Transportation Collaboration Grant
Request for Applications
Overview

The purpose of this request for applications (RFA) is to solicit proposals from eligible public school districts to obtain a Transportation Collaboration Grant. A public school district that applies for this grant can be awarded up to $10,000 for efforts that lead to shared resource management, routing consolidations, or other activities to reduce transportation costs. The applicant that applies is eligible for funding. Partners in the collaboration will not receive funds.

RFA Detailed Information

Application Assistance and Timeline

The successful response to this RFA will propose a collaborative approach to transportation reduction costs that meets the criteria below and is submitted by an eligible public school district. The application window opens Feb. 28, 2022, and closes March 25, 2022.

The Department will provide timely information and assistance to eligible applicants who intend to respond to this RFA. Applicants may send questions regarding the application and process to the subgrant email inbox at schoolbus@education.ohio.gov during the application period.

Funding Details

Up to $10,000 is available to each awardee with $250,000 total available for fiscal year 2022. This is a competitive grant made available by the 134th General Assembly under the passage of Amended Substitute House Bill 110. Grantees will be allocated for allowable expenditures based on submitted proposals, plans and corresponding budgets. Expenditures must be incurred by June 30, 2022. If awarded funds are not used by Sept. 30, 2022, the Department reserves the right to request that subgrantees forfeit the balance of awarded funds.

Eligible Applicants

Per Ohio Revised Code Section 3317.072 a city, local or exempted school district may apply for a Transportation Collaboration Grant funding. Educational Service Centers may be used in a collaboration agreement. However, Educational Service Centers are not eligible to receive grant funding allocation(s).

Application Review

The Department will establish an internal application review process. Members of the review team will have expertise in school transportation and be free of any conflicts of interest for all assigned applications. Each application will be evaluated by at least two review team members.

The review team will conduct an evaluation of applications based on the specific criteria listed in the RFA.
Proposed Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, Feb. 16, 2022</td>
<td>Announcement of grant opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, Feb. 28, 2022</td>
<td>RFA available and districts may apply for the grant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday, March 25, 2022</td>
<td>Application deadline</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, March 28, 2022</td>
<td>Grant review process begins</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, April 11, 2022</td>
<td>Grant selection notification</td>
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Application Submission

Applicants are required to submit a completed PDF copy of a document answering all questions included in the Application portion of this RFA and the Statement of Grant Assurances located in Appendix A.

Application Format

Narrative, including the Executive Summary, should appear on 8.5” x 11,” standard letter size paper, double-spaced. Use Arial, 11-point font. The application should include a narrative that addresses each of the required questions. Indicate each section title in bold. Appendices must be in the order outlined in the document and immediately follow the application narrative. Number all pages and include the applicant’s name, including district IRN in the header of each page.

Deadline

Submit PDF copies of the application narrative, appendices and budget documents, by 4:59 p.m. EST Friday, March 25, 2022, to schoolbus@education.ohio.gov. The electronic version must include all required components. Applications must be submitted by the time and date specified above. Incomplete or late applications may not be considered.

Application Narrative

The application should include the following sections:

1. Applicant name, organization and IRN.
2. Mailing address including city, state and ZIP code.
3. Application contact including position, phone number and email address.
4. Collaborative partner(s) name, organization and IRN.
5. Grant manager including phone number and email address.
6. Confirmation that the program operates from March to June 30, 2022.
7. A detailed description of the proposed activity or activities that will lead to reduce of the district’s overall transportation operation costs. Allowable activities include those that lead to:
   - Shared resource management;
   - Routing consolidation;
- Regional collaboration;
- Other activities that have the potential to reduce transportation operating costs.

8. A list of all school districts involved as partners in the planned activity or activities. An educational service center may be included as a partner. The application must include the signature of the Superintendent and Treasurer of the applying city, local, or exempted village school district and any partners indicating that each participating partner agrees to participate in the proposed activities.

9. The estimated transportation cost reduction that the applicant anticipates through implementation of the activities in the proposal that will be saved by the activity.

