

Rural Resource Competitive Grants

**Request for Application (RFA)
Application Package**

Application Deadline:
Monday, September 30, 2019 at 5:00 p.m. EST
Applications must be received no later than September 30, 2019 at 5:00 p.m.



August 15, 2019



Table of Contents

Part I: GENERAL INFORMATION	3
Introduction and Purpose.....	3
Eligible Applicants.....	3
Application Formatting and Submission.....	3
Timeline of Activities	4
Program Requirements.....	4
Authorized Activities	5
Unauthorized Activities	5
Grant Period	5
Grant Award Amounts	5
Responsibilities of a Fiscal Agent (LEA)	5
Program Accountability and Monitoring	6
Programmatic Reporting Requirements.....	6
Review and Selection Process	7
PART II: APPLICATION COMPONENTS.....	8
Application Guidelines	8
Program Abstract.....	8
Identifying Needs (Needs Assessment) (20 Total Points).....	8
Goals and Objectives and Selecting Interventions (20 Total Points)	8
Plan for Implementation and Implementation (30 Total Points)	9
Evaluation – Examine Progress (10 Total Points)	10
Sustainability (10 Points)	10
Budget (10 Total Points)	10
Rural Resource Grant Application	11
LEA Application Cover Page	Error! Bookmark not defined.

Part I: GENERAL INFORMATION

Introduction and Purpose

The Title I Section 1003 School Improvement Rural Resource Grant provides financial resources to Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) on behalf of Title I schools identified as Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) or Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) schools as defined by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The Division of School and District Effectiveness at the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) will award competitive one-year, non-renewable grants to LEAs on behalf of identified schools to meet the needs outlined in their improvement plans.

The purpose of the Rural Resource Grant is to provide opportunities for identified schools to compete for funds to address Georgia's Systems of Continuous Improvement, including coherent instruction, effective leadership, supportive learning environment and professional capacity.

The Rural Resource Grant provides additional one-time funds to help federally identified schools focus their efforts to increase student achievement. Successful proposals must demonstrate that the applicant will sustain the work outlined in the proposal.

Grants will be awarded for the 2019-2020 school year. The maximum grant period for a Rural Resource Grant is July 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020 subject to the continued availability of funds and the grantee meeting all outlined requirements. All goods and services must be received and activities and purchases for this budget period must be allocated by August 30, 2020. The GaDOE reserves the right to replicate, adapt, and publish materials developed with funding from the Rural Resource Grant.

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants must be LEAs serving Title I schools identified as CSI, TSI, or CSI Promise as defined by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). In addition, the LEA must be considered rural as defined by the Title V, Part B section of ESSA, which is the Rural Education Initiative. K-12 school districts with federally identified schools may also apply for a districtwide grant to enhance their efforts to support the identified schools within their district.

Application Formatting and Submission

This application information package was developed by the GaDOE and contains all the forms and instructions necessary to apply for a Rural Resource Grant. Please review the enclosed materials and carefully follow the instructions for completing the application. Before submitting the application, review the application requirements to ensure that all sections and documents are complete.

The deadline for submission is Wednesday, September 30, 2019 at 5:00 PM. The application must be submitted on or before the deadline at schoolimprovement@doe.k12.ga.us. Applicants will receive a confirmation email once their application has been received. No applications will be considered after the deadline. The GaDOE is required to enforce the established submission deadline to ensure fairness to all applicants. **Faxed or paper applications are not acceptable and will not be reviewed by the GaDOE.**

Supplemental or revised application information, either from the applicant agency or other sources will not be accepted. An application package must contain every element intended to be submitted. Applicants are encouraged to carefully review the procedures for submitting their materials. No changes or additions to an application will be accepted once the application is submitted.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit only the requested information. Readers will have limited time to evaluate applications; and for that reason, their consideration of the application against the selection criteria will focus solely on the required sections of the application and the appendices.

Timeline of Activities

Date	Activity/Action
August 30, 2019	RFA released
September 30, 2019	Application Submission Deadline
October 25, 2019*	Notification of intent to award funds
November 7, 2019*	Funding period begins; Rural Resource grant projects can begin
May 30, 2020	Progress report due
September 30, 2020	Deadline for final programmatic and financial reports

*Date may be subject to change

If you have questions, please contact Program Manager Amy Alderman, at aalderman@doe.k12.ga.us or (404) 308-2503.

