at or about grade level in the next school year; and

    2. Expose students to future learning and life opportunities (during non-instructional time).

3. All applications for educational school day programs must:

    1. Enhance educational purpose of school; and

    2. Enhance students' access to physical, social, and emotional support.

COMPETITIVE PRIORITIES

Applicants need not address competitive priorities, however, if the information is included, MSDE will review as part of the grant application process and provide additional competitive priority points.

ENOUGH Act of 2024

Priority points will be given to local education agencies (LEAs), public community schools, and nonprofit [501(c)(3)] organizations that include schools in the identified ENOUGH communities. A full list of schools in ENOUGH communities can be found here.

The State of Maryland is taking a comprehensive approach to addressing child poverty and promoting economic mobility. On May 9, 2024, Governor Moore signed into law the Engaging Neighborhoods, Organizations, Unions, Governments and Households (ENOUGH) Act of 2024, which aims to reduce the number of children living in poverty in Maryland through community-led solutions that create thriving families and communities. making Maryland the first state in the nation with a state-led, place-based investment strategy for ending child poverty. Maryland has selected 27 ENOUGH communities, which have high levels of concentrated child poverty. Applicants prioritizing these communities will receive priority. The 27 ENOUGH communities can be found here.

Legislative Components

Applicants that explicitly integrate a minimum of one of the legislative components will receive an additional 5 competitive points.

1. Provide opportunities for students to learn about the environment, their place in it, and what they can do to protect it;

2. Provide opportunities to learn about the environment to improve understanding of how nature, science practice, society and social responsibility are intertwined; offer opportunities for appropriate stewardship practice; and help to prepare youth with skills needed in the workforce, and expose them to careers in environmental fields, green jobs, or sustainable practices that apply to any career field;

3. Supplement transportation costs for public transportation and alternative transportation for program sites that are not easily accessible to outdoor education centers or park sites. Applications must explain and justify the transportation needed; or

4. Include components that will connect youth to their environment, provide time outdoors for free play, and discovery as well as structured programming that exposes them to outdoor recreational pursuits, life skills, stewardship activities, and green career skills.

Performance Priorities

The 2021 cohort of PSOEP subrecipients prior grant performance will impact the final scores of the application. A five-point deduction from the overall score of the FY2026 application will be applied for each of the following:

*   High-risk applicants that received an overall risk assessment of a 3, 4, or 5 in Year 2 and/or Year 3 (SY 22-23 and/or 23-24); and
*   Applicants that did not submit Critical Elements Monitoring evidence in Stage I, II or III for Year 4 (SY24-25) by the specified due date.

MINIMUM HOURS OF PROGRAMMING

MSDE shall award applications that demonstrate the ability to successfully implement programs that meet the established criteria by operating site:

- Extended or educational school day by a minimum of eight hours each full week that school is in session; and/or

- Extended day for a minimum of four hours per weekend; and/or

- Summer enhancement program for a minimum of four hours per day for a minimum of 30 days.

Programs must describe the frequency and duration of the program. Applicants must provide a program schedule including proposed start/end dates, days, hours of operation, and total duration of programming to meet the minimum requirements.

Program Requirements

The PSOEP is a competitive grant opportunity. MSDE advises applicants to collect all necessary information, collaborate with key stakeholders, and submit an application that meets grant criteria and implementation standards. Active participation and reporting on partnership and program implementation by the applicant and partnering school(s) are mandatory components of the Validation process in the competitive award evaluation.

PROJECT ABSTRACT

The project statement should briefly describe the project's outcome(s) and strategies (i.e., what the project will do and how it will do it). Proposed programs must provide 100% in-person services. Virtual components can be integrated in the program design but must be funded supplementally. Do not exceed the 100-word limit.

Applicants proposing to operate both an extended day and summer enhancement must include separate descriptions of the programs in the abstract.

EXTENT OF NEED

Needs Assessment

A needs assessment involves systematically reviewing diverse information to prioritize actions in the proposal. Engaging input from all stakeholders, including schools, community members, parents, and students, is fundamental. Ensure that data is relevant to the specific populations served by the program. Clearly state the data collection methods used and the sources, such as the Maryland Report Card.

Establish a clearly defined problem supported by a comprehensive needs assessment. Highlight who is impacted by the issue, the context of the problem, and the broader implications for the community if left unaddressed. Define the primary challenge the program will address and include quantitative data like test scores alongside qualitative insights from focus groups. Document contributing factors and assessing why prior efforts have not adequately addressed the needs.

