



**COLORADO**  
Department of Education

# Funding Opportunity

## Applications Due

First Submission Window: **Monday, April 17, 2023, from 12:00 a.m. – 11:59 p.m.**

Submissions received on April 17, and approved, are ensured a portion of available funds.

Second Submission Window: **Tuesday, April 18 –Wednesday, April 19, 2023.**

Submissions received April 18-19, *may* receive funding *if* funds remain after April 17.

Please submit as: **AU Name\_ 2023 USQP**

## Gifted Education Universal Screening and Qualified Personnel Grant

Pursuant to C.R.S. 22-20-205

### Program Questions:

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# Gifted Education Universal Screening and Qualified Personnel Grant

Applications Due: April 17, 2023, by 11:59 p.m.

## Introduction

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The Colorado General Assembly passed legislation in 2014 that established an appropriation for an Administrative Unit gifted education grant program. The program supports the foundational programming elements of universal screening and qualified personnel. It was the intent of the General Assembly that:

- 1) Evidence-based practices support instruction and the social-emotional development of gifted children; and
- 2) Each gifted child is educated in a rigorous learning environment and culture that develops the child's area of exceptionality and coordinates programs and services among available support systems.

Universal screening provides a means of access to gifted identification assessment and programming to every student.

See Exceptional Children's Educational Act (ECEA) for rules pertaining to the grant. The Rules may be accessed on the CDE Gifted Education website on the Laws and Regulations tab at [www.cde.state.co.us/gt/lawsregs](http://www.cde.state.co.us/gt/lawsregs).

## Purpose

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Through this opportunity, Administrative Units may apply for funds to offset the cost incurred when:

- 1) Conducting universal screening no later than second grade;
- 2) Conducting a second universal screening at a middle school level;
- 3) Using an achievement measure or behavior observation scale for already identified students at the middle school level in conjunction with creation of each child's individual career and academic plan (ICAP); and
- 4) Employing a qualified person to administer the gifted program, implement the program plan, and provide professional learning to increase the capacity of educators to identify and program for gifted students and develop family engagement and communication.

## Universal Screening: Definition

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Universal screening, for the purposes of section 22-20-205 C.R.S., means the systematic assessment of all students within a grade level of an Administrative Unit for identifying exceptional ability or potential, especially in underrepresented populations; and/or universal screening in conjunction with creation of each gifted child's individual career and academic plan (ICAP).

## Universal Screening: Tools and Criterion

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The measurement tool(s) for elementary and middle school universal screening must be determined to be a fair and reliable tool(s) for administration in diverse populations. Scoring at or above the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile is a qualifying criterion for a body of evidence in gifted identification. The AU determines the local criterion for considering students for further identification assessment. Typically, a score above the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile may be an indicator for further data collection.

## Qualified Personnel: Criterion

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The grant will offset the cost for up to a .5 FTE qualified person in gifted education or an educator who is working towards an endorsement or higher gifted degree program. (See **Process for Gifted Education Personnel Working Toward an Endorsement.**)

CDE refers to the leader of the AU Gifted Program as the [AU Gifted Director/Coordinator](#). House Bill 14-1102 permits AUs to apply for grant funds to offset costs incurred by employing a qualified person to **administer** and **implement** the gifted program plan. This individual's [Role and Responsibilities](#) is to ensure the AU is in compliance with ECEA rules and must have .5 of their time dedicated specifically to gifted education. (This grant is not fully funded therefore, if the position is less than .5 within your district, grant funds may be used to support this position for the percentage of the .5 which is awarded.)

The application must include the following information which has been verified by HR/fiscal manager:

- Name of the individual listed as the qualified GT personnel;
- For vacant positions, include the job posting;
- The salary for the qualified GT personnel or salary estimate for vacant positions;
- Number of days in the contract;
- Daily rate for the position; and
- A copy of the district [salary schedule](#) for the gifted education position.

## Eligible Applicants

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To be eligible, the AU applicant must be up to date in submission of the AU's comprehensive program plan, budget, and UIP gifted requirements of all districts in the AU to the Colorado Department of Education (CDE).

The application packet must include a completed application form and required supporting evidence and be received within the application submission window. If the grant application was not completed correctly, included ineligible costs, or did not include the required documents, the AU will be asked to adjust the original application.

## Available Funds and Allowable Expenditures

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This grant application is being released; however, the funding available for distribution to Administrative Units is contingent upon an approved appropriation for the grant program during the 2023 Colorado legislative session. Allowable use funds are finalized by legislature by June 30. If approved, the one year grant window would begin on July 1, 2023. AUs may apply for up to four different grants in one application:

- 1) Universal screening costs for [Kindergarten-2<sup>nd</sup> grade](#);
- 2) Universal screening costs in a [middle school grade](#);
- 3) Middle school measure for already identified students (to be used for ICAP planning); and
- 4) Employment of a qualified person up to .5 FTE that has responsibility for the gifted program.

