



Maryland

STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

GRANT INFORMATION GUIDE

School Waste Reduction and Composting Program

Maryland State Department of Education
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Deadline

March 28, 2024

No later than 5:00 p.m. EDT

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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Program Description

This grant provides funding to county boards and public schools to develop and implement programs for reducing food waste and to establish composting of pre- and post-consumer waste. Grant funds can be utilized to support educational initiatives, infrastructure improvements, and training programs.

According to the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), approximately 774,400 tons of food waste was disposed of in Maryland in 2020. Of that, only 167,200 tons were recycled at organic recycling facilities. The balance was disposed of in landfills and incinerators.¹ As a result, the Maryland General Assembly passed House Bill 150/Senate Bill 124, which supports the increase of education regarding the connection between food waste, climate, the environment, and hunger, in addition to requiring monitoring of food waste and reduction and training of staff and students on the implementation of food waste reduction and composting.

Within this program, Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education (MAEOE) acts as the reviewer of grant applications and selector of grant awardees, while MSDE shall award funds to county boards and public schools to be distributed to selected applicants.

Each year of the grant, MSDE will submit a report by December 1 to the Maryland General Assembly on the program.

AUTHORIZATION

[Md. Code, Educ. § 7-130](#)

GRANT OVERVIEW

Name of Grant Program

School Waste Reduction and Composting Grant

Purpose

The Fiscal Year 2024 State Budget includes grant funds for school waste reduction and composting programs. The Maryland Department of the Environment has reported that in Maryland more food was disposed than any other single material, accounting for 17.9 percent of waste disposed. By providing grants to county boards and public schools in Maryland to develop and implement programs to reduce school-based food waste and establish composting of pre- and post-consumer waste, this program aims to support more environmentally conscious school nutrition programs that also act to increase food security for Maryland residents.

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<https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/land/RecyclingandOperationsprogram/Pages/Solid-Waste-Management---Organics-Recycling-and-Waste-Diversion---Food-Residuals.aspx>

Eligibility

County boards and public schools may submit a proposal to MSDE. Grant funds are targeted to support eligible projects, as defined in [Md. Code, Educ. § 7-130](#), that are selected by MAEOE.

Application Prioritization

- In the application selection process, priority will be given to applications that include the following:
- Programs that will be led by students
- Schools with high numbers of students who receive free and reduced price meals
- Programs that will contract with a small and minority- or veteran-owned business
- Programs that will contract with businesses that pay employees a living wage, as defined by [§ 18-101 of the State Finance and Procurement Article](#)

Dissemination

This Grant Information Guide (GIG) will be re-released on February 28, 2024.

Deadline

Proposals are due no later than 5 p.m. on March 28, 2024.

Grant Period

July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

Funding Amount Available

Total funding amount to be determined by remaining grant pool. Grant awards will range from \$500 - \$8000.

Estimated Number of Grants

Will vary based on the number of applications received.

Submission Instructions

Grant applications must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. on March 28, 2024, via email to Zachary Carey at zachary.carey@maryland.gov.

State Responsibilities

MSDE is responsible for providing required information and technical assistance to facilitate the grantee's performance of the work and will provide additional assistance when requested.

MSDE shall coordinate with the Department of the Environment to identify and apply for federal funding that may be used to support the program.

On or before December 1, 2023, and each December 1 thereafter, MSDE shall report to the General Assembly, in accordance with [§ 2-1257 of the State Government Article](#), on the program.

Program Contact

Zachary Carey

Director of Science

410-767-0348

zachary.carey@maryland.gov

Use of Funds

Project funds will be awarded to county boards and public schools whose applications are selected by the Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education (MAEOE). Funds received by county boards and public schools may be used for the following program costs that support the meeting of program requirements:

- Educational resources for students, parents, and staff on the connection between food waste, climate, environment, and hunger.
- Infrastructure to measure food waste and reduction of food waste.
- Student and staff training on the implementation of food waste and the reduction of food waste.
- Contracting commercial composters, municipal agencies, or county agencies to recycle in-school organic waste.
- Composting bins
- Bulk milk dispensers
- Share tables, as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture
- Surplus food packaging supplies
- Surplus food distribution
- Other infrastructure to prevent or reduce food waste.

