

Georgia Charter Schools Program Grant Writing Workshop: A Focus on Quality

Charter Schools Division
July 11, 2017



Goal

**To provide participants with
the necessary tools and
knowledge to put together
high-quality Planning,
Implementation, and
Dissemination Subgrant
applications**



Focus: Quality

High
Quality

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Objectives

Participants will be able to:

Understand the Planning and Implementation Subgrant and Dissemination Subgrant Application narratives and expectations.

Write high-quality SMART project goals.

Compose a well-written, thorough - yet concise - description of your educational program.

Demonstrate, in writing, the capacity of the governing board and administration to operate a successful charter school and appropriately manage a large federal subgrant award.

Write a clear and concise explanation of, and justification for, the proposed use of subgrant funds.

Properly and correct fill out the required budget forms.



Content

Grant Writing Basics and General Tips

Writing SMART goals

Educational Program

Governance and Management

Student and Community Access

Fiscal Sustainability and Budget Overview

Conclusion and Final Takeaways

Reminders, Questions, and Contact Information



Grant Writing Basics

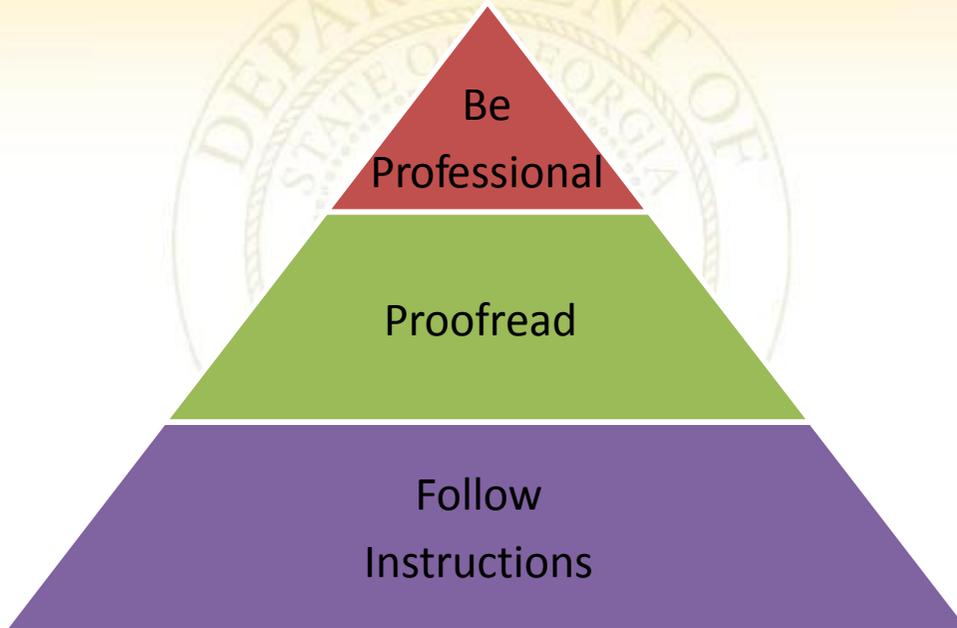
Define Your Project

Read Proposal Guidelines

Assume Nothing



General Tips



Writing SMART Goals



Prompt

Planning and Implementation Application

B. Project Goals (10 Points)

1. Describe the student achievement objectives of the charter school, and the methods by which the charter school will determine its progress toward achieving those objectives.
2. List at least three project goals, with indicators, for the proposed grant that encompass the 24 month project period (or 36 months if applying for both grants). At least two goals must address student academic achievement as measured by the CRCT, EOCT, and/or Georgia's College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCPRI). Each listed goal should be specific, measurable, attainable, research-based and time-phased [i.e. SMART]. As an example, "95% of all staff will receive training on curriculum and policy in year 1, 80% of staff will receive training in reading intervention, writing mastery, and student learning styles in year 2." The use of these grant funds should be directly correlated to student academic achievement.



