Literacy for Learning, Living, and Leading (L4GA) 2019 Grant Competition

Information Packet

December 20, 2019
General Information

The purpose for these funds is to allow systems/agencies/organizations to begin to develop and implement a literacy plan that would address the needs of all of children in a community, from birth through grade twelve.

The Literacy for Learning, Living and Leading in Georgia (L4GA 2019) funding will allow systems/agencies/organizations to build partnerships that engage communities and schools together to strengthen student learning, and establish and train teachers to implement new evidence-based practices with the ultimate goal that upon graduation, all students will be college and career ready. L4GA requires that applicants attend to the convergent power of improving school climate, community partnerships, instruction, and professional learning.

L4GA funds alone will not support a major overhaul of a school’s literacy program. The projects that will be funded will support a school’s intention to build on their current best practices, enhance instruction, solidify an intentional assessment protocol, and ensure that all teachers, leaders, and ancillary staff are confident in their approach to student learning.

Applications are to be submitted in Fluid Review by February 3, 2020 at 5PM.

Communication

If you would like to request membership on the L4GA listserv, please send a blank email to join-L4GA@list.doe.k12.ga.us.

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Allowable Expenses

L4GA funding should be used to fill gaps determined through the needs assessment process. Grant proposals should verify how all resources available within communities and schools have been leveraged and how they will be coordinated. Project funds must be used for activities that directly support the accomplishment of the project purpose, priorities, and expected outcomes. Expenditures must be consistent with applicable state and federal laws, regulations, and guidance.
## Project Purpose and Goals

### Table 1

**System-level Roles and Expectations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who</th>
<th>What</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students (birth through grade 12)</td>
<td>Will have access to high-quality materials in both print and digital form, fiction and non-fiction, that support the <em>Georgia Standards of Excellence</em> in all content areas.</td>
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<td>Will receive an evidence-based curriculum consistent with the science of reading that will ensure adequate delivery of the <em>Georgia Standards of Excellence</em>.</td>
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<td>Students (Prekindergarten to grade 5)</td>
<td>Will receive an evidence-based literacy block that includes all elements of a comprehensive literacy program (e.g., dialogic reading, peer-assisted learning, small group reading interventions, developing academic English, explicit comprehension strategy instruction, explicit vocabulary instruction) using a variety of engaging, high-quality texts.</td>
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<td>Students (grades 6-12)</td>
<td>Will receive evidence-based instruction in Literacy (Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking, Viewing) within content area courses to support disciplinary literacy using evidence-based delivery models as well as robust, engaging text.</td>
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<td>Teachers of literacy (birth through grade 12)</td>
<td>Will engage learners by establishing a positive learning climate and using instructional approaches that are responsive to the community (e.g., linguistically, culturally, developmentally appropriate).</td>
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<td>Will implement ongoing formative and summative assessments and use data to inform instructional decisions and to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction.</td>
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<td>Will engage in high-quality professional learning to build their competence in evidence-based practices in literacy instruction, delivery of content, and peer support.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Role</td>
<td>Commitments</td>
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| School leadership teams       | Will engage in high-quality professional learning to build their competence in evidence-based practices for literacy instruction and evaluation of instructional performance.  
Will demonstrate commitment to literacy by convening partners (teachers, community organizations, families, students) to focus on literacy-related services and activities together. |
| School and District leaders    | Will use local and state data to create literacy plans for feeder patterns, focusing on growing potential for the local community to meet the needs of children from birth through grade 12.  
Will ensure that grants funded to L4GA partnerships are supported through proper and timely allocations and resources.  
Will ensured that the district goals align, and do not conflict, with those of the funded schools.  
Will facilitate partnerships with community organizations to provide social services for families and children attending local schools. |
| Teacher educators/literacy researchers | Will partner with B-12 teachers and leaders to lead professional learning about evidence-based practices for literacy instruction.  
Will engage in a networked improvement community called the “Literacy Think Tank” to improve their own competence in evidence-based practices in literacy instruction.  
Will engage with local community partners to support literacy-related activities and communications for families, youth, and children. |
| Community Partners            | Will provide support services for children, youth and families as determined by the local needs defined by the partnership.  
Will demonstrate commitment to literacy by providing and supporting literacy-related activities and communications for families, youth, and children. |
GaDOE  Will align SEA initiatives and requirements as much as possible and support sub-grantees by provide guidance about alignments.

