

Community Schools Grant Initiative RFP 2013
General Questions and Answers

- 1. In the RFP it says, “Community Schools ensure that students and families have access to a comprehensive suite of programs and services that include academic enhancement, family engagement, health promotion and healthcare, nutrition, counseling, legal, parenting skills and supports, housing, workforce training and related job search assistance.” Does this mean that proposed projects need to address *all* of these areas, or simply the ones that are most relevant to the school district and its students?**

A. Applications should include programs and services that are most relevant to the school community.

- 2. Are there any format guidelines for the 2013 CSGI application? For example, is there a required font size, margin width, minimum or maximum number of pages for this application?**

A. It is preferred that the application narrative not exceed 35 double-spaced pages, paginated, using one-inch margins and Times New Roman standard font in 12-point.

- 3. Is there a cap on the number of proposals an agency can submit? We realize we must submit one application per school but can an agency partner with more than one school?**

A. There is no cap on the number of applications an agency can submit. However, Pursuant to Education Law § 3641 subdivision 6-a, no single school district may receive more than forty percent (40%) of the \$15 million available funding for this initiative. Agencies can partner with more than one school.

- 4. Can you please tell me roughly how many grants you intend to award, and if available, how many applications your office received in the last round of funding, and of those, how many were awarded?**

A. Up to \$15 million from the State FY2013-14 Enacted Budget will be available for grant awards supporting the Community Schools initiative. Each eligible applicant may apply for a maximum allocation of \$500,000 per Community School site (with only one Community School site per application) to be distributed over 3 years. If each applicant is awarded \$500,000, 30 grants may be awarded. This is the first time this grant funding competition is being made available.

5. Can you please detail what I should provide in order to receive a letter of support from the Chancellor?

A. It is up to your agency to communicate directly with the New York City Department of Education to discuss what is required from the Chancellor for a letter of support.

6. Is there a funding cap per individual participant?

A. There is no funding cap per individual participant.

7. Does the \$500,000 maximum award per school cover a total three year period or \$500,000 each year for three years?

A. The \$500,000 award per community school site will cover a three year period.

8. Is there a list of current Community Schools, any on Long Island?

A. The Community Schools RFP is a new grant initiative. NYSED does not have a statewide list of current community schools.

9. Is there a page length you would anticipate most applications being? Any indication you can give would help us judge how much or how little detail to include.

A. It is preferred that the application narrative not exceed 35 double-spaced pages, paginated, using one-inch margins and Times New Roman standard font in 12-point.

10. Do all services need to be delivered right in the school district? Or, do all services need to be delivered specifically in the one school designated as the "Community School"?

A. The purpose of this RFP is to deliver services at the designated community school site.

11. Are there any expenses that cannot be funded, as long as all expenditures are related to the proposed program?

- A. All expenditures must be directly aligned with program goals and objectives. Equipment purchases are permitted when necessary to meet the project goals and objectives, but must not exceed 10% of the total project budget. Additional guidance on allowable costs may be found <http://www.oms.nysed.gov/cafe/guidance/>

12. The \$15 million allocated for this grant in the 2013-14 state budget – is this the only funding for all three years of the grant? In other words, is \$15 million the total amount to be awarded, or do you expect to have additional funding in future years? How much total funding do you anticipate awarding in the CSGL, over the three years?

- A. As stated in the RFP; Up to \$15 million from the State FY2013-14 Enacted Budget will be available for grant awards supporting the Community Schools initiative. Each eligible applicant may apply for a maximum allocation of \$500,000 per Community School site (with only one Community School site per application) to be distributed over 3 years. Any additional funding will be based on availability of state funds.

13. Does the funding need to be evenly spent over the three years of the grant? Can it all be spent in less than three years?

- A. Funding does not need to be evenly spent over the three years of the grant. Grant funds cannot be spent in less than three years. As stated in the RFP; each eligible applicant may apply for a maximum allocation of \$500,000 per Community School site (with only one Community School site per application) to be distributed over 3 years.

14. If a consortium of districts applies, do we understand the RFP correctly, and that they would have to select one site to be the Community School – i.e., they could not select one site in each district? Or, can a consortium of districts apply for funding for two (or more) sites, by submitting two (or more) applications? In that case, would the consortium be eligible for more than \$500,000?

- A. A consortium may propose to establish multiple sites and submit multiple applications, utilizing the same basic programming/services and partners; with one community school site per application. The consortium would be eligible for more than \$500,000.

15. Who do we contact at the Council on Children and Families to receive the “list of recommended public funding streams with prioritized awards made available for Community Schools,” as mentioned on page 5 of the RFP?

A. A list of recommended public funding streams will be made available for Community Schools after awards have been made.

16. Are consortiums preferred?

A. Bonus points will not be awarded to consortiums.

17. Why is the grant writer’s name requested on the cover page? Are there any limitations, as to who can write applications?

A. The grant writer’s name is helpful in tracking application submissions. There are not limitations in regard to who can write the proposal.

18. If more than one grant writer works on an application, should both names be included on the cover page?

A. The lead grant writer’s name is sufficient. Listing multiple names is allowable, if applicable.

19. On the cover page, is the agency (at the bottom right of the page) the applicant agency? Or the agency of the grant writer?

A. The agency of the grant writer should be listed, if applicable.

20. On page 31 of the RFP, there is an asterisk after indirect cost; what does that refer to?

A. Applicants should disregard the asterisk on the Three Year Budget Summary Chart.

21. Is there a preference for programs that help all grade levels? Or is targeting elementary, middle school or high school students acceptable?

- A. The RFP does not include a preference in regard to grade levels to be served. As stated in the RFP, within eligible school districts, Community Schools should target the students and schools with the greatest needs.

22. On the FS-10, what should be listed as the “Project Number” (on the final page)? On the FS-10, what should be listed “Contract Number” (on the final page)?

- A. Applicants should leave the spaces for Project Number and Contract Number blank. If awarded funds, those numbers will be assigned by the State Education Department.

23. The RFP states that applicants can include planning time in their proposed project. How much planning time is allowed, within the grant period?