Project Goals Rubric

Planning and Implementation Application

Acceptable		Unacceptable	
Meets 7-10	Adequate 5-7	Limited 3-5	Inadequate 1-3
The school provides goals that are SMART and aligned to the school's mission and vision and funding request. These goals also align with the Department's CSP goals.	The applicant does not fully address all of the points listed in the higher point category.	The school's goals are too few and do not meet the SMART requirements. But the goals are aligned with the school's mission/vision.	The school's goals are too few, are not SMART, do not align with the school's mission/vision, and the school's goals are not aligned with the Department's CSP goals.



Prompt

Dissemination Application

V. Project Goals and Impact (15 Points)

- Identify 3 to 5 project goals and justify each goal in terms of its value in improving student learning and achievement for Georgia students.
 - At least 1 goal must specifically address how sharing educational, fiscal, and operational best practices through the dissemination project will assist in improving academic outcomes and access to educational opportunities for educationally disadvantaged students.
- Describe how the dissemination activities will result in increased student academic achievement in the participating schools and districts, including among educationally disadvantaged students.
- Describe the methods in which the increase in student academic achievement will be documented by the charter school.
- Describe the charter school's process for developing or refining the project to be disseminated to allow for ongoing correction and improvement.
- Describe the methods and ability of the charter school and participating schools and districts to sustain the benefit of the project after the subgrant period expires.



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Dissemination Application

VII. Project Evaluation (10 Points)

- A detailed description of how the charter school's performance will be measured against the project goals and objectives identified in Section V.
- The specific targets, measures, and metrics for each project goal, including the qualitative and quantitative sources of data that will be used to measure progress on each goal. Make sure the accountability measures are SMART.
- A timeline for measuring progress on each project goal.
 - Include the baseline data that will be measured (i.e., what data will be collected and data sources used).
 - Include the effective evaluation methods that will be used to assess the charter school's progress toward meeting its goals and objectives and allow for ongoing correction and improvement.
 - ***Note: Progress on each goal must be measured and reported at least once in each subgrant year. Any subgrantee failing to meet or report on its project goals may be placed on an improvement plan or defunded.***



Project Goals Rubric

Dissemination Application

Section V: Project Goals and Impact	Does Not Meet (0-6)	Meets (7-15)
	Applicant briefly or fails to develop project goals and objectives for the expected impact of their proposed dissemination activities.	Applicant develops project goals and objectives for the expected impact of their proposed dissemination activities.
Section VII: Project Evaluation	Does Not Meet (0-4)	Meets (5-10)
	Applicant fails to provide an evaluation plan that details how the school will evaluate the proposed project to determine if the project goals and objectives are met, OR the applicant's plan briefly describes or fails to include the required components.	Applicant provides a comprehensive evaluation plan that details how the school will evaluate the proposed project to determine if the project goals and objectives are met. The plan includes all of the required components.



S

- SPECIFIC

M

- MEASURABLE

A

- ATTAINABLE & AMBITIOUS

R

- REALISTIC/REFLECTIVE OF MISSION/RESEARCH-BASED/RIGOROUS

T

- TIME-PHASED/TIME-BOUND



SMART Goals

Specific

All teachers at Achievement Charter School will complete a 2-week summer workshop in Achievement's educational philosophy instructional methodology.

Not Specific

Teachers at Achievement Charter School will receive staff development training.



SMART Goals

Measurable

On average, students will improve their scores on the Stanford-9 Reading Assessment by 4% each year.

Not Measurable

Students will become excellent readers and writers.



SMART Goals

Attainable

Achievement Charter School will have an exceeds rate 5% above the state average by year 3.

Not Attainable

Achievement Charter School will outperform every school in the local district in all academic areas.



SMART Goals

Realistic

75% percent of students at Achievement Charter School will exceed State averages on Math and Reading on the CRCT.

Not Realistic

100% of students at Achievement Charter School will improve upon their baseline CRCT reading scores by 15% in the first year of operation.



