



GRANT INFORMATION GUIDE

Fiscal Year 2025 Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers: Maryland Out-of-School Time Programs for the Future

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

Submission Deadline
April 25, 2024
by 5:00 p.m.

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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Program Description

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) administers the Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) grant program to assist local education agencies (LEAs), non-profit agencies, city or county government agencies, community and faith-based organizations, institutions of higher education, and for-profit corporations in the State to provide activities outside of school hours that provide opportunities for academic enrichment. The enrichment activities include providing instructional services to help students, particularly students who attend low-performing schools, to meet State and local student academic achievement standards in core academic subjects, such as language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

The 21st CCLC program is designed to:

- Offer students a broad array of additional services, programs, and activities, such as youth development and engagement activities, substance abuse and alcohol prevention, service-learning, violence prevention, counseling, art, music, recreation, and technology education that are designed to reinforce and complement the regular academic program of participating students; and
- Target families of students served by community learning centers opportunities for literacy instruction and related educational development.

AUTHORIZATION

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is a reauthorization of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) which established the federal government's expanded role in public education. Section 8302 of the ESEA, as amended by ESSA, authorized funding of the [21st CCLC program](#).

GRANT OVERVIEW

Name of Program

Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers: Maryland Out-of-School Time (OST) Programs for the Future.

Purpose

The purpose of the FY 2025 21st CCLC grant is to create community learning centers that provide students with academic enrichment opportunities, as well as additional services designed to complement the regular academic program.

Dissemination

This Grant Information Guide (GIG) will be released on February 23, 2024.

Deadline

Proposals are due no later than 5 p.m. on April 25, 2024.

Grant Period

Length of Grants: Three Years

Applicants can choose to operate programs during the school year and summer, school year only, or summer only. The period of availability for programs is indicated below.

School Year and Summer

- July 1, 2024 - August 31, 2025 (School Year and Summer Program)
- July 1, 2025 - August 31, 2026 (School Year and Summer Program)
- July 1, 2026 - August 31, 2027 (School Year and Summer Program)

School Year Only

- July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025 (School Year Program)
- July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026 (School Year Program)
- July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2027 (School Year Program)

Summer Only

- July 1, 2024 - August 31, 2025 (Summer Program 2025)
- July 1, 2025 - August 31, 2026 (Summer Program 2026)
- July 1, 2026 - August 31, 2027 (Summer Program 2027)

Following the initial award, subsequent award years will be contingent upon:

- Availability of funding from the specific funding authority
- Satisfactory performance by the grantee as evaluated by MSDE
- Compliance with all grant requirements and meeting all conditions set forth within the 21st CCLC proposal

Funding Amount Available

Total Funds Available: TBD

Range of Grant Award: Minimum Award: \$50,000, Maximum Award: \$400,000.

Submission Instructions

The Fiscal Year 2025 21st CCLC GIG and Application can be downloaded from the [MSDE 21st CCLC grants page](#). All appendices are to be submitted at the time of the application. Appendices do not count towards the Project Narrative page limit. A signed electronic copy in PDF format must be submitted by email to 21stccclcrfp2025.msde@maryland.gov by 5 p.m. on April 25, 2024.

State Responsibilities

MSDE will monitor grantee progress through project updates, financial reports, and an evaluation of outcomes based on grant goals.

MSDE will use the standards in the [Uniform Administrative Requirements](#) to impose specific or “high-risk” conditions for applicants selected for funding. MSDE may also impose additional specific award conditions, as needed (See Uniform Guidance section 200.207). “High-risk” or specific conditions may be imposed for the following (includes but is not limited to): applicants or recipients who have historically failed to comply with the general or specific terms and conditions of the grant and applicants or recipients who have failed to meet expected performance goals. MSDE will assess the risks facing the applicant entity as it seeks to achieve its objectives. This assessment will provide the basis for determining awards for high-risk applicants.

Grant amounts each year will be funded at 100% of the original award contingent on the availability of funding and satisfactory performance divided over three years. Programs selected for funding will be level funded the same amount for all three years of programming unless a lesser amount is specified for subsequent years. In those cases, the lesser amount will be awarded. In addition, awards may be reduced based on the grantee’s inability to meet the goals and performance measures set forth in this grant. This includes participation numbers consistently lower than projected in the bidder’s application. Awards may also be reduced based on fiscal or programmatic concerns or findings during the grant period. Any award reductions will be discussed with the applicant in advance of the reduction.

MSDE reserves the right to continue or discontinue the program(s) for the reasons defined in 2 CFR § 200.208 and for non-compliance of the requirements listed below:

- Demonstrate adequate progress toward achieving all measurable objectives;
- Meet or exceed 85% of the proposed level of students served, as indicated on the original 21st CCLC application, or the Grant Renewal Application for the most recent year of operation;
- Attend required OST national and regional conferences, MSDE grantee meetings, and trainings;
- Submit required documentation in a timely manner during the project year as requested and/or required by MSDE, such as:
 - Monitoring components (Start-Up, Interim, Grant Renewal Application, End of Year Reports, and Critical Elements Monitoring)
 - Corrective action(s)
 - Monthly Reimbursement Expenditure Report submission
 - Detailed local narrative evaluation report reflecting the growth and progress of the program.
- Maintain and submit Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) data (refer to Performance Goals and Indicators section) to be entered into the United States Department of Education (USDE) Annual Performance Report (APR) database by the established deadlines;
- Participate fully in statewide evaluation activities; and
- Comply with all applicable state statutory and regulatory requirements.