10. Evidence to support the estimated reduction in transportation costs.

11. A budget narrative that explains how the requested funds will be used to meet the objectives in this application.

12. A budget worksheet. This will be filled out in the CCIP. Applications should consider their budget narrative as they complete this in the CCIP.
## Budget Narrative

Provide an itemized list of expenditures that the project expects to incur throughout the duration of the funding period. Provide information on the activities that will support the grant’s objectives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget Category</th>
<th>Explain how the requested funds will be used to meet the objectives identified in the co-designed plan.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff Time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technology and Software Needs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resource or Material Development</td>
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<td>Professional Development</td>
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<td>Program Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Partnership Development</td>
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</table>

## Budget Worksheet

This will be filled out in the CCIP. Provide an itemized budget that breaks down salaries, benefits, purchased services, supplies, capital outlay and other expenditures.
Technical Review

The following selection criteria must be evident in a successful application for the Transportation Collaboration Grant. Any application not meeting any of the technical criteria will not be considered.

A. Organizational Information
   Complete sections 1-6 of the narrative, including all the necessary information.

B. Collaboration Partners
   Section 8 includes the signatures of the Superintendent and Treasurer of the applying city, local, or exempted village school district and any partners indicating that each participating partner agrees to participate in the proposed activities.

C. Grant Assurances
   Grant assurances are included, signed and accepted.

Quality Criteria

The following selection criteria should be evident in a successful application for the Transportation Collaboration Grant.

A. District Eligibility (4 points)
   Complete section 8 of the narrative, outlining the collaboration criteria for schools and other organizations in the program.

B. Program Details (8 points)
   Complete section 7 and 9 of the narrative, detailing the collaboration activity or activities for transportation cost reduction. Applicants will be evaluated based on the detailed description of the program.

C. Partnerships (4 points)
   Evidence included of partnerships (section 10) with:
   a. Their district collaboration and/or;
   b. Other organization(s)

Scoring Rubric Criteria

Grant scorers will evaluate each section of the application and award points based on the following criteria. In sections where evaluation is based on a “yes” or “no” answer, applicants will have the ability to earn “1” or “0” points respectively. In sections where qualitative evaluation is necessary for reviewers, portions of the answer will be evaluated on a scale of “0” points to “4” points, with the ability to earn a minimum of 0 points and a maximum of 4 points. In those situations, the below rating characteristics will be used. In the event of a tie, a consensus determination made by grant scorers will determine the awardee.
Rating Characteristics:

Not Addressed/0 Points The response is not provided.

Poorly Developed/1 Point The response is significantly incomplete, missing required appendices or otherwise raises substantial concerns about the viability of the plan or the applicant’s capacity to execute it.

Adequately Developed/2 Points The response meets less than half of the established criteria and contains substantial gaps in other areas.

Well Developed/3 Points The response meets the established criteria, but it requires additional information, explanation, or detail in one or more areas.

Fully Developed/4 Points The response demonstrates the applicant’s thorough understanding of the grant via specific and accurate information. The response presents a clear, realistic picture of how the district expects to operate and inspires confidence in the applicant’s capacity to execute the plan effectively.

Application Appendix: Grant Assurances

Appendix A is required for all applicants. Appendix A must be completed and signed for applications to be considered for selection.

A. Grant Assurances: The full grant assurances and a copy of Appendix A are in this RFA. If you have questions about any of the assurances, please contact the manager of the grant at schoolbus@education.ohio.gov.
Supporting, Evaluating and Reporting Expectations

Monitoring and Reporting

To evaluate grantee effectiveness and gauge success of the performance criteria listed above, subgrantees will be required to submit interim and final grant activities reports by Sept. 1, 2022.

The Department reserves the right to request revisions for clarity or ask for additional information as necessary.

Each city, local, or exempted village school district awarded a grant under this section is required to submit a report to the department by the thirtieth day of September following the fiscal year in which the grant was administered.

The report must include:

1. The activities conducted using grant funds; and
2. Reductions in operating costs resulting from grant activities

Reports will be submitted to the Department’s manager of this grant at schoolbus@education.ohio.gov. This grant may be used to purchase materials and services that enable the grantee to address their identified quality criteria. Examples of permitted and not permitted uses include the following:

Permitted uses include:
- Shared resource management;
- Routing consolidation;
- Regional collaboration;
- Other activities that have the potential to reduce transportation operating costs.

Not permitted uses include:
- Facility construction costs;
- Repair or maintenance of school transportation vehicles.
- Payment in lieu of transportation services.

