



OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION



Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant (CLSD) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Updated November 12, 2025

[OSSE CLSD Website](#)

Grant Overview: The District of Columbia's (DC) Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) grant applications are open for eligible entities. The [purpose of the CLSD competitive grant](#) is to create a comprehensive literacy program to advance literacy skills, including pre-literacy skills, reading, and writing, for children from birth through grade 12, with an emphasis on disadvantaged children, including children living in poverty, English learners, and children with disabilities. OSSE's CLSD program will award \$47,287,429 via two subgrant competitions Birth to Age 5 (B-5) and Grades K-12 (K-12) dispersed over four years.

NOTIFICATION OF INTENT TO APPLY:

1. Where can the Notification of Intent to Apply form be found and how should the form be submitted?

The Notification of Intent to Apply form is in Attachment A in the Request for Applications (RFAs). For your convenience, the B-5 form can be found [here](#) and the K-12 form can be found [here](#). Submission of the form is via email to OSSE.CLSD@dc.gov by Friday, Oct. 10.

2. Is the Notification of Intent to Apply form required?

No, the Notification of Intent to Apply form is not required for eligible entities to apply for any CLSD subgrants, nor is the form binding organizations to apply once emailed.

3. Must my local education agency (LEA) get a signature from all schools to submit the Notification of Intent to Apply form for the K-12 subgrant competition?

The Notification of Intent to Apply form is not required to apply, however, having one signature at the LEA level is sufficient. Prospective applicants do not have to capture signatures from all eligible schools that will be included in the application.

APPLICATION:

4. Where can the OSSE CLSD subgrant competition application(s) be found?

The Request for Applications (RFAs) linked [here](#) capture the application in full. Applications are available on the Enterprise Grants Management System ([EGMS](#)) and must be submitted by 3 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 13, 2025. Applicants must use EGMS to complete the application.

5. Is a comprehensive literacy plan or local literacy plan required for submission? If so, is there a template?

No, comprehensive literacy plans or local literacy plans are not required for FY26 CLSD subgrant applications. In the FY26 CLSD grant, local literacy plans will be created post award. Awarded subgrantees will be required to attend workshops to develop or revise their local literacy plan. Applicants are required to complete a Needs Assessment as described in the RFA and in EGMS. The Needs Assessment does not have a specific template.

6. For the K-12 application, if an LEA is applying for both grade bands, is it acceptable to have one plan that clearly delineates the approach to each grade band?

If an LEA is applying for both grade bands (K- 5 and 6-12), it is important to note that separate applications (“subprojects” in EGMS) are required for each applicable grade band. Given the requirement of separate applications, it is allowable to have the same implementation plan if it clearly delineates the approach for K-5 and 6-12 but it is highly recommended that applicants differentiate the implementation plan for each subproject (K-5 and 6-12) for the most effective scoring. If your organization is also interested in applying for Birth-Age 5, that would require a separate application in EGMS under “Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant Birth through Age 5 Subgrant”.

7. For the K-12 application, if my organization serves overlapping grade bands (i.e., grades 4-8), how do we apply?

Eligible entities serving overlapping grade bands must submit an application for each applicable grade band by creating subprojects under the K-12 subgrant competition. Given this requirement, there should be a subproject created for the K-5 grade band and another for the 6-12 grade band. For example, if an organization serves grades 4-8, an application for grades 4-5 and another for 6-8 should be submitted.

8. Is it acceptable to use our organization’s preferred terminology in place of "English learners" (like “multilingual learners”) or should we use the language in the RFA?

Yes, applicants may use terminology that aligns with their organization’s needs or preferred language. Applicants should define any terms they use, particularly if those terms are equivalent to defined terms in the RFA. To improve reader clarity, please indicate when such terms are used interchangeably.

9. For the B-5 subgrant competition, how should an organization with multiple sites apply?

For the B-5 subgrant competition, organizations with multiple sites/facilities should submit one application in EGMS. The specific sites/facilities that CLSD funds would support should be listed in the Budget Template.

10. NEW! Can the central office organization with multiple licensed DC ECE facilities apply for the B-5 subgrant?

Yes, the entity operating as the central office for multiple DC licensed ECE facilities should be the applicant for the grant. In the budget template Excel file, the applicant must identify the centrally-managed, DC-licensed ECE facilities to be included in the CLSD grant program.

11. For the K-12 application, if my LEA is applying for both grade bands (K-5) and (6-12), what should we put for “Project Title” in EGMS?

For LEAs applying for the K-12 subgrant competition, the “Project Title” in EGMS should be the grade band (“K-5” or “6-12”) that the application will serve. If applicants wish to apply for both grade bands, they can create another subproject and title with the different grade band.