- A. There is no requirement for minimum or maximum planning time. Applicants seeking to incorporate planning should do so by describing their intended planning process so that they can meet the objectives of the Community Schools initiative.

24. Do you anticipate a future RFP for this funding stream? If so, when?

- A. At this time, there is no information about the possibility of future funding for this grant initiative.

25. On page 2 of the rfp, the Additional Eligibility Options in NYC states that the non-profit applying on behalf of a school district must submit a letter of support signed by the Chancellor of the school district. Is this the Chancellor of NYC Schools (i.e., Dennis Walcott) or the District Superintendent?

- A. Dennis Walcott, the Chancellor of NYC Schools, must sign the letter of support.

26. Is there a cap on indirect expenses – if so, what is the rate that should be used?

- A. Each school district must use the restricted indirect cost rate calculated and assigned by the State Education Department for 2013-2014. Community-Based Organizations in New York City must prepare budgets using an indirect cost rate of 2.6 percent.

27. What is the difference between a non-profit provider and a community-based organization?

A. For the purpose of this RFP, a non-profit provider and a non-profit community-based organization are synonymous. However, a community-based organization can be a not-for-profit or a for-profit organization.

28. Is contracting for program evaluation services an allowable grant expenditure?

A. Yes, contracting for program evaluation services is an allowable expense.

29. Will a list of high needs districts be published for prospective bidders?

A. The list of high needs school districts can be found at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/irs/accountability/2011-12/NeedResourceCapacityIndex.pdf>

30. If a group of schools decides to apply for a Community Schools Grant as a consortium, could they rotate the location of the one Community Schools site each year – i.e., in year 1 it is in one district, in year 2 in another district, and in year 3 in the third district?

A. No. The location must at the same Community School site for all three years.

31. Must sites be school-based or may they be located within a community partner's facility?

A. The primary purpose of this RFP is to deliver services at the designated community school site.

32. In response to the 2013 Community Schools RFP, I'm struggling to determine if our district (or any of our schools) is eligible. We are an average need district but I'm not sure if we have a minimum 50% or higher Extraordinary Needs percentage. Would you be able to point me in the right direction to determine whether or not we are eligible or if you have access to the eligibility list, indicate whether or not we are eligible?

A. The list of Extraordinary Needs can be found at:
<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/funding/2013-community-schools-grant-initiative/districts-and-extraordinary-needs.html>

33. Does the \$500,000 distributed over 3 years have to be equally apportioned over that time or can the budget amounts be significantly different for each year, dependent upon need and program design?

A. The \$500,000 distributed over 3 years may be equally apportioned over that time, or the budget amounts may be significantly different for each year, dependent upon need and program design.

34. A consortium of small, rural public school districts would like to propose a single program where specialized service providers serve each of their sites on alternating days (e.g., mental health providers visit district #1 on Mondays, district #2 on Wednesdays, etc). Is this an acceptable model?

A. If a consortium of small, rural public school districts would like to propose a single program where specialized service providers serve each of their sites on alternating days, they would need to submit a separate application for each community school site.

35. Is the Community School program an enrollment program or can students and families drop in and participate in only those activities they choose?

A. The RFP does not specify whether or not students and families may drop in and participate in only those activities they choose. However, the community school must adopt performance benchmarks that allow ongoing measurement of improvement in student and family well-being based on the programs and services that are being provided.

36. The RFP indicates that mentoring is an allowable activity. Is this adult-student mentoring or peer mentoring? Can mentoring activities take place outside of the school?

A. The applicant must determine what type of mentoring will best suit the goals and objectives of the program and its participants. The primary purpose of this RFP is to deliver services at the designated community school site.

- 37. Is there a minimum number of students or families that NYSED expects to be served at each school? A maximum per capita cost?**
- A. There is no minimum number of students or families that NYSED expects to be served at each school, nor a maximum per capita cost. All costs associated with the Community Schools Grant Initiative must be directly aligned with program goals and objectives.
- 38. The RFP indicates that all proposals will be scored and ranked from highest to lowest with awards made to the highest ranking fundable applications until all funds are expended. Does this mean there is no geographic consideration in making awards?**
- A. There are not geographic considerations in making awards. Pursuant to Education Law § 3641 subdivision 6-a, no single school district may receive more than forty percent (40%) of the \$15 million available funding for this initiative
- 39. I am trying to determine if our school district is eligible to apply for the Community Schools grant. Our District is listed as an average N/RC district, but according to the link, the extraordinary needs percentage is between 20 and 70% - I can't find anywhere on the link that shows the extraordinary % for each district.**
- A. Extraordinary Needs percentage data can be found at the following link: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/funding/2013-community-schools-grant-initiative/districts-and-extraordinary-needs.html>
- 40. The RFP does not specifically reference the need to employ an external evaluator for the purposes of program evaluation. Is the use of an external evaluator beneficial and/or recommended?**
- A. Applicants must put forth a plan for qualitative and quantitative program evaluation, which reflect progress achieved on logical, achievable, measurable indicators of success. Contracting for program evaluation services the choice of the applicant, and is an allowable expense.
- 41. The RFP on p.2. indicates that CBOs in New York City can be the lead agencies. "As provided by law, in New York City only, non-profit organizations (including non-profit community-based organizations) that collaborate with the school district may apply on behalf of the New York City school district with approval of the Chancellor of the school district. Non-profit applicants must submit with their applications a letter of support signed by the Chancellor." Our question is about who must provide**

the signed letter of support. Is it the Chancellor of the NYCDOE? Or can the Superintendent of one of the local Community School Districts provide the required letter?

A. Dennis Walcott, the Chancellor of NYC Schools, must sign the letter of support.

42. For elementary school programs, must a not-for-profit applicant have their SACC license for the target school in place prior to submitting their application?

A. No. The SACC registration process must be completed prior to offering services as part of the Community Schools Initiative.

