



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF

EDUCATION

Mentoring Students in the Academic Middle Grant 2021

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Question 1: What is the purpose of the Mentoring Students in the Academic Middle Grant?

Answer 1: The goal of the Mentoring Students in the Academic Middle Grant is to support programs that mentor high school students and first generation college students, from underserved communities, in the academic middle, who are enrolled in or who graduated from a District of Columbia public or public charter school, to provide the students with the skills and experiences needed to successfully complete college and excel in the workforce.

Question 2: What is the maximum amount of funding available?

Answer 2: The maximum amount of funding available is \$200,000.

Question 3: Who is eligible to apply?

Answer 3: Eligible applicants include nonprofit organizations, local education agencies, and institutions of higher education who shall maintain a focus on high school students and first generation college students, from underserved communities, in the academic middle and provide a research based approach to mentoring said students that is equitable, high-quality, measurable, aligned to college and career and financially sustainable

Question 4: What is the target population?

Answer 4: The target population is students in the academic middle.

Question 5: How do I start an application?

Answer 5: All OSSE grants are managed using the Enterprise Grants Management System (EGMS). Please visit grants.osse.dc.gov/ to start an application.

Question 6: How do I get access to EGMS?

Answer 6: New EGMS users must request credentials. Instructions for becoming an EGMS user are available at grants.osse.dc.gov/info/credentials. For technical help with EGMS, contact the EGMS Call Center at (202) 719-6500 or osse.callcenter@dc.gov Monday-Friday from 7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Question 7: What is the application deadline?

Answer 7: The application is due by 3 p.m. on Jan. 5, 2021.

Question 8: What are the permissible uses of funds?

Answer 8: Permissible use of funds include:

- Cost of supplies and materials for students;
- Cost of professional development for staff and mentors;
- Cost of technical assistance; and
- Cost of staff/mentor salaries, wages and/or stipends.
- Application must provide rationale for expenses that do not fall under these categories, and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Question 9: Is this grant funded with local or federal funds?

Answer 9: This grant is funded with local funds.

Question 10: Is this grant eligible for indirect costs?

Answer 10: All OSSE grantees must have an indirect cost rate approved by OSSE, if they plan on claiming indirect costs on grants that allow indirect cost claiming. Once a grantee has an approved rate, that rate will be entered in EGMS and will appear as a special indirect cost line item at the bottom of each budget page, on all grants that allow indirect cost claiming. This is the only place that indirect costs can be budgeted and claimed. Grantees are not permitted to enter indirect costs in the “OTHER” tab of the budget. The criteria for receiving an approved rate vary, depending on the type of entity. The following is required for each type of entity:

LEA's: must submit an indirect cost rate proposal to OSSE for review. The proposal should be submitted to the Office of Grants Management and Compliance at osse.grantscompliance@dc.gov, using the approved LEA Indirect Cost Rate Template can be found at <https://osse.dc.gov/publication/indirect-cost-information-and-templates>. OSSE will issue a letter stating the approved rate and period for which that rate is applicable, once it is reviewed and approved.

Non-Profits: may use the De Minimis rates of 10% Unrestricted and 8% Restricted.

Institutes of Higher Education (IHE's): must provide a letter each fiscal year from The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) stating their approved indirect cost rate. If the letter does not specify a separate restricted and unrestricted rate, the De Minimis rate of 8% will be used as the restricted rate. The rate on the letter will be used as the unrestricted rate.

Question 11: What are the reporting requirements for the grant?

Answer 11: Please see reporting requirements below.

- Program Evaluation Report. A report is due to OSSE by Sept. 30, 2021, with an overview of activities that took place during the funded period (Feb. 3 [or award date] – Sept. 30), highlighting any proposed changes in logistics or budget to the program implementation. Report should also include information on the program's strategies, as well as the frequency of student engagement with the program. Template will be provided.

- Monthly reporting of program implementation. Template will be provided.
- Mid-Program Report. An evaluation report is due to OSSE midway through the duration of the program. At a minimum the report should detail a list of planned programming dates, student enrollment, and an overview of program activities. Template will be provided.
- Final Evaluation Report. A final evaluation report is due within 30 days of the program end date. At a minimum the final report should detail student enrollment, attendance, an overview of program activities, and student progress updates. Additionally, this report should include qualitative feedback from the entities mentors, mentees and other staff (as appropriate). Template will be provided.
- Additionally, OSSE we will ask for qualitative feedback from program contacts up to three times throughout the program duration via phone call or in person meetings. **With the exception of these qualitative conversations, the subgrantee will be responsible for submitting the reporting requirements to OSSE.**

Question 12: Where can I find the RFA for the grant?

Answer 12: The RFA for the grant can be found on the [Mentoring Students in the Academic Middle Grant website](#).

Question 13: Where can I find the slide deck for pre-application conference/webinar?

Answer 13: Please reach out to Christina.Beal@dc.gov to receive a copy of the slide deck of the pre-application webinar.

Question 14: How can I obtain my scores?

Answer 14: After grantees are announced, applicants may request their scores by contacting the grant's manager Christina Beal at Christina.Beal@dc.gov.

Question 15: Based on the application setup in the EGMS portal, are applicants restricted to an 8% indirect cost rate, or are we allowed to use our own indirect rate?

Answer 15: See the answer to question 10.

Question 16: Any more formal criteria for students in the academic middle?

Answer 16: Students considered to be part of the “academic middle” may be loosely defined as those students whose grade point averages represent the middle 50 percent range of grade point averages as earned by those students’ peers.

Question 17: As this grant supports both college and career readiness, would we be able to support students seeking vocational/non-collegiate post-secondary opportunities?

Answer 17: This grant will support programs that mentor high school students and first generation college students, from underserved communities, in the academic middle, who are enrolled in or who graduated from a District of Columbia public or public charter school.

Question 18: How does OSSE define "research based" programming?

Answer 18: Research-based programming is programming that was developed based on the research and evidence available in the field.

Question 19: Is there an age range or time limit for the students we can support (i.e., Can we work with all high school youth, or only juniors and seniors? How long can we support youth once they enter college/other post-secondary education? Can we support first-generation college students who are currently enrolled?)?

Answer 19: This grant will support programs that mentor high school students and first generation college students, from underserved communities, in the academic middle, who are enrolled in or who graduated from a District of Columbia public or public charter school.

Question 20: Is there a page limit?

Answer 20: There is no "page limit," but there are character limits for questions requiring narrative answers outlined in the application in EGMS. The character limits are clearly stated with each question.

Question 21: Is there a format requiring font size and type and spacing?

Answer 21: No, there is no format requiring font size, type and spacing. The application is to be completed in EGMS.

Question 22: If we (the applicant) received another grant for some of the students in our mentoring program, does that mean we cannot include those students in our proposal for the Mentoring Students in the Academic Middle (MSAM) grant?

Answer 22: These grant funds should be used to provide services to students for which those services are not already being paid for with other grant funds. For example, if a grant already obtained by the applicant supports high school seniors with the cost of supplies, the applicant should not propose in the grant application that the MSAM grant support high school seniors with the cost of supplies. Please note that the grant application requires explicit descriptions of all budgeted items and if awarded the subgrantee must maintain all invoices and proofs of payment for use in the case of monitoring and/or audit.

Question 23: Is there a funding formula based on the number of unique students served? For instance, is there a minimum number of students served required to win the full grant amount?

Answer 23: There is no required funding formula for this competitive grant. There is no minimum number of students served required to win the full grant amount.