12. NEW! If my LEA is partnering with an organization to help create a literacy program, is a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) needed for submission?

No, an MOU is not needed for the CLSD application submission. LEAs can explain any partnerships or agreements with external organizations in the Needs Assessment and implementation plan. CLSD funding will be paid out as reimbursements via EGMS.

13. Where can I go for help with the Central Data application?

Training resources for EGMS are located [here](#). This website includes a video on Central Data and how to get set up in EGMS. If you are having technical issues with EGMS, please submit a ticket by clicking the top left of your EGMS page. For reference, please see the picture below.



ELIGIBILITY:

14. What is the eligibility criteria for the CLSD K-12 subgrant? Why is my organization not eligible?

An eligible entity must be a DC LEA serving [high-need schools](#). The full definition for eligible entities are defined by the United States Department of Education (USED), the definition is captured [here](#) and in the RFA found [here](#).

OSSE's Data, Assessment, and Research (DAR) team has calculated the percentage of low-income families of each school to indicate if the school met the criteria for [high-need school](#) derived from the federal eligibility requirements. Schools that were determined to meet the *high-need school* eligibility criteria for K-12 have been captured [here](#). If your organization sees a potential error in the data, please reach out to OSSE.CLSD@dc.gov.

15. What is the eligibility criteria for the B-5 subgrant?

For the B-5 subgrant competition, entities are eligible if they meet the following criteria:

- a. **A licensed DC early childhood education program** (including LEAs) **servicing low-income or otherwise disadvantaged children**, which may include home-based literacy programs for pre-school-aged children, that have a **demonstrated record of providing comprehensive literacy instruction** for the age group such program proposes to serve; or
- b. **A licensed District of Columbia early childhood education program** (including LEAs), which may include home-based literacy programs for preschool-aged children, acting in **partnership with one or more public or private nonprofit organizations or agencies** that have a demonstrated record of effectiveness in—
 - (1) Improving literacy achievement of children, consistent with the purposes of participation under the CLSD program, from birth through grade 12; and
 - (2) Providing professional development in comprehensive literacy instruction.

The full definition for eligible entities are defined by USED, the definition is captured [here](#) and in the RFA found [here](#). B-5 applicants are required to prove eligibility within their application.

16. Are single-site LEAs or ECE programs eligible for either K-12 or B-5 subgrant competitions?

Yes, single-site LEAs and early childhood education programs are eligible for the CLSD subgrant competitions.

17. Can a non-profit or private organization that supports early childhood education (ECE) programs apply to the B-5 CLSD subgrant competition?

No, For-profit private and non-profit organizations that are not licensed DC ECE providers or LEAs are not eligible to apply for the CLSD subgrant directly. Licensed DC ECE providers (including LEAs) must be the primary applicant for the B-5 grant competition. However, non-profit or private organizations may work in partnership with an LEA and/or ECE programs to apply for the CLSD subgrant as a consortium or partnership, as described [eligible entity definition part \(c\)](#) or in the RFA [here](#), but the LEA or licensed ECE provider will be the applicant in EGMS to receive the funding. The applicant can include the external partnership in the application's budget and expand upon its role in the implementation plan.

18. Can a nonprofit or private organization that is a service provider for eligible schools apply directly to the K-12 CLSD subgrant competition?

No, service providers are not eligible to apply to the K-12 subgrant directly. LEAs must be the primary applicant for the K-12 CLSD subgrant competition. However, service provider organizations can partner with an LEA to apply for the K-12 subgrant as a consortium or partnership, as described [eligible entity definition part \(c\)](#) or in the RFA [here](#), but the LEA must be the applicant in EGMS to receive the funding. The applicant can include the external partnership in the application's budget and expand upon its role in the implementation plan.

19. Our LEA serves young adults ages 16-30 who struggle with reading. Are we eligible to apply for this grant?

OSSE's CLSD subgrant competitions require eligible entities to serve Birth – Age 5 or Grades K-12. CLSD funds [may be used](#) for adult learning settings in limited circumstances where the adult learners are earning their HS diplomas or equivalent. Please note, applicants must meet all eligible entity criteria and requirements as outlined in the [RFAs](#).

20. Can a non-profit or for-profit serve as the fiscal agent/sponsor for the applicant? Can there be a separate fiscal agent? What documentation is needed?

The applicant in EGMS must be the eligible entity (i.e. ECE program or LEA). Fiscal details are arranged outside of the CLSD program application, in the District Integrated Fiscal System (DIFS) and EGMS Central Data application.

