

GRANT INFORMATION GUIDE

Bard High School Early College Baltimore Grant Fiscal Year 2026

Maryland State Department of Education

200 West Baltimore Street Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Deadline

August 15, 2025 No later than 5:00 p.m. EDT

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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Program Description

House Bill 150 (Amendment 46) of 2017 provides an annual appropriation of \$300,000 to the Bard High School Early College Baltimore (Bard Baltimore) which the Maryland State Department of Education administers. Bard Baltimore provides high school-age students, particularly those from low-income and historically underrepresented communities, a tuitionfree college program of study in the liberal arts and sciences. Bard Baltimore is part of a national network of Bard Early College campuses that serve approximately 3,000 students in New York, Newark, Cleveland, New Orleans, Baltimore, and Washington, D.C.

AUTHORIZATION

House Bill 150 (Amendment 46) 2017

GRANT OVERVIEW

Name of Grant Program

Bard High School Early College Baltimore Grant FY26

Purpose

The purpose of this grant is to support Bard High School Early College Baltimore (Bard Baltimore), a four-year, freestanding early college high school that allows students to earn 60 transferable college credits and an Associate of Arts degree from Bard College, tuition-free, alongside a high school diploma. The grant period for FY 2025 is July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025.

Dissemination

This Grant Information Guide (GIG) was released on July 7, 2025.

Deadline

Proposals are due no later than 5pm on August 15, 2025

Grant Period

July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026

Funding Amount Available

\$300,000

Estimated Number of Grants

One (1)

Eligibility

This funding opportunity is designed for and open to Bard High School Early College Baltimore.

Submission Instructions

The Bard Baltimore application can be downloaded from the MSDE Office of Grants Administration and Compliance website. The signed and completed application should be saved as a single PDF document and emailed as an attachment to kellise.williamson@maryland.gov by 5:00 p.m. on August 15, 2025. The Division of College and Career Pathways will begin reviewing applications on a rolling basis beginning July 3, 2025.

PROGRAM CONTACT

Kellise Y. Williamson

Postsecondary Credit and P-TECH Coordinator Division of College and Career Pathways (410)767-0319

kellise.williamson@maryland.gov

State Responsibilities

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) will monitor grantee progress through project updates, financial reports, and an evaluation of outcomes based on grant goals. The MSDE program contact will review all applications for eligibility and selection for awards. MSDE will monitor grantee progress through interim reports to ensure that programs are being implemented according to their approved plan and with fidelity. MSDE will monitor grant programs to ensure that funds are spent as scheduled with monitoring of student outcomes, as well as provide technical assistance, financial reports, and conduct on-site or virtual monitoring visits.

Use of Funds

Approved program expenses will be reimbursed upon submission and approval of an invoice with supporting documentation (i.e., receipts, purchase orders, etc.). Other costs not listed here may be presented to the grant manager for determination of allowable expenditures. Approved program expenses will be reimbursed upon submission and approval of an invoice with supporting documentation (i.e., receipts, purchase orders, etc.).

Funds may be used for:

- Support operating expenses related to program implementation.
- Salaries (including fringe benefits)
 - o Funds may be used to hire, recruit and train staff to support the implementation of the Bard High School Early College Baltimore early college program.
- Stipends/consultant fees
- Registration fees
- Materials and supplies to support curriculum development, program outreach, and professional development. This may include materials for the Steering Committee and partnership meetings.
- Transportation as needed for additional services such as work-based learning, work site visits and coordination with the college program.
- Reimbursement for travel expenses cannot exceed local per diem rates, which are:

Mileage: \$0.70/mile

Breakfast: \$15

Lunch: \$18

Dinner: \$30

Administrative costs not to exceed 5% of the total grant, including indirect costs.

Funds may not be used for:

- Supplanting existing program funds.
- Capital improvements.
- Purchase of gift cards.
- Purchase of office furniture and equipment.
- Construction of temporary or permanent structures.

Program Requirements

The application for funding must support one or more of the following strategies:

- 1. Strategic Recruiting: Recruitment strategies include recruiting students from under-resourced middle schools and are targeted to students committed to early college education as well as represent the diversity of Baltimore City.
- 2. Student Support and Guidance: Student support and guidance services address student challenges and needs that may prevent them from fully engaging in their schoolwork, and the services that help students to develop the skills and mindset to succeed in early college.
- 3. Preparation for College: Preparation for college strategies that help students determine a postsecondary pathway toward the completion of a two-year degree as well as completion of a four-year degree.