Grant funds must be expended in the grant year they were awarded. Any funds not expended prior to the expiration of such funds will no longer be available to the grantee. MSDE does not allow 21st CCLC grant funds to be carried over into the following grant year. Final expenditure reports are due 60 days after the end of the grant period. Expenditure reports submitted more than 60 days after the end of the grant period will not be processed.

Program Contact

Reginald Burke
Director, Youth Development Branch
410-767-0313
reginald.burke@maryland.gov

Eligibility

The organizations eligible for services provided by this grant:

- LEAs;
- [Title I Schools](#) that serve a high percentage (at least 40%) of students from low-income families;
- High schools with graduation rates less than 67%; and
- Other schools determined by the LEA to need intervention and support.

Applicants cannot propose to serve a school(s) that they currently provide services to with MSDE funding.

Use of Funds

Examples of MSDE's allowable expenses (not an exhaustive list) which funds **may be used for**:

- Intervention, strategies, and curriculum purchases (must meet ESSA evidence criteria);
- Salaries and fringe benefits for 21st CCLC OST time staff;
- Professional development and 21st CCLC trainings;
- Consultants, subcontractors, and evaluators providing allowable services/activities;
- Classroom materials and supplies for 21st CCLC classes;
- Remedial education activities and academic enrichment learning programs, including providing additional assistance to students which allow students to improve their academic achievement;
- Mathematics and science education activities;
- Arts and music education activities;
- Entrepreneurial education, college, and career readiness programs;
- Tutoring services (including those provided by senior citizen volunteers) and mentoring programs;
- Programs that provide OST activities for limited English proficient students that emphasize language skills and academic achievement;
- Recreational activities;
- Telecommunications and technology education programs;
- Expanded library service hours;
- Programs that promote parental involvement and family literacy;
- Drug and violence prevention programs;
- Counseling programs; and
- Preparation of the proposal costs to develop, prepare, and/or write the 21st CCLC proposal should be treated as indirect costs and allocated currently to all activities of the non-federal entity for current accounting period only (see [2 CFR 200.460](#)).

Examples of MSDE's unallowable expenses (not an exhaustive list) which funds **may not be used for**:

- Preparation of the proposal: Costs to develop, prepare, and/or write the 21st CCLC proposal cannot be charged to the grant as a direct cost by either the agency or contractor;
- Pre-award costs: Pre-award costs may not be charged against the grant;
- Funding for activities conducted and costs incurred before the start date of the grant;
- Entertainment, refreshments, and snacks;
- Food purchases, meals, unless associated with an approved culinary curriculum;
- A field trip without the approved academic support (will be considered entertainment);
- End-of-year celebrations or food associated with parties or socials;
- Game systems and game cartridges;
- Unapproved out-of-state or overnight field trips, including retreats and lock-ins;
- Incentives (e.g., plaques, trophies, stickers, t-shirt, give-a-ways);
- Advertisements, promotional, or marketing items;
- Decorative items;
- Purchase of facilities, vehicles (e.g., buses, vans, or cars), or land acquisition;
- Capital improvements, permanent renovations;
- Supplanting federal, state, local funds, or other non-federal funds (e.g., using grant dollars to fund summer school classes previously offered and paid for by currently existing district or other funds);
- Direct charges for items or services that the indirect cost rate covers;
- Dues to organizations, federations, or societies for personal benefit; and
- Any costs not allowable for federal programs per Uniform Guidance 2 CFR§ 200.400.

Program Requirements

MSDE strongly suggests that the 21st CCLC Maryland OST Programs for the future applicant will implement OST academic enrichment programs that align, enhance, and sustain transformational work of the Maryland Strategic Plan, or the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. MSDE has always aligned the 21st CCLC grant with state goals. By including the Maryland Strategic Plan, or the Blueprint for Maryland's Future the applicant will support the jurisdiction's plan for improvement and be aligned with the Superintendent and State Board's current initiatives.

The [Maryland Strategic Plan](#) contains three phases, and will anchor the vision, mission, values, priorities, enablers, goals, and flagship programs, initiatives, and strategies to realize the Blueprint for Maryland's Future promise of an excellent and equitable education for every student.

The [Blueprint for Maryland's Future](#) is a landmark legislation passed in 2021, which includes comprehensive changes to nearly every aspect of Maryland's public education system. Increasing annual education funding by over \$3.8 billion over the next 10 years, the Blueprint will enrich student experiences, accelerate improvements to student outcomes, and improve the quality of education in Maryland.

The Maryland Strategic Plan and the Blueprint for Maryland's Future Priorities listed below align with the 21st CCLC Maryland OST Programs for the Future grant program.

Maryland Strategic Plan Priorities

- **Priority Two – Ready to Read** - All Maryland students are proficient in reading by the end of the third grade and those who are not have the necessary support to become proficient.
- **Priority Three – Ready for High School** – All Maryland students enter high school on track to meet the college and career readiness standards by the end of the tenth grade, and are engaged socially, emotionally, and academically to succeed in progressive, challenging, and advanced level coursework aligned to college and career pathways.
- **Priority Four – Ready for College and Career** – All Maryland students graduate from high school college and career ready and with an individualized plan to succeed in college, career, and life.

