



U.S. Department of Labor on behalf of the
U.S. Department of Education

Teacher and School Leader Incentive Program

Assistance Listing Number: 84.374A

FY 2026 Grant Competition

Posted April 8, 2026

Contents

Program Information	2
Eligibility	3
Eligible Applicants	3
Costs	4
Program Description	5
Priorities	5
Application Requirements.....	9
Selection Criteria.....	10
Performance Measures	12
Application Submission Information	13
Application Review Information	15
Definitions	16
Award Requirements	21
Application Checklist	23
Appendix	32

Program Information

The Employment and Training Administration at the U.S. Department of Labor (Labor) is soliciting applications in support of the administration of the Teacher and School Leader Incentive Program (TSL) program on behalf of the U.S. Department of Education (ED). The purpose of the TSL program is to assist States, local educational agencies (LEAs), and nonprofit organizations to develop, implement, improve, or expand comprehensive performance-based compensation systems (PBCS) or human capital management systems (HCMS) for teachers, principals, or other school leaders (especially for teachers, principals, or other school leaders in high-need schools) who raise student growth and academic achievement, support workforce readiness, and close the achievement gap between high- and low-performing students. In addition, a portion of TSL funds may be used to study the effectiveness, fairness, quality, consistency, and reliability of PBCS or HCMS for educators.

¹ According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 87 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering, and maintaining the data needed, and completing and

Grant application reviewers will award competitive preference points to projects or proposals that will be carried out by State educational agencies grantees. This priority aligns to the Administration's efforts to ensure Federal education dollars empower states to best meet their teachers' and students' needs. Applicants can also receive competitive preference points for projects or proposals that are designed to advance meaningful learning, including high-quality and proven interventions that will directly benefit student learning outcomes.

Assistance Listing Number: 84.374A.

Program Authority: Sections 2211-2213 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA).

OMB Control Number: 1810-0758.¹

For Further Information: Cynthia Hunter. Telephone: 202-987-1670. Email: Cynthia.Hunter@ed.gov or TSL@ed.gov.

Type of Award: Discretionary grants.

Estimated Available Funds: \$60,000,000.

Contingent upon the availability of funds and the quality of applications, we may

reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefit and voluntary. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to ICDocketMgr@ed.gov and reference the OMB Control Number 1810-0758. *Note:* Please do not return completed applications to this address.

make additional awards in subsequent years from the list of unfunded applications from this competition.

Estimated Range of Awards: \$500,000 to \$8.5 million.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$4,300,000 per performance period.

Estimated Number of Awards: 20.

Project Period: Up to 36 months.

Application Deadline: June 9, 2026.

Note: This application notice and instructions is the official document governing the grant competition. ED is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

Eligibility

Eligible Applicants

To receive funds under this program, an applicant must be:

- (a) An LEA, including a charter school that is an LEA, or a consortium of LEAs;
- (b) A State educational agency (SEA) or other State agency designated by the Chief Executive of a State to participate;
- (c) The Bureau of Indian Education; or
- (d) A partnership consisting of--
 - (i) One or more agencies described in paragraph (a), (b), or (c); and
 - (ii) At least one nonprofit or for-profit entity.

Note: For the purpose of this program, the Secretary considers all schools funded by the Department of Interior's Bureau of Indian Education to be LEAs under section 8101(30)(C) of the ESEA.

Note: Under section 2212(b)(3) of the ESEA, an LEA may receive (whether individually or as part of a consortium or partnership) a grant under the TSL program only twice.

Note: A Partnership under this competition must follow the procedures under [34 CFR 75.127](#) through [75.129](#) in developing a group application. This includes developing an agreement that details the activities that each member of the group plans to perform and binds each member of the group to every statement and assurance made by the applicant in the application. This agreement must be submitted with the application.

Costs

Cost Sharing or Matching

Each grant recipient under the TSL program must provide from non-Federal sources an amount equal to 50 percent of the amount of the grant (which may be provided in cash or in kind), to carry out the activities supported by the grant.² Applicants and grantees should budget relative to each annual award of TSL grant funds. Applicants are strongly encouraged to take this requirement into account when requesting Federal funds and limit their requests appropriately. Applicants should verify that their budgets reflect both the requested Federal award amount and the matching contribution with appropriate cost allocations. TSL: (Cost Share or Matching Formula: The federal award amount is calculated by multiplying the total project cost by 0.67.)

Supplement-Not-Supplant

This program involves supplement-not-supplant funding requirements. In accordance with section 2212(g) of the ESEA, funds made available under this program must be used to supplement, and not supplant, other Federal or State funds that would otherwise be expended to carry out activities under this program. ED considers all schools funded by the Department of Interior's Bureau of Indian Education to be LEAs, and the funds that these schools receive from the Department of Interior's annual appropriation to be neither Federal nor State funds. Further, the prohibition against supplanting also means that grantees seeking to charge indirect costs to TSL funds will need to use their negotiated restricted indirect cost rates. See [34 CFR 75.563](#) for more information.

Indirect Cost Rate Information

This program uses a restricted indirect cost rate. For more information regarding indirect costs, or to obtain a negotiated indirect cost rate, please see this [webpage](#).

Administrative Cost Limitation

This program does not include any program-specific limitation on administrative expenses. All administrative expenses must be reasonable and necessary and conform to Cost Principles described in [2 CFR part 200 subpart E](#) of the Guidance for Federal Financial Assistance.

Subgrantees

² Required by section 2212(f) of the ESEA.

Under [34 CFR 75.708\(b\) and \(c\)](#), a grantee under this competition may award subgrants to directly carry out project activities described in its application to the following types of entities: LEAs, SEAs, nonprofit organizations or for-profit organizations. The grantee may award subgrants to entities it has identified in an approved application.

Renewal

ED may renew a grant awarded under this section for up to 24 additional months, beyond the 36 month performance period, if the grantee demonstrates to ED that the grantee is effectively using funds.³ Such renewal may include allowing the grantee to scale up or replicate the successful program.

Note: During the third year of the project period for grants awarded under this competition, if ED exercises the option to offer an opportunity for renewals, ED will provide grantees with information on the renewal process. This additional funding is intended not only to support continuation of approved project activities, but also to encourage scaling, replication, and sustainability efforts and strategies. In making decisions on whether to award a 2-year renewal award, we intend to review performance data submitted in regularly required reporting, as well as potentially request narrative information to be assessed using selection criteria from [34 CFR 75.210](#).