Program Requirements

The Rural Resource Grant activity/project/program/intervention must:

- Respond to a need identified in the comprehensive needs assessment and/or GSAPS review
- Focus on Georgia’s Systems of Continuous Improvement: Coherent Instruction, Effective Leadership, Supportive Learning Environment, Professional Capacity and/or Family and Community Engagement
- Include strong, moderate, or promising evidence-based interventions

LEAs must collaborate with their GaDOE Continuous Improvement Team (including GaDOE District Effectiveness Specialist (DES), GaDOE School Effectiveness Specialist

(SES) as applicable, and the RESA School Improvement Specialist (SIS) as applicable) throughout the process.

Authorized Activities

Rural Resource Grant applicants can use funds to carry out a broad array of activities that advance overall student achievement and support student success, including:

- Plan, develop, and implement a guaranteed and viable curriculum.
- Plan, develop, and implement a comprehensive assessment process.
- Hire certified staff to support evidence-based teaching practices.
- Provide professional development on evidence-based practices.
- Develop wraparound services and resources to support the whole child.

Unauthorized Activities

- Rural Resource Grant funds may not be used for or to support out-of-state travel, graduate-level courses, or professional memberships.
- Rural Resource Grant funds may not be used for new construction or capital improvements to existing structures.

Grant Period

The maximum grant period for a Rural Resource Grant is July 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020 subject to the continued availability of funds and the grantee meeting all outlined requirements. All goods and services must be received and activities and purchases for this budget period must be allocated by August 30, 2020.

Grant Award Amounts

During the grant cycle covered by this RFA release applicants may request funds based on need and proposed services to the target population. All approved applicants will receive 100% of their proposed budget.

Please note that LEAs are permitted to submit more than one application; however, each LEA is limited to five subgrant awards for this competition. LEAs are permitted to submit more than five applications; however, only a maximum of five applications per LEA will be awarded.

Responsibilities of a Fiscal Agent (LEA)

The following are some of the expectations, roles, and responsibilities of a fiscal agent:

- Administer the grant from award to closeout in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations.
- Serve as the organizational representative and point-of-contact for all business management aspects of the award agreement.

- Apply appropriate management controls using management systems, checklists, and records, including, but not limited to:
 - Internal Controls: Safeguard assets; ensure reliability of accounting data and subgrant terms and conditions
 - Operating Controls:
 - Fiduciary procedural manuals; budgetary control system
 - Accounting Controls:
 - Implement controls to ensure reliability of recorded financial data
 - Maintain appropriate level of transaction review and authorization
 - Develop and implement proper procurement procedures and cash management procedures that are well defined
 - Develop procedures that facilitate timely review and audit of financial activity.
- Prepare necessary reports.
- Keep the GaDOE and stakeholders aware and informed about grant project progress.
- Evaluate the extent to which measurable project objectives are being met.
- Submit Completion Reports no later than September 30, 2020.

Program Accountability and Monitoring

The GaDOE is responsible for monitoring the Rural Resource Grant implementation in accordance with the following program accountability requirements:

- Each applicant receiving funding through this RFA meets the eligibility requirements for the grant described herein, and the applicant assures that it will comply with all program implementation and reporting requirements established through this RFA.
- Each applicant receiving funding through this RFA appropriately uses these funds as described in this application package.
- Each applicant implements activities funded through this application within the timeline in which the funds provided are to be used.

To fulfill its monitoring responsibilities, the GaDOE requires grantees to submit appropriate fiscal and program documentation following guidance provided by the Division of School and District Effectiveness.

Programmatic Reporting Requirements

All grantees must submit a final report to the GaDOE's Division of School and District Effectiveness by September 30, 2020, or at the conclusion of the project's activities, whichever occurs first. Grantees will receive directions for completing the final report. Districts and their schools receiving Rural Resource Grant funds must document how the grant funding improved instruction throughout and increased student achievement.

In addition, grantees must include with the final report a final product that outlines the scope of work and any artifacts created as a result of the grant.