Blueprint for Maryland's Future

- **Priority Three – College and Career Readiness** - Sets a new College and Career Readiness (CCR) standard that prepares graduates for success in college and the workforce by ensuring they have the knowledge and skills to complete entry-level credit-bearing college courses and work in high-wage and high-demand industries.
- **Priority Four – More Resources to Ensure that All Students are Successful** - focuses on strengthening wraparound services through the expansion of community schools, establishing the Maryland Consortium on Coordinated Community Supports, targeting supports for students and families based on differentiated need, establishing a workgroup on English learners, and developing a funding formula based on a new measure of concentration of poverty.

Applicants must align their project design with at least one of the Maryland Strategic Plan or Blueprint for Maryland's Future Priorities.

The 21st CCLC applicant collaborates through the application, submission, implementation, and monitoring stages with pertinent stakeholders to implement high-level strategies. To ensure a fundamental knowledge of the application requirements, the applicant must review the Maryland Strategic Plan resources. This

information will assist the 21st CCLC applicant with the intentional design and alignment of an academic enrichment community learning center during the application stage. The 21st CCLC applicant is encouraged to leverage innovative and evidence-based practices to develop and design a community learning center that promotes academic enrichment and learning beyond the traditional classroom. The 21st CCLC applicant is:

- A LEA considering how the identified Maryland Strategic Plan Priorities can be supported, supplemented, or extended by 21st CCLC programming; or
- A non-profit agency, city or county government agency, community or faith-based organization, institution of higher education, and for-profit corporation that partners with a LEA to shape OST programming that builds a new or enhances an already established Maryland Strategic Plan Priority.

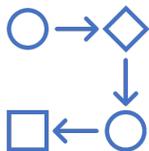
The 21st CCLC applicant asks:



What resources are available within the LEA(s) proposed to be served?



What are the purposes of the resources and identified funding restrictions/limitations?



How can we (21st CCLC applicant and partners) leverage the resources and define relationships through the 21st CCLC funded partnership?

Examples of how a 21st CCLC applicant may maximize funding resources might include:



Restructure part-time positions, such as Family Engagement and After-school Coordinators to full-time positions



Increase certified teacher instructional time in the OST program through smaller teacher: student ratios

Form new partnerships with subject matter experts to provide opportunities that extend learning time



Offer family engagement experiences focused on academic enrichment and behavioral health services beyond the traditional classroom



Create additional tutoring experiences in the OST program that extend the school day tutoring programs



Develop OST tutoring positions that overlap instruction from the school day program into the academic enrichment program

With knowledge of 21st CCLC program requirements and Maryland initiatives, the applicant is to collaboratively create an intentionally designed 21st CCLC grant project that transforms OST programs for the future. Outlined details on the next page will establish the framework required to uphold federal and state requirements of a supplemental funded student, family, school, and community experience.

Application Requirements

COVER PAGE

The cover page includes all contact information and grant partnership information including the total amount of the grant and the organization's Employer Identification Number (EIN) and Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number.

FEDERAL AND STATE ABSOLUTE PRIORITIES

The federal and state absolute and competitive priorities consist of the following sections. These sections will be scored by reviewers.

- Federal Absolute Priority #1 (5 Points)
- Federal Absolute Priority #2 (5 Points)
- Federal Absolute Priority #3 (5 Points)
- Federal Absolute Priority #4 (5 Points)
- State Absolute Priority (5 Points)
- Competitive Priority (5 Points) optional

Federal Absolute Priorities

The Federal Absolute Priorities require the applicant to:

- Provide a description of how the grant project provides comparable opportunities in designing the program for the participation of both public and private school students in the area served by the grant. This detail includes evidence of consultation with private school officials during the design, development, and implementation of the 21st CCLC program on issues such as how the children's needs will be identified and what services will be offered to provide equitable services to private school students and their families that are secular, neutral, and non-ideological.
- Describe efforts to provide a timely notice of intent to apply to the community and that the application and any waiver requests will be available for public review after submission of the application.
- Describe how information about the community learning center (including its location) is disseminated to the community in a manner that is understandable and assessable. Examples of dissemination efforts can include an LEA presenting information about the 21st CCLC program(s) at a school board meeting or a community-based organization posting an announcement on their website.
- Provide evidence of compliance with federal, state, and local fire, health, zoning codes, and safety standards. Submit a copy of all required licenses and/or certifications for health and safety including a Use and Occupancy (U&O) permit and current Fire Inspection report (refer to Appendix), per operating site.

State Absolute Priorities

The State of Maryland has identified the following state absolute priorities, which should be addressed by all applicants.

All applications should identify at least one of the Maryland Strategic Plan or the Blueprint for Maryland's Future priority areas as a focus of the proposed 21st CCLC programming:

- Ready to Read (Maryland Strategic Plan Priority)
- Ready for High School (Maryland Strategic Plan Priority)
- Ready for College and Career (Maryland Strategic Plan Priority)
- College and Career Readiness (Blueprint for Maryland's Future)
- More Resources to Ensure That All Students are Successful (Blueprint for Maryland's Future)

The applicant must identify which strategy or priority the proposed program will align with or build upon in the Performance Goals and Indicator section of the application.

