

## **FAQs: 2010-2013 Public Charter Schools Program Grant (PCSPG)**

- 1. The application due date is January 29, 2010. Can schools, anticipating funds, begin to make grant-funded purchases immediately after that date?**

The grant cycle is competitive and schools are not guaranteed funding. Schools should not obligate or expend funds prior to receipt of award notifications.

- 2. Will any exceptions be made to the deadline?**

No.

- 3. What is the anticipated award date?**

Funds are expected to be awarded in late spring 2010.

- 4. Can the Principal/Director and key administrative staff be paid from CSP funds?**

Schools may use CSP grant funds to cover salaries only in the three month period prior to school opening. Schools can report salaries as a one-time reimbursable expense in only one grant award period (Planning or Implementation I, but not both periods).

- 5. Can schools use the Planning and Program Design funds to cover rent or mortgage payments during the first budget period?**

Schools may use CSP grant funds to cover the rent/mortgage only in the three month period prior to school opening. Schools can request rent/mortgage as a one-time reimbursable expense in only one grant award period (Planning or Implementation I, but not both periods).

- 6. If my school opened in the 2009-2010 school year, can I apply for a CSP grant?**

Schools that opened during the 2009-2010 school year and have not previously received a project award under the PCSGP may apply for an Implementation Grant.

- 7. What if the school does not have a signed charter contract?**

Schools do not need to have signed charter contracts in order to apply for Planning grants. However, implementation funds will not be awarded until a contract has been executed.

- 8. If the criteria following each narrative component include some of the same items contained in the charter school application or other documents, can we just cite the page?**

No, current federal guidelines for the Public Charter School Program Grant require that charter school applicants address specific elements. Regardless of whether some of these elements are included in their charter applications, applicants must include all relevant language in the Project Narrative. It is not

sufficient to merely refer to attachments or other documents, such as the charter contract or charter application.

**9. What are some forms of acceptable documentation for proof that my 501(c)(3) application is pending?**

Forms of proof can include cancelled check, copy of submitted application, or notification from the IRS of application receipt pending determination.

**10. How many applicants received funding last year?**

A total of 58 applicants qualified for awards from the 2009-2012 funding cycle.

**11. Is Attachment J (Grant Objectives) required as part of the proposal or is it submitted at a later date?**

Attachment J is required as part of the proposal.

**12. How should schools already in their first year of operation handle Attachment J?**

Schools already open must complete Attachment J and submit any required documentation prior to receiving Implementation I funds.

**13. How will applications be scored?**

Each application will be scored by five reviewers. We drop the highest and lowest scores and average the remaining three. A proposal must have an average score of at least 70 in order to be eligible for funding and to earn any additional preference points.

**14. Last year's RFP required a copy of the school's charter application. I cannot find this requirement in the 2010-2013 RFP. Should I send a copy of the charter application anyway?**

No. Due to the length of many charter applications, we no longer require copies. However, you must still include page references where applicable in Attachment E (Charter School Assurances). If necessary, we will request an electronic copy of your application at a later date.

**15. The RFP states on Page 2 that an additional \$50,000 may be awarded to up to ten charter schools that meet specific criteria and submit supporting documentation. What kind of documentation would be expected or acceptable, besides the description in the narrative?**

We use the information schools provide in the Project Summary, Project Narrative, Charter School Overview Form (Attachment A1) to determine which schools are eligible to receive additional funding.

**16. Can we still include charter school application page numbers on Attachment E (Charter School Assurances) even though the RFP no longer requires that we send you a copy?**

Yes. Due to the extensive length of many charter applications, we no longer require a paper copy. Include any relevant page number references to your charter

school application on Attachment E. If necessary, staff will request an electronic copy of your charter application at a later date.

**17. When discussing state standards in the curriculum section of the Charter Application , should we provide a few sample standards by grade and subject or do we need to include all state standards?**

Your narrative responses should specifically address the criteria listed in each section of the 2010-2013 RFP.

**18. The curriculum that I intend to purchase has copyright protection so I cannot include copies of this material in my application. How should I handle this?**

Your narrative responses should specifically address the criteria listed in each section of the 2010-2013 RFP.

