

OHIO DEANS COMPACT ON EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

June 14, 2021

Applications for New Incentive Grants:
Improving the Capacity of Ohio Institutions of Higher Education to Prepare All Educators to Improve Literacy Outcomes for All Learners:

Improving Literacy Partnership Grants



DATED MATERIAL: OPEN IMMEDIATELY

RFA AVAILABLE:	June 14, 2021
BIDDERS CONFERENCE:	June 28, 2021, 10:00 – 11:30 am (<i>attendance is required as a condition for submitting a proposal; applications may be submitted beginning noon on June 28, 2021</i>)
CLOSING DATE:	August 9, 2021 (<i>applications must be received by 4:30 pm ET</i>)
NOTIFICATION OF AWARD:	ON OR BEFORE September 20, 2021
ANTICIPATED PROJECT PERIOD:	October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022

Improving the Capacity of Ohio Institutions of Higher Education to Prepare All Educators to Improve Literacy Outcomes for All Learners: Improving Literacy Partnership Grants

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Improving the Capacity of Ohio Institutions of Higher Education to Prepare All Educators to Improve Literacy Outcomes for All Learners: Improving Literacy Partnership Grants

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

PURPOSE OF PROGRAM

The *Ohio Deans Compact on Exceptional Children* seeks proposals that implement sustainable improvements in Ohio's personnel preparation system for teachers and administrators that align closely with the strategic priorities of the Ohio Department of Education and the Ohio Department of Higher Education. Such improvements must contribute to the effectiveness of professional learning systems that build the individual and collective capacity of educators for meeting the instructional needs of all students, including those identified as students with a disability, students who are English Learners (ELs), students who are economically disadvantaged, and other traditionally marginalized groups of learners.

Priority Area: Improving Literacy Partnership Grants

To build on knowledge and experience obtained through prior investments, the Compact proposes two priorities for redesigning and strengthening coursework grounded in the science of reading by teaching candidates to use structured literacy teaching methods aligned with [Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement](#). The first priority is the design and strengthening of the 12-hour reading core courses to prepare educators with increased knowledge and skills to use structured literacy methods grounded in the science of reading to teach all children, including those with disabilities, those who are ELs, and those with other learning challenges, to read. The second priority is the design and strengthening of the Teaching English to Students of Other Languages (TESOL) core courses to prepare TESOL educators with the relevant knowledge, skills, and dispositions to teach ELs to read by using structured literacy methods grounded in the science of reading. Both priorities align directly with the state's model for improving literacy outcomes for all children.

Priority Areas: Applicant institutions of higher education (IHEs) may respond to only one priority area. If more than one application is received by an applicant IHE, only the first one received will be reviewed.

Priority Area 1: Redesigning/strengthening Reading Core Courses

Awardees will be expected to examine their institution's existing 12-hour reading core courses and use products developed by the Higher Education Literacy Steering Committee (HELSC) and previous cohorts of the literacy partnership grant to strengthen core courses. Awardees must commit to use a science of reading approach as the foundation for all 12-hour reading core coursework, aligning preparation programs with *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement*.

Priority Area 2: Redesigning/strengthening TESOL Core Courses

Awardees will be expected to examine their institution's existing TESOL core courses and use products developed by the HELSC and previous cohorts of the literacy partnership grant to strengthen core courses. Awardees must commit to use a structured literacy approach grounded in the science of reading as the foundation for all TESOL literacy content and coursework, aligning preparation programs with *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement*.

Requirements across Priority Areas: Both priorities require applicant IHEs to (1) redesign and strengthen core courses through intentional alignment with *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement*,

which advocates structured literacy practices grounded in the science of reading, (2) work in partnership with one or more area school districts, (3) participate in a higher education-school district community of practice (CoP), (4) contribute to the development of products that can be used by Ohio IHEs to strengthen their existing 12-hour reading core courses or TESOL core courses, and (5) build the capacity of all faculty in the reading or TESOL core courses.