COMPETITIVE AND PERFORMANCE PRIORITIES

Competitive Priorities

Competitive Priorities are optional and may be addressed by the applicant. The applicant has the option to address one of the following with the possibility of receiving up to five additional points:

- Integrate behavioral health supports in association with the LEAs Blueprint for Maryland's Future: Implementation Plan;
- Integrate service-learning in accordance with the seven Best Principles; or
- Propose to serve students in a community that is served by one or more LEAs with a locale code of 32, 33, 41, 42, or 43 (rural) Note: Applicants are encouraged to retrieve locale codes from the [NCES School District Search Tool](#), where LEAs can be looked up individually to retrieve locale codes.
- Application was jointly submitted with points of contact identified for both the LEA and a community-based organization or other public or private entity. In a jointly submitted application, the LEA will manage the fiscal component of the grant. In determining whether an application has been "submitted jointly," the MSDE will look for evidence of:
 - Collaboration in the planning and design of the program;
 - Substantial roles for each partner in the delivery of services, management, and oversight of the program;
 - Shared grant resources to carry out roles;
 - LEA partner serving as the fiscal agent; and
 - Integration with the regular school day program.

Performance Priorities

An applicant's prior or current OST grant performance with the Youth Development Branch (YDB) at MSDE will impact the final scores of this current application. A five-point deduction from the overall score of the FY2025 application will be applied for each of the following:

- 21st CCLC, Public School Opportunities Enhancement Program (PSOEP), and American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Afterschool Program (ARP ESSER ASP) subgrantees that received an overall risk assessment of a 3, 4, or 5 in Year 2 (SY23-24); and
- 21st CCLC, PSOEP, and ARP ESSER ASP subgrantees that did not submit Critical Elements Monitoring evidence in Stage I or Stage II for year 3 (SY23-24) by the specified due date.

REQUIRED MINIMUM HOURS OF PROGRAMMING

MSDE shall review applications that demonstrate the ability to successfully implement programming during either the school year, the school year and summer, or the summer only, for each year of the three-year grant period.

School Year: No less than 12 hours of programming per week (can include weekdays or Saturdays) for 25 weeks during the traditional school year OR no less than four hours of programming on Saturdays only for 25 weeks during the school year.

School Year and Summer: No less than 12 hours of programming per week (can include weekdays and Saturdays) for 25 weeks during the traditional school year OR no less than four hours of programming on Saturdays only for 25 weeks during the school year AND no less than 80 hours of a summer program to include academic and enrichment programming for at least 32 hours on the calendar.

Summer Only: No less than 80 hours of a summer program to include academic and enrichment programming for at least 32 hours on the calendar.

PROJECT NARRATIVE (25 PAGE LIMIT)

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

- Extent of Need (10 Points)
- Goals and Outcomes (15 Points)
- Evidence of Impact (10 Points)
- Plan of Operation, Key Personnel, and Project Timeline (10 Points)
- Partners Plan (10 Points)
- Evaluation and Dissemination Plan (10 Points)

EXTENT OF NEED

Describe the conditions or needs to be addressed through the 21st CCLC grant program. Include a clearly defined problem supported by a needs assessment and supporting data. Describe how the grant funds will address the problem and show how those efforts are effective.

GOALS AND OUTCOMES

The applicant must ensure that the proposed 21st CCLC program includes activities and strategies that address and improve the goals and outcome based on the following measurable state data:

- Percentage of students participating in 21st CCLC programming during the school year and summer who demonstrate growth in reading/language arts on state assessments;
- Percentage of students participating in 21st CCLC programming during the school year and summer who demonstrate growth in mathematics on state assessments;
- Percentage of students attending 21st CCLC programming during the school year and summer with a prior-year unweighted grade point average (GPA) less than 3.0 who demonstrated an improved GPA;
- Percentage of youth participating in 21st CCLC school year and summer program who demonstrated an 80% attendance rate during the school year and summer program;
- Percentage of students attending 21st CCLC programming during the school year and summer who experienced a decrease in in-school suspensions compared to the previous school year; and
- Percentage of students participating in 21st CCLC programming in the school year and summer who demonstrated an improvement in teacher-reported engagement in learning.

In addition, the applicant will identify activities that address at least one additional strategy prioritized by the jurisdiction being served. The Grant Performance Indicators required in the appendix should align with this component of the application.

Applicants serving the grades listed below will be required to annually report outcomes on the USDE Government Performance Results Act (GPRA) Measures.

- GPRA 1: (a) Percentage of students in grades 4-8 participating in 21st CCLC programming during the school year and summer who demonstrate growth in reading/language arts on state assessments. (b) Percentage of students in grades 4-8 participating in 21st CCLC programming during the school year and summer who demonstrate growth in math on state assessments;
- GPRA 2: Percentage of students in grades 7-8 and 10-12 attending 21st CCLC programming during the school year and summer with a prior-year unweighted GPA less than 3.0 who demonstrated an improved GPA;
- GPRA 3: Percentage of youth participating in 21st CCLC school year and summer program who demonstrated an 80% attendance rate during the school year and summer program;
- GPRA 4: Percentage of students grades 1-12 attending 21st CCLC programming during the school year and summer who experienced a decrease in in-school suspensions compared to the previous school year; and

- GPRA 5: Percentage of students in grades 1-5 participating in 21st CCLC programming in the school year and summer who demonstrated an improvement in teacher-reported engagement in learning.

EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

Describe how the proposed plan and strategies being implemented are evidence-based and will lead to the desired impact. Academic enrichment programs or activities supported with 21st CCLC funds must be based on evidence-based research to increase the likelihood that the program or outcome will be successful. Demonstrate how continued investment in the grant program is justified by initial outcome data from the program.