Target Need

Describe how the target group of students to be served will be identified and selected. Provide a detailed recruitment plan that includes ongoing efforts to maintain attendance and enrollment goals, and an explanation of attendance protocols to document participant hours for each programmatic component. Identify a recruitment matrix for determining student eligibility and enrollment preference. Show how the selection criteria are aligned with the population's needs as described in the Needs Assessment and with the intended outcomes.

Community Dissemination

Describe how information about the program (including its location) will be disseminated to the community in a manner that is understandable and accessible.

PROJECT DESIGN

Evidence-Based Strategies

Identify the evidence-based research strategies and activities the program will implement to achieve its objectives. Strategies encompass broad methodologies, such as employing the XYZ Math Curriculum for math instruction. In contrast, activities refer to specific actions aimed at meeting project goals, including one-on-one math tutoring provided by trained volunteers. These activities may occur on designated dates or extend over a specified timeframe to ensure comprehensive support for students.

Describe how the selected program design will uphold the following:

Extended day programs:

1. Integrate an educational component that assists students in meeting academic requirements on grade level;

2. Provide learning and enrichment activities that will assist students in achieving at or about grade level in the next school year; and

3. Expose students to future learning and life opportunities;

Summer enhancement programs:

1. Provide learning and enrichment activities that will assist students in achieving at or about grade level in the next school year;
2. Expose students to future learning and life opportunities; and
3. Utilize year one as a pre-implementation planning year; or

Educational school day programs:

1. Enhance educational purpose of school; and
2. Enhance students' access to physical, social, and emotional support and include how and how often program staff communicate with school staff, how academic instruction is aligned the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards.

Safety

Grant programs are required to prioritize and assure the implementation of safety protocols during operations. It is essential to consider the safety of staff, students, families, and facilities in the program's design and execution.

1. Describe how the screening process (background checks and/or fingerprinting) will be conducted on all staff and volunteers working directly with children, in accordance with standards set forth in Section 5-560 et seq. of the Family Law Article of the Maryland Annotated Code. Before starting to work in the PSOEP out-of-school time program, all staff working with children must have relevant clearances as required under state statute. Background checks are for school employees, volunteers, contractors, and subcontractors who have direct contact with students and college students enrolled in a student teacher program.

2. Describe staff and, if applicable, volunteers' roles and responsibilities, including how they will be selected, trained, and supervised.

3. Explain how students will arrive and depart from the program . Include a dismissal plan that identifies methods of transportation to be utilized (e.g., local jurisdiction buses, independent vendor buses, etc.) or if appropriate, walking arrangements. If school buses are not used, then explain the mode of transportation. As per the 2005 Safe Transportation Equity Act, 14-15

passenger vans do not meet the standards for applicable federal motor vehicle safety standards, and are prohibited from being purchased, leased, or used for transportation for students. A multi-function school activity bus is preferred, as it meets all the safety standards.

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. Demonstrate how continued investment in grant program is justified by initial outcome data from the program.

PERFORMANCE GOALS AND INDICATORS

MSDE identifies performance goals to evaluate the effectiveness of the PSOEP grant programs. The goals are organized by: (1) Extended Day, (2) Summer Enhancement, and (3) Educational School-Day programs. The applicant is responsible for identifying the Performance Indicators, Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards, Maryland Out-of-the-School Time Standards, Activities, Data Source(s), and Evaluation Methods to achieve the specified goal.

Alignment with Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards

The applicant must ensure that extended day and summer enhancement programs have an educational component that is age appropriate and aligns with the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards. The Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards cover English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects. These standards define what students should know and be able to do at each grade level and align with state standards and assessments. The applicant must identify the grade level for Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards.

Alignment with Maryland Out-of-School Time Program Quality Standards

The applicant must integrate the Maryland Out-of-School Time Program Quality Standards listed below that will have a positive measurable impact on the conditions and wellbeing for children and youth.

Program Quality Standards

- Youth Program Climate

- Youth Development

- Family/Caring Adult and Community Engagement

Applicants are called to complete the Performance Goals and Indicators as a component of the FY26 Grant Application.

Implementation and Governance Plan

LEADERSHIP TEAM DESCRIPTION

The applicant must identify the project's leaders, including the roles and positions, as well as expected qualifications, and specify how much of the project director's time will be devoted to this project, as per Uniform Guidance 2CFR 200.430. In support of salaries and wages, documentary support will be required where employees work on, "A Federal award and a non-Federal award."