Applications Available	April 8, 2026
Application Deadline	June 9, 2026
Deadline for Intergovernmental Review	August 30, 2026

Applicants are required to follow the 2025 Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the *Federal Register* on August 29, 2025 (90 FR 42234) and available at [ED 2025 Common Instructions](#).

Program Description

Priorities

This notice includes two absolute priorities and two competitive preference priorities. Absolute Priority 1 is from section 2212(e)(1) and 2212(e)(2)(F) of the ESEA; and Absolute Priority 2 is from the TSL Notice of Final Priority and Definition, published in the *Federal Register* on July 9, 2021 ([86 FR 36220](#)) (TSL NFP). Competitive Preference Priority 1 is from the Secretary's Supplemental Priorities and Definitions on Evidence-Based Literacy, Education Choice, and Returning Education to the States (2025 Supplemental Priorities),

³ Authorized under section 2212(b)(2) of the ESEA.

published in the *Federal Register* on September 9, 2025 ([90 FR 43514](#)). Competitive Preference Priority 2 is from the Secretary's Supplemental Priority and Definitions on Meaningful Learning Opportunities (Meaningful Learning Opportunities Supplemental Priority), published in the *Federal Register* on February 12, 2026 ([91 FR 6625](#)).

Absolute Priority: ED considers only applications that meet both absolute priorities.

Competitive Preference Priorities: An application may receive a maximum of 10 additional points under Competitive Preference Priority 1 and a maximum of 10 additional points under Competitive Preference Priority 2, for a maximum of 20 additional points under the competitive preference priorities. ED will not review or award points for the competitive preference priority if an applicant fails to clearly identify it as a competitive preference priority that it wishes ED to consider for purposes of awarding competitive preference priority points.

<i>Priority Type</i>	<i>Priority Title</i>	<i>Required</i>	<i>Priority Language</i>	<i>Points</i>
<i>Absolute Priority 1</i>	<i>Human Capital Management Systems (HCMS) or Performance Based Compensation Systems (PBCS)</i>	Yes	<p>Under this priority, eligible applicants must propose a project to develop, implement, improve, or expand, in collaboration with teachers, principals, other school leaders, and members of the public, a PBCS or HCMS.</p> <p>Applicants that propose to use grant funds, under ESEA section 2212(e)(2)(A), to develop or improve an evaluation and support system as part of an HCMS, in responding to this priority, must describe how such system—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Reflects clear and fair measures of educator performance, based in part on demonstrated improvement in student academic achievement; and (b) Provides educators with ongoing, differentiated, targeted, and 	Not applicable

<i>Priority Type</i>	<i>Priority Title</i>	Required	Priority Language	Points
			personalized support and feedback for improvement, including professional development opportunities designed to increase effectiveness.	
<i>Absolute Priority 2</i>	<i>High-Need Schools</i>	Yes	<p>Under this priority, eligible applicants must concentrate proposed activities on teachers, principals, or other school leaders serving in high-need schools.</p> <p>In order to demonstrate that the TSL project is concentrated in high-need schools, the applicant must—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Provide the requested data in paragraph (c) of this priority to demonstrate that at least the majority of the schools participating in the proposed project are high-need schools and describe how the TSL-assisted grant activities are focused on those schools; (b) Include a list of all schools in which the proposed TSL-funded project would be implemented and indicate which schools are high-need schools; and (c) Provide the most recently available school-level data supporting each school's 	Not Applicable

<i>Priority Type</i>	<i>Priority Title</i>	<i>Required</i>	<i>Priority Language</i>	<i>Points</i>
			designation as a high-need school.	
<i>Competitive Preference Priority 1</i>	<i>Returning Education to the States</i>	No	Projects or proposals that will be carried out by State educational agencies (as defined in 20 U.S.C. 7801(49)).	0 or 10 points
<i>Competitive Preference Priority 2</i>	<i>Meaningful Learning Opportunities for Students</i>	No	<p>Projects or proposals that are designed to do one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Strengthen core instruction through creating and supporting principals and other school leaders in implementing strategic staffing models, instructional leadership roles, or developing models for teacher and paraprofessional advancement that incentivize high-performing educators with opportunities and leverage their time, resources, and talent in innovative ways to better support student learning and achievement (up to 7 points); (b) Advance innovative assessment models through one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Supporting the development, implementation, and scaling of assessment models that provide timely and useful 	Up to 10 points

Priority Type	Priority Title	Required	Priority Language	Points
			<p>information to educators, students, and families to address student learning needs;</p> <p>(ii) Supporting states to re-envision state assessment systems through research activities, planning, piloting, and/or scaling new or innovative assessment models (up to 3 points).</p> <p><i>Note: Staffing models can include registered apprenticeships.</i></p>	

Application Requirements⁴

Each eligible applicant desiring a grant under this program must submit an application that contains—

- (a) A description of the PBCS or HCMS that the eligible entity proposes to develop, implement, improve, or expand through the grant;
- (b) A description of the most significant gaps or insufficiencies in student access to effective educators in high-need schools, including gaps or inequities in how effective educators are distributed across the LEA, as identified using factors such as data on school resources, staffing patterns, school environment, educator support systems, and other school-level factors;
- (c) A description and evidence of the support and commitment from educators, which may include charter school leaders, in the school (including organizations

⁴ For FY 2026 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, the following application requirements from ESEA section 2212(c) apply.

representing educators), the community, and the LEA to the activities proposed under the grant;

- (d) A description of how the eligible entity will develop and implement a fair, rigorous, valid, reliable, and objective process to evaluate educator performance under the system that is based in part on measures of student academic achievement, including the baseline performance against which evaluations of improved performance will be made;
- (e) A description of the LEAs or schools to be served under the grant, including student academic achievement, demographic, and socioeconomic information;
- (f) A description of the effectiveness of educators in the LEA and the schools to be served under the grant and the extent to which the system will increase the effectiveness of educators in such schools;
- (g) A description of how the eligible entity will use grant funds under section 2212 of the ESEA in each year of the grant, including a timeline for implementation of such activities;
- (h) A description of how the eligible entity will continue the activities assisted under the grant after the grant period ends;
- (i) A description of the State, local, or other public or private funds that will be used to supplement the grant, including funds under Title II, part A of the ESEA, and sustain the activities assisted under the grant after the end of the grant period;
- (j) A description of—
 - (i) The rationale for the project;
 - (ii) How the proposed activities are evidence-based (as defined in this notice); and
 - (iii) If applicable, the prior experience of the eligible entity in developing and implementing such activities.