Program Requirements

This program provides school boards and public schools grant funding to develop and implement programs for reducing waste and to establish composting of pre- and post-consumer waste. Eligible programs will serve to educate students, parents, and staff on the connection between food waste, climate, environment, and hunger, increase school-based infrastructure and capacity to administer food waste reduction and composting programs, train and educate students and staff on the implementation of food waste reduction and composting, and, ultimately, advance understanding within the school community of the purpose, practice, and impact of food waste reduction and composting.

The Fiscal Year 2024 appropriation of the School Waste Reduction and Composting Grant is to be used to increase the number of food waste reduction and composing programs as guided by [Section 7-130 of the Education Article in Maryland Code](#). The application for funding must include information about the activities to be supported by the funding, as well as the outcomes expected.

Each section of the application must be addressed and include identification of the Goals, Impact, and Measurable Success Criteria for the School Waste Reduction and Composting Grant, as well as a

proposed budget and program assurances. This Grant Information Guide (GIG) includes instructions and examples of goals, activities, milestones, and outcomes to successfully implement the program.

Suggested resources to support the requirements:

- [MDE Wasted Food Minimization and Related Activities Toolkit for Maryland Schools](#)
- [MDE Waste Audit Template](#)
- [USDA Reducing Food Waste at K-12 Schools](#)
- [USDA What You Can Do to Prevent Wasted Food Resource](#)
- [USDA Reducing Food Waste: What Schools Can Do Today](#)
- [Cornell Waste Management Institute – School Composting – Let’s Get Growing!](#)
- [Maryland Department of the Environment Solid Waste Management – Organics Recycling and Waste Diversion – Food Residuals](#)
- [Green Strides: A Systems Approach to Reducing Consumer Food Waste](#)
- [Green Strides: K-12 School Food Recovery Roadmap](#)

Program Requirement 1 – School Community Education

All programs must include a component that provides education for students, parents, and staff on the connection between food waste, climate, environment, and hunger. The application for funding must include a description of each activity to address the identified need and expected outcome. For example:

Goal #: Increase student, parent, and staff knowledge of the connection between food waste, climate, environment, and hunger.

Activity	Identified Need	Milestone(s)	Expected Outcome(s)
<p>Organizing a school community summit on food waste, climate, environment, and hunger.</p>	<p>Curricular and school community knowledge gap on the connection between food waste, climate, environment, and hunger</p> <p>Source: Internal Needs Assessment</p>	<p>Assemble summit planning committee (November 2023)</p> <p>Identify partners and collaborators (December 2023)</p> <p>Develop summit objectives and intended outcomes (December 2023)</p> <p>Develop summit content with planning committee and collaborators (January 2024)</p> <p>Provide focus group opportunity for opportunity for student, parent, and staff feedback (February 2024)</p> <p>Finalize summit plan (March 2024)</p> <p>Conduct community outreach to advertise event (March 2024)</p> <p>Hold school community summit (April 2024)</p>	<p>Summit participants will gain understanding of the connection between food waste, climate, environment, and hunger.</p>

The following overarching questions should be considered when addressing Program Requirement 1:

- What is the most effective mode of delivery for an education component or components to include the greatest number and diversity of students, parents, and staff?
- How can the diverse cultures and histories of the school community be considered or utilized when selecting or developing the educational component?
- How can student leadership be incorporated into the development and facilitation of the program requirement?

- How do the strategies and resources used to develop and deliver the educational component enhance the delivery of content?