The applicant must describe who will be included in the leadership team (e.g., project director, site coordinators, board members, students, parents, etc.), how the leadership team will ensure successful implementation of the project, how often they will meet, and actions to oversee positions responsible for grant implementation. The applicant must identify the positions that will be responsible for grant implementation (ex: Grant Manager, Bookkeeper, Academic Instruction Teachers, Enrichment Teacher, Parent Liaison, Evaluator, etc.). A grant manager cannot be a contractual position. The grant manager and fiscal representatives are required and billable positions.

MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Management Plan section describes how and by whom the program will be managed to ensure project success. This section must:

a. Describe how, when, and by whom the program's implementation will be monitored, including starting the project on time (implementation in Fall of 2025);

b. Describe the mechanisms by which the project will clearly define and hold partners accountable to specific roles, responsibilities, contributions, and deliverables, e.g., contracts or Memoranda of Understanding.

c. Describe the professional development that will be provided to staff implementing the strategies/activities; Provide an explanation of who will provide, the frequency of, and the expectations for applied integration of the professional development.

The Management Plan details the major management actions, timeframe, and specific people responsible for each action. The plan supports the proposed plan of operation, but includes only management actions, not direct service activities. Examples of management actions are hiring staff, ordering equipment, and developing curricula. Meetings with the evaluator and steering committee must occur within 30 days of the Notice of Grant Award.

On the Management Plan, in chronological order, the grantee needs to list all major management specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-based (SMART) actions necessary to implement the project during the second year of funding. Assign a responsible party, measurable outcome, and an approximate date for each action. If the action is ongoing, indicate the range of dates over which it will be implemented. MSDE reporting requirements should also be included in the management plan.

Applicants are called to complete the Management Plan as a component of the FY2026 Grant Application.

STEERING COMMITTEE DESCRIPTION

The project must have a steering committee to govern the project consisting of major stakeholders and grant project directors. Duties of the steering committee include establishing major program policies, reviewing quarterly milestones and annual evaluation reports, and making recommendations for

programmatic change. Steering committee members should represent the major stakeholders in the project (e.g., project partners, parents, students, principals, Board of Education members). Project directors should act as advisors to the committee. The duties, members, and meeting dates of the committee should be identified in this section of the project proposal and in the Management Plan.

Partners

A partner is any organization other than the grantee that will actively contribute to the project. This includes the LEA(s) being served, local parks and recreation departments, recreation councils, public libraries, institutions of higher education, private sector business, and other nonprofit [501(c)(3)] organizations and foundations. Partners include subcontractors, organizations that are under contract with the grantee to provide grant-funded activities or services. If awarded, all applicants must ensure MSDE has a record of the current contract/Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in the applicant Budget Documents folder for MSDE review and approval (such resources will be shared during validation). Contracts require review and approval before funds are released for reimbursement. Funds paid to partners by the applicant without an approved contract are subject to non-reimbursement.

The Partner Plan identifies the project's partners, the respective roles in the project, the benefits each expects to receive, and the specific contributions each partner will make to the project in the form of financial support, equipment, personnel, or other resources. The applicant should include which objectives their services will help to achieve, as well as evaluation dates to reflect on progress and/or achieved outcomes.

Applicants are required to complete the Partner Plan as a component of the FY2026 Grant Application.

Evaluation and Dissemination

Program evaluation is a critical and essential process of program implementation. Program evaluation involves the systematic collection and analysis of information related to the design, implementation, and outcomes of a program for the purpose of assessing and subsequently modifying program activities to ensure program efficacy and effectiveness. The Evaluation Plan outlines the process by which the program will be evaluated. The evaluation must include a plan for a professional, independent evaluation of the program.

The evaluation plan must also address the following:

a. Specify the questions the evaluation will seek to answer, based on the project's objectives, and plan of operation. These questions must enable project leaders to assess progress toward objectives and milestones and enable project managers to determine which strategies and activities have been successful, and those that need to be revised.

b. Describe the proposed data and measurement instruments that will be used.

c. Explain how data will be collected, including who is responsible, and provide a timeline.

d. Describe how the integrity and accuracy of data will be ensured.

e.   Specify the third-party individual or group who will conduct the external evaluation or provide a detailed job description and the selection process by which a qualified evaluator will be identified.

f.   Describe how and when evaluation findings will be used to make improvements in the project.

g.   Describe how the evaluation findings will be disseminated to the major stakeholders and all individuals with an interest in the project. Explain how dissemination formats will be tailored to meet the needs of diverse stakeholders.