Grantees must provide a summary of the funded work that includes the following:

- a. A narrative that includes a clear explanation of:
 - How this grant increased student achievement
 - The extent to which the goals and objectives were achieved, and strategies were implemented
 - The results and findings during the grant period
 - An explanation of how grant activities will be institutionalized after the grant funding ends
- b. Support materials that include:
 - Copies of the evaluation tools used to measure the goals and objectives
 - Copies of curriculum guides, resources, or other instructional materials developed as a part of the grant project
 - Video and/or photographic evidence of new opportunities that can be used by GaDOE for future promotional materials for school improvement

Review and Selection Process

The GaDOE's Division of School and District Effectiveness (SDE) will conduct an initial review of all grant applications for completeness and compliance with application and eligibility guidelines. All required materials, including forms and appendices, must be submitted for the application to be considered complete and eligible for review. Only those applications that are received by the deadline and deemed complete by SDE will be forwarded for review and funding consideration.

Impartial readers will evaluate and score each application based on the quality of the proposed activities and the evidence provided to demonstrate the capacity of the applicant to implement the proposed activity.

Five readers will evaluate each application using the Application Scoring Rubric (Appendix A). A reader may award up to 100 points for each application. The highest and lowest scores will be discarded, and the three remaining scores will be aggregated to determine a total score. Therefore, the highest number of points that can be received for a total score is 300. The GaDOE program staff will rank the scores from highest to lowest and allocate funding based upon the scores and will continue funding to subsequent applications until funding is exhausted or all eligible applicants receive funding.

PART II: APPLICATION COMPONENTS

Application Guidelines

Scoring: The standard scoring criteria are based on a 100-point scale.

Proposal/Format: Applications must be submitted to schoolimprovement@doe.k12.ga.us. Paper or faxed submissions will not be accepted

Cover Sheet (p. 18)

Complete all applicable information using the cover sheet provided.

Program Abstract

The narrative should include, at a minimum, the reason that the need exists, the way the activity/project/program/intervention will operate to meet the need of the target population, and the intended outcomes.

Identifying Needs (Needs Assessment) (20 Total Points)

A needs assessment is a process of looking at data and information about the school/district to develop a clear picture and understanding of what is and has been occurring at the school/district and inform what is needed to improve student achievement.

- The Process (4 points) - Prepare a concise narrative that details the process used.
- Specific Needs (10 points) - Provide detailed and concrete data citing the specific academic achievement (reading, math, science, etc.) and support service gaps that the needs assessment process identified. Applicants are encouraged to utilize data tables in this section to clearly convey the need for the proposed grant services.
- Activity/project/program/intervention Focus (6 points) - Provide specific information outlining the focus of the proposed activity/project/program/intervention as defined by the results of the needs assessment process. The information must demonstrate a clear and concise rationale as to why the proposed activity/project/program/intervention focus is appropriate for the target population and how it will address the identified needs gathered in the data collection and analysis process.

Goals and Objectives and Selecting Interventions (20 Total Points)

Applicants must describe in detail the goals/objectives and the services and activities planned for implementation as well as the personnel involved in performing the proposed activity/project/program/intervention. The applicant must provide details as to the need for the proposed activity/project/program/intervention, the evidence-based

rating (with supporting documentation), and the expected outcomes.

Plan for Implementation and Implementation (30 Total Points)

- The applicant must provide a narrative with a complete plan explaining how the activity/project/program/intervention will operate and will address the identified needs.
- The plan should also provide a clear, concise description of how the proposed activity/project/program/intervention is expected to improve student academic achievement and overall student success, including any connections with the school/district improvement plans.
- As part of the proposed activity/project/program/intervention plan, the applicant should continue with a complete plan that utilizes specific goals, objectives, activities and a timeframe. All objectives must be measurable (include measurement instruments), performance-based, challenging, and able to be assessed throughout the year (formative assessment).
- Applicants must provide examples illustrating how identified strategies align with their school or district improvement plan.
- Applicants should create a table like the one below to capture the required information.

Goals	Measurable Objectives	Measurement Tools	Activities	Timeframe

Evaluation – Examine Progress (10 Total Points)

Applicants must describe in detail how they will evaluate both implementation and effectiveness on an ongoing basis. The applicant must continue by providing a detailed explanation as to how it will implement an evaluation plan for continuously assessing progress towards meeting each of the proposed objectives and revising and strengthening the program based upon the continuous assessments. The plan must be based on established performance measures previously identified in the Goals, Objectives, Activities, and Timeframe table.

Sustainability (10 Points)

To address sustainability of the proposed Rural Resource Grant activity/project/program/intervention beyond the grant period, applicants should discuss how project activities will be institutionalized after the end of the grant period. Is the activity/project/program/intervention designed as part of a sequential and sustainable program? If so, explain how program will be sustained after the award year has passed.