Selection Criteria

The selection criteria for this competition are from [34 CFR 75.210](#). The maximum score for the following selection criteria is 100 points. The maximum score for each criterion is included in parentheses following its title. Please see the appendix for a suggested scoring rubric.

- (a) *Need for the project (Up to 10 points)*: The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:
- (i) The extent to which the specific nature and magnitude of gaps or challenges are identified and the extent to which these gaps or challenges will be addressed by the services, supports, infrastructure, or opportunities described in the proposed project. (Up to 5 points)
 - (ii) The extent to which the proposed project will integrate or build on ideas, strategies, and efforts from similar external projects to improve relevant outcomes, using existing funding streams from other programs or policies supported by community, State, and Federal resources. (Up to 5 points)
- (b) *Quality of the project design (Up to 35 points)*: The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers:
- (i) The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale that is aligned with the purposes of the grant program. (Up to 7 points)
 - (ii) The extent to which the design of the proposed project includes a thorough, high-quality review of the relevant literature, a high-quality plan for project implementation, and the use of appropriate methodological tools to ensure successful achievement of project objectives. (Up to 7 points)
 - (iii) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to build recipient and project capacity in ways that lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services. (Up to 7 points)
 - (iv) The extent to which performance feedback and formative data are integral to the design of the proposed project and will be used to inform continuous improvement. (Up to 7 points)
 - (v) The quality of the logic model or other conceptual framework underlying the proposed project, including how inputs are related to outcomes. (Up to 7 points)
- (c) *Quality of the management plan (Up to 35 points)*: The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers feasibility of the

management plan to achieve project objectives and goals on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks. (Up to 35 points)

(d) *Adequacy of resources (Up to 20 points)*: The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

- (i) The likelihood that the proposed project will result in systemic change that supports continuous, sustainable, and measurable improvement. (Up to 7 points)
- (ii) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local, State, regional, or national capacity to provide, improve, sustain, or expand training or services that address the needs of underserved populations. (Up to 7 points)
- (iii) The extent to which there is a plan to incorporate the project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the applicant beyond the end of the project period. (Up to 6 points)

Performance Measures

For the purposes of ED reporting under [34 CFR 75.110](#), ED has established a set of performance measures.

Applications must describe:

The data collection and reporting methods the applicant would use and why those methods are likely to yield reliable, valid, and meaningful performance data.

The applicant's capacity to collect and report reliable, valid, and meaningful performance data, as evidenced by high-quality data collection, analysis, and reporting in other projects or research.

Program Measure	Description
Program Performance Measure 1	The percentage of teachers and school leaders within the TSL-assisted schools rated effective or higher by their districts' evaluation and support systems.
Program Performance Measure 2	The percentage of teachers and school leaders across the participating district(s) that show improvements, over the previous year, on the student growth component of their evaluation rating.
Program Performance Measure 3	The percentage of teachers and school leaders within the TSL-assisted schools that show

Program Measure	Description
	improvements, over the previous year, on the student growth component of their evaluation rating.
Program Performance Measure 4	The percentage of teachers and school leaders in TSL-assisted schools for whom evaluation ratings were used to inform decisions regarding recruitment, hiring, placement, retention, dismissal, professional development, tenure, promotion, or all of the above.
Program Performance Measure 5	The percentage of teachers and school leaders within the participating district(s) who earned performance-based compensation based on their individual evaluation ratings.
Program Performance Measure 6	The percentage of teachers and school leaders in TSL-funded schools who earned performance-based compensation based on their individual evaluation ratings. Grantees will report annually on each measure.

Application Submission Information

Pre-Application Webinar

The Office of Elementary and Secondary Education intends to conduct informational webinars designed to provide technical assistance to interested applicants for grants under the program. These informational webinars occur approximately 2 weeks after the publication of this notice on Grants.gov at [TSL website](#).

Registration

To apply, you must first be registered in two systems: [SAM.gov](#) and [Grants.gov](#). If you are already registered, make sure your registration is active and up to date.

Grants.gov registration involves several steps, including registration on [SAM.gov](#). You may begin working on your application while completing the registration process, but you cannot apply until all registration steps are complete. Once your SAM registration is active, it will take 24-48 hours for the information to become available in Grants.gov. For detailed information on the registration steps, please go to [Grants.gov Applicant Registration](#). Please note that your organization will need to update its SAM registration annually.

SAM.gov

You must have an active account with SAM.gov. This includes having a Unique Entity Identifier. SAM.gov registration can take several weeks. **Begin that process early.**

To register, go to [SAM.gov](#) and click on "[Get Started](#)."

Click on the [Entity Registration Checklist](#) for the information you will need to register in SAM.gov.

If you need help, you can call 866-606-8220 or live chat with the [Federal Service Desk](#).

Grants.gov

You must also have an active account with Grants.gov.

To register, go to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and click “[Register](#).” When ready, click on “[Get Registered Now](#)” and complete the required fields.

For more information or assistance, click on “[Applicant Registration Page](#).”

ED strongly recommends that you do not wait until the last day to submit your application. Grants.gov will put a date/time stamp on your application and then process it after it is fully uploaded. If Grants.gov rejects your application, you will need to resubmit successfully to Grants.gov before 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern Time on the deadline date.

You must provide the Unique-Entity ID (UEI) on your application that was used when you registered as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) on Grants.gov. This UEI is assigned to your organization in SAM at the time your organization registers in SAM. If you do not enter the UEI assigned by SAM on your application, Grants.gov will reject your application.

A Grants.gov applicant must apply online using Workspace, a shared environment in Grants.gov where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different web forms within an application. The Grants.gov website contains [further instructions on how to apply](#).

Intergovernmental Review

This is subject to Executive Order 12372 (Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs) and the regulations in 34 CFR Part 79. One of the objectives of Executive Order 12372 is to strengthen federalism – or the distribution of responsibility between localities, States, and the Federal government – by fostering intergovernmental partnerships. This idea includes supporting processes that State or local governments have developed to coordinate and review proposed Federal financial grant applications. Grant applicants need to contact State Single Points of Contact (SPOC) for information on their State’s procedures. Multi-State applicants should follow procedures specific to each state. Further information about the [SPOC List and the official list of entities](#) can be found online.