Through implementation of the Evaluation Plan, the applicant will provide a summative evaluation report to MSDE following the project year implementation. The evaluation report must integrate the following components:

1.   Evaluation Framework/Purpose;

2.   Methodology;

3.   Evaluation Findings;

4.   Summary;

5.   Recommendations and Limitations.

Applicants operating multiple sites are to submit one evaluation report with a summary, recommendations, and limitations for all operating sites and individual data reported for each operating site, as outlined below:

1.   Evaluation Framework/Purpose;

2.   Methodology; and

3.   Evaluation Findings.

Applicants are required to complete the Evaluation Plan as a component of the FY2026 Grant Application.

Programmatic Monitoring

CRITICAL ELEMENTS MONITORING

The applicant is required to comply with the requirements of the grant program (including completion of data) on an annual basis through documentation and evidence review. The OST Critical Elements monitoring is comprised of stage evidence submission in the following areas: (1) Programmatic Compliance with Federal, State and Local Health and Safety, (2) Programmatic, (3) Evaluation, (4) Management, (5) Sustainability, and (6) Budget and Adequacy of Resources. MSDE conducts a review of the evidence and identifies corrective actions for applicant completion, as well as priorities for technical assistance through program observation. The grantee's ability to comply will affect the monitoring risk assessment indicator, as well as advise MSDE on needed technical assistance.

PROGRAM OBSERVATION

The applicant must implement quality academic enrichment as aligned with the approved grant program. MSDE conducts onsite observations of the following program components: (1) academically aligned objectives; (2) student engagement; (3) adherence to the grant requirements; (4) leveraging of partnerships and (5) data informed decisions. The goal of program observation is to provide positive, constructive, and immediate feedback to grantees regarding the implementation of the OST grant funded program as aligned with the original proposal or as amended.

At the conclusion of the onsite visit, MSDE's Extended Learning Specialist will discuss the observation results with the applicant, provides additional guidance, as well as addresses corrective actions. The applicant will have an opportunity to provide any missing documentation within a specified time frame.

Leveraging Private and Existing Funding Sources

MSDE encourages applicants to describe the ability to leverage private and existing funding sources. If applicable, applicants should include in the Budget Worksheet and Narrative how private and existing funding sources will be combined or coordinated with the proposed grant funding to demonstrate the effective use of resources.

SUSTAINABILITY

MSDE encourages applicants to evaluate plans to expand partnerships and develop new public/private partnerships. It is expected that all programs funded will acquire other funds to assist in sustaining the program in Year 4 and beyond.

MATCHING CONTRIBUTIONS

Proposed budgets may include cash and third-party in-kind contributions (including but not limited to material, personnel, and other types of contributions) each year. Third party in-kind contributions cannot be derived by the state under another award, except where authorized by a statute to be used for cost sharing or matching.

BRANDING

All PSOEP applicants are required to identify MSDE as the funding source for PSOEP funds in all written advertisements. If an applicant receives partial funding from additional sources, they may note that funding for the PSOEP program is received in part from MSDE.

BUDGET AND ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES

All PSOEP awards are reimbursement grants, whereby each program incurs costs and then invoices MSDE for those charges. Applicants must have sufficient cash flow to operate the PSOEP program continuously while awaiting reimbursement receipt, which normally takes approximately six to eight weeks. Interest expense or other debt services costs cannot be charged to the PSOEP grant. Checking fees cannot be charged to the grant. If unallowable costs are reimbursed during the grant period, corrective actions will be taken, and the funds will be required to be repaid to MSDE.

The FY2026 Grant Budget consists of two components: (1) C-1-25 and (2) Budget Worksheet. The budget objects are: (1) Salaries & Wages; (2) Contracted Services; (3) Supplies & Materials; (4) Other Charges; (5) Equipment; and (6) Transfers. The budget object totals in the Budget Worksheet and Narrative must align with the totals identified on the MSDE Grant Form C-1-25.

BUDGET WORKSHEET AND NARRATIVE TEMPLATE

The budget narrative is a part of the Budget Worksheet. The Budget Narrative must:

  a. Describe a clear relationship between the activities described in the application and the proposed allocation of grant funds;
  b. Address the necessity and rationale of proposed costs;
  c. The budget section must demonstrate that there are sufficient resources to successfully implement the proposed program as described in the project narrative, including, but not limited to, instructional staff, curricular materials, evaluation, professional development, background checks, and transportation, if necessary; and

d. Applicants must list all budgetary costs based upon the narrative components and program design and ensure the budget includes a line-item description for every allowable cost necessary to carry out the goals and objectives of the proposed program.

