

STATE OF MARYLAND

**Moderator: Scott Dennis
April 25, 2017
3:49 p.m. ET**

OPERATOR: This is Conference # 170917115

(Jill): OK. So the Maryland Work-Based Learning Collaborative, in just a quick overview of it, it is a five-year research project done through random design. It is funded by the Rehabilitation Services Administration, under the U.S. Department of Education. It's been awarded to DORS in partnership with the University of Maryland, College Park.

There's actually five selected states, Maryland included as one of them. The other four states are California, Maine, Massachusetts, and Vermont. And the purpose of this grant is to enable local education agencies in Maryland to implement a model of school-to-career transition services for students with disabilities.

It aims to improve the lives of students with disabilities in Maryland by increasing their academic, career, and financial success. And it is a research project using a randomized control design.

So that means that half of the students in the project will receive their project services -- or their treatment. And the other half will receive services as usual. So the other half will be (inaudible).

Each LEA can receive up to \$50,000 over a two-year or a 24-month period to implement the project. And as mentioned, it is a randomized control design. It's going to be implemented across six to eight school districts in Maryland.

And we need to recruit a total of 400 students. And those 400 students will be among the LEAs selected to participated. Then of those 400 students, 200 will receive the services as usual. And the other 200 will receive enhanced services, which is defined in your project.

As far as eligibility, any of the 24 LEAs in the state are eligible to apply. You must partner with your local DORS office, though, and demonstrate that you currently have or can establish an inter-agency transition team. (I would) believe it will take about six to eight LEAs for us to achieve the total of the 400 students we need to conduct the research.

And so the LEAs who apply must also be able to demonstrate their capacity to achieve their targeted recruiting goal by providing the estimate of the number of potentially eligible students in your LEA. So the potentially eligible students would include those with an IEP or 504 plans and are in the -- or two years out of school exit. And they can be either diploma or certificate.

But to accommodate the diversity, size and capacity for enrollment, a smaller LEA, you may either form a consortium, or you can receive funds on a pro-rated basis per the number of eligible students. But if you apply as a consortium, you must be able to demonstrate in your application how you consistently communicate and deliver your services across, you know, any of the LEAs within that consortium.

And a couple of important dates. I know you're obviously aware that the RFP was posted on (MLC) website on April 3rd. And since then, there have been two pre-proposal information calls, the call that we're on right now, and there was also one on April 19th at noon.

And the information -- it is the same information on both calls. And like (Kelly) was saying earlier, this will be given out to all the LEAs, the transcript as well as any questions that were asked on the last call that were emailed in and (inaudible) they will all be given to all the LEAs.

The applications, they're going to be due on May 19th. And they should be emailed to myself. And my email address is in the RFP. And DORS will notify all the awardees by June 2nd. So that's the main overview. And

(Kelly), I'll let you jump in about the fund's use. (Amy), you can take it away. (Amy)?

(Amy): Sorry, I was on mute (to stop) making too much noise while someone is talking. OK, so use of funds, the grant fund may be used for personnel expenses, which include salaries and fringe or stipends for staff who are supporting the project in their LEA.

In addition, project materials and supplies that can support the implementation of the services. Also, any per diem and travel rates for the project staff who are participating in any professional development activities or meeting who can claim the expenses from this grant.

The awarded grantees do have some reporting requirements. And these would include quarterly progress and financial reports to DORS. Also, a final report encompassing all funding cycles, and that will be due within 60 days after the end of the two-year grant period.

And then regular tracking of the student services and progress. And we will be providing the -- any training on data collection. And Mathematica Policy Research is actually creating a data collection specific to this project that will be shared with the awarded LEAs and all training and support needed to track.

The selection criteria, which was in the RFP, there are 50 points total. And the page limit for all applications is 10 pages, trying to keep it simple. The key section is the project narrative, which includes project activities. So project narrative is 40 points total, project activities 10 points.

And under that, we are asking that you describe how your project will address the specific activities of the Maryland Work-Based Learning Collaborative, will show involvement of the LEA's transition coordinator, will explain how you will establish and coordinate inter-agency transition team.

Also describe the capacity of DORS staff and available Pre-ETS fund to maximize your service resources and your LEA's capacity to collect (and store) data with DORS and the University of Maryland team, again, through the data -- the data collection system we provide and train on.

Recruitment and enrollment is another 10 points. In that, we're just asking that you describe how you can assist us in the dissemination of project information and the recruitment material to recruit eligible students and families to participate in the study. We will then do the actual recruitment and -- the actual enrollment into the program, so support on getting information out to eligible families.

And also share your capacity to achieve targeted recruiting goals, as (Jill) had mentioned, by providing an estimate of the number of potentially eligible students in your LEA, again, those with an IEP or 504 plan within the last two years of exit.

