

Community Schools Incentive Initiative 2013 FAQ

****The question period for the grant has been extended until June 21st at 5:00 pm.**

- 1) Per the priority list, mental health prevention services are emphasized. Would proposals that do not have that aspect but do have the adult education, parental engagement programming be seriously considered? How will the “priority” be granted to those schools that have a focus on mental health prevention and treatment services and adult education and training; and a student population of which at least 75% of the students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch?
 - All proposals will be considered.
 - In order to account for the priority for the three areas (mental health, adult education, free and reduced lunch), each of the three will be assigned some amount of additional points. They will each count separately, so a proposal could be awarded extra points for one area even if they do not have all three arrears.
- 2) Is the staffing limited to a Community Schools Coordinator? Does the Community School Coordinator need to be an absolutely new staff position or could it be a position that has other responsibilities? Can the position be split?
 - The Community School Coordinator should be a full-time employee with responsibility to manage the Community School. Given this, the Community School Coordinator should not have other responsibilities. They can be an employee that is already at the LEA or CBO as long as their responsibilities are going to change (rather than combined with their previous duties).
 - Other staff beyond the Community School Coordinator can be paid for with the grant funds.
 - The Community School Coordinator position can be split but it is not recommended that it be split between more than two people as then there may be a lack of accountability and oversight.
- 3) Do the 4 eligible services need to come directly off of the list on page 7 of the RFA or could there be other eligible services?
 - There must be at least 4 eligible services from the list on page 7. There can be additional services if desired.
- 4) In terms of the Community Advisory Board, does this need to be a completely new group of people put together for this grant (so not part of the existing School Advisory Board)?
 - You can use your existing advisory board however you may want to add some members from the community or from your partner organizations to make it complete as the Community Schools Advisory Board.
- 5) Do you need to submit a Letter of Support from the community partner's board or just the school's board?
 - You do not need a letter of support from the Board of your partner organizations. It is assumed when you get the letter of support from your partner that their Board is in favor of this relationship.
- 6) Is a letter required from both the Principal and the Local School Advisory Team?
 - Yes

- 7) How will you measure the evidence of a productive relationship between the Community School Coordinator and Principal?
 - This could be represented by notes from meetings between the two, evidence that the matters discussed in these meetings were then implemented in the school, etc.
- 8) Will applications be strong if two or three CBOs write a joint proposal for one school?
 - Yes, this is exactly what we are looking for. The consortium is going to be an LEA along with a group of partners that are working together to offer at least 4 additional eligible services.
- 9) If the LEA is the District of Columbia public school system (DCPS), does the DCPS out of school office count as a local advisory board?
 - Ideally the school would have a local advisory board that is involved in decision making at the school. If this is not the case, we can revisit that on a case by case basis.
- 10) Should the trainings be part of the budget?
 - The trainings will take place at OSSE so there should be no cost associated with them.
- 11) Can two schools apply together for \$200,000?
 - Yes, two schools can apply together as part of one “eligible consortium.” However each eligible consortium can only apply for \$200,000.
- 12) The application requires a community assessment – can you please describe or provide an example of an adequate “assessment” of a community?
 - We do not have a specific format in mind for the community assessment. We would like to see that you have looked into the population and needs of your community and planned your eligible services accordingly.
- 13) As the grant is only for one year, can OSSE provide examples how best others have sustained funding after the start-up phase?
 - As this is our first year, we do not have examples yet. However, you may find some useful information at [Coalition for Community Schools](#), such as a publication entitled “[Financing a Community School](#).”
- 14) The grant requires 4 new eligible services at the site, but can the funding support new or existing services that might integrate the services in a new way?
 - Yes, if your LEA is already offering services that are not traditionally offered by an LEA, then you can include those services. However, you would want to be clear how the money from this grant is going to expand upon the services already offered. Will they be available to more students? Will they be better integrated into the school? Will they bring in more community members?
- 15) Do the partners have to be community-based partners or can the partners also be local government agencies?
 - Both or either is fine.
- 16) Can you explain what “The identification of operational funding for eligible services and community partners” means?
 - This means that it should be clear that you have anticipated the costs associated with the services and the operational costs of providing those services, and that both have been accounted for in the budget.
- 17) For Attachments D, E, and F, who should sign as the applicant, the lead/fiscal agent?
 - The applicant may be different than the Fiscal Agent or it may be the same person. The applicant is the person that will be overseeing the overall project.
- 18) Can OSSE provide best-practice examples from other cities or from previous years?

- Again, we do not have best practice examples from previous years as this is our first year. However, there are examples of community schools operating in DC such as [J.C. Nalle Community School](#) and the [DC Promise Neighborhood Initiative](#). Also, the [Coalition for Community Schools](#) has information about best-practices from various cities around the nation.

19) If a charter school is partnering with a DCPS, and the charter school is the lead LEA and fiscal agent, is the principal letter from the DCPS sufficient to meet the requirements of the RFA?

- The purpose of the letter from the local School Advisory Board is to indicate that not just the Principal, but the entire school community is on board with the school's involvement in the community school. In the situation above, it would be recommended that you have approval from the local School Advisory Board as well as the Principal. However, since the DCPS school could be considered a "partner," it would not be required.

20) Can you expand upon the evaluation elements that will be required for the RFA?

- We do not have a specific plan for evaluation and each eligible consortium should develop their own plan for evaluation. Some suggested things to evaluate are:
 - # of students, community members, parents reached with the services
 - Satisfaction of those participating in the services
 - Outcomes—better health, less days missed, etc.

21) Can you describe the review process for the grant applications?

- Grants applications will first be reviewed by OSSE staff to see that all required components are included and formatting is correct. After that, each application will be reviewed by three panelists from OSSE staff, our Community Schools Advisory Board, or the education community. The top finalists will be chosen for on-site interviews. During the on-site interviews. On-site interviews will take place during the last week of July and the first week of August. Grantees will be notified by August, 15th.