Application Requirements

PROPOSAL COVER PAGE

Proposals must include a completed Proposal Cover Page provided in the application for participation. The cover page should not contain any graphics or additional information and must be signed by the Superintendent of Schools/ Head of Grantee Agency.

PROJECT ABSTRACT

The project statement should briefly describe the project's outcome(s) and strategies (i.e., what the project will do and how it will do it.) Do not exceed the 100-word limit. This statement may be used in press releases, board exhibits, etc.

PROJECT NARRATIVE

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

- Extent of Need
- Evidence of Impact
- Goals, Activities, Benchmarks, and Outcomes
- Evaluation and Dissemination
- Plan of Operation, Key Personnel, and Timeline

EXTENT OF NEED

Describe the conditions or needs to be addressed through the funding. The extent of need should describe how grant funds will address problems and show how those efforts are effective such as providing flexible schedules for busy adults and time needed to complete courses. It should also describe how the implementation of an innovative program measures competency standards and workforce readiness.

EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

Grantees are required to submit annual evaluation reports and quarterly progress reports that are consistent with the project's goal and objective(s). Keep in mind that the final evaluation will consider the entire project, beginning to end. It should not be viewed as what is done after the project's completion, but as an integral element in the project's planning, design, and implementation. During the evaluation, applicants should consider the below questions:

- How will this project assist the Local Education Agency in reaching the goal that by 2030, 45% of high school graduates will have obtained an industry-recognized credential or completed the high school level of a registered apprenticeship program?
- What other measurable improvements are expected to occur to expand Bard Baltimore?
- What data will be collected to prove that the program/activity has had the intended effects?
- How will this data be collected?
- What is the plan for disseminating formative and summative results to stakeholders?

Impact evidence identifies the consequences of actions taken and the extent to which the program or project goals were achieved. Evidence of impact is made clear through outcome evaluation and includes being clear about evaluation standards and identifying improvement.

GOALS, ACTIVITIES, BENCHMARKS, AND OUTCOMES

- 1. Clearly state the overall goals of the project. Each application should include a minimum of three goals. These goals should directly address the primary challenges identified in the needs assessment. Ensure they are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, time-bound, and inclusive/ equitable (S.M.A.R.T.I.E) and aligned with the intended outcomes. Goal statements should also include the specific populations that the selected strategies aim to serve. Describe how these populations will be impacted by the project's activities and outcomes.
- 2. Once you have identified a goal, devise strategies you will use to achieve it. You may want to identify a range of strategies that you will pursue. Explain the rationale behind selecting these strategies and how they are designed to support growth in the Bard Baltimore program.
- 3. List the activities that will be employed that align to the stated strategies.
- 4. Include the benchmarks that are indicators of the success of the implemented activities. Several activities may align to one or two benchmarks. Please make sure that the benchmarks are not additional activities but the result of the activities. The benchmarks should include a measure of success as well as a timeline of when the benchmark will be accomplished.
- 5. Identify the overall outcome that aligns to the goal. The outcome can be developed through an "If/then" statement. For example, **If** we develop strategies that are implemented through specific and aligned activities, and if those activities indicate the intended level of success (benchmarks), then the combined impact will lead to this outcome.

Goals, Activities, Benchmarks, and Outcomes Worksheet

S.M.A.R.T.I.E. GOAL: <enter goal="" here=""></enter>		
Strategies	Activities	Benchmarks
Strategy 1	Activity 1	Benchmark 1
	Activity 2	Benchmark 2
	Activity 3	Benchmark 3
Strategy 2	Activity 1	Benchmark 1
	Activity 2	1. Benchmark 2
	Activity 3	Benchmark 3
GOAL OUTCOME: <enter anticipated="" here="" outcome="" the=""></enter>		

EVALUATION AND DISSEMINATION

Grantees must submit quarterly progress reports and annual evaluation reports aligned with the project's stated goals and objectives. The final evaluation will assess the project in its entirety, from inception to completion.