SMART Goals

Time-bound

Achievement Charter School will close the achievement gap between subgroups by 50% by the end of year 2, and by an additional 10% each year thereafter.

Not Time-Bound

Achievement Charter School will close the achievement gap between subgroups by 50%.



Sample SMART goal with measures

Goal: Downtown Charter School students will become proficient readers of the English language.

Measures:

- In each cohort of Downtown Charter School students, the average score on the Stanford 9 will increase by 5 NCEs (Normal Curve Equivalent) per year until the average NCE of the cohort is 70%.
- On the Georgia criterion-referenced reading test for grades 5-8, a greater percentage of Downtown Charter School students will score at meets and exceeds levels than will their peers in APS.
- Each year, in each cohort, the average scale score of Downtown Charter School students will improve in relation to exceeds expectations on the Georgia reading/ELA CRCT exams. This measure is designed to assess student growth over time on a criterion-referenced test.



SMART GOALS: Take-Away



Non-SMART
goals

=



Educational Program Description



Prompt

Planning and Implementation Application

A. Educational Program Overview (20 Points). Briefly describe your charter school, including the educational program, the school community, the school's origins, and the vision of the school. Please cover the points below:

- Describe how the school plans to use grant funds to implement the school's vision. Please include the grades served during the first two years of operation, curricular focus or theme of the charter school.
- Briefly describe the educational program that will be implemented by the charter school including any themes or key initiatives or instructional delivery methods. If the charter school serves grades 9-12, list the graduation requirements.
- Please describe how your educational program distinguishes your school from other educational options available to the student population that you are seeking to enroll.



Prompt

Dissemination Application

I. General Information (5 Points)

- State when the charter school was established, whether it is a start-up or conversion charter school, the number of charter terms the school has been in existence, and the year school's current charter term will expire.
- State the mission and vision of the charter school, and explain how it aligns with the Department's objectives.
- Describe the size of the school, including the grade levels served, and any future plans for growth over the charter term.
- Describe the physical location of the charter school, including whether in a low-income community. State whether the charter school has a Title I designation.
- Provide a general description of the student population demographics, with particular emphasis on educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter school.
- Describe the charter school's educational philosophy, instructional approach, innovative models, tools, programs, and/or systems. Describe how it supports the needs of all students, including educationally disadvantaged students, and has enabled the school to meet or exceed its performance goals for at least the past 3 consecutive years.
- Describe the extent to which the charter school takes advantage of the flexibility possible under Georgia's charter school law and waivers from local school policies (for locally-approved charter schools) as identified in the charter contract.



Prompt

Dissemination Application

II. Eligibility/Demonstration of Overall School Success (5 Points)

- Increased student academic achievement and attainment for all students AND educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter school. Include CCRPI scores; CRCT, EOCT, and Milestones test results; and graduation rates (if applicable) as compared to traditional public schools in the school's attendance zone, your local district, and the state.
- Demonstrated success closing the achievement gap as measured by CCRPI.
- High levels of parent satisfaction.
 - Provide the parental participation and satisfaction rate in school surveys.
 - Provide the student retention rate.
 - Describe family and community engagement and involvement in the continuous improvement and implementation of the charter school best practices.
- No significant compliance issues, particularly in the areas of student safety, financial and operational management, and the equitable treatment of students. Eligible charter schools will have submitted annual financial audits and operational reports without any findings to the Charter Schools Division over the past 3 years.
- The charter school has the management and leadership necessary to overcome initial start-up problems and establish a thriving, financially viable charter school.
 - Describe initial start-up challenges and how they were overcome.
 - Describe the turnover rates for governing board members, school administrators, and instructional staff.
 - Describe how the charter school is qualified to manage and oversee a federal subgrant.

Ensuring a High Score

Background: (Briefly) tell us your story

- How and why did this school come about?
- Who was involved?