Verify Submission

Verify that Grants.gov received your application submission on time and that it was validated successfully. To see the date/time your application was received, log in to Grants.gov and click on the Track My Application link. For a successful submission, the date/time received should be earlier than 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern Time, on the deadline date, AND the application status should be: Validated, Received by Agency, or Agency Tracking Number Assigned.

If the date/time received is later than 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern Time on the deadline date, your application is late. If your application has a status of “Received,” it is still awaiting validation by Grants.gov. Once validation is complete, the status will either change to “Validated” or “Rejected with Errors.” If the status is “Rejected with Errors,” your application has not been received successfully. Some of the reasons Grants.gov may reject an application can be found on the [Encountering Error Messages](#) webpage at Grants.gov.

For more detailed information on troubleshooting Adobe errors, you can review the [Adobe Reader Software Tip Sheet](#). If you discover your application is late or has been rejected, please see the instructions below. *Note:* You will receive a series of confirmations both online and via e-mail about the status of your application. Please do not rely solely on e-mail to confirm whether your application has been received timely and validated successfully.

Helpful Hints When Working with Grants.gov

Please go to the [Grants.gov Support Center](#) for help with Grants.gov. For additional tips related to submitting grant applications, please refer to the Grants.gov [Applicant FAQs](#) as well as [additional information on Workspace](#).

Submission Problems – What should you do?

If you have problems submitting to Grants.gov before the closing date, please contact Grants.gov Customer Support at 1-800-518-4726 or via email at: support@grants.gov. You may also access the [Grants.gov Self- Service Knowledge Base web portal](#).

Application Review Information

Review and Selection Process: We remind potential applicants that in reviewing applications in any discretionary grant competition, the Secretary may consider, under [34 CFR 75.217](#), information outside the rank order of applications, including the information in each application; and any other information—

- (a) Relevant to a criterion, priority, or other requirement that applies to the selection of applications for new grants;
- (b) Concerning the applicant's performance and use of funds under a previous award under any ED program; and
- (c) Concerning the applicant's failure under any ED program to submit a performance report or its submission of a performance report of unacceptable quality.

Before making awards, ED staff will screen applications submitted in accordance with the requirements in this notice to determine whether applications have met eligibility and other requirements, including whether an application may fail to meet the “Terms and Conditions” applicable to awarded funds referenced elsewhere within this notice. This screening process may occur at various stages of the review and selection process. Applicants that are determined to be ineligible will not receive a grant, regardless of whether the application was included in the peer review process. Applications not selected for funding will be informed of the Secretary's decision in accordance with [34 CFR 75.218](#).

In addition, in making a competitive grant award, the Secretary requires various assurances including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from ED ([34 CFR 100.4](#), [104.5](#), [106.4](#), [108.8](#), and [110.23](#)).

Under ESEA section 2212, in selecting an application for an award, we consider that the Secretary must ensure, to the extent practicable, an equitable geographic distribution of grants under this subpart, including the distribution of such grants between rural and urban areas.

Definitions

The definitions of “human capital management system” and “performance-based compensation system” are from section 2211 of the ESEA. The definition of “evidence-based,” “professional development,” and “school leader” are from section 8101 of the ESEA. The definitions of “continuous improvement,” “demonstrates a rationale,” “logic model,” “project component,” “quality data” and “relevant outcome” are from [34 CFR 77.1](#). The definition of “strategic staffing” is from the Meaningful Learning Opportunities Supplemental Priorities. The definition of “high-need school” is from the TSL NFP. These definitions apply to the FY 2026 grant competition and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition.

Continuous improvement means using plans for collecting and analyzing data about a project component's implementation and outcomes (including the pace and extent to which project outcomes are being met) to inform necessary changes throughout the project. These plans may include strategies to gather ongoing feedback from participants and stakeholders on the implementation of the project component.

Demonstrates a rationale means that there is a key project component included in the project's logic model that is supported by citations of high-quality research or evaluation

findings that suggest the project component is likely to significantly improve relevant outcomes.

Evidence-based means an activity, strategy, or intervention that—

- (a) Demonstrates a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes or other relevant outcomes based on—
 - (i) Strong evidence from at least 1 well-designed and well-implemented experimental study;
 - (ii) Moderate evidence from at least 1 well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental study; or
 - (iii) Promising evidence from at least 1 well-designed and well-implemented correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias; or
 - (iv) (1) Demonstrates a rationale based on high-quality research findings or positive evaluation that such activity, strategy, or intervention is likely to improve student outcomes or other relevant outcomes; and
(2) Includes ongoing efforts to examine the effects of such activity, strategy, or intervention.

High-need school means a school with 50 percent or more of its enrollment from low-income families as calculated using—

- (a) The number of children eligible for a free or reduced-price lunch under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) (or, if an LEA does not participate in the NSLP, comparable data from another source such as a survey);
- (b) If an LEA has one or more schools that participate in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) of the NSLP, for any of its schools (i.e., CEP and non-CEP schools), the method in paragraph (a) of this definition or an alternative method approved by the Department; and
- (c) For middle and high schools, data from feeder schools that can establish that the middle or high school is a high-need school under paragraph (a) or (b) of this definition.

Human Capital Management System (HCMS) means a system—

- (a) By which an LEA makes and implements human capital decisions, such as decisions on preparation, recruitment, hiring, placement, retention, dismissal, compensation, professional development, tenure, and promotion; and

(b) includes a performance-based compensation system.

Logic model (also referred to as a theory of action) means a framework that identifies key project components of the proposed project (i.e., the active “ingredients” that are hypothesized to be critical to achieving the relevant outcomes) and describes the theoretical and operational relationships among the key project components and relevant outcomes.

Performance-Based Compensation System (PBCS) means a system of compensation for teachers, principals, or other school leaders—

(a) That differentiates levels of compensation based in part on measurable increases in student academic achievement; and

(b) Which may include—

(i) Differentiated levels of compensation, which may include bonus pay, on the basis of the employment responsibilities and success of effective teachers, principals, or other school leaders in hard-to-staff schools or high-need subject areas; and

(ii) Recognition of the skills and knowledge of teachers, principals, or other school leaders as demonstrated through—

(1) Successful fulfillment of additional responsibilities or job functions, such as teacher leadership roles; and

(2) Evidence of professional achievement and mastery of content knowledge and superior teaching and leadership skills.