Program Requirement 2 – Food Waste and Reduction Monitoring

All programs must include the implementation of school infrastructure to measure food waste and reduction of food waste. The application for funding must include a description of each activity to address the identified need and expected outcome. For example:

Goal #: Implement a system or systems to measure food waste and food waste reduction.

Activity	Identified Need	Milestone(s)	Expected Outcome(s)
Establish a team of students, faculty, and Food and Nutrition staff to conduct a waste audit using the MDE Tool.	Establish baseline level of waste and communicate results to create awareness in the school community. Will also serve as a comparison to future audits to measure impact of interventions.	Assemble waste audit planning committee (December 2023) Identify partners and collaborators (December 2023) Procure tools to conduct the waste audit (January 2024) Conduct the baseline waste audit (February 2024) Planning committee meet to discuss results and identify strategies to reduce waste (March 2024) Share results during the Summit (April 2024) Conduct follow-up waste audit (May 2024) Share results with school community (June 2024)	School community will gain understanding of food waste. School community will examine the impact of training and education plan and other waste reduction strategies

The following overarching questions should be considered when addressing Program Requirement 2:

- Given school resources and structures, what is the most effective system for measuring food waste and the reduction of food waste? How does the waste produced in our school compare to benchmarks and/or comparable schools?
- What are the tools and resources needed to conduct a waste audit?
- How do the strategies used to reduce waste impact the measured waste?

Program Requirement 3 – Infrastructure Education

All programs must include a component that provides training and education for students and staff on the implementation of food waste reduction and composting. The application for funding must include a description of each activity to address the identified need and expected outcome. For example:

Goal #: Develop and deliver school waste reduction and composting learning modules for students and staff.

Activity	Identified Need	Milestone(s)	Expected Outcome(s)
Develop school waste reduction and composting infrastructure training presentation for students and staff.	Student and staff knowledge of school waste reduction and composting practices varies within the school community. Source: Internal Needs Assessment	Identify training and education development team for training presentation (November 2023) Develop timeline for training development (November 2023) Conduct development team meetings and work sessions (December 2023 – January 2024) Deliver learning student and staff training (February 2024)	Development and delivery of school waste reduction and composting infrastructure training presentations. Increasing student and staff understanding of school waste reduction and composting practices. Increasing student and staff understanding of roles and responsibilities associated with school waste reduction program.

The following overarching questions should be considered when addressing Program Requirement 3:

- What key points of the school waste reduction plan and infrastructure need to be highlighted?
- What is the most effective mode of delivery for student and staff education?

Program Requirement 4 – Activity Selection

All programs must include the selection of one additional activity as outlined in [Md. Code, Educ. § 7-130](#), including:

- Planning to transition the school to an offer versus serve model in cafeterias, which allows students to decline foods offered rather than serving food a student will not eat, in compliance with federal law, and trains students and staff on the model;
- Developing processes for surplus food to be served during after school activities or the following day, or to be taken home to student families;
- Contracting with a commercial composter or municipal or county agency to recycle in-school organic waste;
- Establishing on-site composting bins;
- Replacing single-serve milk cartons with bulk milk dispensers;
- Establishing share tables based on guidance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service document number SP41 CACFP13 SFSP15–2016;
- Packaging and distributing surplus food to local food rescue organizations to support local communities; or
- Establishing any other program or activity that prevents and reduces food waste in a public school.

The application for funding must include a description of each activity to address the identified need and expected outcome. For example:

Goal #: Establish school composting program for organic food waste from school lunch.

Activity	Identified Need	Milestone(s)	Expected Outcome(s)
Acquire four on-site composting bins that will be used to compost organic food waste from school lunch.	School does not have physical infrastructure for composting. Source: Internal Needs Assessment	Assess composting bin options and procurement process. (November 2023) Develop procedures for school-based composting based on best-practices (November 2023) Purchase and install composting bins (December 2023)	Installation and use of composting bins. Implementation of school composting procedures.