Any costs the AU saves by obtaining the grant may NOT be returned into the AU's General Fund but may be used to increase or enhance the costs incurred in implementing the AU's gifted education program [2-20-205 (2)(e)].

## Universal Screening Costs

ECEA Rules state grant funds are to be used towards the per-pupil cost of screening. Additional administrative or training costs are not considered in the calculation for per-pupil assessment.

**Variance for Paper-Pencil Screening:** Tests are typically administered online. However, a variance for paper-pencil may be requested. The [Variance Request for Paper-Pencil Assessment USQP Grant](http://www.cde.state.co.us/gt/grantsprojects) is due **March 15, 2023**, and available at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/gt/grantsprojects>.

### Eligible universal screening expenditures:

Tests (online); or Variance for Paper-Pencil

- Cognitive Assessments such as CogAT or NNAT;
- Behavior Observation Scales (norm-referenced) as the universal screener K-2; (only if administered to all students);
- Behavior Observation Scales as the universal screener Middle School (only if administered to all students) or for already identified students in conjunction with ICAP development; and
- Two different tests at the middle school level are allowed; one for already identified gifted students (to be used for ICAP planning) and one for non-identified students (to find additional gifted students). Reimbursement for tests would be at a rate common to the typical CogAT and NNAT tests costs.

If a variance has been obtained for paper and pencil testing, eligible expenses also include:

- Answer documents;
- Publisher's scoring or hand-scoring materials (e.g., key, norms manual);
- Shipping costs; and
- Basic-level assessment reporting package (e.g., CD Rom).

### Ineligible universal screening expenditures that will not be funded:

- Miscellaneous supplies;
- Two different tests for the same student at a grade level (e.g., SIGS Observation Scale and the CogAT for a 2nd grade student is not allowed);
- Supplies related to test taking (i.e., pencils, computers, plastic tubs);
- Stipends for test trainings, test administration, or test scoring;
- Vendor training costs;
- Additional reporting documents or files beyond the basic-level reporting package;
- Additional assessment instruments not intended for the purpose of universal screening; and
- Indirect costs for accounting or additional administration (i.e., classified staff, paraprofessionals, test proctors, communication flyers).

### **Note:**

If an individual test is administered to some students and a group test administered to the remainder of grade level students, reimbursement for each test is the cost of the group administered test.

## Duration of Grant

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The grants one-year term will begin on July 1, 2023, for the 2023-2024 school year. Additional grant funding for subsequent years will be contingent upon annual appropriations by the State legislature. Funded applicants are not guaranteed any additional funding beyond the 2023-2024 school year.

**Note:**

No carryover will be allowed. Funds must be expended by June 30, 2024. If funds remain, the AU must return unused funds to CDE. Funds may not be used for the upcoming costs for screening tests or qualified personnel.

## Grant Distribution

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As defined in 22-20-205 (2)(d) C.R.S., CDE will distribute monies to grant applicants, subject to available appropriations. Distribution of funds will be based on the day in which the application is received. If funds are sufficient to fund all grant applications, each AU applicant will receive full funding.

Applications may be submitted any time on **April 17, 2023, from 12:00 a.m. – 11:59 p.m.** Applications will also be accepted April 18 through April 19, 2023.

However, funds may be insufficient to fully fund all the requests received during the three-day application process. The day the application is received will impact allocation of funds. This means that funds might be completely expended on April 17, 2023. **Thus, it is highly encouraged that all AU's submit on day one of the application submission window.**

If insufficient funds are available on day one to fund all day one grant applications, CDE will distribute funds proportionately on a pro rata basis. The condition of pro rata will be applied to the total amount approved by the Administrative Unit.

If grant funds remain after day one distributions, then funds for day two applicants and day three applicants would be distributed in the same manner as on day one until all funds are expended.

If funds are distributed on a pro rata basis and the AU receives less than the requested amount, the AU must:

- 1) Choose to supplement the grant up to the full amount for universal screening(s) and/or employing a qualified person; or
- 2) Determine which of the allowable uses of the grant will be funded, which may include pro rata implementation dependent upon the amount of funds received.

When the grant request is not fully funded, the AU director determines how funds will be expended based upon allowable uses. The director may choose to fully fund one grant activity and partially fund the other. Also, for universal screening, the most highly impacted areas or schools might be selected; or only one grade level versus two might be selected for screening. For the director, less than .5 FTE might be funded.

## Evaluation and Reporting

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Administrative Units receiving funds through this grant opportunity must submit the following data through the ESSU Data Management System

- A count of students taking universal screening assessment, grade levels, name of tool, and costs incurred for universal screening;
- Documentation of cost incurred for qualified personnel; and
- Documentation for those working on their endorsement or degree\*.

