



District of Columbia  
Office of the State Superintendent of Education

# SCHOLARSHIPS FOR OPPORTUNITY AND RESULTS (SOAR) ACT FORMULA GRANTS

*Guidance for Submitting FY25 SOAR Formula  
Consolidated Applications*

October 2024

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# Using the FY25 SOAR Formula Consolidated Application Guide

This guide supports local education agencies (LEAs) in completing their fiscal year 2025 (FY25) SOAR Formula Consolidated application for the Academic Quality grant (and Early Childhood grant, if applicable) by providing an overview of and checklist for each section of the SOAR Formula Consolidated application in the Enterprise Grants Management System (EGMS). These overviews and checklists should be used as references prior to and after completing each section, and to check for completion prior to final submission of the application.

Additional resources to assist you with completing your application are:

Resource	Description
<a href="#">SOAR Formula Allowable Uses</a>	Review this one-page document to see descriptions and examples of allowable expenditures under the SOAR Formula grants
<a href="#">FY25 SOAR Formula Allocations and Program Contacts</a>	Review this document to find your LEA’s allocation(s) for FY25 Academic Quality and Early Childhood and SOAR program contact
Pre-Application Webinar – <i>coming soon!</i>	This optional live webinar will provide an overview of grant purposes, application content and process, and allowable expenditures. The webinar will be recorded and posted on OSSE’s <a href="#">SOAR Formula webpage</a> for future reference.

Please contact your [SOAR grant manager](#) if you have any questions.

# FY25 Application at a Glance: SOAR Formula Consolidated

Applicant:		Application Sections SOAR Formula Consolidated	
Application Cycle:	2024-2025 SOAR Formula Consolidated - 00-SOAR Formula Consolidated Original Application	2024-2025	7/1/2024 - 9/30/2025
		Printer-Friendly Click to Return to Organization Select Return to the Dashboard Click to Return to Menu List / Sign Out	
OVERVIEW	CONTACT INFORMATION	SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION	ALLOCATIONS ASSURANCES SUBMIT APPLICATION HISTORY APPLICATION PRINT

Tab	Description
<b>Application Section: SOAR Formula Consolidated</b>	
<b>Overview (Reference Only)</b>	Key details and requirements of the SOAR Formula Consolidated grants, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Purpose of Funds</li> <li>Award Period</li> <li>Permissible Use of Funds</li> <li>Requirements of Funding</li> <li>Terms and Conditions</li> </ul>
<b>Contact Information (Required)</b>	LEAs should provide the main contact person(s) for the SOAR Formula grant program(s).
<b>Supporting Documentation (Optional)</b>	This tab may be used to attach supplemental detail or comply with requests for information from OSSE at any point during the application process and award period.
<b>Allocations (Reference Only)</b>	LEAs can find their FY25 allocation(s) <a href="#">here</a> .
<b>Assurances (Required)</b>	LEA Authorized Representatives must read and acknowledge assurances here.
<b>Submit (Required)</b>	LEAs must run a “consistency check” on this tab which scans the application for completeness of all required sections. After the consistency check is successfully completed, an authorized representative of the LEA must submit the completed application to OSSE by clicking the “Submit to OSSE” button on this tab. For FY25, the application deadline will be <b>3 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 15, 2024</b> .
<b>Application History (Reference Only)</b>	Provides details on the status of the application.
<b>Application Print (Optional)</b>	Provides LEAs the option to print the application.
<b>Application Section: Academic Quality</b>	
<i>SOAR Academy Quality funding is available to support projects designed to have a direct impact on student achievement, either school-wide or for specific subgroups of students. LEAs that receive an FY25 Academic Quality allocation should complete the first five tabs in this application section.</i>	
<b>Needs Assessment (Required)</b>	This tab includes the following components: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quantitative and qualitative data sources checklists</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Needs assessment narrative</li> </ul>
<b>Project Details (Required)</b>	<p>This tab includes the following components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Areas of focus checklist</li> <li>Key strategies checklist</li> <li>Box to indicate number of students impacted by the grant project</li> <li>Project objective in SMART format (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound)</li> <li>Project description</li> <li>Theory of action</li> </ul>
<b>Project Activities (Required)</b>	<p>This tab includes the following component:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chart for indicating at least three specific activities for each reporting period</li> </ul>
<b>GEPA Statement (Required)</b>	<p>This tab includes the following components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Description of mission, policies, or commitments that ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project</li> <li>Description of barriers that could impede equitable access/participation</li> <li>Description of steps that will be taken to address barriers</li> <li>Description of timeline for addressing identified barriers</li> </ul>
<b>Budget (Required)</b>	<p>LEAs must include proposed itemized expenditures under the following categories, as applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Salaries and Benefits</li> <li>Professional Services (i.e., contracted work)</li> <li>Equipment</li> <li>Supplies and Materials</li> <li>Other Objects</li> </ul>
<b>Budget Amendments (Do not complete with original application)</b>	<p>This tab should NOT be completed with the original application. This tab will be used to describe and provide a rationale for specific budget changes when completing a budget amendment.</p>
<p><b>Application Section: Early Childhood</b>  <i>SOAR Early Childhood funding is available for supplementary activities that support school readiness, including the development of literacy and mathematics skills for early childhood students (i.e., 3- and 4-year-olds). LEAs that receive an FY25 Early Childhood allocation should complete the first five tabs in this application section.</i></p>	
<b>Needs Assessment (Required)</b>	<p>This tab includes the following components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quantitative and qualitative data sources checklist</li> <li>Needs assessment narrative</li> </ul>
<b>Project Details (Required)</b>	<p>This tab includes the following components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Areas of focus checklist</li> <li>Key strategies checklist</li> <li>Box to indicate number of students impacted by the grant project</li> <li>Project objective in SMART format (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound)</li> <li>Project description</li> <li>Theory of action</li> </ul>
<b>Project Activities (Required)</b>	<p>This tab includes the following component:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chart for indicating at least three specific activities for each reporting period</li> </ul>