Vision: Paint a vivid picture

- The unique program/focus/theme you are implementing (or have implemented)
- Grades served
- The community
- The school culture
- Key initiatives or special programs
- Instructional methods
- What makes you unique?
- How and why are you successful?
- Include everything funds will be spent on



General Tips

A THOROUGH yet CONCISE description

- Provide lots of details
- BUT don't be wordy or unnecessarily repetitive (say it once!)
- K.I.S.S.

Don't ASSUME anything

- Grant readers may have little or no background knowledge of the curriculum/program you are describing or its success to date
- Link your program to achievement



EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: Take-Away



Assume readers
have no previous
knowledge!



Governance & Management



Prompt

Planning and Implementation Application

D. Governance and Management (20 Points). Describe the qualifications of the governing board.

- Describe the level of oversight the governing board has over the school and school leader.
- Describe the composition of the governing board, *e.g.* parents, community members or staff, and their responsibilities or decision-making authority. List any prerequisites for individuals to serve on the governing board.
- Describe how board members were selected and their qualifications. Detail the training needs of the governing board and what board training has already occurred.
- Describe how the governing board's policies will be made available to parents. Please describe how the charter school will be managed and attach any management contracts as an appendix.



Prompt

Dissemination Application

VI. Project Management Plan (10 Points)

- An overall description of how the subgrant will be managed. Provide a list of the key personnel assigned to manage specific aspects of the subgrant and responsible for completion of the work, including collaborators or contractors. Include resumes and/or biographical information for these individuals. Include a project timeline with benchmarks for the proposed project's goals.
- The school's plan to be compliant, strategic, and responsible with the financial and business aspects of the subgrant.
- The school's plan to have sufficient cash on hand to front initial subgrant expenditures until reimbursement.
- The capability of the governing board to oversee the performance and financial components of the subgrant, including compliance with federal regulations and non-regulatory guidance.
- The capability of the governing board to submit required reports on subgrant activities.
- The school's plan for financial and programmatic sustainability after the subgrant period ends and subgrant funds are no longer available.
- Attach a copy of the charter school's conflict of interest policy to verify that an employee of the charter school, and not an employee of any Education Service Provider, is responsible for the direct administration or supervision of the subgrant.



Ensuring a High Score

Summarize qualifications of relevant parties

- Resumes not necessary!



Governance & Management: Take-Away



Show us your
CAPACITY



Student Access



Prompt

Planning and Implementation Application

E. Student Access (10 Points)

- Describe how the charter school will comply with requirements of Sections 613(a)(5) and 613(e)(1)(B) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Reciting the law in this area alone is unacceptable and will be scored as such on the attached rubric.
- Describe how parents, students and other members of the community will be informed about the charter school, and how students will be given an equal opportunity to attend the charter school. Describe evidence of parent and community involvement prior to and during the operation of the charter school.
- Lottery Questions
 - How was the community notified of the charter school's opening?
 - What is the date of the first, and thereafter annual, lottery?
 - What preference priorities with the school use if any?
 - Were any students given priority notice or guaranteed admission?
 - What are the demographics of the first year class?
 - What is the attendance zone? Please describe in depth how the school will be recruit from all segments of the proposed attendance zone.
 - How has the school accounted for student transportation?
 - If the school uses a weighted lottery, please address what categories are weighted and how. Please also address how the weighted lottery is part of the school's overall recruitment plan.*
- How does the charter school plan to address its students' transportation needs?



Prompt

Dissemination Application

III. Demonstrated Need or Demand (5 Points)

- Describe the community the charter school proposes to serve with its dissemination project, including the number and types of schools and students that will benefit from the project.
- Describe the need for the charter school's best practices in the community it will serve and how these best practices will address the needs of the defined community. Provide concrete and current supporting data that emphasizes the need for the dissemination of the charter school's best practices, including:
 - Performance data for surrounding public schools in the area that the charter school is located;
 - Targeted student population, including projected percentage of educationally disadvantaged students;
 - Gaps in educational opportunities that the charter school will address; and
 - Other factors that create the need for a high-quality charter school.
- Identify specific local school district partners, if known, and provide evidence of a demonstrated need or demand for the specific products and/or services that would be provided through the proposed subgrant activities.