PLAN OF OPERATION, KEY PERSONNEL, AND TIMELINE

The applicant will provide a narrative description of the plan of operation to include:

- How the targeted students will be selected, a detailed recruitment plan that includes ongoing efforts to maintain attendance and enrollment goals, and an explanation of attendance protocols to document participant hours.
- How the program will accommodate students with disabilities, and how the program will provide healthy snacks to participating students;
- Proposed strategies and activities to be funded and how the intended activities will improve student achievement and academic success;
- How the program will coordinate with federal, State, and local programs and make the most effective use of public resources;
- Frequency and duration of the program and how the program will reinforce and complement the student's regular academic day; and
- A transportation and/or walking plan that describes how students will travel to the program.

Include in this section a justification as to why the strategies were chosen and how they will help to achieve the performance goals and measures. Identify how the grant funds will support the strategies and specifically, how many students will be served.

The applicant will provide a narrative description of key personnel and timeline to include:

- Project leaders, including the roles and positions, as well as the expected qualifications. Specify how much of the project director's time will be devoted to this project, as per Uniform Guidance 2CFR 200.430. In support of salaries and wages, documentary support will be required where employees work on (a) more than one federal award and (b) a federal award and a non-federal award.
- How the screening process (background checks and/or fingerprinting) will be conducted on all staff and volunteers working directly with children, in accordance with standards set forth in Section 5-560 et seq. of the Family Law Article of the Maryland Annotated Code.
- How appropriately qualified persons will be encouraged and used to serve as volunteers if volunteers will be used in community learning center activities.

- How, when, and by whom the program’s implementation will be monitored, including starting the project on time.
- Mechanisms by which the project will clearly define and hold partners accountable to specific roles, responsibilities, contributions, and deliverables, e.g., contracts or Memoranda of Understanding.
- How and when the steering committee will be formed to govern the project; and duties of the steering committee, including establishing major program policies, reviewing quarterly milestones and annual evaluation reports, and making recommendations for programmatic change. Steering committee members should represent the major stakeholders in the project (e.g., project partners, parents, students, principals, Board of Education).

List in chronological order, all major key personnel and specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-based (SMART) actions necessary to implement the project during the funding cycle. Indicate the key personnel responsible for accomplishing each action and the estimated timeline for completion. The Management Plan required in the appendix should align with this component of the application.

PARTNERS PLAN

A partner is any organization other than the grantee that will actively contribute to the project. This includes the school(s) being served, government agencies, non-profit organizations, and businesses. Partners include subcontractors: organizations that are under contract with the subgrantee to provide grant-funded activities or services. If awarded, all subgrantees must upload signed subcontractor contracts for review and approval before funds will be released for reimbursement. Any funds paid to subcontractors without an approved contract in place are subject to nonpayment.

A signed and dated letter of commitment is required at the time the application is submitted from each partner who will be involved in the proposed program. Letters should be addressed to the agency applying for the grant. All letters should be included in the proposal and not sent directly to MSDE. Any letters sent directly to MSDE cannot be appended to the proposal. Each letter of commitment must contain the following:

- A statement acknowledging and supporting the performance measures and indicators of the project;
- The participant’s expected gains from the project;
- The expertise, resources, and financial contributions the participant is making toward the project. Financial contributions (in-kind and cash) should be quantified;
- A clear statement detailing the roles, responsibilities, and capabilities of the partners;
- A clear statement indicating the terms of the agreement to include the grant period; and
- Partners that serve as vendors providing direct services to students must provide a proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlining the services and breakdown of expenses to include hourly rates for all providers.

The Partner Plan required in the appendix should align with this component of the application. MSDE acknowledges that MOUs may not be finalized at the time of the application; however, a proposed agreement is required that outlines the details of the partnership within 30 days of the start of the program.

The applicant identifies the grant project's partners, the respective roles in the project, the benefits each expects to receive, and the specific contributions each partner will make to the project in the form of financial support, equipment, personnel, or other resources. The applicant must indicate which objectives the partner services will help to achieve, as well as evaluation dates to reflect on progress and/or achieved outcomes.

The applicant must describe how the program will achieve sustainability beyond the life of the grant. Include a description of current public/private partnerships, the plans to expand these partnerships, and plans to develop new public/private partnerships. It is expected that all programs funded will acquire other funds to assist in sustaining the program after the final year of funding.

LEA/SCHOOL PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT

The [Local Education Agency \(LEA\)/School Participation Agreement](#) must be submitted at the time of the application (refer to appendix). The agreement must include a list of partner schools with principal names, and signature from the local superintendent. Applications submitted without signed LEA/School Participation Agreements will not be reviewed by MSDE.

EVALUATION AND DISSEMINATION PLAN

Applicants will provide a written narrative description of the following:

- What types of data will be collected;
- When several types of data will be collected;
- What designs and methods will be used;
- How will the data be analyzed;
- When reports of results will be available; and
- How information will be used by the program to monitor progress and provide accountability information to stakeholders.

The applicant outlines the process by which the program will be evaluated. The evaluation must include a plan for a professional, independent evaluation of the program. The annual evaluation report must be submitted at the end of each awarded grant program. Through implementation of the Evaluation Plan, the applicant will provide a summative Evaluation Report to MSDE following the project year implementation. An evaluation report will integrate the following components:

- Evaluation Framework/Purpose;
- Methodology;
- Evaluation Findings;
- Summary; and
- Recommendations and Limitations.

Budget and Budget Narrative

The grant budget (15 Points) consists of two components:

- The [Budget Worksheet and Narrative](#); and
- The approved [MSDE Grant Budget Forms \(C-1-25\)](#).

