Ohio's K-12 Comprehensive Literacy State Development Subgrant Frequently Asked Questions

ELIGIBILITY

1. **Are special education classrooms eligible for the Comprehensive Literacy State Development Subgrant?**

Applications must be submitted by the local education agency (LEA, such as central office if the applicant is a traditional public district or the superintendent/administration if the applicant is a STEM or community school). Applications are not permitted to be submitted by individual educators or on behalf of individual classrooms. Funding may be used to support literacy improvement in special education classrooms aligned to required subgrant activities.

2. **Are local education agencies that are not listed on the Prioritization List eligible to apply?**

Applicants must be local education agencies with enrolled students (associated with the LEA's IRN) in the grade band for which the application is submitted and meet criteria for serving "high-need schools". At least 50 percent of the schools served by the LEA must meet the definition of "high-need school", and at least one proposed Literacy Implementation Site must be a "high-need school", based on the federally defined criteria below.
   - Elementary schools: A "high-need" elementary school is one in which not less than 50 percent of the enrolled students are children who come from low-income families.
   - Middle schools: A "high-need" middle school is one in which not less than 50 percent of the enrolled students are children who come from low-income families.
   - High schools: A "high-need" high school is one in which not less than 40 percent of the enrolled students are children who come from low-income families.
   - Joint vocational school district, STEM schools, Community Schools, Educational Service Centers, and State Supported Organizations: A "high-need" school is one in which, if less than 50% of the enrolled students served are in grades 9-12, not less than 50 percent of the enrolled students are children who come from low-income families, or in which, if not less than 50% of the enrolled students served are in grades 9-12, not less than 40 percent of the enrolled students are children who come from low-income families

The prioritization list includes all LEAs identified as eligible based on the "high-need school" criteria using the final EMIS reporting data for the 2023-2024 school year. The list does not address whether the LEA has enrolled students in appropriate age-bands.

3. **Are educational service centers eligible to apply for a subgrant?**

ESCs that meet all eligibility requirements, include having enrolled students associated with the ESC's IRN in EMIS reporting in the grade bands for which funding is requested, and meeting the definition of "high-need", may apply to support comprehensive literacy instruction for the enrolled students. ESCs may not apply to provide services to support other schools or districts.

Schools and districts may include support from an ESC in their individual application if they wish. Partnership and consortia applications will not be accepted for this subgrant opportunity. An ESC may not apply on behalf of eligible school districts in the ESC service area.

STEPS TO APPLY

4. **How can applicants begin working on the application before the One Funding Application platform is available?**

Required subgrant project activities are described on page 2 of the [Ohio's K-12 Comprehensive Literacy State Development Subgrant](#) Request for Applications. The questions that will be part of the online application (when it is available in March) begin on page 32 of the same document. Applicants may begin answering those questions in a word document to copy and paste into the online application fields when the application is available. As described at the beginning of the questions, all fields except the Competitive Preference Priorities have a 4,000 character limit (including spaces), and the Competitive Preference Priorities have an 8,000 character limit (including spaces).

Applicants should also review the allowable expenses that begin on page 13 of the subgrant document linked above. The actual budget that will be completed and submitted is the excel document labelled [Budget Worksheet](#) (this may download directly into a downloads folder rather than opening in a file. All subgrant documents and required attachments may be accessed at [Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant | Ohio Department of Education and Workforce](#).)

GRADE BANDS

5. **If a school building includes grade levels that cross the subgrant grade bands, such as serving grades 5 and 6, should the LEA apply for the grades 6-8 grade band? How would the budget worksheet be completed?**

Grade bands are determined by federal funding requirements for the Comprehensive Literacy State Development grant. The LEA would need to apply for both K-5 and 6-8 funding if they intended to use funds to directly support both grade levels and fill out the budget worksheet for both grade levels.

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LOCAL LITERACY PLANS

6. Is a Reading Achievement Plan allowed to be submitted in place of a Local Literacy Plan?

A Reading Achievement plan (either one submitted for 2024, or one submitted for 2023 with the progress report submitted in 2024) may be submitted as the Local Literacy Plan. If the applicant submitted a report in 2023 that did not require a progress report in 2024, the applicant should make any necessary updates to the 2023 Reading Achievement Plan prior to submission.

