



**Maryland**

STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

# GRANT INFORMATION GUIDE

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## System of Professional Learning Grant

### **Maryland State Department of Education**

200 West Baltimore Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

### **Deadline**

June 16, 2024  
No later than 5:00 p.m. EDT

**MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

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State Superintendent of Schools

**Dr. Deann Collins**

Deputy State Superintendent  
Office of Teaching and Learning

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## Table of Contents

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Program Description .....	3
Use of Funds .....	5
Program Requirements.....	6
Application Requirements .....	7
Budget and Budget Narrative .....	10
Appendices.....	11
The Review Process .....	12
Scoring Rubric.....	12
Reporting Requirements .....	16
Grant Application Timeline .....	17
Non-Discrimination Statement .....	18
The General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) Sect 427.....	19
Customer Service Support Sessions.....	20

## Program Description

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**The System of Professional Learning Grant is a competitive grant administered by the Office of Teaching and Learning and Division of Educator Effectiveness at the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). This grant provides funding for the development and design of a new system of professional development that is tied to the career ladder.**

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future (Blueprint) seeks to provide professional learning for teachers across Maryland in a train-the-trainer model, giving them the skills needed to grow their capacity to positively impact PreK-12 student outcomes. This grant will provide resources for the establishment of a new system of professional learning that includes state-of-the-art training on how to:

- Lead and mentor teams of professionals to promote professional learning among colleagues;
- Collaborate with colleagues to improve student performance;
- Design and support collaborative professional learning for teachers pursuing National Board Certification;
- Provide advanced training on the science of learning specific to individual disciplines;
- Provide instruction and school-based services utilizing racial equity and cultural competency principles and best-practices;
- Select and implement evidence-based instructional practices for students with disabilities and multilingual learners;
- Implement restorative practices and trauma-informed responses; and
- Implement high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) at the classroom level.

### AUTHORIZATION

[MD Code, Education, § 6-1011](#)

### GRANT OVERVIEW

#### Name of Grant Program

System of Professional Learning Grant

#### Purpose

The purpose of this grant is to design and implement a system of professional learning tied to the career ladder for teachers to build their capacity in various educational areas to advance the goals of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future.

#### Dissemination

This Grant Information Guide (GIG) was released on May 20, 2024.

#### Deadline

Proposals are due no later than 5:00p.m. on June 16, 2024.

**Grant Period**

June 24, 2024 - June 30, 2025

**Funding Amount Available**

Up to \$2,000,000

Awards may vary based on the application. MSDE may award components separately.

**Estimated Number of Grants**

One (1)

**Eligibility**

This funding opportunity is designed for colleges and universities, community-based organizations, and non-profit or for-profit organizations who develop and implement systems-wide professional learning training programs.

**Submission Instructions**

Grant applications must be submitted by 5:00p.m. June 16, 2024 via email to [tamarisk.james@maryland.gov](mailto:tamarisk.james@maryland.gov) and [melissa.chandler@maryland.gov](mailto:melissa.chandler@maryland.gov).

**PROGRAM CONTACT****Tami James**

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**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 council is on target to meet its goals and fully expend its awarded program resources.

## Use of Funds

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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 costs, including payroll and salaries or similar compensation for an employee;
- Materials and supplies in support of grant activities;
- Contracts specifically for the purpose of the grant;
- Travel expenses incurred specifically to carry out the grant; and
- Indirect costs.

### **Funds may not be used for:**

- Supplanting existing services or program funds.
- Capital improvements.
- Purchase of gift cards.
- Purchase of office furniture and equipment.
- Cost(s) incurred prior to the approval of the grant.

## Program Requirements

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As defined in MD Code, Education, § 6-1011, and the Accountability and Implementation Board's Comprehensive Implementation Plan dated August 2023, the proposal for the **System of Professional Learning** must provide state-of-the-art training using a train-the-trainer model on how to:

1. Lead and mentor teams of professionals to promote professional learning among colleagues;
2. Collaborate with colleagues to improve student performance;
3. Design and support collaborative professional learning for teachers pursuing National Board Certification;
4. Provide advanced training on the science of learning specific to individual disciplines;
5. Provide instruction and school-based services utilizing racial equity and cultural competency principles and best-practices;
6. Select and implement evidence-based instructional practices for students with disabilities and multilingual learners;
7. Implement restorative practices and trauma-informed responses; and
8. Implementation of high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) at the classroom level.

The **System of Professional Learning** partner must include a plan for how the grantee will assist in delivering the initial training for trainers and how they will provide the documentation and materials for the train-the-trainer modules.

Finally, the **System of Professional Learning** partner and the Maryland State Department of Education will partner to facilitate a Stakeholder Engagement and Advisory committee of major stakeholders to gather their input and recommendations on the system of professional learning tied to the career ladder.

Proposals should speak to how they will address all the above requirements.

# Application Requirements

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## 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 and must be signed by the Head of the Grantee Agency.

## PROJECT ABSTRACT

The project statement should briefly describe the project's overarching goals, outcome(s) and strategies (i.e., what the project will do and how it will do it.) Do not exceed the 100-word limit. This statement may be used in press releases, board exhibits, etc.