The following overarching questions should be considered when addressing Program Requirement 4:

- Given school resources and structures, which option will deliver the largest benefit to the school community when considering school community education, impact on school food waste reduction, and facilities impacts?

Program Requirement 5 – Reporting

All county boards and public schools that receive grant funding must report on program outcomes, including:

- The amount of food waste prevented, diverted, and composted.
- The improvement in education of students on environmental best practices related to food waste management.
- Number of staff involved.
- Number of students involved.
- Successes and challenges related to program implementation.
- Plans for continuing waste reduction efforts beyond the grant period.

Application Requirements

COVER PAGE

Applications must include the Proposal Cover Page provided in the application for participation that includes a project statement. The project statement should briefly describe the project's outcome(s) and strategies (i.e., what the project will do, and how it will be accomplished). Do not exceed the 100-word limit. Project Abstract (1 Page)

In the Project Abstract, introduce the project to the reader. The abstract should be factual, brief, and focused on the organization's efforts. Do not assume the reader is familiar with the proposed project. The project abstract should cover the core aspects of the proposed project, such as the populations served, a brief description of the goals, the strategies to meet them, and the roles of partners.

PROJECT NARRATIVE (10 PAGE LIMIT)

The project narrative consists of the following sections. These sections will be scored by reviewers.

- Extent of Need
- Goals, Measurable Outcomes, and Milestones
- Plan of Operation, Key Personnel, and Project Timeline
- Evaluation and Evidence of Impact

EXTENT OF NEED

Describe the conditions or needs to be addressed through the School Waste Reduction Program. Include a clearly defined problem supported by available needs assessment and supporting data. Document current or past efforts to address the problem and show how those efforts addressed the need. Also discuss the applicant's history or expertise in dealing with the problem by implementing programming or engaging in other related activities informed by evidence and/or research.

GOALS AND MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

Goals

State the overall goal of the project. The goal should address the main problem identified at the beginning of the needs assessment. The applicant must identify at least one goal for each program requirement:

- Set up a program to award grants to local boards and schools to reduce waste.
- Monitor and support implementation of grant funded programming.
- Monitor and report impact of grant awards in the reduction of school waste production.

Measurable Outcomes

Measurable Outcomes are the anticipated outcomes to be accomplished for the project and each must be related to a goal. Outcomes break the long-term goals into steps or address the factors contributing to the problems addressed by the goal. It is imperative that outcomes be established for every target population the project is designed to affect.

Below are some tips for writing outcomes:

- State your outcome in quantifiable terms.
- Outcomes should specify the result of an activity.
- Outcomes should identify the target audience or community being served.
- Objectives need to be realistic and capable of being accomplished within the grant period.

Milestones

Ongoing evaluation is essential to the management of a project. Since goals and outcomes are not evaluated until the end of the year, milestones may be established to measure progress during the year. Milestones should be evaluated either quarterly or semiannually.

Since milestones are intended to indicate progress towards an outcome, each milestone must be related to a stated outcome. Keep in mind that milestones are indicators of progress and may not use the same measurement tool as the objective to which they are related. A project may take months before there is an impact on clients, or the rate of improvement may level off over time. Milestones should anticipate this and be gauged accordingly. Be sure that milestones are ambitious, yet attainable.

PLAN OF OPERATION, KEY PERSONNEL, AND TIMELINE

The Plan of Operation includes the strategies and activities that will be implemented to achieve the project's goals, outcomes, and milestones. Create a plan of operation in chart form that addresses, at a minimum, the key components of the program's implementation or expansion.

Include a timeline and the key personnel associated with each component of the plan of operation. For key personnel, include the roles, responsibilities, tasks, and deadlines of key contributors required for program success. Ensure that all administrative and key personnel responsible for the successful implementation and monitoring of the grant requirements are captured here.

