

# CLSD Program FAQ

## Answering your questions about the Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) Program



### Application Questions

#### ***What does “RFA” mean?***

RFA stands for “Request for Applications”. The RFA is the document that outlines all the details you need to know about the CLSD Program, priority criteria, the grant application and process, and what types of activities and costs will be allowed under the grant.

#### ***I don’t think we will be able to get an application in by the deadline of July 30, 2021. Will there be an opportunity to apply for this funding again next year?***

CDE will be opening applications for a second round of application in Fall 2021. This second round of applicants will still receive a 4-year grant, only with a shortened 9 month Year 1 (Jan 1-Sept 30, 2022). CDE hopes to receive additional funding for the CLSD program in the future but those funds would not be available until the 2025-2026 school year and depend on federal appropriations at that time.

#### ***Who would I contact at my district to let them know I’m interested in our district applying for the CLSD grant and for our school to be included?***

Unfortunately, CDE does not have a list for each school district but most districts have a person or department responsible for writing and/or managing State and Federal grants. We recommend contacting either your finance department or someone in the Superintendent’s Office for guidance.

#### ***Do CMOs need to submit applications for each of our schools, or can we submit one application?***

No, you do not need to submit an application for each school. The main authorizing body or district will submit one application but will be required to submit a list of participating schools and a letter of interest from each school.

#### ***I see the Qualified Opportunity Zone (QOZ) interactive map. Is there a list of schools/districts for identified areas?***

There is not a list of schools or districts in the identified QOZ areas. Applicants will submit a list of participating schools in their application. The review committee will use the QOZ interactive map to see if the schools listed fall into the QOZ.

#### ***Does the Smartsheet proposal accept tables?***

You can have tables in an attachment, but the fields inside Smartsheet only accept text.

### **The Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) Program**

is a competitive federal grant that will span five years and will provide funding to districts through a competitive grant process. 95% percent of the \$16 million in available funds will be directed to school districts, both rural and urban that are geographically diverse, and funds will be distributed to at least three Qualified Opportunity Zones throughout Colorado.

The CLSD grant aims to advance literacy skills for children birth to grade 12, with special emphasis on children living in poverty, English learners and children with disabilities. The grant will provide professional development and technical assistance, literacy coaching, and will help districts disseminate family literacy information.

CLSD activities will also create an infrastructure for districts to develop their own local literacy plans and receive literacy consulting that supports implementation of research-based literacy strategies and interventions in the classroom.

For more information about the CLSD Program, contact Stacey Smith, CLSD Program Grant Manager:

[smith\\_s@cde.state.co.us](mailto:smith_s@cde.state.co.us)

***If we apply for the ELG literacy consultants and are approved, will we also need to apply for this CLSD literacy consultant list?***

Yes, but it will be an abbreviated application process to assess additional skills in topic areas specific to the CLSD grant that were not required as part of the ELG program. We will review your submitted application for the ELG program as part of the consideration for the CLSD approved consultant list.

## **Eligibility questions**

***Can an individual school apply for CLSD grant funds?***

No. At this time CDE is not accepting applications from individual schools. Interested schools must contact the authorizing department and/or person at the district level and let them know they are interested in applying.

***Our district does not have a specific grants team who would apply for the CLSD grant. Who would be eligible to submit an application for interested schools?***

The grant can be submitted by anyone within the LEP so long as it is approved by the authorizing body (i.e. Superintendent, Board of Directors, etc.) **and** can demonstrate how that team/department plans to collaborate across the different age and grade bands to create a district-wide comprehensive literacy program and plan under the CLSD grant.

***Our school is a charter school with three separate schools. Are we able to apply for just one school, or do we need to apply for all locations?***

Maybe. Your school(s) would need to serve students K-12 school, develop and/or update a Comprehensive Local Literacy Plan, include a plan for including early childhood educators in the grant activities, and meet all the grant requirements outlined in the RFA.

***If we are currently in an ELG cohort, can we apply for CLSD funds too?***

Yes! There are no restrictions on CLSD funds and participation in other CDE grant programs. Receiving funds under both programs is allowable as long as funds are used to supplement, not supplant activities under the ELG and CLSD grants.

***Since our school/district is not in a QOZ zone should we still apply?***

Yes, you can still apply if your school and/or district are not in a QOZ. However, you will not receive priority points if you are not in a QOZ, which could push your application further down in the list of applications we received.

## **Program and allowable activities questions**

***Do the percentages of students to be served by grade level apply to every year of the grant?***

Yes. It is a federal requirement to allocate grant activities to the specific age and grade bands for every year of the grant. Birth-5 years (15%), Kindergarten-5th grade (40%), and 6th-12th grade (40%).

***Can you say more about what you mean by “district-wide” efforts? Are we eligible if we are a collaborative of charter schools, or do we need to work with our authorizing districts?***

A collaborative of charter schools can apply as long as the application demonstrates all project activities will support students birth-grade 12 and meets all other required project components.

***Can staff be hired with grant funds such as interventionists, coaches, TOSAs?***

It depends. Staff salaries could be included in the application in lieu of an external consultant so long as there is strong evidence that whoever will be used internally has the expertise *and* capacity to support the work in lieu of an external consultant. If there is a need for a district-wide literacy coordinator to manage the grant and literacy activities across the birth-12<sup>th</sup> grade range, that could be included in the project narrative. Direct student contact positions such as instructional coaches and intervention staff *are not* allowed under the CLSD grant.

***Is the Comprehensive Local Literacy Plan a goal of the grant (PD and collaboration to create the plan) or is it part of the application?***

Both. The Comprehensive Local Literacy Plan (CLLP) is a critical component of the CLSD program and a required activity for CLSD grantees. Many applicants will already have a local literacy plan but may need some help to evaluate and update it. Applicants must describe their plan to either create and/or update an existing CLLP.

***Can the funds go towards district-created PD? Can the funding go towards paying existing district staff to coach and train others (i.e. towards salaries/benefits).***

District created PD can be allowed so long as it is rooted in scientifically and evidence-based practices *and* is pre-approved by CDE.

***How would a vendor of evidence-based interventions get on the approved list to encourage applicants to contact us?***

CDE does not have an approved list of vendors for the CLSD Program. K-3 curriculum and interventions must comply with the READ Act and use vendors from the CDE Approved Vendor Advisory List. Applicants will be responsible for submitting evidence in their application for interventions and instructional materials outside of the K-3 space for proof of evidence-based practices. Please refer to the RFA for more information.

***The text of the RFP says that “Grantees, with the support of an external literacy consultant...will create a comprehensive literacy plan or update an existing plan...”. Is an external literacy consultant a requirement of the grant?***

An external literacy consultant is not a requirement, but applicants will have to demonstrate who internally has the expertise, time and capacity to support this work in the place of a consultant. The review committee will be looking in the application for information about how you will meet all the other project goals without a consultant by outlining the specific team/person with expertise in the Science of Reading and evidence-based practices, as well as their capacity to support the work.