Issue Date: February 5, 2024

FAQ: ARP ESSER Improving Student Academic Outcomes in Computer Science, English Language Arts and Literacy, and Mathematics Grant

Purpose

This FAQ is intended to answer questions that LEA's have submitted in the process of applying for the ARP ESSER Improving Student Academic Outcomes in Computer Science, English Language Arts and Literacy, and Mathematics Grant.

Questions and Answers

1. How much funding is available?

While there is not a limit on the amount that you request, the AOE has approximately $1.2 million available.

2. We would like to request funding from this grant for a literacy coach and leverage funding from other sources.

Funding requests exceeding $75,000 must include:
- A plan for sustainability;
- Alignment with SU/SD strategic or continuous improvement plan(s); and
- High-quality instructional materials and/or related professional learning that support coordinated curriculum.

One of the requirements for funding over $75,000 is, "High-quality instructional materials and/or related professional learning that support coordinated curriculum." The "and/or" indicates that paying for a literacy coach to support professional learning would be allowable. Funds, however, must be spent by September 30, 2024, so the grant cannot be used for a SY 2024-25 position.

For grants over $75,000 the instructional materials do not need to be part of the grant application. However, an application would be strengthened by explaining how the funding for a Literacy Coach and the creation of high-quality instructional materials work in tandem to support positive outcomes for students. Additionally, a plan for sustaining this position would need to be included in the application and how it connects to strategic or continuous improvement plans.

3. The Introduction says, "Funding requests exceeding $75,000 must include: A plan for sustainability; Alignment with SU/SD strategic or continuous improvement plan(s); and High-quality instructional materials and/or related professional learning that support

coordinated curriculum. Is there a place in the application to provide this information?

Yes. Although documents cannot be attached to this grant application, information related to the grant should be included within the text boxes provided in the Grants Management System (GMS). Information from documents can be copied and pasted into the GMS text box. Additionally, if relevant information lives online, links can be included.

4. I would like to include data charts, but I do not see a way to create an attachment in the narrative section of GMS. How can I provide data charts?

Data charts or tables can be copied and pasted into the GMS text boxes. All the answers should be included within the text boxes provided in the Grants Management System.

5. Are teacher stipends an allowable use of funds?

Yes, teacher stipends are an allowable use of funds.

6. Would a collaborative grant preclude districts from applying individually for the grant opportunity in other arenas?

No. A collaborative grant application would not preclude Districts from applying individually.

7. We are looking at an integrated, transdisciplinary model of preschool curriculum that includes social-emotional well-being and curriculum as well as literacy and numeracy - all the more important given the holistic nature of development at this age and the importance of vertical alignment with kindergarten readiness skills. I know the focus of the grant is on literacy and math. Would a holistic approach be allowed under the grant guidelines?

Although the focus of this grant is on improving academic outcomes in the areas of English Language Arts (ELA) and Literacy, Mathematics, and/or Computer Science that does not preclude a holistic approach that is integrated and transdisciplinary. Developmentally appropriate instructional practices should not only improve academic outcomes; these practices should contribute to children's well-being and their positive social-emotional development.

8. Are approved independent schools and staff able to participate in this granting program?

No. Independent schools are not eligible for ARP ESSER funding.

9. We have a few different schools interested in submitting applications for the literacy and math grant application. I am curious if it is best to individual applications or one on behalf of everyone.

The grant application must be submitted by the SU/SD. One grant application should work best.

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10. I am wondering if I could apply for funds to purchase a proficiency-based grading system that would enable us to better align and coordinate our curriculums across our schools. It is called SmartEd Systems. Would this be an allowable use?

Although a proficiency-based grading system could be a valuable purchase, it is not an allowable expense under this grant.

11. Our district would like to plan two professional learning sessions for next year for our teachers. Would both sessions need to take place before the September 30th deadline, or would it be acceptable if the contract was signed and both sessions were paid for before September 30th, but one of the two sessions would occur later in the fall (the first session would occur during preservice in August).

Since the ARP ESSER period of performance, the time grantees are expected to complete grant activities, ends on September 30, 2024, the grant cannot be used to fund professional learning that takes place after that date. A professional learning session delivered in August, however, is an allowable expense.