

FY24 SOAR Facilities Awards

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) awards SOAR Act Facilities grants to public charter local education agencies (LEAs) through a competitive process. Awarded projects must 1) increase the total number of seats available at a high-quality charter school, and/or 2) increase the quality of existing seats at a high-quality charter school.

FY24 Awardees

Applicant	Award Amount
Academy of Hope PCS	\$505,130.13
Cesar Chavez PCS	\$489,424.42
DC International PCS	\$505,130.13
Elsie Whitlow Stokes PCS	\$505,130.13
IDEA PCS	\$505,130.13
Inspired Teaching Demonstration PCS	\$505,130.13
KIPP DC PCS	\$484,924.93

Project Descriptions

Academy of Hope PCS

Academy of Hope Adult (AoH) Public Charter School's Ward 5 campus needs renovations to ensure equitable access to their services and a safe learning environment for all adult learners and staff. This includes replacing the outdated elevator system and ramp to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), implementing additional safety measures due to rising crime rates, updating the HVAC system, and adapting the physical space to accommodate the post-COVID virtual/in-person learning landscape. These improvements will allow AoH to increase its total enrollment across two campuses from 840 learners in the 2023-24 school year to 1,050 in the 2024-25 school year, adding 210 new seats.

Cesar Chavez PCS

Cesar Chavez Public Charter Schools for Public Policy (Chavez) is seeking a SOAR Act Facilities grant to address the pressing issue of outdated and malfunctioning HVAC systems. The current setup, spanning two large buildings, results in significant temperature disparities among classrooms and staff offices, leading to discomfort and decreased productivity. Despite resorting to temporary measures such as using fans and adjusting windows and doors, the persistent discomfort adversely affects both students and staff, contributing to heightened absenteeism rates and negatively impacting morale, well-being, and overall school performance. Chavez intends to utilize the SOAR funding to engage a reputable HVAC firm to overhaul the outdated infrastructure during the summer months, minimizing disruptions to regular school operations. The primary objective of this endeavor is to enhance air quality across the Chavez facility, thereby fostering a conducive environment for improved staff and student morale, health, and well-being, consequently improving student enrollment and attendance and boosting student learning outcomes and academic achievement.

DC International PCS

District of Columbia International School (DCI) is embarking on a project to increase the quality of their existing seats as they grow to full capacity by reconfiguring internal spaces, which will also allow the school to serve some additional students. To enhance learning environments, DCI's project plan involves the strategic adjustment of interior walls to make more efficient use of Delano Hall, their facility at 1400 Main Drive NW. Shifting classroom walls to create additional spaces is necessary to serve their student body at capacity through more flexible scheduling and opportunities for smaller and more customized classes. These modifications will allow DCI to optimize its facilities to better serve its diverse student body and promote an environment more conducive to the educational experience they aim to provide their 1650 students.

Elsie Whitlow Stokes PCS

Elsie Whitlow Stokes Community Freedom PCS is a two-campus pre-K through 5th grade language immersion school located in Washington, DC. Now in its 26th year of operation, the school is pursuing funding through the SOAR Act Facilities Grant to undertake a multifaceted renovation project aimed at enhancing safety measures, expanding student capacity, and improving the overall quality of life and education at the school's flagship campus located in the Brookland community of Ward 5. This comprehensive initiative encompasses three phases. The first phase will focus on enhancing and upgrading safety and security measures in and around the school building and grounds. The second phase of work will include leveling and renovating the school's playground. The third and final phase of work will include the expansion of several classroom and office spaces, the school's commercial kitchen and common areas in the building as well as updates to ensure ADA compliance.

IDEA PCS

IDEA PCS is a Career and Technical Education (CTE) high school. Their mission is to prepare students for both college and careers. In addition to completing the required courses for high school graduation in Washington, DC, their students also complete a sequence of four courses in a specific career program. Each year, they survey their students and ask what CTE programs they are interested in adding. Without fail, the students select Cosmetology as their number one choice. The LEA would love to offer a Cosmetology program, which they believe would increase enrollment and lead to higher levels of student engagement. However, they do not currently have the facilities to offer the Cosmetology program. IDEA PCS recently purchased a blighted house adjacent to their school building and would like to demolish the house and build a structure to house a Cosmetology program since it's an approved program of study through OSSE. The new structure would be approximately 2,000 square feet and include the equipment necessary for their students to learn Cosmetology "on the job." It's estimated that the new space would increase enrollment by 25-30 students and improve the quality of existing seats.

Inspired Teaching Demonstration PCS

Inspired Teaching Demonstration School has reached full enrollment, now enrolling approximately 520 pre-K 3 through 8th grade students each year. Inspired Teaching Demonstration does not have sufficient spaces to support their special class offerings, their academic intervention and special education services, teacher collaboration and professional development, or specialized and/or extracurricular programming. The ground floor of their building has been only partially renovated, and two-thirds of the space remains unfinished, and their multi-purpose room needs upgrading to accommodate expanded arts programming. Completion of the ground floor renovation and multi-purpose room upgrade will enable Inspired Teaching Demonstration to ensure they have high-quality learning spaces and teacher collaboration spaces necessary to deliver an integrated approach to their academic programming to help students learn and thrive.

KIPP DC

KIPP DC is proposing to replace the doors of 90 spaces (classrooms, offices, conference rooms, etc.) at their Benning Campus with new high-quality, high-durability doors and accompanying high-quality, high-durability door hardware (locks and handles, hinges and closers), as well as making repairs and fortifications to door frames where necessary. They are also proposing to replace exterior doors to the building with new high-quality, high-durability doors and accompanying high-quality, high-durability door hardware (including center mullions, locks, hinges, etc.). Finally, they are proposing to replace interior stairwell doors and doors to large spaces (gym, cafeteria, auditorium) with new high-quality, high-durability doors as well as accompanying high-quality, high-durability door hardware.