Professional development means activities that—

(a) are an integral part of school and local educational agency strategies for providing educators (including teachers, principals, other school leaders, specialized instructional support personnel, paraprofessionals, and as applicable, early childhood educators) with the knowledge and skills necessary to enable students to succeed in a well rounded education and to meet the challenging State academic standards; and

(b) are sustained (not stand-alone, 1-day, or short term workshops), intensive, collaborative, job-embedded, data-driven, and classroom-focused, and may include activities that—

(i) improve and increase teachers’—

(1) knowledge of the academic subjects the teachers teach;

- (2) understanding of how students learn;
 - (3) ability to analyze student work; and achievement from multiple sources, including how to adjust instructional strategies, assessments, and materials based on such analysis;
- (ii) are an integral part of broad schoolwide and districtwide educational improvement plans;
 - (iii) allow personalized plans for each educator to address the educator's specific needs identified in observation or other feedback;
 - (iv) improve classroom management skills;
 - (v) support the recruitment, hiring, and training of effective teachers, including teachers who became certified through State and local alternative routes to certification;
 - (vi) advance teacher understanding of—
 - (1) effective instructional strategies that are evidence-based; and
 - (2) strategies for improving student academic achievement or substantially increasing the knowledge and teaching skills of teachers;
 - (vii) are aligned with, and directly related to, academic goals of the school or local educational agency;
 - (viii) are developed with extensive participation of teachers, principals, other school leaders, parents, representatives of Indian tribes (as applicable), and administrators of schools to be served under this Act;
 - (ix) are designed to give teachers of English learners, and other teachers and instructional staff, the knowledge and skills to provide instruction and appropriate language and academic support services to those children, including the appropriate use of curricula and assessments;
 - (x) to the extent appropriate, provide training for teachers, principals, and other school leaders in the use of technology (including education about the harms of copyright piracy), so that technology and technology applications are effectively used in the classroom to improve teaching and learning in the curricula and academic subjects in which the teachers teach;

- (xi) as a whole, are regularly evaluated for their impact on increased teacher effectiveness and improved student academic achievement, with the findings of the evaluations used to improve the quality of professional development;
- (xii) are designed to give teachers of children with disabilities or children with developmental delays, and other teachers and instructional staff, the knowledge and skills to provide instruction and academic support services, to those children, including positive behavioral interventions and supports, multi-tier system of supports, and use of accommodations;
- (xiii) include instruction in the use of data and assessments to inform and instruct classroom practice;
- (xiv) include instruction in ways that teachers, principals, other school leaders, specialized instructional support personnel, and school administrators may work more effectively with parents and families;
- (xv) involve the forming of partnerships with institutions of higher education, including, as applicable, Tribal Colleges and Universities as defined in section 316(b) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.1059c(b)), to establish school-based teacher, principal, and other school leader training programs that provide prospective teachers, novice teachers, principals, and other school leaders with an opportunity to work under the guidance of experienced teachers, principals, other school leaders, and faculty of such institutions;
- (xvi) create programs to enable paraprofessionals (assisting teachers employed by a local educational agency receiving assistance under part A of title I) to obtain the education necessary for those paraprofessionals to become certified and licensed teachers;
- (xvii) provide follow-up training to teachers who have participated in activities described in this paragraph that are designed to ensure that the knowledge and skills learned by the teachers are implemented in the classroom; and
- (xviii) where practicable, provide jointly for school staff and other early childhood education program providers, to address the transition to elementary school, including issues related to school readiness.

Project component means an activity, strategy, intervention, process, product, practice, or policy included in a project. Evidence may pertain to an individual project component or to a combination of project components (e.g., training teachers on instructional practices for English learners and follow-on coaching for these teachers).

Quality data encompasses utility, objectivity, and integrity of the information. “Utility” refers to how the data will be used, either for its intended use or other uses. “Objectivity” refers to data being accurate, complete, reliable, and unbiased. “Integrity” refers to the protection of data from being manipulated.

Relevant outcome means the student outcome(s) or other outcome(s) the key project component is designed to improve, consistent with the specific goals of the program.

School leader means a principal, assistant principal, or other individual who is—

- (a) An employee or officer of an elementary school or secondary school, LEA, or other entity operating an elementary school or secondary school; and
- (b) Responsible for the daily instructional leadership and managerial operations in the elementary school or secondary school building.

Strategic Staffing means a team-based approach to school staffing that replaces the traditional one-teacher, one-classroom model. In this model, at least two professional educators, which can include paraprofessionals and other licensed educators, share responsibility for a common roster of students during the same blocks of time in the school day. Teamed educators have differentiated roles and distributed expertise, allowing for flexible student grouping, more effective use of instructional time, and expanded career entry and advancement opportunities.

Award Requirements

Terms and Conditions

If you are awarded a grant under this competition, you must ensure and may be required to demonstrate that federal funds will not be used under this project in any manner that violates the United States Constitution, Title VI or Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 ([42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.](#) or [42 U.S.C. 2000e et seq.](#)), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 ([20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.](#)), section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act ([29 U.S.C. 794](#)), the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 ([42 U.S.C. 6101 et seq.](#)), Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ([42 U.S.C. 12131 et seq.](#)), the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act of 2001 ([20 U.S.C. 7905](#)), section 117 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended ([20 U.S.C. 1011f](#)), or other applicable federal law. To the extent that a grantee uses grant funds for such unallowable activities, ED may take appropriate enforcement action including the potential recovery of funds or may pursue termination. The Grant Award Notification document accompanying your award may contain further terms and

conditions, as necessary, to ensure grantee compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and administrative priorities.

Please note the provisions of Executive Orders 14151, 14168, 14173, and 14190 as well as the U.S. Department of Justice’s July 29, 2025, non-regulatory “[Guidance for Recipients of Federal Funding Regarding Unlawful Discrimination](#),” which clarifies the application of federal antidiscrimination laws to programs or initiatives that may involve discriminatory practices, including those labeled as Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (“DEI”) programs.

Such activities may risk violating federal civil rights laws and may jeopardize federal funding. This includes any discriminatory equity ideology in violation of a Federal anti-discrimination law. A definition of “discriminatory equity ideology” is contained in Section 2(b) of Executive Order 14190. To the extent that any entity receiving grant funds under this grant uses those grant funds for such unallowable activities, ED reserves the right to take appropriate enforcement actions, including the recovery of grant funds or may pursue termination or non-continuation.