The [Grant Budget Form \(C-1-25\)](#) can be accessed through the MSDE grants website. A proposed budget must be submitted with the application. The application includes a Budget Worksheet and Narrative for applicants to provide the program’s itemized expenditures and justification.

The budget objects are: (1) Salaries and Wages; (2) Contracted Services; (3) Supplies and Materials; (4) Other Charges; (5) Equipment; and (6) Transfers. The line items identified in the Budget Narrative and Budget Worksheet must align. The budget object totals in the Budget Worksheet must align with the totals identified on the MSDE Grant Form C-1-25.

The applicant must identify reasonable and allowable expenses that are aligned with the USDE Uniform Grant Guidance, [2 C.F.R. Part 200](#), (2 CFR § 200). The Electronic Code of Federal Regulations (E-CFR) is accessible at: https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200_main_02.tpl. Utilize [The Maryland Financial Reporting Manual](#) as an additional resource when categorizing allowable expenses. Utilize the [Bureau of Labor and Statistics National Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates](#) database to identify reasonable and allowable wages.

The itemized budget must:

- Detail the expenditures in an itemized budget.
- Itemize general expenses into specific line items. For example, “Meeting Expenses” can be itemized to include, “room rental” and “photocopying.”
- Clearly show the requested funds, braiding funds to the extent possible, in-kind contributions and source for each line item.

Matching Contributions

Proposed budgets must include in-kind contributions (including but not limited to materials, personnel, financial, and other types of contributions) each year according to the following table:

TABLE 1: Matching Contributions

Year	21 st CCLC Funding	In-Kind Contributions
1	100%	10%
2	100%	15%
3	100%	20%

The percentage of in-kind contributions must be a percentage of the Direct Costs and not the Total Requested Amount. In-kind contributions cannot be derived from other federal or state funds.

Adhere to the [OST Grant Fiscal Guidelines](#) when proposing expenses in the specified budget objects.

Appendices

All appendices are to be submitted at the time of the application. Appendices do not count towards the Project Narrative page limit. A signed electronic copy in PDF format must be submitted by email to 21stccclcrfp2025.msde@maryland.gov. Please submit the following appendices:

- [A signed Recipient Assurances page](#);
- [Grant Program Performance Indicators](#);
- [LEA/School Participation Agreement Form](#);
- [Partners Plan](#);
- [Evaluation Plan](#);
- [Management Plan](#);
- [Budget Worksheet and Narrative](#);
- [MSDE Grant Budget Forms \(C-1-25\)](#);
- Use of Occupancy (if a Non-Local Education Agency location);
- Resumes of Key Personnel;
- Partner Contracts or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) per contracted service vendor or Partner Letter of Commitment;
- A copy of the most recent Single Audit Report (Only applicable to entities expending federal funds of \$750,000 or more in a single fiscal year); and
- A copy of the [W - 9 Form](#) (Applicable for first-time grant applicants and/or grantees requiring a change of address/contact).

Awarding of Funds

MSDE has the responsibility to ensure that funds are awarded to eligible entities on a competitive basis through a rigorous peer-review process (ESSA, Sec. 4203(a)(4)). MSDE follows a two-step process for reviewing and awarding applications: MSDE staff who are familiar with the programs and activities under Title IV, Part B, review all applications for completeness and applicant eligibility (ESSA, Sec. 4201(b)(5)(A)); and MSDE selects peer reviewers to review and rate the applications based on an established scoring rubric to determine the extent to which the applications meet the application requirements (ESSA, Sec. 4201(b)(5)(C)). Award decisions are made by the peer review committee based on the scoring rubric and merit of each application. MSDE's role is to facilitate the review process in accordance with state and federal statutes and regulations.

VALIDATION INTERVIEW

MSDE will conduct a validation interview following the peer review process to finalize the issuance of awards. The purpose of the Validation Interview is to:

- provide the grant leadership team and partners the opportunity to validate details about their proposed program;
- communicate the aspects of their proposed program that may need clarification and improvement;
- establish a timeline, if needed, for required revisions not to exceed 15 days from the date of the Validation Interview;
- provide written concerns or remaining questions at the conclusion of the Validation Interview that may result in conducting additional validation actions.

MSDE will initiate notification of grant awards via email. All funding is contingent on the annual awarding of federal funds to MSDE.

APPEAL PROCESS

Appeals based on a disagreement with the professional judgment of the peer reviewers will not be considered. Peer reviewers are non-MSDE employees recruited based on background and expertise in providing effective academic, enrichment, youth development, and related services to children (ESSA, Sec. 4201(b)(5)(B)(i)). Appeals are limited to the grounds that MSDE failed to correctly apply the standards and process for reviewing the application as specified in the Grant Information Guide and Grant Application.