READING TIERED FIDELITY INVENTORY

7. Do applicants need to complete both the universal and advanced tiers of the Reading Tiered Fidelity Inventory (R-TFI?)

Applicants should complete both tiers of the R-TFI to provide a baseline score for the full inventory.

ALLOWABLE EXPENSES

Note: All budgeted expenses must align with the allowable uses of funds by grade band, as described on page 13-15 of the Request for Applications.

8. Many of the project activities specify a literacy coach. If a district or community school applies for the subgrant, but does not currently have a literacy coach, would it be their responsibility to hire one? Is a specific credential or job description required for the literacy coach?

Schools must use a literacy coaching model for which training will be provided by the Department. If the district or community school does not have a literacy coach, subgrant funds may be used to support one, provided they also utilize funds for all required uses of funds within the subgrant. Required uses of funds begin on page 14 of the request for applications for Grades K-5 and Grades 6-12. The district should consider sustainability of the position beyond the funding period for the subgrant.

If the school has a literacy coach that is currently funded by state or local funds, the coach may not be funded with Comprehensive Literacy State Development funds due to the subgrant's supplanting restriction.

Requirements or credentials for literacy coach positions are a local determination. To support local evaluation and preparation, the Department has provided a sample position description in Appendix A.

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9. **May subgrant funds be used to fund supplemental ELA teachers?**

Subgrant funds may not be used to support recurring operational expenses such as teaching salaries.

10. **May districts or community schools hire a dyslexia interventionist or certified structured literacy specialist to oversee and lead subgrant work?**

Funds must be used in support of activities described in the Project Overview on pages 2-7 of the request for applications and aligned to the allowable uses of funds on pages 14-15. Funds may not be used for recurring operational expenses to include administrative and programmatic activities, such as teaching and administrator salaries and, due to supplanting restrictions, may not be used to support activities that have previously been funded with state or local funds, or are required by state or local regulations.

11. **May districts or community schools hire personnel through an ESC with subgrant funds?**

Districts may contract with an ESC to provide support during the subgrant period, provided the support is within the allowable uses of funds on pages 14-15 of the request for applications for the relevant grade bands. The district should consider how activities supported by the ESC would be sustained beyond the subgrant period.

12. **May Comprehensive Literacy subgrant funds be used for refinement of Tier 1 and Tier 2 ELA instruction through professional development and coaching from the vendors of those curriculums?**

Ohio's 2025 K-12 Comprehensive Literacy subgrant is focused on curriculum-based and intervention-based professional learning, not general training in the use of materials. Subgrant funds may be used to support curriculum-based and intervention-based professional learning aligned to the use of Tier 1 and Tier 2 instructional materials, including professional learning and coaching support. This support may be provided by product vendors, provided the vendors meet the criteria required for all curriculum-based and intervention-based professional learning vendors funded through the project:
   a. The professional learning must be aligned to implementation of approved instructional materials.
   b. The vendors must be approved in the Rivet Education Professional Learning Partner guide to provide initial and/or on-going implementation support, or the applicant must complete Appendix 5: Plan for High Quality Curriculum-Based and/or Intervention-Based Professional Learning and receives approval from the Department.
   c. For Tier 2 instructional materials, the applicant must complete Appendix 5 for intervention-based professional learning.

Training provided with Comprehensive Literacy funds to support implementation of high-quality instructional materials must be focused on curriculum-based and/or intervention-

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based professional learning only, meeting the requirements outlined in the RFA. Training in general use of the materials or training unapproved by the Department, following the requirements in the RFA, is not allowed.

13. May subgrant funds be used to purchase assessment programming, such as Acadience?

Funds must be used to supplement, not supplant non-federal funds that would otherwise be used for subgrant activities. If an LEA is not currently providing universal screening three times per year in kindergarten-grade 5, annual universal screening in grades 6-8, or diagnostic and progress monitoring assessments, as needed, in grades 6-12, funds may be used to purchase assessment materials that exceed state or local requirements and exceed the current level of screening by the LEA. Applicable state requirements include dyslexia screening for kindergarten students, annual reading diagnostic assessment for kindergarten-grade 3 students, and progress monitoring required for students with Reading Intervention and Monitoring Plans (currently required for kindergarten-grade 5).