**19. How can I document that my school meets any of the preference point criteria listed on Page 1 of the RFP?**

We use the information you provide on Attachment A1 to determine whether the school has a career academy or other accelerated mechanisms. FDOE will use enrollment and FCAT data from the previous academic year to determine which schools meet the first three bulleted preference points.

**20. Are schools that serve grades K-8 eligible for additional funding? How about schools that serve grades 9-12?**

K-8 schools do not meet the eligibility criteria for additional funding. Only middle schools serving grades 6-8 and high schools serving grades 9-12 meet the secondary schools eligibility criteria for additional funding. All schools that meet any of the criteria for additional funding listed on Page 3 will be ranked from highest to lowest score. No more than ten schools will be eligible to receive an additional \$50,000 depending on available funds.

**21. My charter application is still awaiting a decision by my sponsor. Can I submit a 2010-2013 PCSPG application?**

Yes. You may submit a grant application.

**22. Can charter schools that were denied by the local school district apply?**

Any charter school currently appealing its local school district's decision may submit a grant application. Eligibility will be determined after the State Board of Education makes a final decision.

**23. How do we obtain the required District signature?**

School districts must sign all grant applications. Applicants should contact their school districts and request information on the process for obtaining the signature of the Superintendent.

**24. One of the required attachments is a copy of the 501(c)(3) approval or documentation of application. Is it ok to attach the Articles of Incorporation with a statement of intent to apply?**

The federal law requires that charter schools receiving CSP funds be non-profit organizations. Prior to the awarding of CSP funds to a charter school, the Department requires proof of application to the IRS for non-profit status.

**25. Is it safe to assume that no supporting evidence can be cited in the application? As an example, please confirm that we should not include a copy of our By-Laws when we discuss school policies in our narrative or refer to any of the required attachments.**

Charter schools should not cite any of the attachments or other documents. The narrative should include all relevant text in response to each question and its associated criteria. Do not include any documents other than those requested on Page 15 of the RFP.

**26. Do you already have signed statements on file at the Department of Education for all school districts certifying applicant adherence to the General Assurances for Participation in State or Federal Programs?**

Yes.

**27. In accordance with the requirements of Section 427 of the GEPA Public Law 103-382, a current fiscal year General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) plan is required. The applicant must submit, with this application, a one page summary description of the plan proposed by the District or other entity to ensure equitable access to, and participation of students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. What do we use if the district does not propose a plan?**

All applicants must develop a one page GEPA plan to show how the proposed project will extend equitable access to all students, parents, and their faculty. Please refer to the following URL to review examples of how a GEPA plan can address language barriers, physical disabilities, or extend outreach efforts to all program participants: <http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/gepa427.pdf>

**28. Can the inclusive dates of the Planning and Program Design phase overlap the dates of the First Year Implementation phase (for example can the Planning and Program Design phase last until the first day of school in August, but the First Year Implementation phase begin in June)?**

No. In order to move from one grant period to the next, schools must complete the Project Performance Accountability and Reporting requirements stated on pages 12 and 13. However, a charter school may complete a performance period early, in order to move into the next phase.

**29. We would like to include 2-3 months of salaries for the Principal and Office Manager in our budget, but the cost of that will exceed the amount available for the planning phase and will need to be funded from the first year implementation funds.**

You can report salaries as a one-time reimbursable expense in either Planning or Implementation, but not both grant periods. Costs incurred in one grant period cannot be carried over to the next award.

**30. Are information technology consulting costs an allowable expenditure in the Planning and Program Design phase?**

Only those costs associated with the initial school start-up and planning may be included in the Planning and Program Design. All budget items will be reviewed by program staff to ensure they are allowable. FDOE Grant Specialists will be available to work with funded schools in revising budgets to ensure compliance with federal and state regulations.

**31. The instructions say that applicants can meet one or more the preference point criteria. Can we earn a preference point for bullet #4 even if my school district does not have a grade of “C” or lower required in bullet#3?**

Yes, you can earn a preference point for bullet item number 4 even if the school is not located in a low performing school district.