Prompt

Dissemination Application

IV. Project Proposal (20 Points)

- Provide an overview of the charter school's project plan and project scope. Include a description of the specific dissemination activities the charter school will implement and/or products the school will develop to target the area(s) discussed in Section III above [required and optional dissemination activities are listed on pgs. 15-16 of the application].
- Describe how the project activities will involve contributions from similar charter schools as well as from other public schools, local school districts, developers, and potential developers.
- Describe how the project activities are specifically designed to increase academic success for educationally disadvantaged students. Include a description of the charter school's existing methods to specifically engage and support educationally disadvantaged students.
- Describe the charter school's outreach plan to inform the public of the availability of your proposed dissemination product and/or service.



What We're Looking For

Describe how students will be given an equal opportunity to attend the school and how their educational needs will be met by your charter school program

Describe how your dissemination project will address the needs of your community and the educational needs of Georgia students



Student Access: Take-Away



Small section, BUT
critical to meeting
USDOE
requirements



Fiscal Sustainability & Budget Overview



Prompt

Planning and Implementation Application

F. Fiscal Sustainability (10 Points)

- Please describe how Federal CSP funds will be used in conjunction with other federal funds, state, and local funds.
- Describe any alternative funding sources.
- Describe how the business office practices and policies at the charter school will be or were established. Explain the activities that have occurred for the development of an operating budget that demonstrates the fiscal viability of the school.



Prompt

Planning and Implementation Application

- **G. Budget Narrative (10 Points).** Provide an overview of how grant funds will be used to address project goals and meet the needs of the charter school, charter school developers, or a public school seeking to convert to charter status. All expenditures should be related to one of the proposed project goals or objectives.
- **H. Budget Details (10 Points).** Using the budget detail, list the main line items for each project goal. The budget detail page in the Excel spreadsheet should include all detail sufficient to explain how the total line item amount was reached. No single line item should exceed \$30,000 without proper justification (*e.g.*, a technology line item should be broken down to the number of units and the cost per unit). Line items without proper justification will be denied. Fully describe the proposed budget for 24 months (36 months if applying for a planning grant). Applicants must budget approx. \$5,000 for a programmatic audit in their second year of operation.



Prompt

Dissemination Application

VIII. Budget Narrative (10 Points)

- Describe the planned use of the subgrant funds for the project, including how the funds will be used for all participants involved such as consultants. This description must address all years of the subgrant, up to 2 years. Funds must be spent prior to June 30 of each year a subgrant is awarded.
- Explain how the proposed expenses will allow the charter school to accomplish the project's goals and objectives outlined in Section V above. You may include a table in the narrative that shows how the subgrant funding will be allocated to each project goal.
- Describe any additional grant funding for operational costs that has been or will be sought by the charter school to contribute to this project, including any federal programs administered by the U.S. Department of Education (supplement, not supplant).
- Describe the charter school's fiscal autonomy from the local district (if locally-approved).
- Describe or provide a copy of the charter school's internal financial controls policy to ensure that expenditures will be used appropriately.

Appendix B: Budget Detail Sheets Instructions (10 Points)



Ensuring a High Score

Demonstrate that your school has the ability to plan a balanced budget.

Include information on policies and procedures development.

Use specifics!

Discuss internal controls.



Budget Narrative

Link Expenses to Project Goals

Be Specific!

Plan for less money.



Allowable Expenses

Planning/Implementation



Supplies, materials,
classroom furniture,
computers

Salaries and benefits
for KEY staff during
the START-UP phase
only.

Staff and student
recruitment materials
and activities.

INITIAL Staff Training

Consultant services to
help develop
curriculum etc.