Applicable Regulations

(a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations in 34 CFR parts 75, 77, 79, 81, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98, and 99. (b) The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of ED in 2 CFR part 3485. (c) The Guidance for Federal Financial Assistance in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended as regulations of ED in 2 CFR part 3474. (d) The TSL NFP. (e) The 2025 Supplemental Priorities. (f) The Meaningful Learning Opportunities Supplemental Priority.

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 86 apply to IHEs only.

Continuation Awards

In making a continuation award under [34 CFR 75.253](#), ED considers, among other things: whether a grantee has made substantial progress in achieving the goals and objectives of the project; whether the grantee has expended funds in a manner that is consistent with its approved application and budget; if ED has established performance measurement requirements; whether the grantee has made substantial progress in achieving the performance targets in the grantee's approved application; or whether the continuation of the project is in the best interest of the Federal government.

In making a continuation award, ED also considers whether the grantee is operating in compliance with the assurances in its approved application, including those applicable to

Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department ([34 CFR 100.4](#), [104.5](#), [106.4](#), [108.8](#), and [110.23](#)). In making any continuation award determination, ED may consider all relevant information.

Application Checklist

The application will require you to fill out several forms, which are listed and linked in Grants.gov. See below for a description of forms and sections:

1. Standard Documents

- Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
- ED Supplemental Information for SF-424
- ED Grant Application Form for Project Objectives and Performance Measures Information

2. Budget Information

- Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)
- A copy of the current indirect cost rate agreement confirming the applicant's restricted indirect cost rate

3. Abstract Form

- Project Abstract

4. Project Narrative

- Application Narrative (Project Narrative Attachment Form)

5. Budget Narrative

- Budget Narrative Attachment Form

6. Other Attachment Forms

- Individual Resumes for Project Director & Key Personnel
- Logic Model
- Commitment letters, surveys, or other evidence demonstrating educator support
- Documentation of Nonprofit Status
- In the case of an applicant that is a charter school the application must include a letter from the authorized chartering agency or SEA that confirms their status in the State as an LEA.

7. Assurances and Certifications

- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (Standard Form LLL Form)
- Grants.gov Lobbying Form

Part 1: Standard Documents

- Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
- ED Supplemental Information for SF-424

These forms require basic identifying information about the applicant and the application. Please provide all requested applicant information (including name, address, e-mail address and UEI). **When applying electronically via Grants.gov, you will need to ensure that the UEI on your application is the same as the UEI your organization used when it registered with the System for Award Management.**

Applicants are advised to complete the Application for Federal Assistance (Form SF-424) first. Grants.gov will automatically insert the correct Assistance Listing Number and program name automatically wherever needed on other forms.

Please do not attach any narratives, supporting files, or application components to the Standard Form (SF-424). Although this form accepts attachments, ED will only review materials/files attached in accordance with the instructions provided within this application.

- ED Grant Application Form for Project Objectives and Performance Measures Information

This form collects project objectives and quantitative and/or qualitative program and project-specific performance measures at the time of application submission.

Part 2: Budget Information

Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)

The SF-424A Budget Information Form is required. This part of your application contains information about the Federal funding you are requesting. The form requires total funding requests for each year of the project, but only requires detailed information for Year 1 of the project. You will provide information on all years of the project, including an itemized budget breakdown for each year of the proposed project, in your Budget Narrative. Specific instructions for completing the Budget Narrative are provided within this application notice and instructions under Budget Narrative. Budget Narrative attachments are not included in the page count.

Instructions for completing SF-424A:

The SF-424A has six sections (A-F). While the form includes several sections and boxes, please use the information below to complete only the necessary sections.

Section A – Budget Summary

- *Section A-Budget Summary:* Enter the name of the grant program for which you are requesting funds in 1(a).
- *Section A-Budget Summary:* 1(b): Enter the Assistance Listing Number (84.374A).
- *Section A-Budget Summary:* 1(e) “Federal”: Include the total amount requested for the entire performance period. The amount you enter here will auto populate in 5 (e).
- *Section A-Budget Summary:* 1(f) “Non-Federal”: Only include an amount in this section if you propose to include non-Federal financial resources as part of this project, including any non-Federal funds to meet any program cost sharing requirements. If not including non-Federal financial resources, leave this blank or include 0.
- *Section A-Budget Summary:* 1(g): If using Grants.gov form, the total amount included here will be auto-calculated based on what is included in 1(e) and 1(f).

Section B – Budget Categories

Section B-Budget Categories:

- *Line 6. Object Class Categories:* The categories listed here (a-k) are the categories you will need to further describe in the Budget Narrative. For this section, only include the total amount by category for Year 1 of the project. You will provide a breakdown by category for each year of the project in the Budget Narrative. If using Grants.gov, line 6 column (1) will be auto-populated with the name of the program for which you are requesting funding.
 - *Personnel (line 6a.):* Enter project personnel salaries and wages only. Include fees and expenses for consultants on line 6f or 6h.
 - *Fringe Benefits (line 6b):* The organization’s normal fringe benefits contribution may be charged to the program. Leave this line blank if fringe benefits applicable to direct salaries and wages are treated as part of the indirect cost.
 - *Travel (line 6c):* Indicate the travel costs of employees and participants only. Include travel of persons such as consultants on line 6f or 6h.

- *Equipment (line 6d)*: Indicate the cost of tangible, non-expendable personal property that has a usefulness greater than one year and acquisition costs that are the lesser of the capitalization level established by the applicant entity for financial statement purposes or \$10,000 per article. Lower limits may be established to maintain consistency with the applicant's policy.
- *Supplies (line 6e)*: Show all tangible, expendable personal property. Direct supplies and materials differ from equipment in that they are consumable, expendable, and of a relatively low unit cost. Supplies purchased with grant funds should directly benefit the grant project and be necessary for achieving the goals of the project.
- *Contractual (line 6f)*: The contractual category should include all costs specifically incurred with actions that the applicant takes in conjunction with an established internal procurement system. Include consultant fees, expenses, and travel costs in this category if the consultant's services are obtained through a written binding agreement or contract.
- *Construction (line 6g)*: Construction funds are not authorized, unless specified by the program. If construction is allowable, include the amount request for construction costs.
- *Other (line 6h)*: Indicate all direct costs not covered on lines 1-6. For example, include costs such as space rental, required fees, honoraria and travel (where a contract is not in place for services), training, and communication and printing costs. If applicable, include stipends under other. Do not include stipends when calculating the indirect cost. Do not include costs that are included in the indirect cost rate.
- *Total Direct Costs (line 6i)*: The sum of lines 6a-6h. If using Grants.gov, this number is auto-calculated.
- *Indirect Costs (line 6j)*: Enter the amount of indirect cost in accordance with the program requirements, negotiated indirect cost rate agreement, or the 15% de minimis rate. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. For more information, please see the grantor agency requirements. If not applicable, leave blank.
- *Total Cost (line 6i and 6j)*: This number should be equal to sum of lines 6i-6j (total of direct costs + indirect costs). If using Grants.gov, this number is auto-calculated. The sum for column one, labeled Project Year 6 (1), should also be equal to item 15a on the application cover sheet (SF Form 424).
- *Line 7. Program Income*: You may leave this field blank.

