

FY10 Title II, Part D ARRA Competitive Grants *Updated May 13, 2010*

FAQs

Question: If your LEA has multiple eligible schools, then may all apply?

Answer: Yes

Question: Can all eligible schools in an LEA apply for all grants they qualify for?

Answer: Yes

Question: Can a high school apply for more than one grant?

Answer: Yes

Question: How many is approximately 1,000? What is your give and take?

Answer: The grant is intended for high schools of approximately 1000 students or less. Please email us with any questions concerning enrollment numbers for a ruling.

Question: In terms of private school consultation, when should this be done and if they chose to participate how is this done? What rights are private schools afforded?

Answer: Please see Appendix D in the Guidance. The private school consultation should be done during the design and development of the application. During the consultation, the LEA and the private school determine what services the private school needs and the decision is made how these services will be provided. The private school only receives "educational services" and does not receive money.

STEM Grant Questions

Question: For the STEM Grant, do LEAs have to have both a high school and the feeder middle school on the eligibility list OR if a high school is eligible are they able to include a feeder middle school in the grant?

Answer: If the high school is eligible but the middle school that feeds into the high school is not, then the high school will be the fiscal agent for the grant and they will both get the grant. There will be one application for both schools with both schools participating in writing the grant, etc. It will also work the other way - if the middle school is eligible but the high school it feeds into is not, the middle school will be the fiscal agent.

Question: Will all CTAE, science, math teachers be required to participate in the second semester....even if the areas aren't related to the grant. (Some of the CTAE programs are directly related to math or science, others are not, i.e., will the CTAE Business programs be required to participate?) Will this be full participation or possibly advisory?

Answer: The school should identify one teacher from one STEM related CTAE area, one math teacher, one science teacher, and a building administrator or CTAE coordinator. The grant is not intended to cover all CTAE areas; however, we encourage other teachers of content that relate to STEM to participate.

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STEM Grant Questions

Question: Will Middle Schools have to have a CTAE program to participate?

Answer: Yes; however, they may begin a CTAE program if they provide the necessary assurances to GaDOE before applying.

Question: Will both middle schools and high schools purchase Polycom...even if they are on the same general campus...walking distance?

Answer: This should be determined on a case-by-case basis. Please contact the grant lead person at the GaDOE.

Question: Are the equipment requirements the same for middle and high schools?

Answer: This will be determined after the grant award. Equipment will vary according to the focus of the grant.

Question: Are there specifications for the room that will be used as a lab?

Answer: Not at this time.

Question: How is the outreach program for elementary school defined? Do you have suggestions for an outreach program for the feeder elementary school?

Answer: This will be determined by the schools. Some suggestions may be determined by the leadership team, the Governance Board, etc.

Question: Will the group that is a part of the Governance Board receive Professional Learning on criteria for developing model STEM projects?

Answer: That is a good idea and could certainly be considered.

Question: How often will (or should) the governing board meet?

Answer: To be determined.

Question: May an out of state post-secondary school be considered for the Governance Board?

Answer: Yes

Question: How will the Professional Learning implementation plan and scheduling be done with all science, math, and CTAE teachers involved? What is the expectation for schools to release a large number of teachers for f2f grant professional learning?

Answer: Up to the school.

Question: Does the system administrator that implements the program have to participate in the Professional Development? Does the IT coordinator have to participate in the professional development?

Answer: Yes, for the school administrator implementing the program.

Question: Is the professional development for the grant team exclusively or are the other math, science, and CTAE teachers included?

Answer: The professional development should start with the minimum number of team members, but others may be phased in later.

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STEM Grant Questions

Question: Can discretionary grant funds be spent on instructional materials or books for new STEM courses?

Answer: Yes, but only with approval from the GaDOE.

Question: Will RESA provide direction or guidance for the evaluation plan?

Answer: The ETC/RESA can assist schools in developing their application and implementation, but the external evaluator and evaluation will be determined by the GaDOE.

Question: Do you have a list of state STEM competitions for us to consider?

Answer: Yes, it will be provided to the schools/LEAs awarded the grant.

Question: What kind of certification is required for the CTAE teachers for them to participate in this grant?

Answer: Certification requirements are determined by the PSC.

Question: Does the CTAE teacher in the high school have to teach the same program as the CTAE teacher in the middle school?

Answer: No.

Question: Can grant funds be spent to pay extended day pay for math and science teachers to collaborate with CTAE teacher?

Answer: The grant money cannot be used to pay any part of a salary during contracted hours. If the teachers are involved in before or after contract hours PD that includes collaboration and planning directly related to the grant then the PD funds may be used for stipends. [See page 5, Substitutes and/or Stipends (Function 2210)]

Question: Does the CTAE teacher in the high school have to teach the same program as the CTAE teacher in the middle school?

Answer: The schools do not have to teach the same program. The most important part of the grant is the collaboration of the math, science, and CTAE teachers within each school.