And it must be all eligible students in your LEA. The LEA cannot pick a subset of eligible students such as only certificate students or only diploma students. So it has to be all eligible students.

Key personnel is 10 points. So under the section, just -- you need to demonstrate that your project has the perfect staff capacity and partners to meet the requirements of the project -- of the project.

And then finally, under project narrative, letters of commitment. The letters of commitment are required from all project partners that you name in your narrative, the LEA Superintendent's Office and local education agency participating in the project (if it's a) consortium.

The next major section is, obviously, the budget and budget narrative. And this section is worth 10 points and should detail each year of the project in a separate itemized budget for each of the two years, and should demonstrate the extent to which the budget is reasonable, cost-effective, and integrates any other sources of funding. All costs described in the project narrative will appear in the budget narrative and must have a corresponding entry in the itemized budget for that year.

And then your applications also have a cover sheet and appendices as necessary. Appendices might include a reference page. It could include a

sample work-based learning curriculum, any tool you use, your choice on the appendices.

And we just want to mention the benefits to the selected LEA. You do get, again, up to \$50,000 for a two-year period to strengthen the work-based learning opportunities to transition-age students.

This will include enhanced transition planning for those students, some (boots) to the IDEA indicators 13 and 14 compliance and outcomes, capacity building for both practice services and development of a committed local team or expansion of an existing local team, jump-start to using and understanding Pre-ETS funding, and then a customized training and CA at no cost to you for professional staff development. You will also get follow-up data on your students through the data collection.

And then at this point, we're going to open it up to our audience, (Cristina), for questions. And, you know, we'll answer what we can here. If your question needs to be reviewed, we'll just ask you to email that to (Jill). And we will add it to our written form that will be answered and sent back out to everybody. So go ahead. The floor is open for questions.

(Cristina): I think my one question was, looking at -- (if we can braid) current Pre-ETS services that we're doing into this model. Is that -- is that correct?

(Amy): Yes. Yes, because we are asking you guys to actually access Pre-ETS funding. We will work with each selected LEA on our definition of some of the interventions that are ...

(Cristina): OK.

(Amy): Will be a little more specific. But it will be -- you will be able to access Pre-ETS funding to provide any of those services.

(Cristina): OK, because I'm meeting with my local DORS' next counselors, (Suzy Miller) and with (inaudible) (Daniel) (inaudible) from CSM next Monday. And what I kind of want to do is put together a (cool) CSM-and-DORS type

of flow, starting in 10th grade to where we interweave our resources and our activities to come up with outcomes.

And (they'll be put) around what currently have, but add in some other things like a -- so that we can add in the other (partners of Pre-ETS) with that, because I would like to see as kind of a timeline and a structure around Pre-ETS, like in ninth grade. This is what you would typically expect, you know, in some of these different -- this is what you would do, and kind of build that in.

That's kind of what I was thinking for Charles County, is kind of creating that, a systematic way of doing Pre-ETS (inaudible) and tracking that versus students that aren't in a systematic (stream of Pre-ETS).

(Amy): Got you. And part of what -- the students that we are targeting are students in their final two years before they exit. So that -- that's part of your timeline.

(Cristina): Right.

(Amy): And the intervention we are requiring is early engagement with DORS through Pre-ETS.

(Cristina): OK.

(Amy): Developing that inter-agency team, as you already know. You guys in Charles County have that as a way to provide some of these services, and at least two work-based learning experiences, which we will ...

(Cristina): Right.

(Amy): Define for you guys and one paid work experience before exit. So those are ...

(Cristina): OK.

(Amy): (The) requirements for these ...

(Cristina): Yes.

(Amy): That (you put into) your timeline.

(Cristina): And that would ...

(off-mic)

(Cristina): That would be -- that is kind of what we're encompassing. But I also want to add in the college counseling component for the secondary ed counseling component and the benefits counseling component.

(Amy): (Right, yes.)

(Cristina): OK, on a timeline of when we would offer services and how that information is shared between the different agencies. So I just -- that was my main question. Can I use what I currently have, because the \$50,000 wouldn't cover a lot of the services?

(Amy): Right ...

(off-mic)

(Amy): why you could access the Pre-ETS dollars to help provide these services.

(Cristina): Right.

(Amy): As well, right. So it could be (inaudible) (build in) sustainability, absolutely.

(Cristina): OK, so I just -- would it be safe to assume that the funding of the programming comes from the Pre-ETS, and the \$50,000 is to build the support around it or the infrastructure to carry it out?

(Amy): Right, or any additional staffing time or travel or extra supplies that you have to use to provide those ...

(Cristina): OK.

(Amy): Four intervention points that I mentioned, correct.

(Cristina): OK. OK, I just wanted to make sure that I understood that correctly. And how do I come up with my target number? Like, say, if I have, you know, based upon -- I would just look at my available 10th (inaudible) 12th graders?