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<p><b>GEPA Statement</b> <i>(Required)</i></p>	<p>This tab includes the following components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Description of mission, policies, or commitments that ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project</li> <li>• Description of barriers that could impede equitable access/participation</li> <li>• Description of steps that will be taken to address barriers</li> <li>• Description of timeline for addressing identified barriers</li> </ul>
<p><b>Budget</b> <i>(Required)</i></p>	<p>LEAs must include proposed itemized expenditures under the following categories, as applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Salaries and Benefits</li> <li>• Professional Services (i.e., contracted work)</li> <li>• Equipment</li> <li>• Supplies and Materials</li> <li>• Other Objects</li> </ul>
<p><b>Budget Amendments</b> <i>(Do not complete with original application)</i></p>	<p>This tab should NOT be completed with the original application. This tab will be used to describe and provide a rationale for specific budget changes when completing a budget amendment.</p>

# Checklists: SOAR Formula Consolidated Application

These checklists support LEAs in completing the SOAR Academic Quality and Early Childhood application sections while minimizing the likelihood that the application will be returned for changes. While drafting responses, use these checklists to ensure all items on the checklist are addressed and you've included all required information in your narrative.

## Needs Assessment

In the Needs Assessment tab, be sure that:

- The data sources selected in the checklist are used to clearly substantiate a demonstrated need at the LEA, either for all students or for specific subgroup(s) of students.
- Specific data points from each data source selected are included in the needs assessment narrative.
  - For example, if the data source selected was “Next Generation Assessments,” a specific data point could be “only 20 percent of fifth-grade students scored a 4 or 5 on DC CAPE in the 2023-24 school year.”
  - LEAs should aim to include both quantitative and qualitative data sources when substantiating the need for the proposed project. At least one data source related to academic achievement or growth must be included.
- Data points provided are up to date. LEAs may continue the same project from a prior year's SOAR grant, but the data provided should be the most recently available data (e.g., 2023-24 school year assessment data).

## Project Details

In the Project Details tab, be sure that:

- At least one area of focus is identified and aligns with both the needs assessment and the project description.
- At least one key strategy is identified and aligns with the project description.
- The box indicating the number of students that will be impacted by the project is filled out.
- The project objective(s) is provided in SMART format (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound).
  - For example: For the DC CAPE assessments administered in spring 2025, proficiency in math for fifth-grade students will increase by 7 percent when compared to the 2023-24 school year results.

- There is a clear link between the need(s) and the project objective(s), and between the project objective(s) and the project description.
- The project is clearly described, including how the proposed project will meet the need(s) identified in the needs assessment section and how the project will have a direct impact on student achievement, either school-wide or for specific subgroups of students (and for the Early Childhood grant, how the project will facilitate supplementary activities that support school readiness, including the development of literacy and mathematics skills.)
- The theory of action is presented in the appropriate if/then/because format: “IF [we do X activity], THEN [we will see Y result], BECAUSE [research/evidence shows Z].”
  - For example: IF families have more opportunities for engagement, THEN student retention will increase, BECAUSE research shows that “family engagement in education is directly related to a range of benefits for students, including improved school readiness, higher academic achievement, better social skills and behavior, and increased likelihood of high school graduation” (Harvard Family Research Project, 2021).
- The evidence provided is from a credible, recent (fewer than 10 years old) academic source that is cited OR there is specific evidence of success at the LEA.
- The if-then-because statement clearly communicates how and why the project will be successful.