Question: Could the school involve all four of their CTAE teachers to combine the programs?

Answer: Collaboration with multiple teachers in different content areas is highly encouraged.

Question: Can the school use a professor from a college to teach students and pay him/her through either the professional learning monies?

Answer: The professional development budget is designed to provide teachers with the training and best practices they need to meet the goals of the grants. It cannot be used to hire a professor to teach students. If the school wants to pay a professor to provide the training as well as model classroom instruction while teachers observe, that is acceptable use of the professional development funds. The schools must document that in the description of the professional development plan and in the explanation of how the funds were used. The guidance of the grants is designed to build a sustainable plan that can continue after the grant funding is gone.

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eTextbook Grant Questions

Question: How many teachers in the eTextbook? If it's 60, how do we include their qualifications in a 20 page narrative?

Answer: You should include a faculty list and identify how many of the teachers have Master's, 6-Year, PhDs, etc. instead of a detailed description of each teacher. You can do it in table form, if you like, and if necessary, place it in the application under Optional Appendices.

Question: Will school systems decide which content areas they will implement for eTextbooks and digital content? All areas for 9th & 10th graders? Content areas on the scheduled textbook replacement cycle? What happens when all the students in a class are not in the same grade, i.e., an 11th grade taking a 10th grade class or subjects that are not grade specific?

Answer: All of these questions should be determined through the grant goals for the school.

Question: All netbooks will be purchased initially...then warehoused until implementation? With this grant spanning a three year period the students/teachers receiving netbooks in year two and three will begin working with "old technology." Will netbooks be the best option for eTextbooks in three years?

Answer: Since ARRA requires that the funds be expended by September 2011, it is recommended that the netbooks for the first year be purchased before the 2010-11 school year begins. The netbooks for years 2 and 3 will be purchased prior to the 2011-2012 school year.

Question: Will students or schools be responsible for purchasing carrying cases?

Answer: The netbooks will come with cases.

Question: How will students charge laptops during the school day? During class?

Answer: It is recommended that 2 batteries (with charger) be purchased for each netbook and the students can use these to charge the netbooks at home; however, schools/LEAS may purchase battery charging stations for the school/class, as well as extra charged batteries available in a central location in each school.

Question: How would the school obtain the books to load on the computers? To clarify, does the state choose the digital textbooks, or are they digital versions of the textbooks adopted by the school? Additionally, what if the adopted book doesn't have a digital version?

Answer: It is the intent of the grant that digital content will come with the netbooks. The GaDOE is setting up agreements with some of the major content vendors to provide it for free.

Question: Do all of the teachers in the high school need to receive professional development?

Answer: Strongly recommended. All teachers of core courses in grades 9-10 in year 1, 9-11 grade courses in year 2, and all teachers by year 3.

Question: Content area – Is this up to us to decide? Or is it to be implemented in all core content areas at once? Since the digital content is going to come with the netbooks, we need to know what areas to address in the grant application.

Answer: As this is a pilot program to replace traditional textbooks with digital content, our vision is that your school will implement eTextbooks for as many courses as possible. We are currently in negotiations with publishers to provide the digital content for the netbooks. For the purpose of your grant application, please describe the current instructional context for all of your school's courses.

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eTextbook Grant Questions

Question: Under the Equipment funds, "Equipment maintenance at 10%" is listed. What does this mean? Are we to include statements about how the equipment will be maintained?

Answers: 10% of the total equipment cost is simply an estimate of the cost for maintaining that equipment. You do not need to include a statement specifying how the equipment will be maintained, however please note that this is a responsibility of your district's technical staff.

Questions: Are we required to contract for the Professional Learning with the ETC/RESA (Appendix F)? Could we use the funds instead to hire a PL/technology coach (3-year position) for the grant teachers? This would not be supplanting as this position does not currently exist.

Answers: We are checking with US Ed on whether or not the funds can be used to fund an additional position. Please note, however, that all funds awarded under this grant must be spent by September 2011.

Question: Will the ETC/RESA be installing the equipment? That task is listed in Appendix E under Technology Purchase and Installation. Also, "Tech support including...ongoing maintenance" is listed in that same section. Will the ETC/RESA be providing maintenance for us?

Answers: ETCs and RESAs will NOT be installing or maintaining equipment. This is the responsibility of the vendor and/or your district's technical staff.

Question: Appendix E has some tasks for Teachers that seem to be misplaced, such as "Assist teachers with requirements...". Should those tasks be assigned in our application to the ETC/RESA instead?

Answer: We are in the process of revising Appendix E to read "participate in training" rather than "conduct training". The revised guidance will be posted to each Title IID ARRA grant's web page as soon as possible.

Question: Can we use the iPad for the eTextbooks grant?

Answer: iPads are allowable, if they are comparable in price to netbooks. However, please be advised that iPads do not meet many of the minimum recommended hardware specifications outlined in Appendix A of the grant guidance. A particular area of concern is the inability of the iPad to run Flash and Java; some digital content does contain Flash material and/or requires that Java be installed on the device. Other concerns are the storage capacity of the iPad and the absence of a built-in web cam.