**Note:** If the position was vacant at the time of the application, once the individual is hired, use the [Addendum for USQP Qualified Personnel](#), to provide the name of the individual, the hire date, and all required information and

associated costs. Once complete, please submit the Addendum to the Office of Gifted Education.

\* When funds are used for personnel working toward an endorsement, the AU must submit evidence that personnel supported by grant funds are working toward an endorsement. This evidence will be the Educator Plan to become qualified for USQP Grant-Gifted Education Personnel and a yearly *Progress Toward Endorsement Report*.

CDE takes seriously its obligation to protect the privacy of student and educator Personally Identifiable Information (PII) collected, used, shared, and stored. PII will not be collected through the *Gifted Education Universal Screening and Qualified Personnel Grant*. All program evaluation data will be collected in the aggregate and will be used, shared, and stored in compliance with CDE's privacy and security policies and procedures.

## Data Privacy

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Documents submitted must not contain any personally identifiable student information including names, identification numbers, or anything that could identify an individual. All data should be referenced/included in the aggregate and the aggregate counts should be redacted to remove small numbers under n=16 for students.

## Technical Assistance

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For additional program information, webinars are available at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/gt/grantsprojects>

## Submission Process and Deadline

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An electronic copy of the application (in PDF format) must be submitted to [CompetitiveGrants@cde.state.co.us](mailto:CompetitiveGrants@cde.state.co.us) beginning on **April 17, 2023, from 12:00 a.m. - 11:59 p.m.** The electronic version should include all required components of the application as one document. Faxes will not be accepted. If you do not receive an email confirmation of receipt of your application, please email [CompetitiveGrants@cde.state.co.us](mailto:CompetitiveGrants@cde.state.co.us). Application materials and budget are available for download at [www.cde.state.co.us/gt/grantsprojects](http://www.cde.state.co.us/gt/grantsprojects)

Submit the electronic copy of the application and electronic budget to:  
[CompetitiveGrants@cde.state.co.us](mailto:CompetitiveGrants@cde.state.co.us)  
Beginning on **April 17, 2023, from 12:00 a.m. – 11:59 p.m.**  
Please submit as: **AU Name\_ 2023 USQP**

## Application Format

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- Applications should only include the required elements in the template outlined below, plus required attachments.
- If you are not a multidistrict AU, disregard the superintendents' signature tab.
- The signatures on the Part IB- Program Assurances page and Part IIC- Qualified Personnel (if applicable) must include original signatures.
- Submit all application components and attachments as a **single PDF document**.

## Required Elements

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The Application template can be found on the CDE Gifted Education website at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/gt/grantsprojects>

A complete application contains the following elements in the order below:

- Part IA: Applicant Information;
- Multi-District Signatures (only required for multidistrict AUs);
- Part IB: Program Assurances Form;
- Part IIA: Statement of Need;
- Part IIB: Administrative Unit Application Request-Universal Screening; and
- Part IIC: Administrative Unit Application Request-Qualified Personnel.

### Steps for Required Attachments

#### For Universal Screening

1) The vendor's quote for all testing materials must be attached. Any other eligible expenses being requested also should be included on the vendor quote.

#### For Qualified Personnel

1) The application must include a signature on Part IIB-Qualified Personnel from the Administrative Unit's HR Department/fiscal manager verifying the following information is accurate:

- Name of the individual listed as the qualified GT personnel;
- Position status as either employee or contractor;
- The salary for the qualified GT personnel or salary estimate for vacant positions (entered as 1.0 FTE);
- Number of days for a full-time position (used to verify salary is consistent with other positions of similar level);
- Daily rate based on salary and number of days worked (used to verify salary is consistent with other positions of similar level); and
- A copy of the district salary schedule for the gifted education position. The AU's salary schedule which indicates a circled or highlighted amount on the schedule for the qualified gifted person (e.g., coordinator, director) and specific placement on the salary schedule for that qualified person (employee or contractor). If salary schedules are not used in an administrative unit, the supervisor of the qualified gifted education position may write a letter regarding salary needs up to .5 FTE. The letter must include the position description, number of days worked specific to gifted education, and the salary.

2) Attach degree or endorsement to application or follow the [Instructions for Gifted Education Personnel Working Towards an Endorsement](#) which includes the *Educator Plan to Become Qualified for USQP Grant-Gifted Education* for a person working towards endorsement.

**IMPORTANT:** For vacant positions, an estimate of all of the above information *must* be submitted from the Administrative Unit's HR Department, along with:

- AU's job description;
- AU's job posting; and
- Once the person is hired, please use the [Addendum for USQP Qualified Personnel](#) to document personnel hired after submission of grant application along with degree/endorsement/educator plan with the new information and submit it to Diane Barranco at [barranco\\_d@cde.state.co.us](mailto:barranco_d@cde.state.co.us) to ensure grant allocation is complete.