

SCHOOL BASED MENTALHEALTH SERVICES (SBMHS) GRANT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Can you clarify the process for submitting a Letter of Interest?

School districts and charters academies who are interested in participating in this funding opportunity should visit the Grant Information page on the Department of Education's website (link below) and download a copy of the Letter of Interest. They must also inform the team from the Office for a Safe and Respectful Learning Environment (OSRLE) that they are considering submitting a Letter of Interest and provide the name and contact information for the individual to whom the data spreadsheet should be sent. Staff from OSRLE will then send the data spreadsheet for that district or charter school to the identified individual. The completed Letter of Interest and the completed "Letter of Interest" sheet on the data spreadsheet (Sheet 1) must be submitted to the individuals identified on the first page of the Letter of Interest via email no later than March 1, 2021.

- [Grant Information page: Grants Home](#)

How are we supposed to use the data file?

You will use the data file as you consider which schools within your district or charter academy meet criteria for demonstrated need, as the data provided on the spreadsheet are the data points that will inform consideration of funding. You will complete the first sheet in the spreadsheet with the list of schools, and in your order of priority, for which you are submitting the Letter of Interest and submit it with the completed Letter of Interest form, which must be done no later than March 1, 2021, as noted above and on the first page of the Letter of Interest. See below for more information regarding demonstrated need.

No FTE positions can be supported. Can the 25% in-kind be used for this area, therefore addressing the administrative needs (personnel search, book-keeping, data gathering, etc.) that the grant will require?

Existing staff that dedicate time and resources in support of the SBMHS grant can be used for 25% match provided the match is coming from time that is funded by state dollars and not by federal dollars. Additionally, the Request for Funds (RFF) template that will be provided to all awarded LEAs includes a sheet that will be used to report the match each time an RFF is submitted. In addition, NDE will request back-up documentation for the information reported for match through the RFF process on a periodic basis, for reporting purposes.

Are there a specific amount of school districts that will be given a portion of the \$800,000 or will it be dependent upon needs, size, type/demographics of student population (or lack thereof)? Do you foresee grants ranging from thousands, tens of thousands or a couple of hundreds of thousands?

The \$800,000 will be allocated according to need and based on the strategies that each LEA/Charter school has committed to do (as stated in the Letter of Interest). It is not known what the range of funding will be and is based on the number of districts/charter schools that successfully complete a Letter of Interest (LOI) and meet criteria and eligibility requirements.

It would seem that if there is a collaborative effort between school sites, more impact could be had. This would require more allocated funds. Would it be best for each school site to apply, or do it collaboratively in efforts to show continuity and obtain a larger amount of funding?

LEAs will complete a Letter of Interest (LOI) and select the schools within their district or charter that are of highest need based on the information in the data files and have the capacity to comply with the grant requirements. Charter academies with more than one school site or campus must submit the LOI on behalf of any school sites or campuses for which they wish to be considered.

Is this same amount guaranteed for the future of the grant once allocated for the first year?

No, annual funding is not guaranteed and can only be provided if progress is made on the selected strategy(ies).

"Demonstrated need" is noted as a criteria. What constitutes this criteria? Beyond school climate data obtained (assuming with your support re the instruments used), will other data be required or voluntarily be considered by the state, e.g., number of diversity data, number of suicides, mental health checklist data, reduced and free lunch, etc.?

The "demonstrated need" criteria is outlined in the data files and includes: opportunity zones, school climate data, demographic data, and discipline data. You will receive a file that includes all of the data you are required to consider once the intent to submit a LOI submission has been confirmed, which file you will then use to complete the LOI. The LOI must also meet the submission deadline date of March 1, 2021.

A ratio of mental health support personnel (psychologists, social workers, counselors, their interns) is required. a.) In these numbers, what criteria is used? High ratios? b.) What if there is a desire for sites to encourage more collaborative efforts with local universities, stipends can be used for the interns and service activities. c.) Intern supervisory funds cannot be given, can the time used for supervision be part of the 25% in-kind?

a.) The State Board of Education adopted non-binding recommended ratios for pupils to Specialized Instructional Support Personnel (SISP) in April 2020 and in alignment with nationally accepted best practices as determined by the professional associations of each; the ratios for SISP that are eligible for the purposes of this funding opportunity are listed below; higher numbers of pupils per school counselor, psychologist, or social worker indicates greater need.

- School Counselors 1:250 students
- School Psychologists 1:500 students
- School Social Workers 1:250 students

b.) Collaboration with the three selected NSHE institutions is necessary and expected of all selected LEAs. Stipends may be provided by NSHE institutions or by LEAs, depending on local capacity. Stipends are available for practicum students (those still in college), clinical interns (post graduation from a master's program), and for supervision of both practicum students and clinical interns.

c.) Stipends for supervision by practicing school counselors, school psychologists, and school social workers who provide supervision to practicum students, or to licensed mental health clinicians who provide clinical supervision to licensed master's level mental health providers who are completing an approved clinical internship, are considered to be eligible strategies within this funding opportunity and may be included in the Letter of Interest submitted by any LEA.

These monies can be used for "service activities." What constitutes service activities? Can curricular supports be purchased?

Eligible recruitment and retention activities are defined in Section B of the Letter of Interest and further defined under Recruitment Strategies (on page 5) and Retention Strategies (on page 6).

Without knowing the grant monetary allocation (if given to that group), how would you suggest that districts/ charters financially determine/budget the financial element?

Interested districts and charter academies are not required to submit a budget at this time. Once an LOI is submitted, site specific criteria is met, specific Recruitment and Retention activities are selected, and LEAs are selected based on demonstration of need criteria, a budget template will be sent to each LEA that has been selected to be awarded a subgrant. Budgets are not required until LEAs are selected by OSRLE/NDE.

What will be your criteria in reviewing the letter of interest?

The data provided in the data spreadsheet that will be sent to each LEA that informs the team from the Office for a Safe and Respectful Learning Environment (OSRLE) that they are considering submitting a Letter of Interest includes the criteria that will inform decisions regarding demonstration of need. Capacity and willingness, as demonstrated in the narrative portions on pages 5 and 6 of the Letter of Interest, will also be taken into consideration.