43. What are the steps involved in pre-qualification for a not-for-profit?

A. Information regarding the pre-qualification process through the New York State Grants Gateway can be found at:
https://grantsgateway.ny.gov/IntelliGrants_NYSGG/module/nysgg/goportal.aspx

44. Is there priority for elementary, middle or high schools for this opportunity?

A. There is no priority for elementary, middle or high schools in this grant opportunity.

45. Where do we find the Assurance of Joint Commitment and Collaboration Form, or is this something each individual applicant must create?

A. The Assurance of Joint Commitment and Collaboration Form is Attachment 4 in the RFP.

46. What is the page limit for each section, including the executive summary? What is the page limit for the proposal?

A. It is preferred that the application narrative, including the executive summary, not exceed 35 double-spaced pages, paginated, using one-inch margins and Times New Roman standard font in 12-point.

47. What is the cost per child?

- A. There is no required cost per child. All costs associated with the Community Schools Grant Initiative must be directly aligned with program goals and objectives.

48. What is the page limit for each section, including the executive summary? What is the page limit for the proposal?

- A. It is preferred that the application narrative, including the executive summary, not exceed 35 double-spaced pages, paginated, using one-inch margins and Times New Roman standard font in 12-point.

49. As we prepare our application for the Community School Initiative, we would like to know if our agency can submit more than once application, each partnering with a different school in a different school district? Is there a limit on the number of applications one agency can submit?

- A. There is no limit on the number of applications one agency can submit. Pursuant to Education Law § 3641 subdivision 6-a, no single school district may receive more than forty percent (40%) of the \$15 million available funding for this initiative

50. Where do we find the exact Community Need % for each School district listed on the DOE list? Average/RC but what is exact %?

- A. The list of Extraordinary Needs can be found at:
<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/funding/2013-community-schools-grant-initiative/districts-and-extraordinary-needs.html>

51. Please confirm that school districts DO NOT need to pre-qualify for CSGI using the Grants Gateway. Page 21 states that they are exempt entities.

- A. School districts do not need to pre-qualify for CSGI using the Grants Gateway.

52. Is there a suggested cost per participant, or a suggested minimum number of participants to be reached?

- A. There is not a cost per participant, or a minimum number of participants to be reached. All costs associated with the Community

Schools Grant Initiative must be directly aligned with program goals and objectives.

53. The RFP states that there can only be one center per application, yet it allows for a Consortium of Public School Districts to make one application. Does that mean only one school district can be served? We have a five district consortium. Would that mean the award maximum would be \$500,000 if we prepared one application or is it \$2,500,000?

- A. A consortium may propose to establish multiple sites and submit multiple applications, utilizing the same basic programming/services and partners, with one community school site per application. Each application will be reviewed and scored independently—the success of one application within the consortium does not mean that all applications will be funded.

54. With regard to the Application Cover Page (Attachment 2), we assume the line for “Chief School/Administrative Officer” refers to a CBO’s authorized representative, since the CBO will administer the grant. Would you confirm?

- A. When the CBO is the lead applicant agency in New York City, the administrative officer should sign the Application Cover page as “Chief School/Administrative Officer”.

55. With regard to the MOU between LEAs and community partners, who is the LEA in NYC’s case? The Community School District (Superintendent), the school (Principal) or the NYC DOE (Chancellor)?

- A. For MOUs in New York City, the LEA (Lead Education Agency) is considered the Community School District where the proposed community school site is located. Therefore, the District Superintendent must sign the MOU.

56. In NYC, with regard to the Assurance of Joint Commitment and Collaboration Form, would you confirm that the “Chief Administrative Officer (Superintendent)” is the authorized representative of the CBO administering the grant? And is the “Board of Education President” the Chancellor?

A. In New York City, the following individuals should sign the Assurance of Joint Commitment and Collaboration Form for all applications:

- Chief Administrative Officer: Chancellor Dennis Walcott
- Board of Education President: N/A
- Local Administrative Union President: Ernest Logan
- Local Teachers Union President: Michael Mulgrew

57. With respect to the Bonus Points, can you provide information about the State's CORE initiative? We are having difficulty obtaining information about what this is and thus, if communities served by our schools are participating. In addition, the NYC Regional Council Strategic Plan refers to "Opportunity Zones" – is this the same as "Opportunity Area" as referenced in the RFP? If so, where can we find information that would detail the specific geographic boundaries within the NYC Region?

A. CORE communities are the South End, West and Arbor Hill neighborhoods of Albany and Census tracts 4 and 5 in Newburgh.

Please visit <http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/> and click on the 'Regional Opportunity Agenda' button on your Regional Council's page to see if a local geographic area has been identified as an Opportunity Area. Only Regional Councils with specific geographic areas will be eligible for bonus points.

58. What data Numerator and Denominator go into Extraordinary Needs Percentage?

A. The Numerator is the Extraordinary Needs Count and Denominator is the public school enrollment.

59. Where can we find more guidance on completing the M/WBE Documents and Forms?

A. Please refer to pages 23-25 and the M/WBE Documents section of the RFP for guidance on completing the forms. You may also contact the M/WBE Coordinator at mwbe@mail.nysed.gov.

60. What is the difference between a preliminary MOU and a final MOU?

- A. A preliminary MOU may take the form of a fully signed MOU, a draft MOU that has not been signed by all parties, or a letter of intent signed by all parties. It must provide an overview of all partners' involvement in planning and program implementation. A final, fully executed MOU provides a detailed description of each partner's roles and responsibilities. This final MOU may include additional partners that were not identified in the original MOU and must be approved by NYSED prior to the receipt of initial grant funding.

61. What is an APPR plan and how do we demonstrate/communicate that the school district has one?

- A. The New York State Board of Regents has committed to the transformation of the preparation, support, and evaluation of all teachers and school leaders in New York State. Chapter 21 of the Laws of 2012 amended Education Law §3012-c to fundamentally change the way teachers and principals are evaluated. The purpose of the evaluation system is to ensure that there is an effective teacher in every classroom and an effective leader in every school. The evaluation system will also foster a culture of continuous professional growth for educators to grow and improve their instructional practices.

It is the partner's responsibility to communicate with the school districts to demonstrate that the school district has an approved APPR plan.