Applicants must evaluate the following required measures:

- Evaluation Questions: Identify the key questions the evaluation will address, grounded in the project's goals, objectives, implementation plan, and anticipated outcomes. Analyze the connection between the expected results, the specific activities undertaken, and the elements most critical to assess. Focus on what matters most in measuring the project's effectiveness and impact.
- Evaluation Strategy: Describe the methods you will use to answer the evaluation questions. Specify the criteria that will guide the assessment of lessons learned from the project. Additionally, identify which populations will be included in the evaluation process.
- Data: The type of data and method of data collection depends on the program's nature, the questions, and the evaluation strategy. What measurement tools and instruments will be utilized? How will you establish the baseline data? Ensure that both quantitative and qualitative data methods are incorporated. Explain how project staff will gather data from the different sites and organizations involved. When selecting data collection techniques, confirm that adequate resources are available to effectively implement them.
- Evaluator(s): Identify the individuals or teams responsible for conducting the evaluation. Outline their specific qualifications and expertise. Describe the roles and responsibilities of key personnel involved in the evaluation process.
- Budgeting of resources and staffing for evaluation: The application budget should allocate adequate funds to support a comprehensive and meaningful evaluation. Note: The evaluation will be conducted as an internal self-assessment and may be completed at no cost by the Council Chair, Co-Chair, or a designated representative.
- Dissemination: Provide details on how the project's findings will be shared with key stakeholders and other interested parties. Recognize that information needs and dissemination methods may vary among different audiences. Will the project have an online presence or participate in major national conferences to share lessons learned? Describe how and when project demonstrations will be made available. Additionally, include information about the types of reports and other deliverables that will be produced throughout the project.

Evaluation and quarterly progress reports should be consistent with the project's goals and objectives. An effective ongoing plan should evaluate benchmarks and help project staff make informed decisions.

PLAN OF OPERATION, KEY PERSONNEL AND TIMELINE

The Plan of Operation includes the strategies and activities that will be implemented to achieve your goals, outcomes, and milestones. List all major management actions necessary to implement the project during the funding cycle.

Include a timeline and the key personnel associated with each component of the operation plan. For key personnel, include the program instructor(s) (if known), the program contacts for Bard Baltimore, the program director, and any other personnel who will be involved. Indicate names, titles, affiliations, roles, and responsibilities.

Budget and Budget Narrative

The project budget should detail all related expenses of the Bard Baltimore Fiscal Year 2025 in a separate itemized budget. It should demonstrate to what extent the budget is reasonable, costeffective and integrates other sources of funding (as required by the grant process). All costs described in the project narrative should appear in the budget narrative and must have a corresponding entry in the itemized budget. Reviewers should be able to see a clear connection between project activities and budget line items.

Clearly show the requested funds and in-kind contributions for each line item, if applicable. Indicate the source of the in-kind contribution. Both requested and in-kind funds must be reasonable with current market prices. Show how the expenses were calculated for each line item. Reviewers will use this information to determine whether the budget is reasonable and cost-effective. Use the format indicated by the following excerpt from a sample Budget Narrative.

Salaries and Wages (list separately for each position)

Line item	Calculation	Requested	In-Kind	Total
Project Manager	\$50/hr. x 40 hrs. per week x 52 weeks	\$83,200	\$20,800	\$104,000
	Total for salaries & wages:	\$83,200	\$20,800	\$104,000

Appendices

The following appendices must be included but not apply to the page limit of the Project Narrative. Include other appendices as deemed necessary.

Appendix A: A signed recipient assurances page

Appendix B: The Grant Information Survey Form

Appendix C: A signed C-125 MSDE budget form

The Review Process

The review of proposals will be a three-part process:

- 1. Written applications will be pre-screened for submission requirements and inclusion of all required sections. Applications not meeting all pre-screen requirements may be returned to the applicant for revisions.
- 2. A review committee established by MSDE will evaluate applications using the scoring rubric. The scoring rubric is tailored to the grant program, its intent, and intended impact on the target population.
- 3. Final approval for awards will be determined by the review committee.

Review Committee

The committee will be composed of representatives from MSDE and the Office of College and Career Pathways. Reviewers will assign numerical scores to each proposal based on the criteria on the scoring rubric. Each application will be reviewed and scored based on all documents submitted. Applications may be returned to the applicant if some or all criteria do not meet the criteria standard.

Bard Baltimore Scoring Rubric

PROJECT ABSTRACT

Level 3	Level 2	Level 1
Exceeds Criteria	Meets Criteria	Does Not Meet Criteria
The project abstract outlines a concise and comprehensive summary of the target population, goals, strategies, and partnerships.	The project abstract addresses the required components.	The project abstract is missing or does not address the required components.