FUNDING AVAILABLE AND AWARDS:

21. In the K-12 subgrant competition, is the annual maximum budget per LEA or per application? Can a LEA submit applications for both K-5 and 6-12 grade bands?

For the K-12 CLSD subgrant competition, the maximum annual budget limit is per grade band application. Yes, LEAs can submit one application for grades K-5 and a second

application for grades 6-12. If an applicant is applying for both grade bands, the LEA can apply for up to \$2,500,000 per year for grades K-5 and up to \$2,500,000 per year for grades 6-12. The same LEA could also apply, if eligible, for the B-5 subgrant competition which is limited to \$975,000 per year per application. Please note, the last year (FY29) for K-12 is reduced to \$2,100,000 and the last year for B-5 is reduced to \$815,000.

22. Funding the maximum amount of subgrants (10 for B-5 and 15 for K-12) at the maximum award amount exceeds the total funding available, can you help us understand award limitations?

Applicants can budget *up to* the maximums stated in the tables below, but it is not expected that every applicant will budget for the full amount in their application. Applications will be reviewed based on the scoring rubric (Attachment H in the RFA). Awards will be determined based on the application scoring recommendations, but all final award decisions are left to the Superintendent's, or his/her designee's discretion. Applicants can be awarded in full, awarded partially, or not awarded. More information regarding the review process can be found in Section IV of the [B-5 RFA](#) or Section IV of the [K-12 RFA](#).

Table 1: Maximum Amount per Application in B-5 CLSD Subgrant Competition

Age Band	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	Total Maximum
B- 5	\$975,000	\$975,000	\$975,000	\$815,000	\$3,740,000

Table 2: Maximum Amount per Application in K-12 CLSD Subgrant Competition

Grade Bands	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	Total Maximum
Grades K-5	\$2,500,000	\$2,500,000	\$2,500,000	\$2,100,000	\$9,600,000
Grades 6-12	\$2,500,000	\$2,500,000	\$2,500,000	\$2,100,000	\$9,600,000

Applicants are required to provide the following to justify their request:

- Budget narratives for each line item in the budget to make up their request **(Budget Template Excel)**
- Clearly outline the schools included in the program and provide their size **(Facility/School Selection in the Budget Template Excel)**
- Ensure the applicant's implementation plan aligns with the budget request **(Implementation Plan)**

Winning applicants may be required to make amendments to the budget or other application sections to meet grant requirements or final award numbers.

23. Will applicants potentially be ‘downgraded’ if they propose a large project and apply for the maximum award? Is it advantageous to apply for a smaller award?

It is recommended to apply for the budget amount that best supports your project implementation plan to reach the objectives of the DC CLSD grant pillars. The proposed

budget will not be scored strictly on dollars per student/child but will also consider the number of students being served as well as the intensity and expected impact of the activity.

Applicants can be awarded in full, awarded partially, or not awarded. Awards will be determined based on recommendations from the application scoring recommendations from the Scoring Rubric found in Attachment H of the RFA, and the final award amount will be determined by OSSE. More information regarding the review process can be found in Section IV of the [B-5 RFA](#) or Section IV of the [K-12 RFA](#).

BUDGET FORMULATION AND TEMPLATE:

24. Since the start date of the funding period FY26 (October 1, 2026) has passed, what assumption should we make for beginning the budget formulation for FY26?

It is recommended to start the budget formulation for FY26 on or within 4 weeks after the target award date of Friday, Dec. 19, 2025.

25. Should applicants only put a budget for Year 1 in EGMS?

Yes, applicants should only upload totals for **FY26** in the “Budget” tabs in **EGMS** (*Salaries and Benefits, Professional Services, Supplies and Materials*, etc.). However, please note that application scores are based only on the Proposed Budget and Narrative subtab ([Budget Template Excel](#)) in which applicants must include the budget for all four years of the grant period.

26. In the ‘School Selection’ tab of the K-12 Budget Template Excel, what teachers should be included in Column E?

All classroom teachers should be included in this column, even those beyond content teachers, including teachers in art, music, physical education, intervention classes, etc. If there is a classroom, the teacher(s) should be included in the number.

27. How precise should the budget be?

It is expected that applicants will need to make assumptions on their budget based on current quotes, historical reference numbers, and/or initial market research. Applicants should itemize their budget in their Budget Template Excel with the understanding that applications may be awarded in full, awarded partially, or not awarded. If awarded, applicants will make necessary adjustments to the estimated figures in the budget throughout the grant period.