Section C – Non-Federal Resources

This section should only be completed if you are proposing a cost share or if the program for which you are applying requires a Non-Federal cost share. If include a cost share, provide a breakdown by including the dollars that will come from the applicant, State, and other sources, as applicable.

Section D – Forecasted Cash Needs

- *Line 13. Federal:* The total for 1st Year column will automatically calculate based on the funding amounts included in Quarters 1-4. These quarters apply to **Year One ONLY**. Enter the forecasted cash needs from Federal sources for each quarter of the first program year. The amount entered for each quarter will be used to auto-calculate the amount in line 15 and is your forecasted needs. You will have an opportunity to provide updates to these quarterly amounts in post-award.
- *Line 14. Non-Federal:* The total for 1st year column will automatically calculate based on the funding amounts included in Quarters 1-4. These quarters apply to **Year One ONLY**. **Leave this blank for each quarter if you are not including any Non-Federal Funds**. If including non-Federal funds, enter the forecasted cash needs from non-Federal sources for the first quarter of the first program year. If not applicable, leave blank.
- *Line 15. (sum of lines 13 and 14):* If using Grants.gov, the total is auto-calculated.

Section E – Budget Estimates of Federal Funds Needed for Balance of the Project

This section collects information for future funding periods. While the columns are labeled First (b) through Fourth (e), this is the section where you will include the **total** amount of Federal funds requested for Years 2-5, for five-year projects. You are only including the **total** amount of Federal funds requested for the outyears beyond Year 1. The total amount in Section D. line 13 plus the total amount in the outyears should match the project total requested in Section A line 5 (e).

- *Line 16 Column (a) Grant Program:* If using Grants.gov, this box will be auto-populated with the name of the program you included in Section A Line 1.
- *Line 16 Column (b) First:* Include the total amount requested for the first outyear. **Year 2 of the project**. Ensure this amount matches what is in your Budget Narrative.
- *Line 16 Column (c) Second:* Include the total amount requested for the second outyear. **Year 3 of the project**. Ensure this amount matches what is in your Budget Narrative.
- *Line 16 Column (d) Third:* Include the total amount requested for the third outyear. **Year 4 of the project**. Ensure this amount matches what is in your Budget Narrative.

- *Line 16 Column (e) Fourth:* Include the total amount requested for the fourth outyear. **Year 5 of the project.** Ensure this amount matches what is in your Budget Narrative.

Section F – Other Budget Information

- *Line 21. Direct Charges:* You may leave this field blank.
- *Line 22. Indirect Charges:* Enter the type of indirect rate (provisional, predetermined, final or fixed) or 15% de minimis rate that will be in effect during the funding period, the estimated amount of the base to which the rate is applied, and the total indirect expense.
- *Line 23. Remarks:* You may leave this field blank.

Part 3: Abstract Form

The project abstract should not exceed one page and should include a concise description of the following information:

- Project objectives and activities
- Absolute Priority (Absolute Priority 1 and Absolute Priority 2)
- Applicable competitive preference priorities
- Proposed project outcomes
- Proposed project partners, if applicable

Part 4: Project Narrative

This section should be attached as a single document to the Project Narrative Attachment Form and should be organized in the following manner and include the following parts in order to expedite the review process.

Ensure that you only attach the ED approved file types detailed in the [2025 Common Instructions](#). When attaching files, applicants should limit the size of their file names.

Table of Contents

The Table of Contents shows where and how the important sections of your proposal are organized and should not exceed one double-spaced page.

Application Narrative

ED encourages applicants to limit this section of the application to the equivalent of no more than 40 pages. The recommended page limit does not apply to the cover sheet; the budget section, including the narrative budget justification; the assurances and certifications; or the one- abstract, the resumes, the bibliography, or the letters of support. However, the recommended page limit does apply to the **Project Narrative**.

Part 5: Budget Narrative

This section should be attached as a single document to the Budget Narrative Attachment Form. It should be organized in the following manner and include the following parts in order to expedite the review process. Ensure that you attach the ED approved file types detailed in the [2025 Common Instructions](#).

Each application must also provide a Budget Narrative for requested Federal funds. The Budget Narrative for requested Federal funds should provide a justification of how the money requested for each budget item will be spent, and the total amounts for each project year should match the total amounts in Section E – Budget Estimates of Federal Funds Needed for Balance of the Project in SF-424A.

This section requires an itemized budget breakdown for each project year and the basis for estimating the costs of personnel salaries, benefits, project staff travel, materials and supplies, consultants and subcontracts, indirect costs and any other projected expenditures. Be sure to complete an itemized budget breakdown and narrative for each year of the proposed project. Below is a breakdown of the categories to be included in the Budget Narrative for each project year:

- *Personnel*: List all staff positions by title including roles and responsibilities. For each position give the annual salary, the percentage of time devoted to the project, and the amount of each position’s salary funded by the grant.
- *Fringe Benefits*: The institution’s normal fringe benefits contribution may be charged to the program. Leave this line blank if fringe benefits applicable to direct salaries and wages are treated as part of the indirect cost.
- *Travel*: For grantee staff only, specify the purpose, number of staff traveling, mileage, per diem, estimated number of in-state and out-of-state trips, and other estimated costs for each type of travel.
- *Equipment*: Identify each item of equipment you expect to purchase that has an estimated acquisition cost of \$10,000 or more per unit (or if your capitalization level is less than \$10,000, use your capitalization level) and a useful lifetime of more than one year (see [2 CFR Part 200.1](#) for the definition of Equipment). List the item, quantity, and the unit cost per item.
- *Supplies*: Identify the cost of supplies (e.g., general office supplies, desk/chairs, laptops/printers, other specialty items) in the detailed budget per category. Except for general office supplies, list the item, quantity, and the unit cost per item. Supplies include all tangible personal property other than “equipment” (see [2 CFR Part 200.1](#) for the definition of Supplies). Items with a unit cost of less than \$10,000 are supplies, not “equipment.”
- *Contractual*: The contractual category should include all costs specifically incurred with actions that the applicant takes in conjunction with an established internal procurement system. Include consultant fees, expenses, and travel

costs in this category if the consultant's services are obtained through a written binding agreement or contract.