## Project Activities

In the Project Activities tab, be sure that:

- There are at least three specific activities provided for each of the two reporting periods (a total of six activities minimum for the entire award period).

Reporting Period 1	July 1, 2024 - Jan. 31, 2025
Reporting Period 2	Feb. 1, 2025 - Sept. 30, 2025

- Note: LEAs will be required to report separately on each activity in the semi-annual narrative report.
- Each project activity includes a target completion date using the MM/YYYY format that falls within the applicable reporting period.
- Each project activity includes a description of the evidence of completion that the LEA will retain in its files to demonstrate that the activity has been completed (e.g., professional development sign-in sheets, coaching logs, student data trackers, and observation notes).
  - Note: LEAs will be required to submit evidence for each activity if selected for OSSE monitoring of FY25 grants.



- Evidence may include multiple items for one activity to sufficiently demonstrate completion (e.g., dated professional development sign-in sheet, agenda, and training slides).

## GEPA Statement

In the GEPA Statement tab, be sure to include:

- A description of how the LEA’s existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.
  - For example: Regarding the afterschool reading tutoring program that is being supported by SOAR funds, our LEA’s communications policy stipulates that we translate all emails, flyers, newsletters, etc., into Spanish, French, and Amharic. This helps ensure that all parents and caregivers are fully aware of the opportunities available for their child(ren) and increases enrollment rates for students most in need of supports such as reading tutoring.
- A description of at least one barrier that could impede equitable access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries.
  - For example: For afterschool activities such as the tutoring program, we have identified that transportation is a barrier for many of our students experiencing homelessness.
- A description of the steps that will be taken to address identified barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity.
  - For example: In order to address this transportation barrier, we plan to partner with a shuttle company to provide rides to impacted students at 6 p.m. when the tutoring program ends.
- A description of the timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers.
  - For example: As of submitting this grant application in November 2024, we finished receiving quotes from multiple transportation companies and will make a selection by Dec. 15, 2024. This will allow a contract to be signed in early January and service to students to begin on Jan. 15, 2025, the first day of the tutoring program. We plan to survey parents and caregivers in February to see how the service is working for them and obtain any suggestions for improvement.

# Budget

As overall guidance for the SOAR grant budget, be sure that:

- The budget is designed to cover costs incurred during the award period (July 1, 2024 – Sept. 30, 2025) and that goods and services can reasonably be received within this time frame.
- The budgeted costs are aligned with the project description.
- A complete justification is provided in the cost basis field for each budgeted item. The below sections describe what a complete justification should include for each budget category.

The sub-sections below provide the specific information and details you need to include in each line and column of your SOAR grant budget.

## Budget: Salaries and Benefits

On the Salaries and Benefits tab, each budget line item must have:

- Program Category*: Select the program category that best fits the purpose of the expenditure. Please refer to the Expenditure Categorization Guide (linked at the top of each budget tab within the EGMS application) for more guidance.
- Position Title*: Enter the position title of the employee working on the grant project. If multiple individuals with the same title will be included in the budget, you may include them on the same line (e.g., “2 Special Education Teachers”).
  - *NOTE*: The “supplement not supplant” requirement does not apply to the SOAR Academic Quality grant, so it is acceptable to budget for salaries of teachers and other staff that would normally be supported by local funding. This requirement does apply to the Early Childhood grant.
- Brief Position Description*: Provide a brief description (no more than one to two sentences) of the role of this employee. The description should demonstrate how the activities conducted by the individual are necessary to meet the purpose or objectives of the grant project.
- Cost Basis*: Provide a justification for the amount budgeted for this employee. This should include the annual salary, fringe benefits rate (if applicable), percentage of staff time that will be requested for reimbursement, number of staff in the position (if more than one) and time period for reimbursement (if not the entire award period). The cost basis should demonstrate how the amount budgeted is reasonable for what is being purchased (e.g., a book that costs \$1,000 would not be reasonable).
  - Examples of acceptable cost basis formats for a lead math teacher budgeted at \$50,000:
    1. Annual salary and benefits for this full-time position is \$115,000, with a fringe rate of 15 percent. 50 percent will be charged to the grant in reimbursement requests from Aug. 1, 2024 - July 30, 2025.

2. Annual salary for this full-time position is \$100,000. 100 percent will be charged to the grant in reimbursement requests from Aug. 1, 2024 - Jan. 31, 2025.

*Amount Budgeted:* Enter the total amount budgeted for the employee(s).