28. How much specificity is needed when noting external partners and/or service providers on the application?

It is recommended that applicants conduct some initial research for estimates and partnerships when explaining their implementation plan. If the applicant has existing quotes from external partners, those may be useful to reference in the budget narrative. Otherwise, we understand that assumptions will be made by outlining the type of organization the applicant intends to partner with and naming organizations they may reach out to for a quote. This detail on partnerships will give the reader a better idea of the implementation plan and/or budget narratives.

29. When filling out the Budget Template, who should be counted as school administrators? Should this be limited to principals and vice principals or can other staff who are considered part of school leadership team be counted?

School administrators can be defined as staff members whose activities are concerned with directing and managing the operation of a particular school. This can include staff members who are considered part of the school leadership team if their duties are aligned with this definition. It may be helpful to reference the federal guidelines for school administrators [here](#) (page 6) when considering personnel to add to this count.

30. If my LEA has experienced large shifts in enrollment and organizational structure this year (compared to SY24-25 that is requested in the Budget Template), can we budget for the new numbers rather than the SY24-25 enrollment numbers?

Applicants should input the data for SY24-25 in the “School Selection” tab as requested. However, in the tab for Pillar D, applicants can put the salaries of how many instructional coaches they would like to have and explain how the shifts in enrollment and organizational structure have changed for SY25-26 in the Budget Narrative column to support the request.

ALLOWABLE USES OF FUNDS:

31. Is there a list of approved programs or can CLSD funding be used for any program that supports the outlined goals?

The CLSD subgrant competitions do not have a list of required programs. However, all programs, planning, professional development, and events should be rooted in structured literacy, an [evidence-based](#) instructional model that focuses on building the foundational literacy skills of phonemic awareness, letter-sound correspondences, syllables, morphology, syntax, and semantics using an approach that is explicit, systematic, and cumulative.

For the K-12 subgrant application, priority points are given to entities using OSSE’s [High-Quality, Science-Based Literacy Programs List for K-5](#), [Early Adolescent Literacy Intervention Programs List](#) and/or [Approved Structured Literacy Training List](#).

32. Can we budget for professional development opportunities that will be accessible to educators outside of the designated CLSD schools?

The target audience for all CLSD-funded professional development opportunities should be the staff (or subset of staff) at the CLSD schools. However, there is no penalty in the scoring rubric for making professional development opportunities accessible to educators at non-CLSD schools. It is recommended that the applicant explain the purpose and impact of the professional development models desired in your implementation plan. Keep in mind that attendance records for professional development opportunities funded by CLSD can be monitored by OSSE or USED at any time.

33. If our LEA was a FY21 CLSD subgrantee, can we include the roles that we started in the previous cohort in our FY26 CLSD subgrant application?

It is possible to fund positions that started in the FY21 CLSD grant cohort if the position has not been funded by other state, local, or non-federal funds in prior years; the position is not required by any state, local, or federal laws; and the position aligns with the allowable costs in Attachment E of the RFA. Any concerns with supplement, not supplant requirements will need to be considered on a case-by-case basis given the specific funding history (if any) of the organization. Please reference Attachment E in the RFAs for guidance in adhering to the supplement, not supplant provision. Please also use Attachment E to ensure that the position is an allowable position in the FY26 CLSD subgrant competitions.

34. For the K-12 subgrant competition, can CLSD funding cover structured literacy training costs for educators who are required to receive training according to federal, state, or local laws?

No. CLSD funding can only be used to provide supplemental structured literacy training for educators who are not required by any federal, state, or local laws to receive structured literacy training. For example, [DC Code § 38-2264](#) mandates LEAs to require kindergarten teachers to successfully complete an OSSE-approved structured literacy training or demonstrate competency by the start of 2026-2027 school year. The supplement, not supplant provision prohibits using CLSD funds on activities required by state or local law. Therefore, CLSD funding cannot be used for any procurement of training or compensation made to abide by this law, DC Code § 38-2264. As laws evolve, so will the allowable activities in the CLSD program. All activities funded by CLSD must abide by the supplement, not supplant provision, including structured literacy training recipients. For more information on supplement, not supplant, see ATTACHMENT E in the [K-12 RFA](#).

35. For the B-5 subgrant competition, can applicants include training and support of kindergarten teachers and classrooms from a transitional standpoint, given that most students are five at the point of kindergarten entry?

The B-5 subgrant funding [must be used](#) for activities pertaining to children from birth through kindergarten entry. In limited circumstances, CLSD projects could include training teachers to support with the kindergarten entry transitions if explained in the application. If an eligible entity would like to serve Kindergarten teachers, please apply for the K-12 CLSD subgrant competition.