LETTER OF APPEAL

Eligible entities that wish to appeal a grant application decision must submit a full and complete written appeal, including the issue(s) in dispute, the legal authority or other basis for the appeal position within 30 days after notification of denial of award. The letter must be on the applicant's letterhead and include an original signature of the authorized applicant's representative. An original letter and two (2) copies of the appeal should be delivered or mailed to the MSDE address listed below:

Assistant State Superintendent of the Division of Student Support,
Academic Enrichment, and Educational Policy
Maryland State Department of Education
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, Maryland, 21201

21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant Fund Scoring Rubric

Areas	Level 3 Exceeds Criteria	Level 2 Meets Criteria	Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria
<p>Federal Absolute Priority #1 5 points</p>	<p>There is a detailed and evidence-based description of how the grant provides comparable opportunities in designing the program for the participation of both public and private school students in the area served by the program. Details include a needs-based assessment and a plan of aligned services to be offered.</p>	<p>There is an explanation of how the grant provides comparable opportunities in designing the program for the participation of both public and private schools students. Details indicate the need to be addressed supported by services.</p>	<p>There is a limited explanation, or the explanation lacks evidence of how the grant provides comparable opportunities in designing the program for both public and private school students.</p>
<p>Federal Absolute Priority #2 5 points</p>	<p>There are multiple modes of evidence to demonstrate efforts to provide a timely notice of intent to apply and description to disseminate information across multiple stakeholders.</p>	<p>There is evidence to demonstrate efforts to provide a notice of intent to apply and dissemination plan for stakeholders.</p>	<p>There is limited or no evidence of intent to apply and/or a plan to disseminate information to stakeholders.</p>
<p>Federal Absolute Priority #3 5 points</p>	<p>There are multiple modes of evidence that describes how information about the community learning center (including its location) is disseminated to the community in a manner that is understandable and assessable.</p>	<p>There is evidence that describes how information about the community learning center (including its location) is disseminated to the community in a manner that is understandable and assessable.</p>	<p>There is limited or no evidence that describes how information about the community learning center (including its location) is disseminated to the community in a manner that is understandable and assessable.</p>

Areas	Level 3 Exceeds Criteria	Level 2 Meets Criteria	Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria
Federal Absolute Priority #4 5 points	There are multiple modes of evidence of compliance with federal, state, and local fire, health, zoning codes, and safety standards	There is evidence of compliance with federal, state, and local fire, health, zoning codes, and safety standards	There is limited or no evidence of compliance with federal, state, and local fire, health, zoning codes, and safety standards
State Absolute Priority 5 points	The application identifies a plan to implement strategies, activities and expected outcomes of more than one Maryland Strategic Plan, or Blueprint for Maryland’s Future Priority.	The application identifies a plan to implement strategies, activities, and expected outcomes of one Maryland Strategic Plan, or Blueprint for Maryland’s Future Priority.	The application provides a limited explanation of strategies, activities, and expected outcomes of one Maryland Strategic Plan, or Blueprint for Maryland’s Future Priority.
Competitive Priorities 5 points (Optional)	The application includes a detailed plan to implement one of the competitive priorities.	The application includes a limited plan to implement one of the competitive priorities.	The application does not address the implementation of competitive priorities.

Areas	Level 3 Exceeds Criteria	Level 2 Meets Criteria	Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria
<p>Extent of Need 10 points</p>	<p>The extent of need includes multiple quantitative and qualitative data sources. Data sources include direct input from all stakeholders in the proposed program specific to the target population and the school(s) the program will serve. Data sources confirm the existence of the problem, pertaining to the specific population, and schools the program will serve. Detailed collection methods are logical, rational, and clearly address the main problem described in the extent of need.</p>	<p>The extent of need includes some quantitative and qualitative data specific to the target population and the school(s) the program will serve. Data sources are described, and collection methods are logical and rational.</p>	<p>The extent of need for the project section fails to define the problem or obstacle the 21st CCLC program will address.</p>

Areas	Level 3 Exceeds Criteria	Level 2 Meets Criteria	Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria
<p>Goals and Outcomes 15 points</p>	<p>The application includes exemplary activities to address each of the six State measurable outcomes, a target percentage, multiple data sources, and more than one identified Maryland Strategic Plan or Blueprint for Maryland’s Future priority and describes the expected impacts on the program. Example: Application A included the specific methods on increasing math and reading state assessment scores and GPA; increasing attendance; reducing suspensions; and increasing teacher-reported student engagement. The applicant selected the Ready to Read priority and clearly articulated two or more expected impacts on the program.</p>	<p>The application includes activities to address each of the six State measurable outcomes, target percentage, a data source, and the application includes one of the identified Maryland Strategic Plan or Blueprint for Maryland’s Future priority and describes the expected impacts on the program.</p>	<p>The application does not include activities to address all six of the State performance measures and/or did not include an LEA identified Maryland Strategic Plan or Blueprint for Maryland’s Future priority.</p>
<p>Plan of Operation, Key Personnel, and Timeline 10 points</p>	<p>The application provides a detailed narrative description including SMART actions supported by chronological timeline and highly qualified key personnel to implement an exemplary plan of operation that directly aligns with the extent of need and measurable outcomes.</p>	<p>The application provides a narrative description of the plan of operation; justification of the strategies chosen; a narrative description of the key personnel and timelines; and a list of all key personnel as outlined in the plan of operations.</p>	<p>The plan of operation provided does not address the items identified in the statement of need, lacks a descriptive plan of operation, key personnel are listed, and a project timeline is not provided.</p>