## PROJECT NARRATIVE (25 PAGE LIMIT)

The project narrative consists of the following sections. Reviewers will score these sections.

- Justification of Need
- Evidence of Impact
- Goals, Measurable Outcomes, and Milestones
- Strategies
- Plan of Operation, Key Personnel, and Project Timeline
- Evaluation and Dissemination

## EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

Discuss your history of impact on the target population or similar populations, what has worked, what has not worked, and your track record in effectuating change. 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.

## GOALS, MEASURABLE OUTCOMES, AND MILESTONES

**Goals:** State the overall goal(s) of the project. The goal(s) should be a broad statement that outlines the overall purpose of the program. The goal(s) should be high-level and should encompass multiple activities. Goals and objectives should directly align to the needs assessment. Include all relevant groups and individuals in the target population. The strongest applications will directly support the Pillar Two goals of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future.

**Measurable Outcomes:** Outcomes measure progress toward the goal. Outcomes break the long-term goal into steps or address the factors contributing to the problem addressed by the goal. It is imperative that outcomes be established for every target population the project is designed to affect. There should be multiple outcomes aligned to the same goal.



**Milestones:** Ongoing evaluation is essential to the management of a project. Since goals and outcomes are not evaluated until the end of the year, milestones must be established to measure progress during the year. Milestones should be evaluated quarterly.

Since milestones are intended to indicate progress towards an outcome, each milestone must be related to a stated outcome. Keep in mind that milestones are indicators of progress and may not use the same measurement tool as the outcome to which they are related. A project may take months before there is an impact on clients, or the rate of improvement may level off over time. Milestones should anticipate this and be gauged accordingly. Be sure that milestones are ambitious, yet attainable.

## **STRATEGIES**

Strategies are broad approaches (methods, procedures, techniques) employed to reach milestones, realize outcomes, and ultimately accomplish goals. Begin this section with a justification as to why specific strategies were chosen and how they will help in accomplishing the stated goals, including those identified in the Evidence of Impact. The justification should cite research to support the strategies. It is essential that the project include strategies for each outcome, and outcomes for each strategy. Once the question of why strategies were chosen is addressed, discuss how the strategies will be adapted to fit the project.

## **PLAN OF OPERATIONS, KEY PERSONNEL AND TIMELINE**

The plan of operation tells the reader when key activities will take place during the grant period. Applicants should consider the key tasks or activities that need to be conducted to implement the program successfully, whether each task can realistically begin and end in the proposed time frame, and how long each task will take to complete. It should contain three sections: management, implementation, and evaluation, and should include responsible staff for each activity. From an implementation team perspective, applicants are required to provide a list of the key staff or personnel responsible for the successful implementation and monitoring of the grant requirements. Attach a one page job description for each staff person listed. In the application, applicants must provide the name, title, and role/responsibility of each staff person. Space in the application is provided for applicants to provide partner project information.

### **Stakeholder Engagement and Advisory Committee**

The project must have an advisory committee consisting of major stakeholders; the grantees and MSDE will partner in the facilitation of the committee. Duties of the advisory committee include reviewing quarterly milestones and annual evaluation reports and making recommendations for input and feedback on the design and implementation of the system of professional learning. The advisory committee shall meet a minimum of five times per fiscal year, and their work shall be guided by data and the needs of the stakeholders. The work of the advisory committee should be public and communicated to all stakeholders. The meeting dates of the committee should be identified in this section of the grant application and in the timeline.

## **EVALUATION AND DISSEMINATION**

Applicants should include an evaluation plan for each measurable outcome. Grantees are required to submit an interim progress report that is consistent with the project's goal and objective(s). Keep in mind that the final evaluation summary 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.

Evaluation is an important part of determining the success of the program. Applicants are required to describe in detail what success will look like and the criteria that will be used to determine and measure success. Measures of success should align to the identified need and to the goals and outcomes. Applicants must describe how they will communicate the outcomes and impact of the process, as well as implications and lessons learned for sustaining the system of professional learning and the train-the-trainer model. Descriptions of the types of reports and other by-products developed during the project may be made available. Applicants are required to describe a plan for dissemination of information and results to both MSDE and other stakeholders. This plan should include reports, resources, and other materials that will be available, including products intended to support the sustaining, scaling, or replication of the activities by other stakeholders.

Evaluation and quarterly progress reports should be consistent with the project's goals and objectives. An effective ongoing plan should evaluate milestones and help project staff make informed decisions.

# 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): Sample

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
<b>Total for salaries &amp; wages:</b>		\$83,200	\$20,800	\$104,000

## Appendices

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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](#)

Appendix C: Evidence of status of a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, if applicable

Appendix D: Job description(s) of Key Personnel

# 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.
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, the Office of Teaching and Learning, and the Division of Educator Effectiveness. Reviewers 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.