ADA Compliance (for
example)

Conference
Attendance

Library Books



Unallowable Expenses

Planning/Implementation



Salaries for individuals involved in the school's ongoing program.

- Lead Teacher salary, Spanish Teacher salary
- Any employee of an EMO

Lease Payments
(Facility grant)

Contracted service for payroll

Routine student transportation

On-going staff development/training required by EMO



Unallowable Expenses

Planning/Implementation



Playground equipment,
athletic equipment, or
sports uniforms

Repairs and
maintenance of
classrooms or building

- Fire Alarm, bell systems,
refrigerators/freezers,

Planning and zoning,
traffic studies,
demographic studies, or
site inspections

Food or cafeteria
equipment

Microwaves, outdoor
tables, or reception
furniture

Furnishings and
equipment for staff
offices, or
Administrative supplies

Other administrative
expenses such as a PA
system or flags

Blackberries, cell
phones, telephones,
walkie-talkie radios



Allowable Expenses

Dissemination



Extended contract
time for staff involved
in the project (5%)

Printing, copying,
graphics production,
artwork, publication

Consultant services to
support
dissemination work
(10%)

1x purchase of
equipment associated
with activities

Travel associated
with dissemination
activities



Unallowable Expenses



Dissemination

Any expense not directly related to the state project goals in the application

General operating expenses; Indirect costs

Payroll expenses (except for substitutes in the case of travel)

Professional dues or memberships; Continuing education credits

Employee hiring/recruitment; Marketing or recruitment activities

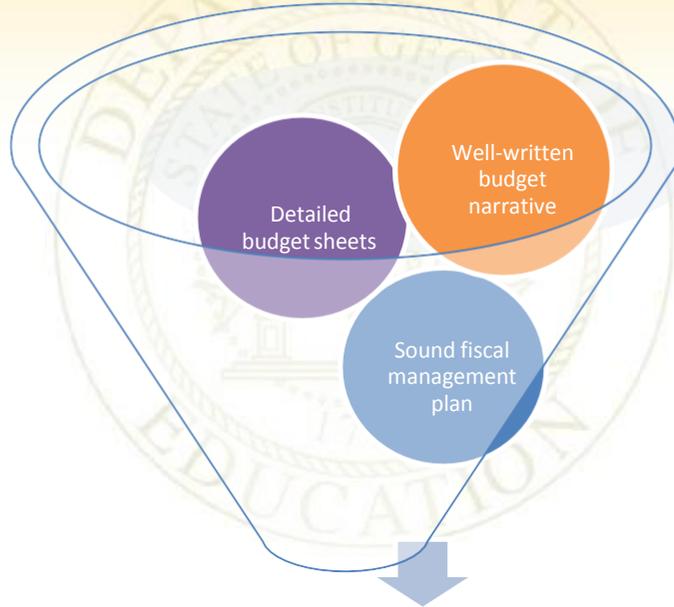
Purchasing or leasing of a school facility; Capital expenses (e.g., remodeling, etc.)

Expenses outside scope of charter/K-12 education; To offset or cover costs of preparing CSP application

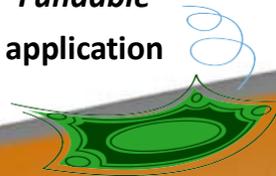
Expenditures that are not “allowable, allocable, or reasonable” as defined in Non-Regulatory Guidance



Fiscal Sustainability & Budget: Take-Away



**Fundable
application**



Conclusion/Final Takeaways

Strong
Application

Grant
Funding

Increase
Student
Achievement



Reminders

- **Application Deadline** – Friday, July 28, 2017 at 4:00pm
- **State Board of Education Meeting** – September 28, 2017 (meeting at which awards will be considered)
- **Award Notification** – September 29, 2017
- **Managing Your Federal Grant Webinar** – October 2017

Application materials, including webinar presentations, are available on the Department's website:

<http://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/Charter-Schools/Pages/Grant-Applications.aspx>



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