Areas	Level 3 Exceeds Criteria	Level 2 Meets Criteria	Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria
<p>Evidence of Impact 10 points</p>	<p>The application significantly describes how all proposed strategies are evidence and research-based and explains how the evidence will lead to desired outcomes. They provide a link to research data and provide data on how students in their program have progressed in prior years. They can share ongoing progress with students who previously participated in the 21st CCLC program.</p>	<p>The application adequately describes how proposed strategies are evidence and research based. They provide a link to research data and provide data on how students in their program have progressed in prior years.</p>	<p>The application does not describe the evidence of impact.</p>
<p>Evaluation and Dissemination 10 points</p>	<p>The application includes a plan that incorporates multiple evaluation questions, strategies, and descriptions of proposed data instruments, collection processes, and analytic methods that are consistent with the project’s goal and objectives. The plan identifies independent evaluator and key personnel assigned to each task, a detailed timeline and a process to report outcomes to stakeholders.</p>	<p>The application includes a plan that incorporates evaluation questions, strategy, and a description of proposed data instruments, collection processes, and analytic methods that are consistent with the project’s goal and objectives. The plan identifies an independent evaluator, a timeline and process to report outcomes to stakeholders.</p>	<p>The application does not include an evaluation plan, or it does not include all the areas addressed in the GIG.</p>

Areas	Level 3 Exceeds Criteria	Level 2 Meets Criteria	Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria
Partners 10 points	The application clearly and thoroughly describes the mechanisms by which the project will define and hold partners accountable to specific roles, responsibilities, contributions, and deliverables (e.g., contracts, Memoranda of Understanding). Signed and dated letters of commitment from 100% of partners are provided.	The application describes the mechanisms by which the project will define and hold partners accountable to specific roles, responsibilities, contributions, and deliverables (e.g., contracts, Memoranda of Understanding). Signed and dated letters of commitment from 50% or more of partners are provided.	This section fails to describe the mechanisms by which the project will hold partners accountable to specific roles, responsibilities, contributions, and deliverables (e.g., contracts, Memoranda of Understanding).
Budget 15 points	The application includes a budget and budget narrative that lists and describes budget categories e.g., salaries - list personnel name, % FTE, amount assigned [Regina Brown 5% FTE of annual salary \$82,000 = \$4,100] and job description. Line-item amounts show how the cost of each item was calculated. All line-item costs, including indirect cost, are calculated correctly. Items on the budget narrative are allowable, allocable, and reasonable. The budget, budget narrative and C-1-25 agree. The agency provides more details than required.	The application includes a budget and budget narrative that lists and describes budget categories e.g., salaries - list personnel name, % FTE, amount assigned [Regina Brown 5% FTE of annual salary \$82,000 = \$4,100] and job description. Line-item amounts show how the cost of each item was calculated. All line-item costs, including indirect cost, are calculated correctly. Items on the budget narrative are allowable, allocable, and reasonable. The budget, budget narrative and C-1-25 agree.	The application does not include a budget worksheet, or the budget worksheet 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
August 31, 2024/2025/2026	Final Evaluation Report (School Year Programs)
October 31, 2024/2025/2026	Final Evaluation Report (School Year and Summer, and Summer Programs)

Notes: Any requests for amendments must be submitted at least 45 days before the grant period ends, and must be submitted using the C-12-5- A and B forms 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.

Grantees must comply with the following reporting requirements:

- Submit required documentation in a timely manner during the project year as requested and/or required by MSDE, such as:
 - Monitoring components (Start-Up, End of Year Reports, and Critical Elements Monitoring);
 - Corrective action(s);
 - Monthly Reimbursement Expenditure Report submission or AFR Reporting for LEA applicants;
 - Detailed local narrative evaluation report reflecting the growth and progress of the program;
- Participate fully in statewide evaluation activities; and
- Comply with all applicable state statutory and regulatory requirements.

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

Conflict of Interest

All potential conflicts of interests should be avoided. According to the general procurement standards, the non-Federal entity must maintain written standards of conduct covering conflicts of interest and governing the actions of its employees engaged in the selection, award and administration of contracts. No employee, officer, or agent may participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by a Federal award if he or she has a real or apparent conflict of interest. Such a conflict of interest would arise when the employee, officer, or agent, any member of his or her immediate family, his or her partner, or an organization which employs or is about to employ any of the parties indicated herein, has a financial or other interest in or a tangible personal benefit from a firm considered for a contract. The officers, employees, and agents of the non-Federal entity may neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from contractors or parties to subcontracts. The standards of conduct must provide for disciplinary actions to be applied for violations of such standards by officers, employees, or agents of the non-Federal entity. (EDGAR 2 CFR §200.318)

Within the 21st CCLC program, conflicts of interest could include:

- Employing immediate family members as contract labor for services;
- Having a program employee serve as a vendor; and
- Purchasing supplies from a company in which a program employee has a financial interest.

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.

Grant Timeline

Date	Program Milestone
February 23, 2024	MSDE disseminates the grant information and opens the application submission window
March 5 and March 12, 2024	MSDE will hold customer service sessions
April 25, 2024	Grant application deadline by 5:00 pm EST
April 26 – June 14, 2024	Grant application review period
June 24 – June 28, 2024	Award notification period
July 1 – July 26, 2024	Validation interview period
July 31, 2024	Notice of Grant Awards released

Customer Service Support Sessions

The MSDE OST Team will hold two virtual customer service support sessions for applicants. During this session, the MSDE OST Team will provide support and answer questions regarding the application and submission process.

Customer Service Support Session 1

Tuesday, March 5, 2024

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

[Join video call](#) or dial: (US) [+1 469-213-3760](tel:+14692133760) PIN: [247027954#](tel:+14692133760)

Customer Service Support Session 2

Tuesday, March 12, 2024

11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

[Join video call](#) or dial: (US) [+1 469-213-3760](tel:+14692133760) PIN: [358442352#](tel:+14692133760)

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