

Investment in Schools Grant Year One Application (FY19) Guidance and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Overview

The Investment in Schools grant is available to schools identified in the [DC School Report Card](#) in the lowest-performing 5 percent of schools in the District, identified as Comprehensive Support and Improvement schools, type 1 (CS1). All local education agencies (LEAs) with CS1 schools are eligible to apply for these funds. More information is available on OSSE's website: osse.dc.gov/investmentinschools.

Sections of the Grant

The Investment in Schools application questions are available [here](#). Eligible LEAs will apply for the Investment in Schools Grant through the Enterprise Grants Management System (EGMS). Applications may be submitted on Dec. 7, 2018, and no later than Feb. 28, 2019. Early submission is encouraged. The following tabs are included in the grant application:

1. Needs Assessment: The LEA should describe its plan for carrying out a Needs Assessment process with key stakeholders for each CS1 school.
2. School Improvement Planning Process: The LEA should describe its plan for carrying out the school improvement planning process with key stakeholders for each CS1 school.
3. School Improvement Plan Implementation: Once each CS1 school's improvement plan is complete, LEAs may use funds to launch the implementation of school improvement activities at these schools. In this section, the LEA should describe how the implementation of the plans will be carried out. LEAs may request amendments to this section during the year, as needed to reflect updated/additional implementation plans.
4. Documents to be submitted May 31, 2019: An LEA will need to submit the following:
 - Needs Assessment for each CS1 school;
 - School Improvement Plan for each CS1 school; and
 - Resource Equity Analysis (DCPS only, given it is the only LEA with a CS school identified that has more than one school overall in the LEA).

5. Detailed Planned Expenditures

- In the first year, fiscal year (FY) 2019 (Oct. 1, 2018 - Sept. 30, 2019) a CS1 school can receive up to \$240,000.
- Provide cost assumptions for each expenditure with details such as: when the expenditure will be spent, how many units will be bought, how many people served, and how the item will support the project plan in the narrative.

Overall Application Checklist

Prior to submitting an application, an LEA should ensure its application addresses each of the following:

For the Narrative Sections:

- *Ensure engagement:* The LEA leadership team, school leadership team, and other specific groups of stakeholders should be involved in creating the Needs Assessments and School Improvement Plans.¹
- *Design based on thoughtful planning:* The School Improvement Plan for each CS1 school should be informed by its Needs Assessment and, if applicable, the Resource Equity Analysis.

For the Budget Sections:

- *Align budget and narrative:* Costs detailed in the budget must align to plans described in narrative sections.
- *Ensure costs are allowable, allocable, and reasonable:*
 - Staff costs should be related to planning and completing the Needs Assessment, School Improvement Plan and, if applicable, the Resource Equity Analysis.
 - Ensure that the percentage of staff time entered in the Salary and Benefits tab reflects the amount of time the employee will be engaged in work related to the Investment in Schools grant.
 - Provide cost assumptions for each expenditure with details such as: when the expenditure will be spent, how many units will be bought, how many people will be served, and how the item will support the vision and goals.
- *Describe what is known at this stage:* For activities related to school improvement plan implementation, an LEA may provide projected implementation activities as a placeholder. If the LEA has not developed a plan for the costs of these activities, this section must be completed after the Needs Assessment and School Plan processes are completed to provide additional details related to the planned implementation activities.

¹ Please note that OSSE's template for the CS plan aligns with the requirements of the Title I, Part A Schoolwide Plan. For this reason, at the minimum, the following stakeholders should be involved: parents, members of the community to be served, teachers, principals, other school leaders, paraprofessionals, Title I grant administrators, and LEA representatives. If appropriate, also include specialized instructional support personnel, technical assistance providers, school staff, and other individuals as determined by the school; for secondary schools this should also include students.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What are examples of allowable costs?

- Hiring vendor(s) to assist with completing the Needs Assessment and School Improvement Plan (e.g., community engagement, data analysis)
- Training, conferences, and professional development opportunities related to School Improvement planning
- Percentage of staff time dedicated to completing the Needs Assessment and School Improvement Plan
- Expenses that were incurred after Oct. 1, 2018 but prior to the receipt of the GAN, but are aligned to the allowable activities for the grant, may be included as part of the LEA's application. These expenses must be approved in the LEA's application prior to reimbursement.

2. What if my school's performance status changes next year?

Schools will not be re-identified for CS1 status until the 2021-22 school year.

3. Will the allocation remain the same for next year?

OSSE is investing a total of \$11 million over three years for schools identified in the bottom 5 percent of the STAR Framework—approximately \$1 million per school over three years. The initial allocation of \$240,000 is only for year one of the grant, which OSSE expects may be devoted largely to planning and some initial implementation. Funding in years two and three will continue to support implementation at higher funding levels based on school's implementation plans and total funding availability. The year two application will be available in summer 2019 to support implementation from Oct. 1, 2019-Sept. 30, 2020.

4. Are we required to submit a budget for the full \$240,000 allocation?

An LEA may request to reduce or increase the allocation for year one. Keep in mind that these funds may support the planning process and implementation activities that occur by Sept. 30, 2019.

5. How did OSSE determine the \$240,000 allocation?

The allocation was based on the number of identified CS1 schools and available funding in FY19.

6. Is the allocation per school?

Each school is eligible for a \$240,000 allocation in FY19. Allocations are calculated per school and an LEA with more than one CS1 school may:

- Pool funds together to provide planning support to more than one CS1 school
- Justify the need for one CS1 school receiving more funds than another CS1 school

7. How do I allocate funds across my CS1 schools? (for LEAs with more than one school identified at CS1)

The LEA should determine its approach to completing needs assessments, a resource equity analysis, and school improvement plans. The LEA's approach will dictate what costs may be appropriate to centralize, particularly in year one.

In any approach, per ESSA (ESEA §1003(e)(1)(F)(2)), an LEA must assure that each school the LEA proposes to serve will receive all of the state and local funds it would have received in the absence of funds received under this grant.

8. Who do I contact if I have questions?

The OSSE team is available to support LEAs as they develop their FY19 grant applications and complete school improvement templates by no later than May 31, 2019. For additional support, please contact the following members of our team:

- For the [Investment in Schools grant application](#) – Renu Oliver, Renu.Oliver@dc.gov
- For the [Needs Assessment](#) - Christina Parrish, Christina.Parrish@dc.gov
- For the [School Improvement Plan](#) – Christina Parrish, Christina.Parrish@dc.gov
- For the [Resource Equity Analysis](#) – Renu Oliver, Renu.Oliver@dc.gov