

FAQ CSP Implementation 1 FY 13 Grant

Construction

1. Can funds be used to expand campus facilities, for example to build, rehabilitate or construct a science lab/offices etc in a new building?
2. Is rehabilitation or construction of classrooms an eligible cost?

Answer: No, CSP funds may not be used for construction. CSP funds may be used for necessary maintenance, repair, or upkeep of buildings and equipment that neither add to the permanent value of the property nor appreciably prolong its life, but merely keep it in an efficient operating condition. The determination of permanent value or prolonging the life of a building is determined by the NJDOE. Also, funds may not be used for addressing fire code violations or ADA compliance.

Expanding Your Program

3. We have some teaching assistants who will be working part-time during the school day, paid through our regular budget; can we use start-up grant funds to pay them to staff the after-school program?

Answer: No, this would appear to be an ongoing cost. Funds must be used for start-up activities, not ongoing costs. One time activities such as expanding or developing new curriculum for the after-school program are allowable, but the normal costs associated with running the program are considered ongoing costs and are not allowable.

4. Can we use start-up grant dollars to pay our staff during our after-school program?

Answer: If this is recurring or ongoing, then no. Implementation costs under the CSP grant program are for start-up activities only. In many cases these are one-time costs or initial occurrences of a cost, such as the planning, set up or training for a program that are eligible. When these plans transition into ongoing costs, funding cannot come from the CSP grant program. Ongoing costs associated with your school are not allowable expenses. It is the sub-grantees responsibility to provide justification regarding costs and why they should be considered start-up costs. The NJDOE makes the final decision based on these justifications, determining if these costs are allowable and reasonable in nature.

5. If we are adding an additional grade next year, can we apply for dollars to support the purchasing of additional technology and curriculum for those students?

Answer: Yes, initial implementation activities may include: (a) informing the community about the school; (b) acquiring necessary equipment and educational materials and supplies; (c) acquiring or developing curriculum materials; The term of the grant goes from December 1, 2012 to November 30, 2013 and costs may be incurred anywhere in between that time period. Check to see what you already have budgeted out using local funds for adding the additional grades as these grant funds are for costs that are in addition to what you have already budgeted.

Professional Development (PD)

6. We currently do PD every Friday for our cycles of data analysis and planning. Can we allocate teacher time/PD resources after December to a specific PD initiative connected to the grant?

Answer: Yes, provided that the PD activity is aligned to at least one of the three grant goals and your plan is clear about how the PD is a justified start-up activity. The actual PD may occur either during or after school hours, but costs associated with implementing the results of the PD are not allowable (i.e. staff time beyond PD time).

7. We currently have built in PD time at our school, if we redirect some of our teachers hours to a grant project activity is that an allowable expense? Or would PD hours have to be hours beyond our current PD schedule?

Answer: Professional development costs that go beyond the schedule that has been budgeted through local funds of the school could be eligible, but grant funds cannot be used to replace state or local funds being used to cover professional development costs. The LEA may not decrease state or local funds for particular activities because federal funds are available. Certain costs associated with the start-up of new programs or training could be considered eligible, however your plan must show that they are necessary for being successful towards the aligned goal and are justified as start-up activities.

Travel

8. Are travel expenses allowable for faculty and board members for training? For instance, would the expenses for the charter school board members and appropriate staff to attend the New Jersey School Board Association annual training (registration fees and mileage) be eligible?

Answer: Yes, but remember that all travel expenditures attributed to this grant are subject to State A-5 travel restrictions.

The provisions of A-5/Chapter Law 53 contain additional requirements concerning prior approvals, as well as expenditures related to travel. It is strongly recommended that the applicant work with their business administrator when constructing the budget. The NJDOE applies the A-5 restrictions uniformly to all grantees. Unless otherwise specified, the following restrictions apply to all grant programs:

- No reimbursement for in-state overnight travel (meals and/or lodging)
- No reimbursement for meals on in-state travel
- Mileage reimbursement is capped at \$.31/mile

Federal Compliance

9. With the DUNS/CCR requirements, how is parent organization defined? If a CMO's role is a contracted relationship to provide services, but the CMO was instrumental in facilitating the founding, design and opening of the school does their DUNS information also have to be listed?

Answer: If the CMO or any other parent organization is managing the school, then their DUNS/CCR information needs to be included. If they are only providing services then they do not need to include their DUNS information. As stated in the Discretionary Grant Application (DGA) handbook, "if an applicant is owned or controlled by a parent organization, the name and DUNS number of the parent organization must be provided."

10. Please confirm that, at the time of the submitting the application, applicants can be in process, but not have completed the SAM registration. If that is confirmed, should the chief school administrator fill in as much of the “Documentation of Federal Compliance (DUNS/CCR)” form as possible, but not sign the form at the time of submission of the application?

Answer: You can submit the grant application with the form filled out with the DUNS number, but with the date blank and unsigned if the process for registering was not completed by the application deadline (**note this on the form**). If you are selected for funding through the reader panel evaluation, then you would have to complete the registration process and submit to us a signed copy of the form before we would finalize a grant.

Announcement of Awards

11. When will we be informed if we have been awarded a grant?

Answer: After grants are received by September 12, 2012 no later than 4pm, they will be given to reader panels to be scored. Around November 15, 2012 we will send letters to each participating charter notifying them of their status.