## Budget: Professional Services

On the Professional Services tab, each budget line item must have:

- Program Category:* Select the program category that best fits the purpose of the expenditure. Please refer to the Expenditure Categorization Guide (linked at the top of each budget tab within the EGMS application) for more guidance.
- Item(s) to be Purchased:* Describe the specific goods or services that will be purchased with grant funds.
- Purpose of Expenditure:* Provide a brief description (no more than one to two sentences) of the purpose of this expenditure in the grant program. The description must explain why the expenditure is necessary to meet the purpose or objectives of the grant project.
- Cost Basis:* Provide a justification for the amount budgeted for this expenditure. This should include the quantity (i.e., number of units), and estimated cost per unit. For services, the cost basis should include the time period of the contract. The cost basis should demonstrate how the amount budgeted is reasonable for what is being purchased (e.g., a book that costs \$1,000 would not be reasonable).
  - o For example, for a series of monthly in-school literacy trainings budgeted at \$10,000, an acceptable cost basis format could be “10 two-hour workshops at \$1,000 each; contract with vendor covers Sept. 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025.”
- Amount Budgeted:* Enter the total amount budgeted for the item(s).

## Budget: Equipment (Items with a per-unit cost of \$5,000 or more)

On the Equipment tab, each budget line item must have:

- Program Category:* Select the program category that best fits the purpose of the expenditure. Please refer to the Expenditure Categorization Guide (linked at the top of each budget tab within the EGMS application) for more guidance.
- Item(s) to be Purchased:* Describe the specific goods or services that will be purchased with grant funds.
- Purpose of Expenditure:* Provide a brief description (no more than one to two sentences) of the purpose of this expenditure in the grant program. The description must explain why the expenditure is necessary to meet the purpose or objectives of the grant project.
- Cost Basis:* Provide a justification for the amount budgeted for this expenditure. This should include the quantity (i.e., number of units), and estimated cost per unit. For services, the cost basis should include the time period of the contract. The cost basis

should demonstrate how the amount budgeted is reasonable for what is being purchased (e.g., a book that costs \$1,000 would not be reasonable).

- For example, for demonstration fume hoods for the school’s two chemistry labs budgeted at \$10,400, an acceptable cost basis format could be “two fume hoods estimated at \$5,200 each.”
- *Amount Budgeted*: Enter the total amount budgeted for the item(s).

## Budget: Supplies and Materials

On the Supplies and Materials tab, each budget line item must have:

- *Program Category*: Select the program category that best fits the purpose of the expenditure. Please refer to the Expenditure Categorization Guide (linked at the top of each budget tab within the EGMS application) for more guidance.
- *Item(s) to be Purchased*: Describe the specific goods or services that will be purchased with grant funds.
- *Purpose of Expenditure*: Provide a brief description (no more than one to two sentences) of the purpose of this expenditure in the grant program. The description must explain why the expenditure is necessary to meet the purpose or objectives of the grant project.
- *Cost Basis*: Provide a justification for the amount budgeted for this expenditure. This should include the quantity (i.e., number of units), and estimated cost per unit. For services, the cost basis should include the time period of the contract. The cost basis should demonstrate how the amount budgeted is reasonable for what is being purchased (e.g., a book that costs \$1,000 would not be reasonable).
  - For example, for student laptops budgeted at \$15,000, an acceptable cost basis format could be “30 Chromebooks estimated at \$500 each.”
- *Amount Budgeted*: Enter the total amount budgeted for the item(s).

## Budget: Other Objects

On the Other Objects tab, each budget line item must have:

- *Program Category*: Select the program category that best fits the purpose of the expenditure. Please refer to the Expenditure Categorization Guide (linked at the top of each budget tab within the EGMS application) for more guidance.
- *Item(s) to be Purchased*: Describe the specific goods or services that will be purchased with grant funds. **The “Other Objects” budget category should be used sparingly and only for items that don’t fall under other budget categories.** Examples include conference registration fees, travel expenditures (plane fares, Uber, taxi, etc.), one-off venue rental for trainings or events related to the grant project, and teacher stipends.
- *Purpose of Expenditure*: Provide a brief description (no more than one to two sentences) of the purpose of this expenditure in the grant program. The description

must explain why the expenditure is necessary to meet the purpose or objectives of the grant project.

- Cost Basis:* Provide a justification for the amount budgeted for this expenditure. This should include the quantity (i.e., number of units), and estimated cost per unit. For services, the cost basis should include the time period of the contract. The cost basis should demonstrate how the amount budgeted is reasonable for what is being purchased (e.g., a book that costs \$1,000 would not be reasonable).
  - For example, for registration fees for teachers to attend a math conference, budgeted at \$2,500, an acceptable cost basis format could be “registration fees for five teachers at \$500 per person.”
- Amount Budgeted:* Enter the total amount budgeted for the item(s).