EXTENT OF NEED

Level 3	Level 2	Level 1
Exceeds Criteria	Meets Criteria	Does Not Meet Criteria
The main problem and contributing factors are clear, concise, and demonstrate considerable understanding of the issues. The proposal details who is affected by the problem, and when and where the problem exists, including historical impacts on the target population(s). Current qualitative and quantitative data is cited to clearly illustrate the problem. Data is derived from a variety of sources, including state and local data references. Applicant demonstrates extensive history of expertise and aligns to evidence-based practices specific to the population they intend to serve that illustrate progress in the	The main problem is clear and concise. The proposal identifies who is affected by the problem and when the problem exists. Data supports the identified problem. Local data is referenced to document the problem and includes demographic and other statistics. Applicant identifies demographics or other statistics relevant for the population(s) intended to be served. Applicant provides an example of their history of expertise or aligns to evidence-based practices specific to the population they intend to serve.	The main problem is missing or is not clear. The proposal does not accurately identify the target population(s). Data has not identified or does not support the problem stated. Applicant does not identify demographics or other statistics of the population(s) intended to be served. No citations or research included in proposal, The proposal lacks details of how the funds will address the problem.

Level 3	Level 2	Level 1
Exceeds Criteria	Meets Criteria	Does Not Meet Criteria
addressing the identified problems.		

EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

Level 3	Level 2	Level 1
Exceeds Criteria	Meets Criteria	Does Not Meet Criteria
The proposal provides two or more examples that explain the history of impact on the target population including discussion of past efforts, failures, and successes toward influencing change. The proposal clearly explains future impacts of the proposed activity/project and how the target population is expected to be influenced by the efforts of specific to implementing this grant.	The proposal provides at least one example that explains the history of impact on the target population. The proposal describes the future impact of the activity/project and how the target population will be influenced by change.	No examples that explain the history of impact on the target population. The proposal does not describe the future impact of the activity/project.

GOALS, ACTIVITIES, BENCHMARKS, AND OUTCOMES

Level 3 Exceeds Criteria	Level 2 Meets Criteria	Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria
The applicant has provided clear and measurable goals that address the main gap(s) identified in the needs assessment and demonstrate a strong connection to Bard Baltimore programming.	The applicant has provided goals that address the main gap(s) identified in the needs assessment and demonstrates some connection to Bard Baltimore programming. For each goal statement, the applicant has identified some	The applicant has not provided clear and measurable goals that address the main gap(s) identified in the needs assessment or demonstrate a connection to Bard Baltimore programming. For each goal statement, the
For each goal statement, the applicant has identified specific strategies, activities, benchmarks, and anticipated outcomes to be	strategies, activities, benchmarks, and anticipated outcomes to be accomplished for every target population. The applicant has established	applicant has not identified specific strategies, activities, or anticipated outcomes to be accomplished for every target population.

Level 3	Level 2	Level 1
Exceeds Criteria	Meets Criteria	Does Not Meet Criteria
accomplished for every target population. The applicant has established detailed, ambitious, and measurable benchmarks to track progress throughout the year and has included a plan for regular monitoring and evaluation of progress toward the goals and objectives. The goals, strategies, activities, benchmarks and outcomes are well- aligned with the needs assessment, and demonstrate a clear and strategic approach to addressing the identified gaps.	some benchmarks to track progress throughout the year and has included some plan for monitoring and evaluation of progress toward the goals and objectives. The goals, strategies, activities, benchmarks, and outcomes are aligned with the needs assessment, and demonstrate some approach to addressing the identified problem.	The applicant has not established clear benchmarks to track progress throughout the year or has not included a plan for monitoring and evaluation of progress toward the goals and objectives. The goals, strategies, activities, benchmarks, and outcomes are not aligned with the needs assessment or demonstrate a clear approach to addressing the identified gap(s).

EVALUATION AND DISSEMINATION

Level 3	Level 2	Level 1
Exceeds Criteria	Meets Criteria	Does Not Meet Criteria
Evaluation questions are included for each goal with considerable guidance toward implementation of aligned strategies and can be effectively and meaningfully evaluated. Clear evaluation strategy that includes alternative scenarios and criteria to ensure comprehensive evaluation. Multiple relevant, logical data types and collection methods are identified.	Evaluations questions are based around the goal(s) and outcomes, provide guidance on the implementation, and can be evaluated. Clear evaluation strategy Clear data type(s) and collection method(s) are identified. Evaluator is identified. The dissemination plan includes how the findings will be shared to stakeholders, committee members, and the public.	Limited or no examples of evaluation questions. No evidence of evaluation strategy The data type and collection method are unclear. Evaluator is not identified. The dissemination plan does not clearly identify how findings will be shared.