Please note this is not an exhaustive list. If there is doubt about whether an expenditure is appropriate, please contact the manager of the grant at schoolbus@education.ohio.gov.

General Management

Grantees are required to maintain records, including, but not limited to, invoices, purchase order requests, requisition orders and receipts and provide the Department access to those records for the purpose of an audit or for supporting budget documentation. This cooperation includes access without unreasonable restrictions to its records and personnel for the purpose of obtaining relevant information.

Records must be maintained for three years following submission of the final grant activities report.
Conflicts of Interest

Grantees must avoid conflicts of interest when entering into contracts for equipment and services. State law regarding conflicts of interest is strict. It is the responsibility of the grantee to be in compliance with the Ohio Ethics Law, ORC Chapter 102, ORC 3314.03 regarding conflicts of interest.

Misuse of Funds and Grant Termination

The Department may terminate the grant award immediately if it is determined that the grantee staff or any individuals connected with the program have used grant funds for personal gain, performed criminal activities or broken any of the agreed upon assurances provided in the use of the CCIP or grant specific assurances. If it is determined that any grant funds have been misused, the Department reserves the right to request the grantee return the full amount of awarded funds.
Transportation Collaboration Grant
Selection Criteria and Rubric

Scoring Requirements

The following criteria will be used by reviewers to evaluate the application. Applications with the highest total point value in the quality criteria will be selected.

Application Checklist

The Ohio Department of Education’s Technical Review Team will ensure each applicant submitted all required narratives and appendices before scoring the application. Applications that are missing one or more required narratives and/or appendices will not be scored. Application missing one or more technical criteria will not be scored.

Rating Characteristics:

Not Addressed/0 Points The response is not provided.

Poorly Developed/1 Point The response is significantly incomplete, missing required appendices or otherwise raises substantial concerns about the viability of the plan or the applicant’s capacity to execute it.

Adequately Developed/2 Points The response meets less than half of the established criteria and contains substantial gaps in other areas.

Well Developed/3 Points The response meets the established criteria, but it requires additional information, explanation, or detail in one or more areas.

Fully Developed/4 Points The response demonstrates the applicant’s thorough understanding of the grant via specific and accurate information. The response presents a clear, realistic picture of how the district expects to operate and inspires confidence in the applicant’s capacity to execute the plan effectively.
# Quality Criteria Rubric

## District Eligibility (4 points)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Review Criteria</th>
<th>Not Addressed</th>
<th>Poorly Developed</th>
<th>Adequately Developed</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
<th>Fully Developed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Section 8.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The response provides context for why the partnership addresses the purpose of this grant.</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The applicant and partnering districts are eligible to receive this grant.</td>
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**Total Points Earned** /4

## Program Details (8 points)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Review Criteria</th>
<th>Not Addressed</th>
<th>Poorly Developed</th>
<th>Adequately Developed</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
<th>Fully Developed</th>
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<tr>
<td>Section 7.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Provides a detailed understanding of how the collaboration will work.</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>• The activities will lead to cost savings. For example: shared software, staff, supervisors, buses.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Section 9.</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Provides an estimated transportation cost reduction through implementation of the collaboration.</td>
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**Total Points Earned** /8
# Partnerships (4 points)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Review Criteria</th>
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<tr>
<td>Section 10.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Provides evidence that once the project is in place and will reduce transportation costs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Points Earned</td>
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# Appendix A

## Grant Assurances

### Statement of Grant Specific Assurances

*The grantee agrees to, if awarded a grant that:*

- Proof of evidence of financials from collaboration will be provided.
- Proof of evidence of results from the planned collaboration will be provided.
- Any additional documents of evidence as requested by the Department of Education will be provided.
- The LEA will complete any reporting requested by the Department of Education to comply with all reporting requirements.
I HEREBY CERTIFY that, to the best of my knowledge, the information in this application is correct.

The applicant designated below hereby applies for the Transportation Collaboration Grant for the purpose of program from the grant list and acknowledges to all Statement of Grant Specific Assurances.

Signature of Superintendent: ___________________________ Date: ______________

Printed Name of Superintendent: ___________________________

Signature of Treasurer: ___________________________ Date: ______________

Printed Name of Treasurer: ___________________________

District: ___________________________ IRN: ___________________________