62. Does a not-for-profit lead applicant have to do anything with respect to the APPR plan in their proposal?

- A. In New York City, if the not-for-profit is the lead applicant, it is their responsibility to ensure APPR compliance within partnering districts.

63. How do we know if the Community School is serving a community that is participating in the State's CORE initiative or that has been identified as an Opportunity Area with specific geographic boundaries within a region by a Regional Economic Development Council? The website provided <http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/> does not clearly articulate which communities are participating in the State's CORE Initiative or is an Opportunity Area.

- A. CORE communities are the South End, West and Arbor Hill neighborhoods of Albany, and census tracks 4 and 5 in Newburgh.

Please visit <http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/> and click on the 'Regional Opportunity Agenda' button on your Regional Council's page to see if a local geographic area has been identified as an Opportunity Area.

64. If an external evaluator is hired to conduct program evaluation for the grant, would it be appropriate to view the evaluator as a direct service provider or would they need to be considered a subcontractor? If the latter, if the external evaluator were a non-profit instead of an M/WBE, would we need to completed the 101 and 105 forms?

- A. An external evaluator would be considered a subcontractor. If an applicant determines that they must request a waiver of the M/WBE participation goals, they should submit a Request for Waiver (Form 101), which includes documentation of the applicant's good faith efforts to use certified M/WBE subcontractors. Applicants will be required to certify and attest to their good faith efforts by completing NYSED's Certification of Good Faith Efforts (Form 105). Consistent with existing state law and procedures, school districts that contract with not-for-profits (that do not in turn subcontract to for-profit entities) for the purposes of this grant can seek and, as appropriate, are expected to receive a waiver from the M/WBE goals.

65. If the district would like to use BOCES to provide targeted professional development for its staff, would such an expense need to adhere to M/WBE rules, i.e. such an expense would not be excluded from the M/WBE calculation?

- A. The M/WBE percentage goals are applied to the entire budget for the three-year grant, excluding any expenses budgeted for personal services and related fringe benefits, and indirect costs. Applicants should complete and submit the Calculation of M/WBE Goal form found in the M/WBE Documents section of the RFP to determine the actual M/WBE goal dollar amount. The M/WBE Coordinator is available throughout the process to assist applicants in meeting the M/WBE goals.

66. Are projects related to physical activity services or obesity prevention/reduction allowable?

- A. Projects related to physical activity services or obesity prevention/reduction may be allowable if they are considered additional supports for students and families designed to counter environmental factors that impede student achievement, student engagement or other factors identified in the grant application.

67. How is “equipment” defined? How are “supplies and materials defined”? Are there spending thresholds associated with each definition?

- A. Equipment is defined as having a unit cost of \$5,000 or more. Items under \$5,000 should be considered Supplies and materials. All expenditures must be directly aligned with program goals and objectives. Equipment purchases are permitted when necessary to meet the project goals and objectives, but must not exceed 10% of the total project budget.

68. What are the formatting requirements for the CSGI application? Specifically, are there any page limitations? Are there font size or type requirements? What are the spacing requirements?

- A. It is preferred that the application narrative not exceed 35 double-spaced pages, paginated, using one-inch margins and Times New Roman standard font in 12-point.

69. If districts form a consortium to apply but only one of the districts is eligible for bonus points – does the entire application earn bonus points or no?

- A. If applicable, bonus points will be awarded to the lead agency that submits the CSGI proposal.

70. I was not able to find information regarding our district’s eligibility for bonus points at the URL provided in the RFP. Can you provide links clearly identifying those districts (or zip codes) which are considered “Opportunity Areas” or “NYS CORE” participant? Or, Can you provide contact information at the relevant agency for this information?

- A. CORE communities are the South End, West and Arbor Hill neighborhoods of Albany, and census tracks 4 and 5 in Newburgh.

Please visit <http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/> and click on the ‘Regional Opportunity Agenda’ button on your Regional Council’s page to see if a local geographic area has been identified as an Opportunity Area.

71. In the CSGI RFP you mention that there is a list of recommended public funding streams with prioritized awards for Community Schools and to reach out to the Council on Children and Families for said list. We were told by the Council to post all CSGI related questions to NYSED. As such we would like to request a copy of the list of public funding streams for community schools referenced on page 5 of the RFP.

A. Information on prioritized funding opportunities will be provided to community school grantees following the selection process.

72. Fees are usually charged to community-based organizations by the NYC Department of Education for providing building access and facility operations before and after school, as well as on weekends. When approved community-based organizations apply, who will be responsible for expenses related to “opening fees” at school buildings in NYC? Do fees for school building access need to be budgeted in the Community Schools submission or will some other mechanism be used to cover these costs?

A. Applicants should discuss building access and facility operations, including “opening fees”, with school leadership prior to submitting the CSGI application. If the community-based organization will be required to pay the fees, the cost should be budgeted in the application.

73. For other extended hours programs in NYC front desk security and janitorial services are provided by the school. Should we assume the same structure for Community Schools or do we need to budget full security and janitorial services for the non-school-day hours when the program is in operation?

A. Applicants should discuss building access and facility operations, including front desk security and janitorial services, with school leadership prior to submitting the CSGI application. If the community-based organization will be required to pay the costs, they should be budgeted in the application.

74. Has a process been established to attain support from the NYC Chancellor?

A. NYCDOE has established a deadline of September 3 to submit "request for partnership" form. NYC CBOs should email SEDCommunitySchoolGrant@schools.nyc.gov in order to receive the form.

75. How will CBO lead applicants in New York City attain necessary signatures from the DOE?

- A. CBOs must submit proposals to the NYC DOE by September 11th. The DOE will acquire necessary signatures and will notify the CBO when proposals have been signed and are ready to be picked up, prior to the RFP submission date of September 18th.

76. Is there a prescribed level of detail that should be included in all MOUs, or only those for lead partners? Should performance expectations and accountability be included in all preliminary MOUs?

- A. A preliminary MOU must minimally establish the roles and responsibilities of each partner/consortium member; proposed strategies for communication and collaboration; and methods partners/consortium members will employ to hold one another accountable for performance. Performance expectations and accountability are not required to be included in all preliminary MOUs.