- **Redesigning and Strengthening Coursework.** Applicants must address in their proposal the current content of their program that is mis-aligned with *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement* that will be removed from their program, content specific to structured literacy and the science of reading that will be added to their program, and a plan for how to make these changes. For additional information about *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement*, or about the science of reading, contact Dr. Melissa Weber-Mayrer, Director, Office of Approaches to Teaching and Professional Learning, Ohio Department of Education, at (614) 728-8095, or via email at: Melissa.Weber-Mayrer@education.ohio.gov.
- **Work in partnership with one or more school districts.** Awardees must work with one or more low resource districts¹ or districts with one or more schools that have a component grade of C or below on the Ohio report card measure *Improving At-Risk K-3 Readers* to establish field sites for testing the use of evidence-based language and literacy practices in conjunction with the district leadership team structures (i.e., teacher-based teams, building leadership teams, and district leadership team). The effort should be based on *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement* and include opportunities for demonstrating the use of evidence-based language and literacy practices with diverse learners in one or more schools in the partner district(s).

Applicants must describe the nature of the partnership and the strategies used to develop and sustain the partnership between the IHE and the school district(s), and between other relevant partners (e.g., state support teams, educational service centers, professional associations, Ohio Deans Compact, state education agency personnel), the intended outcomes of the partnership (including all products), the goals and activities designed to meet intended outcomes, and the partners' plan for sustaining the partnership beyond the life of the grant (see *Application Requirements and Project Activities*).

- **Participate in a higher education-school district community of practice (CoP).** The intent of this priority is to support authentic, meaningful, and sustainable university-school district partnerships to promote inclusive models of preparation and personnel development for educators (i.e., teachers, intervention specialists, related services providers, and administrators), improve equitable access to high-quality literacy instruction and equitable literacy outcomes for struggling learners, and fund development efforts that support shared inquiry into common problems of practice related to improving literacy results for all learners. Participation in the higher education-school district CoP will: (1) allow for the identification of possible alignments and gaps between preservice preparation and in-district practice with regard to the use of evidence-based language and literacy instruction and intervention; (2) foster shared understanding on the part of higher education and school district faculty of curricular improvement processes and shared

¹ Low resource areas, for purposes of this priority, are defined as partnerships that involve districts – or districts served by Educational Service Centers (ESCs) – with a free/reduced lunch rate of 50% or higher. School district for purposes of this RFA is defined broadly to include Ohio's educational service centers (ESCs).

ownership of curricula developed through the project beyond individual faculty; (3) identify strategies for “bridging” the preparation to practice continuum (i.e., the transition between what educators are able to do upon leaving preservice programs and what teaching reading to diverse learners asks of them); (4) provide a forum for shared learning and greater mutual understanding and appreciation among representatives from higher education, school districts, regional entities (e.g., state support teams), and other partner groups; and (5) creating a shared vision for how the partnership and grant strategies will impact professional and student learning.

- **Contribute to development of high-quality products.** Partnership efforts should result in high-quality instructional/educative materials (e.g., curriculum materials, on-line learning modules, simulations, recording webinars, field experience manuals, publishable reports of inquiry projects) that can be used by Ohio IHEs to improve the preparation of all teachers to more effectively teach all children to read. Products developed must be based on the science of reading.
- **Build the capacity of all faculty.** The intent of this priority is to support the ongoing professional learning of all the faculty members who are a part of the design and/or implementation of the redesigned and strengthened coursework. Consequently, the grant proposal must include a plan for ongoing engagement of the program’s faculty members in job-embedded professional development to strengthen their beliefs, knowledge, and/or skills in structured literacy grounded in the science of reading. Examples of these professional learning opportunities include but are not limited to the following activities: participation in LETRS training, book studies of one or more textbooks referenced as part of the *P20 Literacy Collaborative* resources, and clinical opportunities for faculty to work intensively with their partner district(s) to apply evidence-based language and literacy practices with PK-12 students and/or support and coach their candidates to apply evidence-based language and literacy practices with PK-12 students.

BACKGROUND

The background section discusses the evidence supporting the Incentive Grant initiative. Applicants are encouraged to consider the ways in which their proposed activities respond to needs identified in this section.

Teaching children how to read is one of the most important jobs of teachers (National Council on Teacher Quality, 2018). In 2018, the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) released a strategic plan for improving results for each child in the state. Grounded in a commitment to equity, partnerships, and quality schools, *Each Child Our Future: Ohio’s Strategic Plan for Education: 2019-2024*, outlines 10 strategies for ensuring that “each child is challenged to discover and learn, prepared to pursue a fulfilling post-high school path and empowered to become a resilient, lifelong learner who contributes to society.” (p. 9). Ohio’s plan recognized the importance of developing literacy skills across all ages, grades, and subjects. It also acknowledged the importance of expanding access to quality early learning experiences and building the capacity for effective literacy instruction across the state. Implementation of this strategy necessitates professional development specific to evidence-based language and literacy practices to be central to educator preparation programs (EPPs) and job-embedded professional learning opportunities. From 2016 to 2020, there has been a moderate increase in the number of Ohio EPPs that prepare candidates to use structured literacy practices based in the science of reading (Drake & Walsh, 2020). Indeed, Ohio’s strategic investments and supports are enhancing the knowledge and skills of candidates and educators to teach each child how to read.