Will deliver a communications system provides real-time access updated online and face to face training as well as assessment windows and new resources both internal and developed by outside partners.

Will provide state data to support local efforts.

Will convene and facilitate teacher educators and literacy researchers to improve the network’s capacity and competence.

Will facilitate a comprehensive approach to professional learning that promotes evidence-based practices and involves alignments face-to-face statewide convenings, online learning, and on-site interactions among sub-grantee partnerships via professional learning communities and coaching.

**District Performance Planning and Budget Timelines**

Districts awarded a grant award will be notified of their entire award. These funds will be spent over the five-year grant cycle upon successful yearly implementation.

Year-one funding will be requested for approval in May 2020. These funds will be available upon State Board approval. In order to request funding, each school will be required to submit a detailed performance plan and budget timeline. These documents will be reviewed and approved by GaDOE staff and together with budget requests presented to the State Board of Education for approval.

Performance plans and budget timeline documents will be provided to systems upon receiving funding.

**Eligibility Criteria**

All LEAs in Georgia are eligible to apply for L4GA funding. Districts currently implementing an L4GA grant in all their schools, cannot compete for these new funds. Districts can submit applications on behalf of schools in a new feeder pattern. A second competition is scheduled for late Spring 2021. Current grantees and new districts can submit applications during the second round.
Fidelity to the Application

Sub-grantees will not be permitted to change the project’s overall scope originally outlined in the application, scored by reviewers during the application review process, and approved by the SBOE. This policy is designed to provide basic fairness to applicants for discretionary sub-grants. Amendments to the project specific to implementation and initiatives can be amended per approval from the program manager.

Scoring

In order for any application to receive funding it must meet a minimum quality score of 75 points. In the event one or more school applications receive a score below 75 the applicant will receive technical assistance to ensure that the proposed plan can be implemented prior to complete funding.

Grant Competitive Priority

Please see competitive priority document on the L4GA Grant Website

https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/L4/Pages/Literacy-Grant.aspx

Grant Period

The performance period for the L4GA grant is five years.

A grant award is made available for an approved performance period of five years. Continuation funds beyond year one are contingent upon the evidence and progress as documented in the annual evaluation report, increased student achievement as documented in the required common data elements, and performance based on the approved plan and budget timeline. Please note that a sub-grantee approved by the State Board of Education may not charge expenses to its L4GA grant before the beginning of the grant period, which is the day of State Board approval. The awardee will receive start-up awards for initial grant implementation. After performance plans and budget timelines are approved for year one, the State Board will award year one funding. Each year, beyond year one, updated performance plans and budget timeline will be submitted with a request for continued funding by the State Board of Education.
**Awards**
Grant awards will be made to districts with the highest composite score. Because grants must be sizable in order to accomplish the goals of the literacy plan, per pupil allocations will be similar to grant awards of previous grant cycles. Once all scores are tallied, per pupil allocations will be determined based on October 2017 FTE reports.

**Award Amounts**
The GADOE will award sub-grants that will be significant in size in order to achieve the goals set forth in the project.

Funding for the L4GA grant to LEAs and nonprofit early learning organizations and/or agencies will be based on a per pupil allocation. Funding will be provided for all classrooms including special education, CTAE, Title I and EL. Funding will be awarded according to pupil full-time equivalent (FTE) count for school-aged children. For funding purposes, the October 2019 FTE report will be used for this grant application.

**Sustainability**
Sustainability planning is a requirement of the L4GA grant. Sustainability planning should be embedded throughout the application. Community partners and organizations are a critical link to sustaining L4GA projects beyond the grant period. Funded applicants must bring together community organizations, P-20 partners, and RESAs with local schools and centers to determine how to leverage resources within the community.

**Fiscal Requirements**
Georgia Online Reporting System (GAORS), the Consolidated Application Portal (CONAPP) and the Invoice Application are the required reporting and accounting systems designated by GaDOE to help ensure uniform, standard and accurate reporting of fiscal data on the use of funds.

Any person, agency, etc., debarred from receiving Federal funds is not eligible to apply for a L4GA project grant.