# Scoring Rubric

## PROJECT ABSTRACT

Level 3 Exceeds Criteria	Level 2 Meets Criteria	Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria
<p>The project abstract outlines a concise and comprehensive summary of the overarching goals, measurable outcomes, strategies, and partnerships. Project abstract includes alignment to MSDE's vision and mission, the Strategic Plan, and the Blueprint.</p>	<p>The project abstract addresses the overarching goals, measurable outcomes, strategies, and partnerships.</p>	<p>The project abstract is missing or does not address the required components.</p>

**EVIDENCE OF IMPACT**

<p><b>Level 3 Exceeds Criteria</b></p>	<p><b>Level 2 Meets Criteria</b></p>	<p><b>Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria</b></p>
<p>The proposal provides two or more examples that explain the history of impact on the target population including discussion of past efforts, failures, and successes toward influencing change.</p> <p>The proposal clearly explains future impacts of the proposed activity/project and how the target population is expected to be influenced by the efforts of specific to implementing this grant.</p>	<p>The proposal provides at least one example that explains the history of impact on the target population.</p> <p>The proposal describes the future impact of the activity/project and how the target population will be influenced by change.</p>	<p>No examples that explain the history of impact on the target population.</p> <p>The proposal does not describe the future impact of the activity/project.</p>

**GOALS, MEASURABLE OUTCOMES, AND MILESTONES**

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

**STRATEGIES**

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

**PLAN OF OPERATIONS, KEY PERSONNEL AND TIMELINE**

<p><b>Level 3 Exceeds Criteria</b></p>	<p><b>Level 2 Meets Criteria</b></p>	<p><b>Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria</b></p>
<p>The proposal includes an advisory committee and partner plan that identifies individuals from a variety of backgrounds with extensive experience toward ensuring successful implementation.</p> <p>All relevant activities listed chronological indicating a comprehensive plan throughout the grant period.</p>	<p>The proposal includes an advisory committee and partner plan that appears adequate for ensuring implementation.</p> <p>The proposal includes a clear time-specific plan.</p>	<p>The proposal does not include an advisory committee or partner plan that is adequate for ensuring implementation.</p> <p>The proposal does not include a plan, or the plan is vague.</p>

**EVALUATION AND DISSEMINATION**

<b>Level 3 Exceeds Criteria</b>	<b>Level 2 Meets Criteria</b>	<b>Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria</b>
<p>Clear evaluation strategy that includes alternative scenarios and criteria to ensure comprehensive evaluation.</p> <p>Multiple relevant, logical data types and aligned collection methods are identified.</p> <p>Detailed dissemination plan on how the project findings will be shared to stakeholders, and advisory committee members including examples of how, when and through what methods.</p>	<p>Clear evaluation strategy</p> <p>Clear data type(s) and aligned collection method(s) are identified.</p> <p>The dissemination plan includes how the findings will be shared to stakeholders and advisory committee members.</p>	<p>No evidence of evaluation strategy</p> <p>The data type and collection method are unclear or unaligned.</p> <p>The dissemination plan does not clearly identify how findings will be shared.</p>

**BUDGET AND BUDGET NARRATIVE**

<b>Level 3 Exceeds Criteria</b>	<b>Level 2 Meets Criteria</b>	<b>Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria</b>
<p>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.</p>	<p>The budget narrative is complete. The budget aligns to the proposal and is free of mathematical errors. Expenses are reasonable and allowable.</p>	<p>Budget does not align with the proposal, includes cost that are not reasonable or allowable, or has several mathematical errors.</p>



## 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.
Ongoing	Informal check-ins will be held with MSDE on a monthly basis. Monitoring visit will be conducted.
September 30, 2024	First interim progress report (C-1-25 C) reflecting the months of September and October is due.
December 30, 2024	Second interim progress report (C-1-25 C) reflecting the months of November and December is due.
February 28, 2025	Third interim progress report (C-1-25-C) reflecting the months of January and February is due.
June 30, 2025	Fourth interim progress report (C-1-25-C) reflecting the months of March through May is 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, June 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
May 20, 2024	The Grant Information Guide and the application for participating are released.
May 23, 2024 1:00 PM	MSDE will hold a virtual customer service support session for interested applicants.
May 29, 2024 10:00 AM	MSDE will hold a virtual customer service support session for interested applicants.
June 16, 2024	The grant application period closes.
Week of June 17, 2024	MSDE begins reviewing applications for completeness and minimum requirements.
Week of June 17, 2024	MSDE Review Committee will evaluate proposals.
Week of June 24, 2024	MSDE will notify applicants of the award status.
June 24, 2024	The grant period begins.
June 30, 2025	The grant period ends.

## Non-Discrimination Statement

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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.

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## **The General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) Sect 427**

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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

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MSDE will hold two 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:

### Thursday, May 23, 2024

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

[Video call link](#) using Google Meet

### Wednesday, May 29, 2024

10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

[Video call link](#) using Google Meet

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

#### Tami James

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Office of Instructional Programs and Services  
(410)767-0100

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#### Melissa Chandler

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[melissa.chandler@maryland.gov](mailto:melissa.chandler@maryland.gov)

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### Attachment

System of Professional Learning Grant Application for Participation