Budget (10 Total Points)

Provide a brief and concise narrative on the following:

- How the items within the budget support the goals of the proposed activity/project/program/intervention
- How the requested funds were allocated for accomplishing tasks and activities described in the application
- How the major costs indicated on the Budget Summary are reasonable and necessary in relation to the number of participants to be served, to the scope of the project, and its anticipated outcomes

The proposed budget must provide clear evidence that the expenditures are appropriate and justified to support the strategies and action steps/activities.

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Rural Resource Grant Application

Release Date:	August 30, 2019
Application Due Date:	September 30, 2019 at 5:00 p.m.

District/School:		
Grant Manager:		Phone Number:
Email:		Date:
GaDOE Continuous Improvement Team Contact:		
Actual Funding Amount Requested:		

Please indicate which one of the Systems of Continuous Improvement your grant will address (please check all that apply).	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Coherent Instruction
<input type="checkbox"/>	Effective Leadership
<input type="checkbox"/>	Supportive Learning Environment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Professional Capacity
<input type="checkbox"/>	Family and Community Engagement

Program Abstract

The narrative should include, at a minimum, the reason that the need exists, the way the program will operate to meet the need of the target population, and the intended outcomes of the proposed activity/project/program/intervention.

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Identifying Needs (Needs Assessment)

The Process - Prepare a concise narrative that details the process used.

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Identifying Needs (Needs Assessment)

Specific Needs - Provide detailed and concrete data citing the specific academic achievement (reading, math, science, etc.) and support service gaps that the needs assessment process identified. You are encouraged to utilize data tables in this section to clearly convey the need for the proposed grant services.

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Identifying Needs (Needs Assessment)

Program Focus - Provide specific information outlining the focus of the proposed activity/project/program/intervention as defined by the results of the needs assessment process. The information must demonstrate a clear and concise rationale as to why the proposed activity/project/program/intervention focus is appropriate for the target population and how it will address the identified needs gathered in the data collection and analysis process.

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Goals and Objectives and Selecting Interventions

Describe in detail the goals/objectives and the services and activities planned for implementation as well as the personnel involved in performing the proposed activity/project/program/intervention. Provide details as to the need for the proposed activity/project/program/intervention, the evidence-based rating (with supporting documentation), and the expected outcomes.

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Plan for Implementation and Implementation

Provide a clear, concise description of how the proposed activity/project/program/intervention will address the needs identified in the needs assessment process and how it will improve student academic achievement and overall student success (including any connections with the school/district improvement plans). Ensure the plan includes evidence of best practices, including research or evidence-based practices that will be used to enhance student achievement. (See criteria on p. 10.)

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Use the table below to capture the required information outlined in the Application Components section.

Goals	Measurable Objectives	Measurement Tools	Activities	Timeframe

Evaluation – Examine Progress

Describe in detail how you will evaluate both implementation and effectiveness on an ongoing basis. Provide a detailed explanation as to how you will implement an evaluation plan for continuously assessing progress towards meeting each of the proposed objectives and revising and strengthening the program based upon the continuous assessments.

Sustainability

Discuss how the activity/project/program/intervention will be institutionalized after the end of the grant period. If the activity/project/program/intervention is designed as part of a sequential and sustainable program, explain how it will be sustained after the award year has passed.

Budget

Provide a brief and concise narrative on the following:

- How the items within the budget support the goals of the proposed activity/project/program/intervention;
- How the requested funds were allocated for accomplishing tasks and activities described in the application;
- How the major costs indicated on the Budget Summary are reasonable and necessary in relation to the number of participants to be served, to the scope of the project, and its anticipated outcomes; and
- How Title I Section 1003 school improvement funds will supplement and not supplant other federal, state, and local funds, and other non-federal funds.

**Georgia Department of Education
Title I Section 1003 School Improvement Competitive Grant**

LEA Application Cover Page

LEA Name: School Name:	LEA Mailing Address:
LEA Contact and Coordinator (person responsible for the grant):	
Name:	
Position and Office:	
Contact's Mailing Address:	
Telephone:	
Email Address:	
Superintendent (Print Name):	Telephone:
Signature of Superintendent:	Date:
GaDOE Continuous Improvement Team Contact (Print Name):	
Signature of GaDOE Contact	Date:
<i>The District, through its authorized representative, agrees to comply with all requirements applicable to the grant.</i>	