**Responsibilities of a Fiscal Agent**
The following are some of the expectations, roles, and responsibilities of a fiscal agent:

1. As the official grant recipient, all awards must be adopted by the local Board of Education (LEAs) or local Board of Directors (non-LEAs).
2. Administer the grant from award to closeout in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations
3. Serve as the organizational representative and point of contact for all business management aspects of the award agreement
4. Apply appropriate management controls using management systems, checklists, and records
   i. Internal Controls:
      a. Safeguard assets; ensure reliability of accounting data and grant terms and conditions
   ii. Operating Controls:
      a. Fiduciary Procedural Manuals; Budgetary Control System
   iii. Accounting Controls:
      a. Implement controls to ensure reliability of recorded financial data
      b. Maintain appropriate level of transaction review and authorization
      c. Develop and implement proper procurement procedures and cash management procedures that are well defined
      d. Develop procedures that facilitate timely review and audit of financial activity
   iv. Compliance Controls:
      a. Consider mechanisms to monitor and review compliance with grant terms (e.g. ensure grant funds are disbursed only to eligible recipients)
      b. Ensure that all expenditures/disbursements are consistent with the objectives of the grant award and comply with applicable Federal, state and local laws and regulations governing the project and use of funds (e.g. OMB Circulars A-87, A-21 and A-122 Cost Principles, Regulatory and Non-Regulatory Guidance, EDGAR, and Code of Federal Regulations)
   v. Document Control System:
      a. Develop written documentation of adequate internal operating and accounting controls that demonstrate evidence of controls related to grant compliance.

5. Assemble appropriate staff resources and communicate all compliance requirements and resources of the grant.
6. Keep abreast of changes in policies, procedures or requirements and continue to advise project staff of grant requirements.
7. Request any further “prior approvals” when identified.

8. Prepare necessary reports:
   i. Source Documentation
a. Appropriately support transactions entered into the grantee’s system
b. Documentation tracks each grant transaction and support the validity of financial data reported
c. Maintain separate/clean funding lines for L4GA funds

ii. Audit Trail
a. The lowest level of detail the system should provide is documentation that supports all transactions (e.g. invoices, contracts, purchase orders)
b. The overall recordkeeping system should be able to trace financial statement balances through the grantee’s general ledger, cash books and other journals
c. Amounts claimed on financial statements and reports accurately reflect the accounting books and records from which they were prepared

9. Make the most of site visits by GaDOE to enhance project, show organizational strength and demonstrate commitment to the project
10. Keep GaDOE and the public aware and informed about grant project progress
11. Evaluate the extent to which measurable project objectives are being met
12. Liquidate all obligations incurred under the award within the set deadline
13. Ensure and oversee the performance of final audits and resolution of findings
14. Establish adequate system for records retention
15. Completion Reports are due no later than 30 days after the end of the grant period.

Details of the Application
While we have provided applicants with a hard copy of the grant application, the final submitted application will be uploaded into our online grant management system, Fluid Review. All applications are to be submitted in Fluid Review by February 3, 2020 at 5PM. As highlighted in each section of the grant application, applicants are requested to stay within a prescribed word count for each section. These word counts were derived by reviewing previously funded applications to derive a general length for each section.

Fluid Review
Fluid Review is an online data management system that will support all of grant development and management activities in one location. It establishes workflow so that applicants can upload and manage their grant development.

GaDOE will host training on how to utilize the system at a future date.
Application Review and Selection Process

Phase 1 – Reader Review and Scoring
An expert panel of reviewers will evaluate and score each application based on the quality of the proposed activities and the capability of the applicant to implement the proposed project. These readers are comprised of experienced grant readers with expertise in early learning, elementary literacy, and secondary literacy. These readers will also have expertise in literacy assessment and the Georgia Standards of Excellence.

Phase 2 – Federal Compliance Review and Analysis of Applications
GaDOE staff will review all applications. In the event an unallowable expense is noted, staff will contact the district contact on file to discuss.

Grant awards will be made subject to approval by the Georgia State Board of Education. Awards will be determined based on rank (highest score first) and available funding. After the selection process, applicants who were not awarded funding will receive copies of the readers’ comments.

**Please note all readers’ scores, GaDOE decisions, and State Board of Education (SBOE) decisions are final. These decisions may not be appealed.**