Question: We want to use a specific manufacturer device for this grant. How can we compose our application properly if the specific device that we select does not meet the recommended minimum specifications in Appendix A?

Answer: The application does not require you to specify the type of equipment that you plan to use. You will specify your equipment once you have been awarded the grant and are ready to compose your budget plan.

Question: How can we be sure that the digital content provided by the eTextbook publisher(s) will run on the specific manufacturer device that we have in mind?

Answer: You cannot be sure of this until it is determined what content will be available. The available content will be determined by the grant award date. Once you have been awarded the grant, and the content has been identified, you will be able to make an informed decision as to what specific manufacturer device will be the best option for your school.

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eTextbook Grant Questions

Question: Who will choose the digital content? How will the content appear on the netbooks when ordered? Will the list of content providers be limited? Chosen by GaDOE? How can we write our application when we don't know these things?

Answer: We will schedule meetings with key players after grants are awarded to determine textbook needs. This team will include school team members, curriculum staff, ETC/RESA staff, and GaDOE staff. The plan is for the initial netbooks to be imaged by the hardware vendor. The district IT staff will then be responsible for updating new content each year. Remember that the vision for this pilot is for traditional textbooks to be replaced by digital resources, so districts should write their grants under the assumption that eTextbooks will be implemented in all subject areas.

Student Literacy Grant Questions

Question: Which grades are eligible for the Literacy Grant?

Answer: K-12

Question: In a smaller district, can the multiple eligible schools (for example - 1 elementary school and 1 middle school) choose teachers from several of their multiple schools - for example, 2 elem. and 3 middle teachers could be chosen for the 5 teachers?

Answer: No, that is not the intent of the grants.

Question: Is GA Movie Academy participation optional (page 4 under LEAs must agree to.... Also listed under Outcomes (pg.3)?

Answer: Yes, it is optional.

Question: Oasis – or application that meets the criteria....What does this mean?

Answer: If the LEA determines another application meets the same needs/requirements of the grant, then the LEA may choose that application.

Question: Can READ 180 serve the same purpose as OASIS for the Literacy Grant?

Answer: READ 180 is specified on the Lexile website as a program appropriate for addressing individual needs through differentiated instruction, adaptive and instructional software, high-interest literature and non-fiction, and direct instruction in reading, writing, and vocabulary skills. It is acceptable to use.

Question: Do you know if Riverdeep will meet the requirements for the lit piece?

Answer: Riverdeep offers dozens of products. The school applying for the grant will need to look at the specific product they are interested in to see if it leverages the Lexile Framework® to select and assign the most appropriate text and writing assignments for student literacy growth and uses reports to monitor student progress and make instructional decisions. Someone from Riverdeep sales should be able to provide that information if it is not on the website.

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Student Literacy Grant Questions

Question: Under part G: Evaluation Plan the wording states: *A description of the specific criteria used to measure the impact of the project on student achievement. At a minimum, CRCT or EOCT data submitted for 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 for the participating teacher/classrooms.* We are hearing that funding for CRCT is being cut from the state budget – how should we proceed with this component of the grant application?

Answer: The recommendation in this case is to state on the application that the school will use the CRCT or other student performance data if CRCT is not available. It is highly recommended that schools include multiple forms of assessing student learning such as: performance-based projects like digital storytelling, benchmark tests, writing assessments, etc. These could be monitored throughout the school year and can be implemented with or without the CRCT data.

Question: When the Title II D money is gone, will the schools be able to use Title I money, or would that be considered supplanting since the program had been previously paid for with Title IID?

Answer: From the Title Program Director, *One of the questions to overcome supplanting to ask is "Did the money that was originally paying for the item go away AND would this item not be purchased because of this money going away?". If the LEA has the supporting documentation to prove this and if this is an allowable Title I cost item, then the LEA could possibly use Title I monies to pay for the item.*

Therefore, it seems that as long as it can be proved that the product being purchased by the Title IID grant cannot be purchased the following year because the Title IID funds are gone **AND** it is an allowable purchase with Title I funds, then it should be ok. The important thing to remember is that you cannot purchase the same product with both grants in the same fiscal year, nor can you change funding to Title I if you are still receiving Title IID funds.

Question: Since the Active Slate/Projector/Screen set up works like the Interactive Whiteboard--do they need to purchase IWB in room 421 and 420? Could they spend the money on additional student laptops or other equipment instead?

Answer: The guidance for the grant provides recommended specifications for the equipment. If a school finds that the students can be equally interactive with the technology by using the slates/tablets as they would with an IWB, then that would be acceptable.

Question: Can they purchase the iPads with these funds?

Answer: The minimum hardware/software specifications on Appendix A ask for components that are available on laptops only. The software for the reading and writing programs will need more processing ability and memory than what is available on the netbooks or iPads.