EVALUATION AND EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

MSDE is required to submit a final report that is consistent with the requirements identified in [Section 7-130 of the Education Article in Maryland Code](#). Keep in mind that the annual evaluation, as described in Maryland Code, will examine the amount of food waste prevented, diverted, and composted, along with the improvement in education of students and staff on environmental best practices related to the management of food waste.

Budget and Budget Narrative

The project's budget should detail all related project expenses in a separate itemized budget. It should demonstrate the extent to which the budget is reasonable and cost-effective. All costs described in the project narrative should appear in the budget narrative and must have a corresponding entry in the itemized budget for that year. Reviewers should be able to see a clear connection between the project activities and the budget line items.

The itemized budget form (C-1-25) can be accessed through the [MSDE grants webpage](#), and a proposed budget must be submitted with the application.

The application form includes a space for applicants to provide the program's budget and a budget narrative. All costs described in the project narrative should appear in the budget narrative and must have a corresponding entry in the itemized budget. Refer to the samples below for reference while completing the application budget and budget narrative:

1. Services

Line item	Calculation	Requested	In-Kind	Total
Food Waste Reduction Staff Professional Development	\$50/staff member x 10 staff members	\$500	\$0	\$500
Total for Services:		\$500	\$0	\$500

2. Supplies

Line item	Calculation	Requested	In-Kind	Total
Surplus food packaging supplies	\$25.00 x 1000	\$2,500	\$0	\$2,500
Composting bins	\$80.00 x 50	\$4,000	\$0	\$4,000
Total for Supplies:		\$6,500	\$0	\$6,500

Appendices

The following Appendices must be included in the proposal for funding, but do not apply to the page limit of the Project Narrative:

Appendix A: [A signed recipient assurances page](#)

Appendix B: A signed [C-125 MSDE budget form](#)

School Waste Reduction and Composting Grant Scoring Rubric

Areas	Level 3 Exceeds Criteria	Level 2 Meets Criteria	Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria
Extent of Need	The extent of need is clearly described; the comprehensive program need is evident.	There is a limited description of the extent of need. Limited data justifying program presented.	The extent of need is not clearly identified.
Goals, Measurable Outcomes, and Milestones	The application articulates multiple and exemplary measurable goals, outcomes, and milestones and includes a clear narrative to achieve these goals. Outcome statements are clear and tell how the project's target population would improve.	The application partially lists goals and outcomes but does not include measures of progress towards the goal. The application notes outcomes that do not align to the problem/need identified.	Program goals, outcomes, and milestones are not clear, measurable, or attainable. Statements are vague and not measurable.
Plan of Operation, Key Personnel, and Timeline	Includes a detailed plan of operation that addresses each goal identified in the grant information guide. Activities occur within the grant period. Key personnel have considerable experience related to environmental literacy.	Proposed activities are evidence-based and meet the requirements for the selected strategy. There is a timeline for all key activities. Key personnel have relevant experience. The names, titles and percentage of time dedicated to the program are provided.	Proposed activities are listed and lacking alignment to a strategy. There is no clear plan of operation. The timeline is either missing or does not include dates for all activities. Key personnel information is incomplete.

Areas	Level 3 Exceeds Criteria	Level 2 Meets Criteria	Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria
Evaluation and Dissemination	There is an evaluation plan that includes clear questions, a description of proposed data instruments, collection processes, and analytic methods aligned to the goals. The applicant is explicit about who is assigned to this task and timeline to complete. There is a plan to collect, evaluate and report on outcomes.	There is a plan for how the applicant will measure the program's success per selected strategy. Evaluation measures align to the extent of need and the stated goals. There is a plan that details timeline and responsible individual for disseminating.	The evaluation plan does not measure the success of the program and is disconnected from the goals and plan of operation. There is no plan for disseminating results to stakeholders.
Budget Narrative	The application includes a thorough budget narrative. The itemized budget narrative lists budget items showing how the cost of each item was calculated. Budget calculations are correct.	The application includes a broad budget narrative. The budget narrative lists budget items showing how the cost of each item was calculated but lacks detail.	The application lacks a budget narrative or lacks detail and is not itemized. Budget contains errors.