Ensuring that all educators are better prepared to meet the instructional needs of each child has never been more important. Increasingly more students are impacted by adverse childhood experiences (e.g., the percentage of children considered homeless has increased by 135%), over 19% of Ohio's children are living in poverty, and more than 50% are characterized as economically disadvantaged (Children's Defense Fund, 2018, 2020; ODE, 2018). One out of every 10 Ohio children have parents who have not received a high school diploma; these rates are higher for Latinx children (more than 20%) and Black children (14%). Without a high school diploma, individuals have limited employment opportunities, economic well-being, and access to resources, which decreases the likelihood that their children will begin formal schooling with the foundational early language and literacy skills that promote literacy learning.

Ohio's student population is becoming more diverse and demonstrating more diverse learning needs. Over the past decade, only two out of every five students have met the third-grade reading guarantee and fourth-grade reading proficiency rates have been the lowest for Black, Latinx, and Indigenous children (Children's Defense Fund, 2018; 2020). The pandemic has exacerbated this problem, because for the past two years, students have advanced to fourth grade without being required to meet the third-grade reading guarantee. Although for some subgroups this has occurred for years (e.g., students with disabilities), this situation has highlighted the importance that teaching literacy is the responsibility of all teachers – not just elementary, special education, and English-Language Arts teachers. It has never been more important for middle, adolescent-young-adult, and TESOL teachers to understand the science behind how children learn to read and the practices they can embed within their instruction to strengthen students' academic language and literacy.

Preparing teacher candidates to deliver effective language and literacy instruction for ELs is essential for ensuring equity in educational achievement for each child. In the United States, a student's ability to succeed in school and be prepared and empowered for the future is reliant on their English proficiency (August & Shanahan, 2006; Lesaux et al., 2014). From 2008 to 2018, there was an 113% increase in Latinx students and a 50% increase in ELs across the state (ODE, 2018). As the EL population continues to grow, the importance of expanding the use of evidence-based language and literacy practices that improve EL learning intensifies. The primary goal of this priority is to prepare and support all teachers, including those in TESOL licensure/endorsement programs, to teach each child how to read. In order to reach this goal, teacher candidates must be taught relevant content in ways that support them in learning and applying evidence-based language and literacy practices grounded in the science of reading in multiple settings with diverse learners.

In addition to ensuring that content taught is of high quality, relevant, and aligned with Ohio's approach to language and literacy instruction, teacher candidates must experience powerful field experiences aligned with their coursework, and powerful simulations embedded within that coursework. Ohio's approach to language and literacy instruction involves preparing teachers to provide systematic instruction in two critical areas: accurate and fluent word identification, and linguistic comprehension (Baker et al., 2017). For more information on Ohio's investment in improving literacy outcomes for each child and the approach being used by the state, see the following resources:

- [*Each Child Our Future: Ohio Strategic Plan For Education: 2019-2024*](#)
- [*Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement*](#)
- [*What Works Clearinghouse Practice Guide: Foundational Skills to Support Reading for Understanding in Kindergarten Through 3rd Grade*](#)

- [What Works Clearinghouse Practice Guide: Improving Adolescent Literacy: Effective Classroom and Intervention Practices](#)
- [What Works Clearinghouse Practice Guide: Teaching Academic Content and Literacy to English Learners in Elementary and Middle School](#)

Aligning the curricula in EPPs with state standards that reflect current knowledge and skills and the use of evidence-based practices is more effective than revising standards alone (Augustine et al., 2009). Therefore, it is crucial that IHEs, local school districts, professional associations, and state education agencies (SEAs) collaborate to ensure that all educators enter the teaching profession with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively teach each student, including students with disabilities, students who are ELs, and students with learning challenges, to read. Although cooperation between SEAs and IHEs, districts, and other organizations is key to providing teachers and leaders with the critical knowledge and skills needed to improve student achievement (Blanton & Pugach, 2007; Darling-Hammond et al., 2005), there are few examples of such entities regularly engaging in these cooperative practices (Goe, 2009; Levine, 2005).

