



OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

**Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25) Whole Child and Educator Wellness Grant (WCEW)
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

Released Dec. 4, 2024

- 1. Knowing that the grant applicants must be community-based organizations (CBOs), is there a process in place for when a school reaches out and may be interested in partnering with an organization?**

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) is maintaining a list of schools and early childhood education (ECE) facilities that have expressed to OSSE their interest in the grant program. CBOs that are seeking school and ECE facility partners may reach out to KimberlyA.Thompson@dc.gov. The partnership agreement must be finalized in advance of the application deadline and submitted with the application.

- 2. Our CBO is currently operating out of District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS). Is our organization eligible to apply?**

There is the potential for a conflict of interest if you are delivering the grant's capacity-building services during school hours, while working as a District government employee at DCPS. After reviewing the Request for Applications (RFA), if you still believe your organization is qualified to meet program requirements, please let KimberlyA.Thompson@dc.gov know how your organization will avoid a conflict of interest. Please reference question 7 for additional details on conflicts of interest.

- 3. If we are interested in working with a CBO that will be providing wellness support and technical assistance, how would we proceed? Do we need to first partner with the CBOs? Would only one CBO be matched with us? Or would schools be able to learn about the different CBOs to find a match depending on their priority areas? For example, a CBO that provides more mindfulness support vs. a CBO that provides more physical health and movement support or outdoor education. If you could share how the schools are matched with the CBO that would be great.**

OSSE cannot dictate to CBOs to partner with specific school/ECE sites, but we can provide them with a list of sites that have expressed interest in participating in the grant. Grantee sites can receive support from multiple CBOs under different program areas, but it is up to them to determine with whom they will finalize a partnership.

- 4. My organization is a national organization that provides direct support to schools and districts in communities across the country. We have staff in DC that partner with DCPS. Would we be seriously considered for funding as a national organization that serves DC as part of a larger footprint? Are proposals to support ECE facilities versus schools given equal weight?**

All CBOs will be considered if they can demonstrate they provide capacity-building services to the ECE and/or DC public and public charter schools. Since you represent a national organization, in your program narrative and budget narrative, you would need to provide

information on the staff and services operating only in the District. All proposals that serve only ECE or school sites or a mix of both are reviewed equally.

- 5. Many of the questions have 1,000-character limits but ask five to eight questions, meaning about one sentence per answer, maximum. There is concern over having sufficient space to adequately answer all the questions.**

The character limit for all questions (except for the technical assistance plan) under the Program Abstract and Program Plan sections of the FY25 Whole Child and Educator Wellness Grant application has been increased from 1,000 to 3,000 characters. This update took effect on Nov. 20, 2024. Please see the updated information on the [grant webpage](#) that addresses your question.

- 6. If the applicant organization is actively partnering with a school to provide different services than are proposed in the application, and thus would not be supplanting funds, can the organization partner with that school for this grant?**

Yes. WCEW grant funds cannot be used to supplant existing and active school partnerships in any specific priority area. In your application, you should provide a supporting program narrative and budget justification for the scope of your proposed priority area and planned school partnerships. Other existing school partnerships outside of the scope of the application are allowable.

- 7. Regarding this requirement: CBOs will partner with a minimum of five DC ECE facilities and/or public and public charter schools. As a CBO and an ECE, can our location count as a partner, or do we need a minimum of five additional partners?**

There is the potential for a conflict of interest if you are delivering the grant's capacity-building services during normal ECE working hours. Please let OSSE know in your application how your organization will avoid a conflict of interest.

- 8. A CBO is entering cooperative agreements to open ECE centers at DCPS elementary schools, expected to open in early 2025. Can those two sites count as partner ECEs, even though the ECE centers will be managed by the CBO applying?**

There is the potential for a conflict of interest if you are delivering the grant's capacity-building services during normal ECE working hours. All applicants must submit their letters of commitment from their sites with the application that is due Dec. 18. All sites must be currently licensed, operating, and approved for the Child and Adult Food Program (CACFP) program. Alternatively, you could partner with other CACFP program sites under other sponsors. Please reach out to KimberlyA.Thompson@dc.gov if you have questions about eligible CACFP sites.

- 9. Is the source of this funding federal? We would like to know if the funding can count toward our required Head Start match.**

The grant funding sources are local.

- 10. In section 1.2.3. the last sentence in the second paragraph states: "-Partner sites may be new or previous partners, however, the WCEW grant cannot be used to supplant funds for active school partnerships." Does this mean that a grantee can work with ECE programs that they partnered with before (FY23, and FY24)?**

Yes, applicants can continue existing partnerships. In reference to supplanting funds, a grantee cannot swap one funding source for WCEW grant dollars. If a program is already funded and implemented, the WCEW is not intended to simply replace those funds to free

up the original funding source for another use. Instead, the WCEW may be used for new programs with either an existing or new partner. It cannot fund already established and funded work underway. Please reference question 6 for additional details on supplanting funds.

11. The RFA references a needs assessment several times. Is the needs assessment conducted prior to the beginning of the program or is it mandatory that a needs assessment is conducted during the program?

The needs assessment is completed during the grant award period. See Section 2.1.3.1 for school recruitment and needs assessment requirements.

12. Within the technical assistance plan, can the grant funds be used to support the first three months of programming?

Grant funds can be obligated starting from the award date when the Grant Award Notice (GAN) is generated. The planned award date is Jan. 27, 2025.

13. Can an entity submit multiple applications?

OSSE will accept one application per CBO; a lead organization may contract with other organization(s) that can provide services in another program. (Contracted organizations can only appear on one application.)

14. Is there a maximum number of sites a CBO can partner with?

There is no maximum number of sites to partner with in your proposal. Applicants that choose to work with more than five sites should submit: (1) a plan that reflects how they will manage the number of proposed schools, (2) their organizational capacity for managing the sites, and (3) a budget commensurate with the project scope.

15. Can funds be used for teacher stipends?

Stipends can be used to cover replacement staff time during trainings and professional development and to supplement time covered outside of normal working hours, as allowable.

16. Is a Local Education Agency (LEA) considered a CBO?

For eligibility purposes under the WCEW grant, a local educational agency (LEA) is not a CBO.