- *Construction*: Construction funds are not authorized.
- *Other*: Indicate all direct costs not covered elsewhere. For example, include such costs as space rental, required fees, honoraria and travel (where a contract is not in place for services), training, and communication and printing costs. List items, such as stipends or incentives, not covered elsewhere. Do not include costs that are included in the indirect cost rate.
- *Indirect Costs*: Include the amount of indirect cost in accordance with the program requirements, negotiated indirect cost rate agreement, or the 15% de minimis rate. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both.
- *Total Cost*: This number should be total direct costs + indirect costs.

The Budget Narrative provides an opportunity for the applicant to identify the nature and amount of the proposed expenditures. The applicant should provide sufficient detail to enable reviewers and project staff to understand how requested funds will be used, how much will be expended, and the relationship between the requested funds and project activities and outcomes.

In accordance with [34 CFR 75.232](#), ED staff perform a cost analysis of each recommended project to ensure that costs relate to the activities and objectives of the project, are reasonable, allowable and allocable. ED may delete or reduce costs from the budget during this review.

Note: Applicants are encouraged to review the Cost Principles described in 2 CFR part 200 subpart E 2 of the Guidance for Federal Financial Assistance.

Part 6: Other Attachment Forms

Attach one or more documents to the Other Attachments Form. You may provide all of the required information in a single document, or in multiple documents.

Ensure that you only attach the ED-approved file types detailed in the [2025 Common Instructions](#).

Suggested order:

- Reference List
- Appendix A
- Resumes/Vitae
- Letters
- Supplementary Information

- Other Appendices

Part 7: Assurances and Certifications

Be certain to complete all required assurances and certifications and include all required information in the appropriate place on each form. The assurances and certifications required for this application are:

- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities**
- Grants.Gov Lobbying Form – “Certification Regarding Lobbying”**

Note: While it is required to submit the lobbying form that best meets an applicants’ situation, the two forms are classified as “optional” in Grants.gov to avoid submission errors when only one of the lobbying form is submitted.

Attaching Files – Additional Tips

Please note the following tips related to attaching files to your application:

- When you submit your application electronically, you must upload any narrative sections and all other attachments to your application as files in Portable Document Format (PDF). ED recommends applicants submit all documents as read-only flattened PDFs, meaning any fillable PDF files must be saved and submitted as non-fillable PDF files and not as interactive or fillable PDF files, to better ensure applications are processed in a more timely, accurate, and efficient manner.
- Grants.gov cannot process an application that includes two or more files that have the same name within a grant submission. Therefore, each file uploaded to your application package should have a unique file name.
- When attaching files, applicants should follow the guidelines established by Grants.gov on the size and content of file names. Uploaded file names must be fewer than 50 characters, and, in general, applicants should not use any special characters. However, Grants.gov does allow for the following UTF-8 characters when naming your attachments: A-Z, a-z, 0-9, underscore, hyphen, space, period, parenthesis, curly braces, square brackets, ampersand, tilde, exclamation point, comma, semi colon, apostrophe, at sign, number sign, dollar sign, percent sign, plus sign, and equal sign. Applications submitted that do not comply with the Grants.gov guidelines will be rejected at Grants.gov and not forwarded to review.
- Applicants should limit the size of their file attachments. Documents submitted that contain graphics and/or scanned material often greatly increase the size of the file attachments and can result in difficulties opening the files. For reference, the average discretionary grant application package with all attachments is less than 5 MB. Therefore, you may want to check the total size of your package before submission.

Appendix

FY 2026 TSL Application Suggested Scoring Rubric

Selection Criterion				Total Points Possible
(a) Need for the project (Up to 10 points) – The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:				10
Factor (i)	The extent to which the specific nature and magnitude of gaps or challenges are identified and the extent to which these gaps or challenges will be addressed by the services, supports, infrastructure, or opportunities described in the proposed project.			5
Factor (ii)	The extent to which the proposed project will integrate or build on ideas, strategies, and efforts from similar external projects to improve relevant outcomes, using existing funding streams from other programs or policies supported by community, State, and Federal resources.			5
Factor Scoring Guide	Not Addressed 0	Limited 1-2	Adequate 3-4	Excellent 5

Selection Criterion				Total Points Possible
(b) Quality of the project design (up to 35 points) – The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers:				35
Factor (i)	The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale that is aligned with the purposes of the grant program.			7
Factor (ii)	The extent to which the design of the proposed project includes a thorough, high-quality review of the relevant literature, a high-quality plan for project implementation, and the use of appropriate methodological tools to ensure successful achievement of project objectives.			7
Factor (iii)	The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient			7

	quality, intensity, and duration to build recipient and project capacity in ways that lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.	
Factor (iv)	The extent to which performance feedback and formative data are integral to the design of the proposed project and will be used to inform continuous improvement.	7
Factor (v)	The quality of the logic model or other conceptual framework underlying the proposed project, including how inputs are related to outcomes.	7
Factor Scoring Guide	Not Addressed 0	Limited 1-2
	Adequate 3-6	Excellent 7

Selection Criterion				Total Points Possible
(c) Quality of the management plan (Up to 35 points) – The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers feasibility of the management plan to achieve project objectives and goals on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.				35
Criterion Scoring Guide	Not Addressed 0	Limited 1-14	Adequate 15-34	Excellent 35

Selection Criterion		Total Points Possible
(d) Adequacy of resources (up to 20 points) – The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:		20
Factor (i)	The likelihood that the proposed project will result in systemic change that supports continuous, sustainable, and measurable improvement.	7
Factor (ii)	The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local, State, regional, or national capacity to provide,	7

	improve, sustain, or expand training or services that address the needs of underserved populations.	
Factor (iii)	The extent to which there is a plan to incorporate the project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the applicant beyond the end of the project period.	6
Factor (i) & (ii) Scoring Guide	Not Addressed 0	Limited 1-3
		Adequate 5-6
		Excellent 7
Factor (iii) Scoring Guide	0	1-2
		3-5
		6