Level 3 Exceeds Criteria	Level 2 Meets Criteria	Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria
Evaluators and their qualifications are indicated.		
Detailed dissemination plan on how the project findings will be shared to stakeholders, committee members, and the public including examples of how, when and through what methods.		

PLAN OF OPERATION, KEY PERSONNEL AND TIMELINE

Level 3	Level 2	Level 1
Exceeds Criteria	Meets Criteria	Does Not Meet Criteria
The proposal includes proposed activities that are innovative, evidence-based, and likely to transform Bard Baltimore for students. There is a timeline established for each phase of the program and lists the individuals responsible. A detailed plan of operation and timeline that addresses all program requirements. Detailed description of personnel responsibilities and timeline.	The proposal includes proposed activities that are evidence-based and meet the requirements for the selected strategy. There is a timeline for all key activities. Key personnel are selected that have relevant experience in the field. The names and titles of personnel are provided and the percentage of time they will dedicate to this program.	The proposal includes proposed activities that are listed and may not be clearly aligned 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.

BUDGET AND BUDGET NARRATIVE

Level 3	Level 2	Level 1
Exceeds Criteria	Meets Criteria	Does Not Meet Criteria
The budget narrative is detailed and comprehensive of all activities necessary for successful implementation of proposal. The budget aligns directly to the proposal and does not rely entirely on grant funds for successful implementation. There are no mathematical errors, and all expenses are cost effective and appear necessary.	The budget narrative is complete. The budget aligns to the proposal and is free of mathematical errors. Expenses are reasonable and allowable.	Budget does not align with the proposal, includes cost that are not reasonable or allowable, or has several mathematical errors.

Reporting Requirements

Grantees must comply with the following reporting requirements:

Date	Reporting Requirements for Each Year
Ongoing	Fiscal and program monitoring; all invoices must be accompanied with supporting documentation.
January 15, 2026	Interim Report – collection captures mid-year data on activities that have taken place, milestones met (and not met), goals and objectives expectations, grant timeline adherence, how much of the budget has been expended, and summary of progress to date.
July 31, 2026	Final Progress Report (C-1-25 D)- captures how the grant has achieved its goals and objectives, and whether all grant funds have been spent or obligated throughout the grant funding period.
September 30, 2026	Final Annual Financial Report – collection captures how the grant has achieved its goals and objectives, and whether grant funds have been spent or obligated at the end of the grant period.

Notes: Any requests for amendments must be submitted at least 45 days before the grant period ends, and must be submitted using the C-125-B form found on the MSDE grants webpage. Final invoices must be submitted no later than 60 days after the grant period ends.

Grant Application Timeline

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

Date	Timeline Event
July 7, 2025	The Grant Information Guide and the application for participating are released.
July 16, 2025	MSDE will hold a virtual customer service support session.
July 31, 2025	MSDE will hold a virtual customer service support session.
August 11, 2025	MSDE will hold a virtual customer service support session.
August 15, 2025	The grant application period closes.
August 15, 2025	MSDE begins reviewing applications for completeness and minimum requirements.
August 15 – August 31, 2025	MSDE Review Committee will evaluate proposals.
August 31, 2025	MSDE will notify applicants of the award status.
July 1, 2025	The grant period begins.
June 30, 2026	The 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 Finance and Operations

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

410-767-0123 - voice 410-767-0431 - fax Deaf and hard of hearing use Relay.

The General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) Sect 427

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

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:

Wednesday, July 16, 2025

11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Video call link: https://meet.google.com/qar-cwcv-frd

Thursday, July 31, 2025

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Video call link: https://meet.google.com/meg-jxwm-mgx

Monday, August 11, 2025

10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Video call link: https://meet.google.com/igg-uzcg-fdi

MSDE staff will also be available to provide technical assistance throughout the grant application process. If you have questions about the application or the process, please contact:

PROGRAM CONTACT

Kellise Y. Williamson

Postsecondary Credit and P-TECH Coordinator 410-767-0319

kellise.williamson@maryland.gov

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

Attachment

Bard High School Early College Baltimore Grant FY26 Application for Funding