An increasing number of authors and researchers (e.g., Darling-Hammond, L., 2010; DuFour & Marzano, 2011; Gallimore, et al., 2009; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008; Louis, et al., 2010; McNulty & Besser, 2014; Schmoker, 2006; Wahlstrom et al., 2010; Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008) advocate for the use of team structures to facilitate shared learning for instructional improvement. They note that no single person has all the necessary knowledge, skills, and talents to meet the needs of all children. This finding is reflective of the growing body of evidence in support of teachers working together to inform each other's instructional practice and to share meaningfully in school leadership functions (Gallimore, et al., 2009). This shift is evident in the work of the Ohio Leadership Advisory Council, which provides a foundation for Ohio's improvement process and associated structures.

The Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) standards hold IHEs accountable for ensuring that “candidates develop a deep understanding of the critical concepts and principles of their discipline and, by completion, are able to use discipline-specific practices flexibly to advance the learning of all students² toward attainment of college and career-readiness standards.” This standard builds on the 2008 NCATE standards foundational belief that all children can and should learn” and that “high quality education is a fundamental right of all children.” CAEP standards³ also require EPPs to ensure that “effective partnerships and high-quality clinical practice are central to preparation so that candidates develop the knowledge, skills and dispositions necessary to demonstrate positive impact on all P-12 students’ learning and development” (p. 6). Likewise, EPPs must demonstrate “efforts to know and address community, state, national, or regional or local needs for hard to staff schools and shortage fields,” including for example, students with disabilities and students who are ELs (see, for example, Causton-Theoharis et al., 2011).

In 2012, Bier and colleagues described a model for creating shared opportunities for teacher and university faculty learning and development, defining the “sweet spot” as the “intersection of opportunities to learn by pre-service teachers, veteran teachers, and university teacher education faculty in a shared

² “All students” is defined as children or youth attending P-12 schools including students with disabilities or exceptionalities, students who are gifted, and students who represent diversity based on ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, language, religion, sexual identification, and geographic origin (Draft Recommendations for the CAEP Board, 2013, p. 19).

³ See <file:///H:/Desktop/Downloads/caep-2013-accreditation-standards.pdf>

context which focused on analysis of P-12 student learning” (p. 129). For authentic university-school district partnership efforts to be successful and sustainable, they must respond to and be aligned with the core mission and goals of both partners – the institution of higher education and the public school district.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS & PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Applicants must include in its application the following components:

- A. A logic model, reflective of evidence-based practice that depicts, at a minimum, the goals, activities, outputs, and outcomes of the proposed project. A logic model communicates how a project will achieve its outcomes and provides a framework for both formative and summative evaluation of the project.
- B. An implementation plan and schedule for accomplishing the activities described in the *Implementation, Management, & Evaluation of the Project* section of this priority.
- C. A plan, reflective of effective practice and linked to the project’s logic model, for a formative evaluation of the proposed activities that relies on clear performance objectives and measures of progress in implementing project activities, and describes how key partners, including school district representatives, will contribute to continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.
- D. A description of the process used to restructure/redesign – or support the restructuring/redesign – of existing 12-hour reading core or TESOL courses, including the individuals internal and external to the IHE who will be involved in the implementation of project activities (*Note: this description must address the ways in which the education department will collaborate with other departments within the IHE, and external partners, to improve teacher preparation in the area of literacy, including the professional development of the EPP’s faculty members to develop a deep understanding of structured literacy practices grounded in the science of reading*).
- E. A description of the evidence-based content and practices, and dispositions, needed by teacher preparation candidates to effectively meet the needs of diverse learners, including students with disabilities, students who are ELs, and students with learning challenges, in inclusive settings; how such content will be used as the basis for the restructured or redesigned coursework (including the content that will be removed and added from the curriculum); the intended recipients (i.e., candidates) of the restructured or redesigned coursework, and the implications of the restructured or redesigned coursework on degrees and/or credentials candidates will receive upon program completion.
- F. Letters of support from the applicant institution’s Provost or highest-ranking academic official, the Dean of the school/college of education, and the applicable Department Chairperson.
- G. A budget for an external evaluation to be conducted by an independent third party, and an assurance indicating that the applicant IHE will participate in Compact “centralized” evaluation activities. *Note: Each project employs an evaluator to give formative feedback and to help write the end-of-year report (i.e., final report).*