77. For the “Attachment 4: Assurance of Joint Commitment and Collaboration Form,” in NYC who are the intended signatories? Should the Chancellor or the Community School District Superintendent in the targeted school district sign as “Chief Administrative Officer?” Who is the intended signatory for “Board of Education President” in NYC? Are the “Local Administrators” for the administrators’ and teachers’ unions citywide officials or union leaders at the Community School District level?

- A. In New York City, the following individuals should sign the Assurance of Joint Commitment and Collaboration Form for all applications:
- Chief Administrative Officer: Chancellor Dennis Walcott
 - Board of Education President: N/A
 - Local Administrative Union President: Ernest Logan
 - Local Teachers Union President: Michael Mulgrew

78. In the interest of saving time at the start of a the school year, can “Attachment 4: Assurance of Joint Commitment and Collaboration Form” be reformatted so that each signatory signs a separate piece of paper with the same assurance rather than passing one piece of paper around to the offices of four signatories?

- A. Each signatory may sign a separate Assurance of Joint Commitment and Collaboration Form, but all forms with original signatures must be submitted with the CSGI application.

79. How many pages is the narrative? Is there guidance for the length of each section? Should the grant be single or double spaced? What is the preferred font?

- A. It is preferred that the application narrative not exceed 35 double-spaced pages, paginated, using one-inch margins and Times New Roman standard font in 12-point.

80. Should the allocation be distributed equally of the three years of the grant?

- A. Funding does not need to be evenly spent over the three years of the grant.

81. How much time is allowed for planning and implementation upon award?

- A. All grantees are expected to begin some enhanced service delivery during the 2013-14 school year. Applicants seeking to incorporate a timeline that reflects planning should do so by describing their intended planning process and potential partners so that they can meet the grant objectives.

82. What defines grant period?

- A. Grants will be for a term of up to three years, anticipated to begin on or before December 1, 2013, and to end June 30, 2016. Within this term there will be three program periods: December 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014; July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015; and July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016.

83. When will awards be made?

- A. Awards will be made when scoring of the applications has been completed and all necessary approvals are in place, with the intent for programs to begin on or before December 1, 2013.

84. I am working with two districts that qualify for this funding opportunity. The Districts are engaged in a centralization study and the binding

referendum is slated for October of this year. Should the Districts apply together, would both Districts be eligible for \$500,000 in funding each? The partners are interested in working with both Districts, however with the binding centralization vote occurring after the grant deadline, we are uncertain how to write prepare a proposal: should we assume a positive outcome and present the two districts coming together as one in the second year of the grant? Would this reduce funding in year two? The same number of students would still be served. Option 2 might be: prepare the grant as two stand alone districts working together in the grant with impact of the centralization vote to be determined upon outcome of vote and award of the grant?

- A. The Districts may choose to form a consortium and may propose to establish multiple sites and submit multiple applications, utilizing the same basic programming/services and partners, with one community school site per application. Each community school site is eligible for a maximum of \$500,000 over a three year period.

85. For nonprofit applicants in New York City, the CSGI rfp requires approval and a letter of support from the Chancellor of the school district. Does this refer to the superintendent of the school district, or to the NYCDOE Chancellor?

- A. Dennis M. Walcott, the Chancellor of NYC Schools, must sign the letter of support.

86. In addition, Attachment 4: Assurance of Joint Commitment and Collaboration Form includes the signature of the Board of Education president. For NYC applicants, is this the citywide Board of Education president, or the district-level Community Education Council president?

- A. In New York City, all applicants must have the following individuals sign Attachment 4: Assurance of Joint Commitment and Collaboration Form:
- Chief Administrative Officer: Chancellor Dennis Walcott
 - Board of Education President: N/A
 - Local Administrative Union President: Ernest Logan
 - Local Teachers Union President: Michael Mulgrew

87. Will extra points be awarded for a high needs district versus an average needs district with a greater than 50% Extraordinary Needs percentage? Or are they viewed as equal for the purposes of the application?

A. High needs school districts will not receive extra points. They will be viewed as equal for the purpose of the application.

88. Is the applicant district considered a site no matter how many schools are included?

A. No, each community school site is the physical location where services will be provided.

89. If a consortium of districts applies, will all districts be considered as one site? Can activities proposed in the application take place in any of the schools in the various districts as long as the schools are identified in the application?

A. A consortium may propose to establish multiple sites and submit multiple applications, utilizing the same basic programming/services and partners, with one community school site per application. Each application will be reviewed and scored independently—the success of one application within the consortium does not mean that all will be funded.

90. Can a district or consortium submit more than one application on behalf of different schools in each application?

A. A consortium may submit multiple applications, utilizing the same basic programming/services and partners, with one community school site per application. Each application will be reviewed and scored independently—the success of one application within the consortium does not mean that all will be funded.

91. What documentation is needed to demonstrate that a community has been identified as an Opportunity Area by a Regional Economic Development Council?

A. Please visit <http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/> and click on the 'Regional Opportunity Agenda' button on your Regional Council's page to see if a local geographic area has been identified as an Opportunity Area. If applicable, a map or written explanation of the Community School site's location within the Opportunity Area would provide sufficient documentation.

92. Can individual schools apply for the grant listed above?

A. The school district must apply on behalf of an individual school.

93. We intend to apply as a consortium of school districts. Do we need to develop an MOU specific to the consortium in addition to the required program MOU or would the consortium members be part of the program's MOU with all partners?

A. The consortium members should be part of the program's MOU with all partners.

94. We understand that each partner should have an active role in planning, technical support and service provision for the program. In the case of a consortium of several school districts, would each consortium member be required to have a role in service delivery at the specific CS site (even if it's not in that school district) or would being involved in planning and ongoing meetings/strategies for support, improvement and/or evaluation for the program and its services be sufficient?

A. Consortium members should be involved in planning and ongoing meetings/strategies for support, improvement and/or evaluation for the program and services at the community school site.

95. The budget is for the first project period of 12/1/13-6/30/14. Should we submit a budget identifying costs for 6 months of programming, or should we develop our full year budget and submit that?