14. May subgrant funds be used to purchase core curriculum or evidence-based reading intervention materials?

Funds must be used to supplement, not supplant non-federal funds that would otherwise be used for subgrant activities. As Ohio law requires use of approved high-quality instructional materials for core curriculum and instructional materials in English Language Arts for prekindergarten-Grade 5 and for evidence-based reading intervention programs for prekindergarten-Grade 12, subgrant funds may not be used to purchase these materials.

15. Are online training resource subscriptions allowable for professional learning?

Ohio's 2025 K-12 Comprehensive Literacy subgrant is focused on curriculum-based and intervention-based professional learning. This training may not be provided by online subscription services. Although supplemental professional learning is allowable, such as to support content-area literacy instruction, explicit writing instruction, or supports for gifted learners, the professional-learning must be high-quality, evidence-based, aligned to the local literacy plan and identified project needs and goals, and support sustainability. General online training subscriptions would not meet this requirement.

16. May funds be used to support afterschool programs? If so, what are the programming requirements, may building staff provide the services, and what licenses are required of staff?

Funds must be used in support of activities described in the Project Overview on pages 2-7 of the request for applications and aligned to the allowable uses of funds on numbered pages 14-15. If activities are aligned to student need and the local literacy plan, funds may be used to support access to afterschool or summer programming as part of a community partnership or to support implementation of a multi-tiered system of supports.

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Expenses as part of a community partnership may include training and equipping community partners with high-quality programming aligned to instruction or providing a stipend to a staff member to coordinate with the community partner, but operations should not be significantly directed or funded by the LEA and school staff should not be paid to provide direct instructional services.

Expenses for afterschool or summer programming as part of a multi-tiered system of supports should be limited and must be supplemental to systematic, school-day activities to improve tiered instruction and should directly support implementing afterschool or summer instruction for students aligned to the implementation plan to improve MTSS. These expenses may include purchasing programming, providing training, and paying staff to oversee and provide instruction. Programming should be based on strong, moderate, or promising evidence of effectiveness (as defined by ESSA, federal guidance and state policy) and monitored for fidelity of implementation.

17. How should administrative costs be allocated to the subgrant?

Indirect costs may be charged at the LEA's approved restricted indirect cost rate. Subgrant funds may not be used to fund recurring operational expenses such as administrative salaries.

BUDGET

18. How much funding should LEAs request? How much should LEAs request each year?

Information on the budget and funding per year are on page 9 of the [Request for Applications](#). Guidance is also provided in the budget worksheet. Applicants applying for subgrants in multiple grade bands should request funding for each grade band that is at least the minimum amount of funding and not greater than the maximum amount of funding for the grade band.

19. Will there be an opportunity to revise budgets during the subgrant period?

The Department will work with the subgrantee to make revisions and updates to their budget each year. The budget proposed in the subgrant application is evidence of the applicant's commitment to participate in the Comprehensive Literacy project. The Department will work with the subgrantee to finalize the proposed budget, in addition to working with the subgrantee to revise their budget as the need arises.

GRANT ACTIVITIES

20. How many district or school representatives should attend the annual Literacy Academy? Is the Literacy Academy offered during the school year or in the summer?

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Representatives from the proposed literacy implementation sites should plan to attend the annual Literacy Academy, typically held in June of each year. Consider planning for a team of representatives from your district to attend that represent key support associated with the subgrant project and implementation at the proposed sites. The target audience for the Literacy Academy includes educators, literacy leaders and coaches, and administrators. Team size may vary based on district size and the grade bands supported through the subgrant, but it is recommended to consider a team of at least two representatives.

21. **How often will technical assistance and communities of practice coordinated by the Department occur? Typically, how many representatives participate in each event?**

The Department will work with subgrantees to determine and/or finalize representatives for each form of technical assistance upon award to ensure appropriate representation in each community of practice. When developing the proposal and budget, consider the team members most vital to implementing the work at the proposed site, communicating with and supporting educators and teams, and planning for sustainability of work beyond the life cycle of the subgrant. For example, consider the team members who would be vital in the implementation of family engagement initiatives at the proposed site(s).

