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## Frequently Asked Questions

### Emergency Assistance to Non-Public Schools (EANS) Program

as authorized by the

### Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 (CRRSA Act)

The United States Department of Education (USDE) has published their own extensive list of FAQs related to the EANS program. [Click here for the USDE's FAQ document.](#)

- Question:** Will schools have to seek out vendors and procure services on their own?  
**Answer:** During this round of EANS funding, the MSDE will take on the task of procuring the service and/or assistance from state-approved vendors and contractors. The MSDE will need to seek approval of all contracts by the Board of Public Works, which is why we have the turn-around time that we do. We will need to aggregate all requests, align those requests with vendors and scopes of work, and then bring those competitively-procured contracts to the Board of Public Works for approval and award. Unfortunately, we cannot extend the timeline and still administer the program on its current timeline.

That being said, there is no need for nonpublic schools to do this work. We only ask that nonpublic schools provide an anticipated approximate dollar amount for the requested service or assistance so that we have an estimate of the funding request. The quantity and type of service requested will inform our procurement process, so we don't have a pre-existing list to share. We will select the vendors and respective scopes of work based on grant awards and related requests.

- Question:** Why do we have to provide low-income student enrollment?  
**Answer:** With respect to the low-income student counts/calculations, we are required by the United States Department of Education to collect information from applicants related to low-income student estimates. As stated in the application, acceptable data sources for low-income qualification are: free and reduced-price meals data (FARM), scholarship data or financial assistance data.

For example, you could determine the FARM-eligible proportion of students at the LEA-zoned school at which a majority of your students would attend if not enrolled in the nonpublic school. Maryland FARM data is available to the public, [here](#). Be sure to use 2019-2020 data.

3. **Question:** My school opened in May 2021. Am I eligible for an award?  
**Answer:** Only nonpublic schools that have been operating since and open prior to March 13, 2020 (the date the President declared a national emergency) are eligible to apply for an EANS award.

4. **Question:** Can we request reimbursement of items we've already purchased?  
**Answer:** Yes, a nonpublic school may request to be reimbursed only for expenses for allowable services or assistance that it incurred on or after March 13, 2020 and before June 27, 2021, to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the COVID-19 emergency that have not already been reimbursed with Federal funds, including PPP. (See page 21 of the [USDE's FAQ document](#).)

Reimbursements must align with the approved categories for funding. (See page 10 of the guidelines.) It will be necessary for the nonpublic school to provide the appropriate documentation in order to substantiate the request for funding reimbursement.

5. **Question:** What can I spend the funds on?  
**Answer:** For this EANS program, the MSDE will not be awarding funds directly to nonpublic schools but will rather use the funding requests to procure vendors that will provide services or assistance to the nonpublic schools.

6. **Question:** What does see the word "award" mean exactly?  
**Answer:** We are not awarding funding as part of the EANS program. MSDE will directly pay for services and assistance and MSDE retains ownership of items reimbursed through the EANS program. An EANS "award" constitutes participation in the EANS program, based on MSDE's review of applicants and eligibility.

7. **Question:** On page 4 of the guidelines, I see reference to Title VI. Does this apply?  
**Answer:** The Title VI provision does NOT apply to eligibility because the schools are not direct recipients of federal funds.