The budget must:

a. Detail the year of the project in an itemized budget;
b. Itemize general expenses into specific line items. For example, "Meeting Expenses" can be itemized to include, "room rental" and "photocopying;"
c. Clearly identify the requested funds and in-kind contributions; and
d. Identify the source of each in-kind contribution, if applicable.

Identify reasonable and allowable expenses aligned with the United States Department of Education (USED) Uniform Grant Guidance, 2 C.F.R. Part 200, (2 CFR § 200). The Electronic Code of Federal Regulations (E-CFR) is accessible at: https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200_main_02.tpl. Utilize The Maryland Financial Reporting Manual as an additional resource when categorizing allowable expenses whether a Non-Local Education Agency or a Local Education Agency. Utilize the Bureau of Labor and Statistics National Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates database to identify reasonable and allowable wages.

Adhere to the following guidelines when proposing expenses in the specified budget objects.

a. **Salaries and Wages:** Expenditures incurred on personnel on the Lead Agency payroll.

   i.   Specify and detail how the expense was calculated for each line item. The calculation column must include hourly rate of pay provided based on the reasonable and allowable rates of pay aligned with the U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics (BLS), number of hours billed to the project and, percentage of time billed to the project; Total weekly allocations cannot exceed 40 hours;

   ii. Program staff identified in Salaries/Wages must include paycheck withholding as supporting documentation when submitting reimbursement invoices; and therefore, are coded within this category.

      a. Contracted services supported by a contract/MOU should not be reported in this budget object.

   iii. Program staff identified under Salaries/Wages and Contractual Services must remain in that budget object for the remainder of the grant year; and

   iv. The budget must include a position or contracted services expense for a finance agent/bookkeeper.

b. **Contracted Services**: Expenditures on services performed by person(s) who are not on Lead Agency payroll, provide direct services, and are requesting reimbursement by the grant program.

   i.   Specify and detail how the expense was calculated for each line item. The calculation column must include hourly rate of pay based on the reasonable and allowable rates of pay aligned with the U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics, administrative fees, and number of hours billed to the project. Please provide the following in the calculation column and embed the hyperlink to the BLS reference;

    ii.   Vendors that provide direct services to students must submit a proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlining the deliverables and breakdown of expenses to include hourly rates and administrative costs for all providers. The MSDE acknowledges that MOUs may not be finalized at the time of the application; however, a proposed agreement is required that outlines the details of partnership; and

    iii.   The external evaluator is appropriately categorized in the Contracted Services budget object and is at a maximum of seven percent of the Total Requested.

c.   **Supplies and Materials:** Refer to 2 C.F.R. Part 200, The Maryland Financial Reporting Manual, Appendix D for a definition. The total object cannot exceed eight percent of the Total Requested.

    i.   Specify and detail how the expense was calculated for each line item. The calculation column must include quantity and cost per item.

d.   **Equipment**: Refer to 2 C.F.R. Part 200, and The Maryland Financial Reporting Manual, Appendix D for a definition. The total object cannot exceed three percent of the Total Requested.

e.   **Other Charges:** May include expenses such as travel, conferences, fringe, etc. (not an inclusive list). The total object cannot exceed 36 % of the Total Requested.

    i.   Professional Development:

        a. Include funds to cover travel and lodging expenses for at least two key personnel to attend one national and two regional training activities during each year of the project (actual attendance will be contingent on MSDE approval).

        b. Include funds for the Grant Manager to attend three state grantee networking meetings; and

        c. Include funds for the Grant Manager to attend one two-day state grantee retreat.

f.   **Transfers:** The total object cannot exceed 13 % of the Total Requested.

g.   **Indirect Cost Rate:**

    i.   Indirect Costs cannot exceed 10% of the Total Direct Cost for Non-LEAs; LEAs should report the FY26 MSDE approved indirect cost rate.

Both requested and in-kind funds must be reasonable with current market prices. Grant funds cannot be used to purchase food, facilities, vehicles, or support new construction.