Reporting Requirements

Grantees must comply with the following reporting requirements:

Date	Reporting Requirements for Each Year
Ongoing	Fiscal and program monitoring
April 15, 2024	Interim Progress Report (C-1-25 C)
August 15, 2024	Final Progress Report (C-1-25 D)
September 30, 2024	Final Evaluation Report (Narrative and Fiscal)

Notes: Any requests for amendments must be submitted at least 45 days before the grant period ends, and must be submitted using the C-1-25 B form found in the [Grant Budget Forms Workbook](#) on the [MSDE grants webpage](#). Final invoices must be submitted no later than 60 days after the grant period ends.

Project Timeline

A project timeline tells the reader when key activities will take place during the grant period. Applicants should consider all the key tasks or activities that need to be conducted to implement the program successfully, whether each task can realistically begin and end in the proposed time frame, and how long each task will take to complete. It should contain three sections: management, implementation, and evaluation.

Grant Timeline

This funding opportunity, including all attachments and updates, are found on the [MSDE grants webpage](#).

Date	Program Milestone
February 28, 2024	The Grant Information Guide and the application for participating are released.
March 11, 2024 March 18, 2024 March 20, 2024	MSDE will hold three virtual customer service support sessions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monday, March 11, 2024 @ 12:00p-1:00p<li>• Monday, March 18, 2024 @ 10:00a-11:00a<li>• Wednesday, March 20, 2024 @ 2:00p-3:00p
March 28, 2024	The grant application period closes.
July 1, 2023	Grant period begins.
June 30, 2024	Grant period ends.

Non-Discrimination Statement

The Maryland State Department of Education does not discriminate on the basis of age, ancestry/national origin, color, disability, gender identity/expression, marital status, race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation in matters affecting employment or in providing access to programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. For inquiries related to Department policy, please contact:

Equity Assurance and Compliance Office
Office of the Deputy State Superintendent for Operations

Maryland State Department of Education
200 W. Baltimore Street - 2nd Floor Baltimore,
Maryland 21201-2595

410-767-0123 - voice
410-767-0431 - fax
410-333-6442 - TTY/TDD

The General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)

Each application must develop and describe the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the project or activity to be conducted with such assistance, by addressing the special needs of students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries to overcome barriers to equitable participation.

Customer Service Support Sessions

The MSDE will hold three customer service support sessions for interested applicants. During these sessions, MSDE personnel will provide an overview of the application process. The sessions will be on:

Monday, March 11, 2024

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Google Meet joining info

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/vsx-wgfz-ruk?hs=122&authuser=0>

Or dial: (US) +1 518-547-0059 PIN: 496 101 962#

More phone numbers: <https://tel.meet/vsx-wgfz-ruk?pin=2377637967240&hs=1>

Monday, March 18, 2024

10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Google Meet joining info

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/qif-sdok-owv?hs=122&authuser=0>

Or dial: (US) +1 513-970-2913 PIN: 256 528 515#

More phone numbers: <https://tel.meet/qif-sdok-owv?pin=7514283029347&hs=1>

Wednesday, March 20, 2024

2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Google Meet joining info

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/obw-bqwv-yhj?hs=122&authuser=0>

Or dial: (US) +1 541-876-6276 PIN: 135 679 620#

More phone numbers: <https://tel.meet/obw-bqwv-yhj?pin=4439283103654&hs=1>

MSDE staff will also be available to provide technical assistance throughout the grant application process. Contact Zachary Carey at zachary.carey@maryland.gov with questions related to the School Waste Reduction and Composting Grant.

This funding opportunity, including all attachments and updates, can be downloaded from the [MSDE Office of Grants Administration and Compliance website](#).

Attachment

School Waste Reduction and Composting Grant Application for funding.