More information on technical assistance May be found on page 2 of the Ohio's K-12 Comprehensive Literacy State Development Subgrant in the Project Overview section.

22. **How much time should be planned for completing the Reading Tiered Fidelity Inventory each year?**

Administration and facilitation of the Reading Tiered Fidelity Inventory may vary based on team size, familiarity with the tool and other variable factors specific to the building's context but is estimated to take approximately 1-2 hours per tier. Michigan's MTSS Technical Assistance Center provides additional guidance on the timing need for preparation and facilitation.

23. **What is the overall time commitment for required training events? How often will they occur and how many educators at each site should attend? Are trainings offered in the summer or during the school year?**

The Department anticipates providing information regarding time commitments and dates for Department-disseminated training events during year 1 in summer 2025. All trainings will be virtual and take place during the school year. When developing the project proposal and budget, consider the staff, including literacy coaches, that would ideally be engaged in each set of trainings.

More information on trainings may be found on page 2 of the Ohio's K-12 Comprehensive Literacy State Development Subgrant in the Project Overview section.

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24. What is the time frame for completing the three required learning walks? How much time should be allotted for each observation?

The Department anticipates providing additional information regarding learning walks, including time requirements, in early fall 2025. Proposed implementation sites will be provided with sufficient time to plan for the completion of learning walks before implementation begins.

25. What is the frequency for completing surveys, interviews, or assessments as part of monitoring?

Brief reports will be submitted via Microsoft Forms three times per year, and the Spring Monitoring Survey will be submitted in April-May. Brief reports should take less than an hour to complete. The monitoring survey may take somewhat longer.

26. Is the Department's non-evaluative learning walk form available for us to review?

The Department's learning walk form is not yet available for review, but the Department anticipates providing additional information regarding learning walks, including time requirements, in early fall 2025. Proposed implementation sites will be provided with sufficient time to plan for the completion of learning walks before implementation begins.

27. What data collection system will be used to gather coaching logs?

The Department will develop or provide a platform for the collection of coaching logs. Previous projects have leveraged user-friendly data entry systems such as a Microsoft Form.

28. When planning for engagement with the Regional Literacy Network, how many representatives should plan to attend? How often will Regional Literacy Network meetings occur?

Regional Literacy Networks are coordinated by the state support team in each region and the frequency of meetings varies by region. The Department anticipates information about regional literacy networks for each region being available by late summer 2025 to support coordination and attendance planning by the subgrantee. For additional questions on the regional literacy network within the region, please contact your state support team.

29. Which of the required project activities require travel and/or lodging expenses?

The Department anticipates one in-person subgrantee meeting to be held each school year, likely in the second half of the academic year. Subgrantees should plan for a team of participants to attend, based on the funded grade bands. Guidance will be provided around attendance in advance of each in-person meeting.

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In addition, the annual Literacy Academy is expected to occur annually each year in June in Columbus. All expenses and lodging requirements are dependent on the LEA's existing practice and policies.

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Appendix A: Sample Literacy Coach Job Description

Note: *This sample position description is being provided as an example only to demonstrate the duties and responsibilities of a literacy coach. Exact duties and responsibilities, as well as minimum and preferred qualification, may vary based on the needs and context of the LEA. Applicants should use this information as guidance to ensure that existing or proposed literacy coaches have the skills and qualifications needed to implement Ohio's literacy coaching model and that the duties and responsibilities align with the expectations of the Department during the subgrant period.*

Overview and Description

Coaches will provide instructional coaching to support the implementation of a multi-tiered system of support for literacy.