- H. A budget for attendance at an annual three-day statewide conference of the Ohio Deans Compact on Exceptional Children during which successful applicants will be required to share their progress in implementing project activities; attendance at quarterly Community of Practice (CoP) meetings; and participation in quarterly phone conferences. *(Note: At a minimum, the Quarter 1 and 2 meetings of 2021-22 and the 2022 annual conference will be virtual.)*

Applicant institutions must be represented at the virtual bidders conference, scheduled for **June 28, 2021, from 10:00 to 11:30 am**, as a condition of submitting an application in response to this RFA **(Note: at least one representative of the applicant institution must attend; the representative need not be the prospective principal investigator).**

Deliverables

At the end of the funding period, each project should provide:

- A. A description of the restructured or redesigned course scope and sequence (Priority 1: reading core; Priority 2: TESOL core), including all clinical learning experiences, and the specific competencies aligned with evidence-based practices that are targeted through each course/set of courses that form the basis of the restructured/redesigned courses; and all course syllabi, all assessments, all field experience activities, all readings, and all in-class activities for the restructured/redesigned courses;
- B. The product(s) to be delivered through the grant (e.g., on-line learning module, webinar), which must be made available through a website or other electronic repository;
- C. A plan for sustaining the effort beyond the life of the grant; and
- D. A final performance report, which includes all evaluation findings and information.

Other Requirements

- A. Recipients of awards under this request are required to participate in the following activities:
 - A Compact-sponsored Community of Practice (CoP), held quarterly;
 - An annual Compact statewide conference (3 days); and
 - Quarterly Compact phone conferences for incentive grantees.
- B. Recipients of awards under this RFA must share evaluation information with the Ohio Deans Compact.

II. AWARD INFORMATION

Information about the estimated number of awards, the maximum award amount, and the project period is provided in the table below. The Compact will reject and will not consider an application that proposes a budget exceeding the maximum amount for any single budget period under this request for applications.

FUNDING:

Incentive Grants to Ohio IHEs					
PRIORITY	AWARD RANGE/ MAXIMUM	ESTIMATED NUMBER OF AWARDS	ANTICIPATED DURATION	PROJECT PERIOD	INDIRECT COSTS
1 <i>Reading Core Courses</i>	Up to \$30,000	2	12 months	October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022	Limited to 8% of applicable direct costs
2 <i>TESOL Core Courses</i>	Up to \$30,000	2	12 months	October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022	Limited to 8% of applicable direct costs

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Eligible Applicants

Accredited four-year institutions of higher education (IHE) in Ohio.

Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost sharing/matching is not required.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Page and Format Limitations

Applications submitted in response to this RFA must be limited to 30 double-spaced pages. This page limitation applies to all material presented in the application narrative (i.e., the section where applicants address selection criteria). Use the following standards in developing the application narrative:

- A "page" is 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.
- Double space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative, including titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions.
- Use a font that is either 12 point or larger or no smaller than 10 pitch (characters per inch). Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial. An application submitted in any other font (including Times Roman or Arial Narrow) will not be accepted.

The page limit applies only to the application narrative. It does **not** apply to the online applicant information page, the required budget components (including the narrative budget justification), the one-page abstract, or appendices. Additionally, the page limit does **not** apply to staff vitae, instruments to be used, partnership agreements (e.g., agreements between the IHE and partners such as area school districts), and letters of support/cooperation. A letter of commitment from a minimum of one partner school district that meets the requirements described under the Purpose of Program section of this RFA is required. Letters of support/cooperation should be specific, indicating agreement with a particular aspect of the proposed project.

Staff vitae should include each person's title and role in the proposed project and contain only information that is relevant to this proposed project's activities and/or publications. Vitae for consultants and advisory committee members should be similarly brief.

The application narrative should be organized to follow the exact sequence of the components in the selection criteria used to evaluate applications. The selection criteria are listed under **Section V Application Review Information** for each of the priorities addressed in this request. The abstract should precede the table of contents and application narrative.

The Compact will reject, and will NOT consider an application that fails to adhere to the page limit requirements, or the standards delineated above, for the competition.