(Amy): Exactly.

(Cristina): And then ...

(Amy): Those two are the last -- so if they're (certificate-bound), I think they might -- you know, they could -- they could be as old as, you know, they're -- the 19- to 21-year-old. And those who are on diploma, it would be their final two years or junior, senior year if they are on an IEP or have a 504 plan.

(Cristina): So what it -- because that number is going to be greater than if I just selected like a number, like 50, so that it was manageable. What -- would that be how I would do that?

(Amy): You would get -- you would actually just give us an estimate of all the potential ...

Female: Right.

(Cristina): Yes, OK.

(Amy): Eligible families. We will go through -- because we have to do a whole recruitment and enrollment process for information sent to them. And they have to consent to it.

(Cristina): OK.

(Amy): So we need to then potentially approach as many as we can. So they just need to know it's available. We want to see how many eligible families -- or eligible students in their families -- or in your county that could potentially be enrolled.

(Cristina): OK, I can get that number. I was just trying to figure out for the budget why -- you know, when I'm budgeting and looking at time and staffing and stuff a number. But we won't know that number right away.

(Amy): You mean, how many are actually going to be (inaudible) we won't know that because it's random assignment.

(Cristina): OK.

Female: Yes.

(Amy): Yes. Yes, it's random assignment. But I can, you know, from a research perspective, if you look at your number of eligible, it's usually somewhere around a 30 percent uptake rate from the number of eligible. So if you think of it that way, (Cristina), that might give you a kind of a rough number of what you, you know, might think about and -- should you get funded in terms of staffing.

(Cristina): OK.

(Amy): So if there were a hundred potentially eligible, 30 percent of that hundred would probably end up being randomized into the project.

(Cristina): OK, that's a good start. I can work with that. I just kind of wanted to know a general number if I was looking at budget. So OK, do they have a template of what this is supposed to look like or just kind of follow the RFP and hit all those main points besides the rubric?

(Amy): Yes, just hit those. And that's why we made it (really simple) with only 10 pages. So if you follow that outline and just respond to each of the points, you'll be fine.

(Cristina): OK, perfect.

(Amy): Yes, we don't want it to be burdensome. So we kept it short.

(Cristina): Good. Good, I like it short and sweet. OK, I think those are (some of) ...

(Amy): (Do we have) any other questions?

(Cristina): My questions.

(Amy): OK, all right.

(Cristina): I think that was pretty much it. It kind of ties into what I'm trying to do right now. So hopefully, I can meet with my team and kind of come up with the -- get their input. And then we can go to the writing phase.

(Amy): OK, great. And again, if you have -- if another question pops into your head, you know, during that meeting, after that meeting, you can email any of us. And we will try to get an answer to you.

(Cristina): OK.

(Multiple Speakers)

(Cristina): That sounds perfect.

(Amy): And we will post ...

(Cristina): All right.

(Amy): (Jill), do you know how we're doing that? Are we going to post on the (MLC) website or send an email out with the written answers? We will somehow get them to you, (Cristina).

Scott Dennis: Yes. This is Scott. They don't have to be posted on -- we can send them out to everybody who participated. We will also have to post it on (MLC) website.

(Amy): OK, great. So there'll be many options for seeing all the questions and the answers to the questions.

(Cristina): OK, perfect.

(Amy): OK.

(Cristina): Thanks, Scott.

(Amy): All right.

(Cristina): I realized I was speaking on mute.

(Amy): I did that before, too, yes. OK, well, thanks, (Cristina), for calling in. And if you have more questions, again, email us and we'll answer them (as soon as we can).

(Cristina): OK, great.

(Amy): All right.

(Cristina): Thank you.

(Amy): All right, bye.

(Cristina): Bye.

Female: Bye, (Cristina).

(Amy): OK. Hello?

Scott Dennis: Yes?

(Amy): Hello? So I guess (inaudible) we'll answer questions then. And then I'll call -
- I'll email you guys about the transcript, kind of go from there.

(Jill): OK.

Female: OK.

(Amy): Sounds good?

(Jill): OK.

(Amy): Nobody else (inaudible). I didn't know if I heard a beep or not, OK? So I'm ready to answer the questions.

(Jill): I didn't hear any other beeps.

Female: I didn't (inaudible) I kept checking my email. I am -- I haven't gotten any. I don't know, (Jill), if you did, or (Amy). But yes, so I'll add (Cristina)'s cue questions, (that's) all I gathered, to our list of questions. I'll get that out so that everybody can review those and get them out -- back out to everybody. All right.

(Amy): Sounds good.

Female: All right. Thanks, everyone.

Scott Dennis: Good.

(Amy): Thank you.

Scott Dennis: Bye.

(Jill): All right.

(Amy): ... all right, bye. See you tomorrow.

Female: Bye.

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