Coaches will:
- Provide support at the building and classroom level related to language and literacy instruction that is aligned with [Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement](#) and [Ohio's Learning Standards for English Language Arts](#).
- Build collaborative relationships with administrators and staff, school-based literacy coaches, educators and community partners.
- Support the identification of building-level needs to support implementation of professional learning in evidence-based literacy instruction, multi-tiered systems of support and high-quality instructional materials.
- Provide instructional (classroom-level) coaching to support the implementation of a multi-tiered system of support for literacy through the use of a student-focused coaching model.
- Provide individualized, classroom-based modeling and ongoing support of evidenced-based practices aligned to high-quality materials and curriculum-based professional learning.
- Support the Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) in implementing a system of advanced tiers of instruction.
- Support the MDT in analyzing data from diagnostic assessments and progress monitoring to determine additional supports and interventions needed by individual students.
- Guide and support school teams in collecting and analyzing universal screening data for the purpose of developing and implanting school and grade level literacy plans.
- Support grade level lesson planning using high-quality instructional materials for English Language Arts.
- Support teachers in the analysis of data to plan literacy instruction for whole group, small group, and individual students and to adjust based on data.

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Qualifications

The following are minimum qualifications for the Literacy Coach:
- A master's degree in education, with either reading or literacy endorsements on state license.
- Three (3) to five (5) years of successful classroom teaching that includes reading/literacy instruction in grades K-12.
- Completion of a professional development program or course in evidence-based language and literacy instruction.
- Expertise in how to improve student learning through the implementation of high-quality evidence-based reading/literacy strategies.
- Experience providing and coaching structured literacy instruction.
- Evidence of previously producing professional development materials specific to language and literacy development.
- Experience with coaching skills, including mentoring and providing feedback about instruction to classroom teachers.
- Knowledge of how to analyze and use student and adult implementation data to drive instruction.
- Experience collaborating with and leading others.
- Experience facilitating and interpreting screening measures for identifying students at-risk for reading difficulties.

The following are the preferred qualifications:
- A master's degree in reading or literacy education, or master's degree in a related area.
- Completion of a professional development program accredited by the International Dyslexia Association (accreditation or accreditation plus level).
- Experience working with administrators.
- Experience facilitating or participating in continuous improvement cycles such as the Ohio Improvement Process or a collaborative problem-solving model.
- Experience designing and implementing school-wide multi-tiered system of supports with an understanding of academic and behavioral integration.
- Experience providing instruction to individuals with dyslexia or individuals with risk factors for dyslexia.
- Successful experience as a provider of professional development and technical assistance specific to evidence-based language and literacy development.
- Experience in facilitating a needs assessment to support the installation and implementation of a multi-tiered system of supports.

Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions

KNOWLEDGE

A thorough understanding of the following is essential:

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- Reading acquisition, assessment and instruction, aligned to the science of reading.
- Effective strategies for language and literacy instruction, aligned with the science of reading.
- Explicit and systematic reading instruction.
- Ohio's Learning Standards in English language arts and literacy.
- Instructional coaching practices and strategies for supporting adult learners.
- Data-driven decision making to support all learners through a multi-tiered system of support.

SKILLS

- Delivering explicit and systematic reading instruction in grades K-5 and/or intervention grades 6-12.
- Administering assessments and measures of essential early literacy skills, interpreting results and using data to drive instruction.
- Administering system fidelity assessments, interpreting results to set goals, identify additional professional learning needs and recommend changes to improve schoolwide and/or classroom instructional practices.
- Ability to rapidly acquire and apply new skills and information.
- Ability to provide and receive effective instructional feedback.
- Ability to effectively prioritize, schedule, manage, and organize multiple daily tasks to achieve goals.
- Ability to identify problems and develop appropriate solutions.
- Use effective written and oral communication skills, including the ability to engage in difficult and candid conversations with a variety of stakeholders.

DISPOSITIONS

- Sense of urgency for literacy achievement.
- Motivating others to perform at high standards.
- High degree of professionalism to ensure and protect the confidentiality of educators and students.
- Strong work ethic, self-directed and reliable, and the ability to work both independently and collaboratively.
- High quality interpersonal skills and the ability to relate to and interact with peers and colleagues.
- Persistent despite obstacles.
- Ability to orchestrate change.
- Value lifelong learning.
- Belief that a coach can make a difference, despite the nature of the challenges.
- Desire to grow professionally.
- Belief that all students can become proficient readers.

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