Conflict of Interest

All potential conflicts of interest should be avoided. According to the general procurement standards, the non-Federal entity must maintain written standards of conduct covering conflicts of interest and governing the actions of its employees engaged in the selection, award, and administration of contracts. No employee, officer, or agent may participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by a federal award if he or she has a real or apparent conflict of interest. Such a conflict of interest would arise when the employee, officer, or agent, any member of his or her immediate family, his or her partner, or an organization which employs or is about to employ any of the parties indicated herein or has a financial or other interest in or a tangible personal benefit from a firm considered for a contract. The officers, employees, and agents of the non-Federal entity may neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from contractors or parties to subcontracts. The standards of conduct must provide for disciplinary actions to be applied for violations of such standards by officers, employees, or agents of the non-Federal entity. (EDGAR 2 CFR §200.318).

Within the PSOEP program, conflicts of interest could include:

a. Employing immediate family members as contract labor for services;
b. Having a program employee serve as a vendor; and
c. Purchasing supplies from a company in which a program employee has a financial interest.

The General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), Section 427

Each applicant must develop actions taken 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.

Awarding of Funds

MSDE will initiate notification of grant awards via email no later than July 30, 2025.

DENIAL OF GRANT APPLICATION

Each applicant whose application is denied will receive a Denial Notice that explains the reason for the denial after final award decisions are made.

REASONS FOR DENIAL

Applicants may be denied funding for failure to meet the requirements listed under the Eligibility, Funding, and Length of Grant section in this document.

APPEAL PROCESS

Appeals based on a disagreement with the professional judgment of the peer reviewers will not be considered. Peer reviewers are recruited based on background and expertise in providing effective academic, enrichment, youth development, and related services to children (ESSA, Sec. 4201(b)(5)(B(i)). Appeals are limited to the grounds that MSDE failed to correctly apply the standards and process for reviewing the application as specified in the Grant Information Guide and Grant Application.

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

MSDE does not discriminate on the basis of age, ancestry/national origin, color, disability, gender identity/expression, marital status, race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation in matters affecting employment or in providing access to programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

For inquiries related to Department policy, please contact:

> Equity Assurance and Compliance Office
> Office of the Deputy State Superintendent for Operations
> Maryland State Department of Education
> 200 W. Baltimore Street – 2nd Floor
> Baltimore, Maryland 21201-2595
> 410-767-0123 - voice
> 410-767-0431 - fax
> 410-333-6442 - TTY/TD

PSOEP Grant Application

The details of the e-application are included in the Resource section. Please submit the data electronically through accessing the FY26 PSOEP Grant Application. The deadline for application submission is Monday, July 28, 2025.

Upon submission, MSDE will review the provided data:

1. Grant Application; and

2. Grants Management Plans consisting of: (1) Performance Goals and Indicators, (2) Management Plan, (3) Partner Plan, and (4) Evaluation Plan; and

3. Budget Documents consisting of the FY2026 Proposed Budget Documents workbook with the C-1-25 and Budget Worksheet tabs completed, and if applicable, contracts/MOUs.

Resources

Utilize the link below to access the full version of the FY26 PSOEP Grant Application:

- [PSOEP Competitive Award Application Full Qualtrics.pdf](#)

Utilize the link below to access the editable Grants Management Plan documents:

- [Performance Goals and Indicators](#)

- [Evaluation Plan](#)

- [Management Plan](#)

- [Partner Plan](#)

- [FY2026 Proposed Budget Documents_C-1-25 and Budget Worksheet.xlsm](#)

Customer Service Support Sessions

The MSDE Team will hold two virtual customer service support sessions to provide support and answer questions regarding completing the application. Registration for the sessions with the dates and a video call link are provided below.

CUSTOMER SERVICE SUPPORT SESSION 1

Tuesday, June 24, 2025, 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Join video call or dial: (US) +1 469-213-3760   PIN: 826 687 580#

CUSTOMER SERVICE SUPPORT SESSION 2

Thursday, July 10, 2025, 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Join video call or dial: (US) +1 469-213-3760   PIN: 445 785 208#

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

Grant Application Timeline

This funding opportunity, including all attachments and updates, can be downloaded from the MSDE Office of Grants Administration and Compliance website. The application must be submitted electronically using Qualtrics by the application deadline.

Date	Timeline Event
June 18, 2025	The Grant Information Guide and application for participating are released.
June 17, 2025	MSDE will hold a virtual customer service support session for interested applicants.
June 26, 2025	MSDE will hold a virtual customer service support session for interested applicants.
July 30, 2025	Application deadline. MSDE Reviewers will evaluate applications.
August 15, 2025	MSDE will notify applicants of the award status.
June 30, 2026	The annual grant period ends.