A. Applicants must complete an FS-10 Budget Form that identifies costs for only the first project period, December 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014. Applicants must also complete the Three-Year Budget Summary Chart and provide a budget narrative for the entire grant period that details expenses for each program year.

96. May a school be a lead agent on one application and part of a consortium of schools on another application (if they are not the lead agent)?

A. The district, not an individual school, may be the lead agency. A district may be a lead agent on one application and part of a consortium of districts on another application. Only one grant per community school site is allowable.

97. As described in the first bullet on page 9 of the application instructions regarding MOUs between Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and community partners, does a non-profit organization applying on behalf of a school, stand as the equivalent to a LEA for purposes of this requirement?

A. In New York City only, a non-profit organization can apply as the lead fiscal agent. If the agency is applying as such, it is held to the same requirements as LEAs in regard to the Memorandums of Understanding outlined on Page 9 of the RFP.

98. In “Attachment 2: Application Cover Page”, when a nonprofit is applying on behalf of a school, should one of the officers of the nonprofit board sign this document under “Authorized Signature”?

A. The nonprofit’s Administrative Officer must sign the Application Cover Page.

99. In “Attachment 2: Application Cover Page”, should the Grant Writer / Agency be the same person as the Authorized Signature of the “Applicant Agency”, or the specific grant staff name that wrote the grant document?

A. The Grant Writer / Agency name should refer to the specific individual who wrote the grant document.

100. Where can we find the FS-10 Budget Form as highlighted in “Attachment 1: Application Checklist”?

A. All required fiscal forms are locate at the following link:
<http://www.oms.nysed.gov/cafe/forms/>

101. Logistically, how are applicants to address the 20% M/WBE target (and paperwork requirements associated with the grant application) and still comply with their organizational procurement policy (which is subject to audits by the State Comptroller)?

A. Applicants can comply with NYSED’s Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (M/WBE) participation goals for this grant through one of three methods. (See pages 23- 25 of the RFP for an outline of these methods.) Applicants should find ways to meet the goals that are not in conflict with their own organizations’

procurement policies. The M/WBE Coordinator is available throughout the grant process to assist in all areas of compliance and can be reached at mwbe@mail.nysed.gov.

102. Given that in NYC applications will be accepted from nonprofit organizations who are unlikely to be aware of what other applications are being submitted from within the NYC school district, how are the NYC proposals expected to address the question regarding identifying which schools will be supported within the district?

A. Non-profit organizations (including non-profit community-based organizations) in New York City that collaborate with the school districts should discuss the schools being supported in the specific CSOI application that they are submitting.

103. Could you please clarify the requirement for the nonprofit applicant to be “an active member of the consortium?”

A. The nonprofit organization must work in ongoing, active collaboration with the school district and other consortium members to plan and implement the Community School Grant Initiative.

104. Are the worker’s compensation and disability benefits documents not required? Does it only pertain to districts that plan to contract with an outside agency to deliver services? Are they required of all partners a district plans to work with, to provide services to students?

A. All applicants (school districts and nonprofits), if granted an award, must provide proof of workers' compensation and disability insurance coverage. We do not request proof of coverage from subcontractors. Each member in a consortium is required to provide proof of coverage, if granted an award.

105. Can we hand-deliver applications to NYSED?

A. Applications may be hand-delivered or submitted via postal mail to the following address:

New York State Education Department
Grants Management Office, 464 EBA
89 Washington Avenue
Albany, New York 12234

Attn: Betsy Kenney, Office of Student Support Services

Mailed applications must be postmarked by September 18, 2013.

- 106. What does “co-located” mean? (As on page 1 of the RFP, “...community hubs to deliver co-located or school-linked academic, health....”) Can you describe examples?**
- A. Co-located means located or delivered on the same premises as the school. For example, a school health clinic may be located on school grounds.
- 107. What does “school-linked” mean? (As on page 1 of the RFP, “...community hubs to deliver co-located or school-linked academic, health....”) Can you describe examples?**
- A. School-linked means services that are delivered in coordination with the school but that may not be permanently housed on school premises.
- 108. Where do we find information on individual district participation in the State’s CORE Initiative?**
- A. CORE communities are the South End, West and Arbor Hill neighborhoods of Albany, and census tracks 4 and 5 in Newburgh.
- 109. Is there a list of Opportunity Areas identified by the specific regions of the Regional Economic Development Council? The Capital District Region does have two areas identified in a document found here: <http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/assets/documents/regionalopportunities/capitalregionopportunityagenda.pdf> but the Mohawk Valley Region, for example, does not publish a similar document.**
- A. Please visit <http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/> and click on the ‘Regional Opportunity Agenda’ button on your Regional Council’s page to see if a local geographic area has been identified as an Opportunity Area.
- 110. Although our district is considered a distressed area and was eligible to apply for the designation, the municipality did not apply and the opportunity has passed. So, that leaves any school districts in distressed areas whose municipalities chose not to apply for this designation at a**

significant disadvantage with regard to this community schools application. Is there any way that there can be consideration given to distressed areas whose municipalities did not apply for this designation?

- A. School districts that meet the eligibility requirements in the RFP are able to apply for the Community School Grant Initiative. The RFP enables school districts to document their need for community school services.

111. Is the Community Schools Initiative Grant ONLY for non profit businesses and programs? I have a sole proprietorship that operates in the Bronx and surrounding boroughs and gives tutoring programs, staff development and parent workshops for Early Childhood and Afterschool programs, and wants to start a mentoring program also?

- A. As stated in the RFP: “as provided by law, in New York City only, non-profit organizations (including non-profit community-based organizations) that collaborate with the school district may apply on behalf of the New York City school district with approval of the Chancellor of the school district.” Grant recipients may choose to partner with or engage the services of for-profit businesses, but for-profit entities may not apply for the grant.

112. If a lead applicant elects to use the consortium structure and some of the partners of that consortium are otherwise funded (i.e. will not be receiving funds through the 2013 Community Schools grant), is it necessary for those partners to be included in the MOU and Assurance of Joint Commitment & Collaboration documentation?