Submission Dates and Times

Applications Available: **June 14, 2021**

Required Bidders Conference: **June 28, 2021, 10:00 am to 11:30 am**

Deadline for Receipt of Applications: **August 9, 2021, 4:30 pm ET**
(Note: applications will not be accepted before noon on September 6, 2019)

Notification of Award: **On/before September 20, 2021**

Submission Process

Applications for grants in response to this request must be submitted electronically using the Ohio Deans Compact web site at www.ohiodeanscompact.org. The following application components must be uploaded as PDF documents to the web site: (1) Abstract; (2) Application Narrative; (3) Appendix A; (4) Other Appendices; (5) Project Budget; and (6) Budget Narrative Justification. An application information page and project budget template must be downloaded from the website, completed, and uploaded in PDF format as part of the required components.

Appendix A should be used to provide the following required components (see Application Requirements & Project Activities in this RFA): (1) project logic model, (2) table outlining the content that will be removed from the program and content designed to teach structured literacy practices grounded in the science of reading that will be added to the program, (3) implementation plan and schedule, (4) plan for formative evaluation of proposed activities, and (5) other data, charts, and/or tables referenced in the Application Narrative. Other Appendices should include, at a minimum, letters of support (see Application Requirements & Project Activities, Item F).

Applications that do not comply with the deadline requirements will not be accepted.

Questions regarding this RFA should be submitted online through the Compact website. Responses to questions will be posted through this site to ensure that all interested applicants receive the same information.

Individuals with disabilities who need an accommodation or auxiliary aid in connection with the application process should contact the person listed under **Section VII Contact Information** of this request. If an individual with a disability receives an accommodation or auxiliary aid in connection with the application process, the individual's application remains subject to all other requirements and limitations in this request.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

Review and Selection Process

In reviewing applications under this request for applications, the Ohio Deans Compact on Exceptional Children may consider the past performance of the applicant in carrying out a previous award from the Compact, such as the applicant's timely use of funds, the applicant's attendance at required Compact meetings and events, achievement of project objectives, and compliance with grant conditions. The Compact may also consider whether the applicant failed to submit a timely performance report or submitted a report of unacceptable quality.

Additionally, in making a competitive grant award, the Compact requires various assurances including those applicable to federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving financial assistance. These assurances and additional certifications will be required of any institution recommended for funding and as a condition of receiving funding under this request. One of these assurances includes a detailed expenditure plan. Projects that do not expend the funds they receive probably did not need those funds in the first place.

Upon completion of the review process, individual reviewer scores and applications will be ranked. The higher ranked, approved applications will be funded first. There may be lower ranked, approved applications that do not receive funding. It is possible that a small number of applications that are approved and fall next in rank order (after those projects selected for funding) will be placed on hold. If dollars become available as a result of negotiations, or if a higher ranked applicant declines the award, the projects on hold may receive funding. If applicants receive a letter stating their application will not receive funding, then their project has neither been selected for funding nor placed on hold. Copies of reviewer comments will be emailed to applicants upon request.

Selection Criteria

Abstract

An **abstract**, not to exceed one page, should precede the application narrative, and should include the title of the program and the applicable priority area. Additionally, the abstract should include the intended outcomes and activities of the project, how the proposed project meets the Compact priority for improving literacy partnership grants, and the names and affiliations of the partners.

Relationship of Partnership Effort to Compact Priority (25 points)

In determining the relationship of the proposed project to the Compact's priority under this RFA, the Compact considers the following factors:

- (1) The intended outcomes of the project (i.e., what will be different as a result of the project)?

- (2) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, and the likely impact of the product(s) to be developed on the intended recipients.
- (3) The potential contribution of the proposed project to increased knowledge or understanding of educational problems, issues, or effective strategies;
- (4) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population.

Nature & Focus of the Partnership (20 points)

In determining the quality of the proposed partnership activities, the Compact considers the following factors:

- (1) The shared beliefs (e.g., all learners should have equitable access to grade-level content) on which the partnership is built.
- (2) The partners who will be involved in implementing grant activities and each partner's specific roles and responsibilities with regard to the project.
- (3) The extent to which entities that are to be served by the proposed project demonstrate support for the project (include letters of support from the applicant institution's Dean of the school/college of education, and the applicable Department Chairperson, and the superintendent/CEO of the partnering school district).
- (4) The strategies used to develop and sustain effective partnerships between the IHE and the school districts/educational service center, and between other relevant partners (e.g., two-year institutions), resulting in graduates who are prepared and ready to meet the literacy instructional needs of all students, including students with disabilities, in inclusive settings.
- (5) The relevant knowledge, skills, and dispositions that will be developed through the project by applicant faculty and partner educators.
- (6) The extent to which the project reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice.
- (6) The content of the proposed project aligns with *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement*.