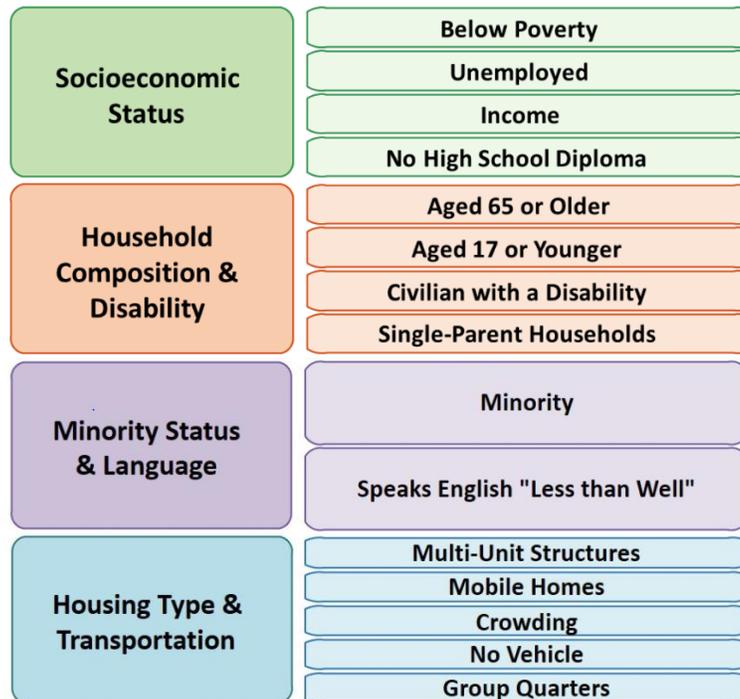
8. **Question:** What is a service vs. assistance?  
**Answer:** A service is the action or activity performed through contracted personnel, whereas assistance refers to a tangible or physical product that can be retrieved at a later date.

9. **Question:** Do consumables requested by nonpublic schools need to be returned back to schools in October 2023?  
**Answer:** No, consumables do not need to be returned.

10. **Question:** Can you give a dollar amount of how much schools should be requesting?  
**Answer:** No, we cannot provide or recommend a suggested allotment of funding per nonpublic school. Complete the funding worksheet, with your highest priority request first. In the case that the total of funding requests received exceeds the total EANS I funds available, the MSDE will prioritize funding for low-income students and requests of the highest priority (that schools note on their funding sheet). The MSDE will use the social vulnerability index value for the census tract of the school's location to determine low-income student counts.

11. **Question:** What is the Social Vulnerability Index (SVI)?

**Answer:** According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), “social vulnerability refers to the potential negative effects on communities caused by external stresses on human health”. The SVI tracks data by census tract and rates vulnerability based on 15 key social and demographic indicators. “Census tracts” are subdivisions of counties and are ranked on 15 social factors, including poverty, lack of vehicle access, and crowded housing. Specifically, this measure uses (see Figure 1, below):



Source (obtained 1/25/2022):

[https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/placeandhealth/svi/documentation/SVI\\_documentation\\_2018.html](https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/placeandhealth/svi/documentation/SVI_documentation_2018.html)

Schools can also visit this link [here](#) for more information and documentation about the Social Vulnerability Index.

12. **Question:** We need to update our HVAC system. Is that allowable?

**Answer:** A nonpublic school may request services or assistance for “improving ventilation systems, including windows or portable air purification systems to ensure healthy air in the non-public school.” That authority, however, is tempered by several other provisions. The CRRSA act requires that the MSDE keep title to materials, equipment and property purchased with EANS funds and the public agency must administer such materials, equipment, and property. Moreover, it also requires that equipment and supplies purchased with EANS funds must be able to be removed from a non-public school without remodeling the non-public school facility. Clearly, a portable air purification system could meet these requirements because an SEA could keep title and it could be removed when no longer needed without remodeling the non-public school facility. A ventilation system that is installed and becomes a capital improvement in a non-public school, however, would not meet these requirements. ([For more guidance on this, click here for the USDE’s FAQ document.](#))

13. **Question:** I'm filling out the Funding Worksheet, but I need more lines than are available. What should I do?

**Answer:** Additional lines have been added to the Funding Worksheet document. If you are still in need of more space, feel free to download a fresh copy of the funding worksheet, and continue working.

14. **Question:** I'm requesting reimbursement, but I don't see where I can upload supporting documentation such as invoices, receipts, or posted checks.

**Answer:** You may attach those documents to the end of your funding worksheet and upload all documentation together.

15. **Question:** I'm a vendor and interested in becoming a state-approved vendor. How can I do that?

**Answer:** As stated in the guidelines, once award amounts and scopes of work have been determined from applications, the MSDE will begin the process of procuring the service and/or assistance from state-approved vendors and contractors. The MSDE will need to seek approval of all contracts by the Board of Public Works.

For vendors who are interested in becoming state-approved, we advise look out for and apply for any state-wide or consortia-related requests for proposal or requests for bids to which your company is eligible.

This page will be updated with frequently asked questions and answers on a continual basis.