- A. All partners and consortium members must be included in the MOU. Consortium applicants must submit a signed Assurance of Joint Commitment and Collaboration Form for each member of the consortium.

113. If a lead applicant elects to use the consortium structure and includes several public schools with school-linked services, is it necessary to obtain district superintendent signatures for each school if the schools are in different, although adjacent, districts?

- A. Outside of New York City, The District Superintendent is required to sign the Assurance of Joint Commitment and Collaboration Form for any community school site located within the district.

114. Is there any need to get signatures from the networks of any of the schools that are included in the consortium?

A. All members of the consortium should sign the Memorandum of Understanding.

115. In terms of establishing clear qualitative and quantifiable goals as well as benchmarks (in year one as well as subsequent years), will there be opportunities to make adjustments based on data outcomes with the anticipated new NYS Regents assessments in ELA and Algebra I; and with the new teacher evaluation system (assuming that teacher growth is an identified indicator) that is being implemented beginning 2013-2014?

A. Yes, there will be opportunities to make adjustments based on data outcomes.

116. Is there a minimum number of students that must be served under this grant?

A. There is no minimum number of students that must be served at each community school site.

117. As we prepare our application, we would like to know whether, in the case of a community-based nonprofit applies as the lead agency and DOE teacher would serve as the project's coordinator; Would it be allowable for the nonprofit to include in the grant budget the portion of the teacher's salary devoted to the project as a purchased service from the school district? In other words, is there a way for the nonprofit to pay the district for school personnel who will support the project? Alternatively, could the nonprofit budget NYC-DOE "per session" teacher hours as a purchased service from the district?

A. It is allowable for the nonprofit to include in the grant budget the portion of the teacher's salary devoted to the project as a purchased service from the school district. The nonprofit may budget NYC-DOE "per session" teacher hours as a purchased service from the district.

118. Is the Total Budget \$500,000 over the entire grant period or \$500,000 for each grant year?

A. The \$500,000 is to be distributed over the three year grant period.

119. Is an Independent Evaluator required?

A. An independent evaluator is not required.

120. Does NYSED have an evaluation format prepared at this time?

A. No. As stated in the RFP, by September 1 of each year, the State Education Department, in consultation with appropriate Council on Children & Families member agencies and each grantee, will establish minimum performance benchmarks required for continued funding in the subsequent project year.

121. For non-profits that want to apply, can you clarify the eligibility criteria?

We don't understand the language on page 2 that states "that collaborate with the school district may apply on behalf of the New York City school district with approval of the Chancellor of the school district." Do we have to apply for a school district or can we partner with just a school?

A. Non-profits in New York City must collaborate with the school district in applying for a community school site within that district.

122. We would like more information about bonus points where "Would the Community School serve a community that is participating in the State's CORE initiative or that has been identified as an Opportunity Area with specific geographic boundaries within a region by a Regional Economic Development Council?" Specifically,

A. Is NYC participating in the CORE Initiative?

B. Relative to CORE, is NYC as a whole considered "the community" to be considered for bonus points or are there smaller defined communities?

C. Is NYC one of the "Opportunity Areas" defined by REDC?

A. CORE communities are the South End, West and Arbor Hill neighborhoods of Albany, and census tracks 4 and 5 in Newburgh.

Please visit <http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/> and click on the 'Regional Opportunity Agenda' button on your Regional Council's page to see if a local geographic area has been identified as an Opportunity Area.

123. If two or more districts enter into a consortium for this initiative and each has identified a school site in their district, would the consortium be able to

apply for those sites in one application or would there still need to be separate applications for each site?

A. Separate applications are required for each community school site.

124. Regarding item 3F on page 18 prohibiting the issue of “subgrants to other recipients.” One of our proposed partners is an institution of higher education with experience providing education and enrichment programs to school-aged children during the summer. Traditionally, these have been grant-sponsored programs at the college, not tuition or fee-based programs. Would this be considered a prohibited subgrant? In order to conduct such a program our partner would need to cover the costs of salaries, meals on site, supplies, and so on.

A. No. As stated in 3F on Page 18, the fiscal agent is permitted to contract for services with other partners or consultants to provide services that the fiscal agent cannot provide itself.

125. Can an organization apply to be a lead and also be a subcontractor with another application?

A. Yes, an organization may apply to be a lead and also be a subcontractor with another application.

126. Is the grant is designed for as a small number of schools in a district-as few as 1-2?

A. The grant is designed to be manageable for districts of all sizes.

127. The grant encourages a suite of services and linkages to community resources. Is the grantee expected to arrange services in all categories (e.g. health, mental health, nutrition etc) or a selected number of services that are appropriate?

A. Applicants should include programs and services that are most relevant to the school community.

128. Is the maximum of \$500,000 meant to be \$500,000 per year or \$500,000 split up spread out over all three years, meaning approximately \$165,000 per year?

- A. The award of up to \$500,000 per community school site will cover a three year period. Funds do not have to be distributed evenly in each of the three years.

129. Does NYSED consider a building/campus with multiple schools as one school site (i.e. one application) or as multiple schools and therefore applications?

- A. If services are to be shared among all schools in the building, a single proposal should be submitted that reflects utilizing the same basic programming/services and partners.

130. Is there a limit to the number of applications that one CBO can submit? Can the Department of Education limit this number in New York City specifically?

- A. There is no limit to the number of applications one CBO can submit. No single school district, including applications submitted by a CBO, may receive more than forty percent (40%) of the \$15 million available funding for this initiative.

131. Can this grant be used to replace already existing funding for programs such as school-based health centers?

- A. Allowable costs include the delivery of co-located or school-linked academic, health, mental health, nutrition, counseling, legal and/or other services to students and their families in a manner that will lead to improved educational and other outcomes. The grant must supplement, not supplant, existing funding sources.

132. Can schools collaborate with more than one CBO for their application?

- A. Yes, schools may collaborate with more than one CBO for their application.

133. If a grantee has multiple funding streams, how will the students be counted? For example, if the program has a Community Schools Grant and a 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant, will the students who attend afterschool count towards both grants or only one?