Implementation, Management, & Evaluation of the Project (25 points)

In determining the quality of the plan for implementing, managing, and evaluating project activities to meet stated goals, the Compact considers:

- (1) The goals of the project.
- (2) The activities that will be implemented to achieve the goals and the associated time lines for accomplishing all activities.
- (3) The product(s) to be developed and how it/they will be used by each partner to improve the capacity of educators to work together to improve instructional capacity and student learning in literacy.

- (4) The ways in which implementation will be monitored and evaluated, the procedures for ensuring regular and frequent communication and among partners, and the mechanisms for ensuring that high-quality products result from the project.
- (5) The extent to which partnership will involve the use of efficient strategies, including the use of technology, as appropriate, and the leveraging of non-project resources.
- (6) The evaluation methods to be used, the extent to which they are feasible and appropriate to the intended goals and outcomes of the project.
- (7) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide timely guidance and performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

Adequacy of Resources & Project Personnel (10 points)

In determining the adequacy of resources, including project personnel, for implementing the proposed project, the Compact considers the following factors:

- (1) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.
- (2) The time commitments for all project personnel, and the extent to which the time commitments of the principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to implement the proposed activities as planned.
- (3) The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant organization.

Sustainability (20 points)

In determining the likelihood that the project will result in sustainable partnerships that build on activities implemented through the project, the Compact considers the following factors:

- (1) The ways in which the partners will use the product(s) beyond the life of the grant.
- (2) The ways in which the partners will sustain the partnership beyond the life of the grant.
- (3) How the project would be continued/extended beyond the life of the grant.
- (4) The likely utility of the product(s) that will result from the proposed project, including the potential for their being used effectively by other IHEs in Ohio.

Reporting Requirements

Applicants receiving awards must submit a final performance report describing their implementation of project activities, findings, and other relevant information in accordance with procedures established by the Compact and the University of Cincinnati. Each grantee shall freely share the products developed through the grant back to the Compact. These products will be posted on the Compact website to support other IHEs and PK-12 districts to replicate development and implementation efforts in their locale.

Performance Measures

Applicants must include clear and measurable performance measures for implementation objectives identified by the applicant. In addition, the Compact requires all applicants responding to this Priority to address the following program performance measure in their application:

- *By the end of the project period, 100% of the applicable courses comprising the restructured or newly developed program have been designed, redesigned, or restructured to incorporate structured literacy practices grounded in the science of reading as the foundational approach and identified evidence-based competencies needed by all teacher candidates to support higher levels of literacy proficiency for all students, including students with disabilities, students who are ELs, and students with learning challenges.*

VI. REQUIRED BUDGET COMPONENTS

Applicants are required to complete a project budget template and budget narrative justification. The template must be downloaded from the website, completed, and uploaded in PDF format as part of the required components. The budget narrative justification describing all costs identified in the project budget must be uploaded in PDF format as part of your required application. Please refer to www.ohiodeanscompact.org for submission instructions.

In developing your project budget, please note the following:

- Applicants must specify the level of effort on the part of the principal investigator and other key personnel contributing to the project. Applicants are encouraged to incorporate PI effort at no less than .25 FTE (one to two course releases per year depending on IHE-specific workload policies).
- Faculty buy-out for summer terms is allowable.
- Equipment purchases, defined as equipment that has a useful life of one year or more and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more, are permitted if their purchase is necessary to support implementation of approved project activities. Other property purchases necessary to support project implementation are allowable and should be included with *materials and services* costs.
- Travel within the US is allowable when it relates to the expressed goals of the project. Requests for travel to international conferences/events will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- For applications submitted in response to this request, the indirect cost rate may not exceed 8% of the direct costs. Applicable Education Department General Administrative Regulations apply to training grants.
- Tuition costs are allowable if related to the employment of a graduate research assistant to support project implementation.

Successful applicants recommended for funding under this competition will be required to complete additional certifications and assurances as a condition of receiving an award. Funding may be withheld from institutions that do not follow the requirements specified in this RFA or the certification and assurance documents.

VII. CONTACT INFORMATION

For further information, contact:

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VIII. REFERENCES

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Note: sections of this Request for Application were modified from several notices issued by the USDoE, Office of Special Education Programs.