- A. Students who attend the 21st CCLC program and receive other wrap-around services through the community schools grant, should be counted in both funding streams.

134. Is there a cap on evaluation services?

- A. No, there is no cap on evaluation services. All expenditures must be directly aligned with program goals and objectives.

135. Is there a cap on the cost per student?

- A. No, there is no cap on the cost per student. All expenditures must be directly aligned with program goals and objectives.

136. How will the state evaluate the efficacy of selected proposals?

- A. As stated in the RFP, the State Education Department, in consultation with appropriate Council on Children & Families member agencies and each grantee, will establish minimum performance benchmarks required for continued funding in the subsequent project year.

137. Is the 40% of total funding per district limit in NYC for each City School District or for all of NYC?

- A. The 40% cap is for the district of New York City, as a whole.

138. How is the MWBE requirement being applied to consultants?

- A. The goal of 20% M/WBE participation is applied to the entire three-year grant budget, including consultant costs, but not including any portion of the grant funds budgeted for direct personal services (i.e., salaries) and related fringe benefits or indirect costs. Consistent with existing state law and procedures, school districts that contract with not-for-profits (that do not in turn subcontract to for-profit entities) for the purposes of this grant can seek and, as appropriate, are expected to receive a waiver from the M/WBE goals.

139. If partner organizations are providing part-time staff based on the size of the grant, are those staff being treated as direct personnel and therefore exempt from the MWBE requirement?

- A. Only employees of the lead applicant are considered direct personal services and should be excluded from the M/WBE goal calculation. Staff members of partner organizations are not considered direct personal services and, therefore, should be included in the goal calculation. Applicants should complete and submit the Calculation of M/WBE Goal form found in the M/WBE Documents section of the RFP to determine the actual M/WBE goal amount.

140. Are outside evaluators subject to the MWBE requirement? What if the preferred consultant is a not-for-profit and therefore by definition cannot be considered a MWBE?

- A. Outside evaluators are considered subcontractors and not employees of the lead applicant. Therefore, outside evaluators should be included in the M/WBE calculation. If an applicant determines that they must request a waiver of the M/WBE participation goals, they should submit a Request for Waiver (Form 101), which includes documentation of the applicant's good faith efforts to use certified M/WBE subcontractors. Applicants will be required to certify and attest to their good faith efforts by completing NYSED's Certification of Good Faith Efforts (Form 105). The M/WBE Coordinator is available throughout the grant process to assist in all areas of M/WBE compliance. Consistent with existing state law and procedures, school districts that contract with not-for-profits (that do not in turn subcontract to for-profit entities) for the purposes of this grant can seek and, as appropriate, are expected to receive a waiver from the M/WBE goals.

141. Will applications that include funding for outside evaluators be considered?

- A. Yes, applications that include funding for outside evaluators will be considered.

142. Are there formatting guidelines for the application program narrative? Is there a page limit for the program narrative?

- A. It is preferred that the application narrative not exceed 35 double-spaced pages, paginated, using one-inch margins and Times New Roman standard font in 12-point.

143. The RFP states that applicants may only apply for one Community Schools site per application. So if a consortium of school districts is developing a program that calls for multiple Community Schools sites, it must prepare a separate CSGI application for each proposed site. Is this correct?

A. Yes, if a consortium of school districts is developing a program that calls for multiple Community Schools sites, it must prepare a separate CSGI application for each proposed site.

144. Given the one site per application requirement, should consortia of school districts plan to establish a single Community Schools site to serve all consortium districts/schools (if possible)?

A. A consortium of districts may choose to submit one application for one community school site that would serve students in multiple districts. Alternatively, the consortium may select one site in each district and submit multiple applications, utilizing the same basic programming/services and partners; with one community school site per application.

145. If a consortium plans to establish a sole Community Schools site to cover all of its districts, is it allowable to offer some services “off-site” to address the needs of consortium district students and families who cannot easily access the single Community Schools site?

A. The primary purpose of this RFP is to deliver services at the designated community school site.

146. How should applicants respond to the M/WBE requirements and complete the M/WBE documentation forms if they are unable to establish the vendors that will provide services and supplies for the Community Schools program at the time of submission? Are applicants required to know the vendors that they intend to use for CSGI project supplies and services at the time of submission?

A. Any vendor who is providing services to the lead applicant as a partner, in direct support of the project goals and objectives, must be identified in the application. Those vendors who are only providing supplies and/or materials, and who are not otherwise involved in the planning and implementation of the project, do not have to be identified in the application.

147. Are CBOs in NYC required to form a consortium with the district? The rfp is confusing regarding this on page 19 where it says the CBO must be an active member of the consortium.

A. CBOs are not required to form a consortium with a school district.

148. Are applicants required to submit M/WBE Documents Package with their application?

A. Yes, applicants are required to submit the M/WBE Documents package with their application.

149. Do school districts need to be concerned with the "prequalification requirements" associated with the Grants Gateway system?

A. No, school districts do not need to be concerned with the "prequalification requirements" associated with the Grants Gateway system at this time.

150. How many applications may a district apply for?

A. In awarding grants, the State Education Department will first fund the highest-scoring application for a high-need school district in each one of the following categories based on the Department's need/resource capacity (N/RC) index, as delineated in the attached appendix:

- (1) the New York City School District ("High N/RC: New York City"),
- (2) a high-need large city school district ("High N/RC: Large City Districts"),
- (3) a high-need urban-suburban ("High N/RC: Urban-Suburban Districts") or high-need rural ("High N/RC: Rural Districts") city school district,
- (4) a high-need urban-suburban ("High N/RC: Urban-Suburban Districts") non-city school district, and
- (5) a high-need rural ("High N/RC: Rural Districts") non-city school district .

A list of Priority Categories of High Need/Resource Capacity (N/RC) School Districts is available at:

<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/sss/CommunitySchoolsAppendix.xls>

Remaining funds will be awarded to the other applications with the highest scores until all funds are expended. However, no application will receive funding if its final average score falls below 65.