

## RFP #GT-22

### Strengthening Teacher and Leader Effectiveness 2: Teacher and Principal Leadership

#### Questions and Answers

- 1a. Question:** If a district is legally connected/part of two different BOCES, can the district apply as part of a consortium with both BOCES? And/or can one of the BOCES be the lead applicant and the other BOCES be a partner of the consortium?
- 1b. Question:** Can two BOCES submit an application together if they are legally connected? Or, even if they are not legally connected?
- 1c. Question:** Can a BOCES be a partner on an application that is led by another BOCES?

**Answer:** A BOCES-led consortium may only include one BOCES as the lead applicant and one or more of the BOCES eligible component districts (eligible based on the posted Eligibility List at <http://usny.nysed.gov/rttt/rfp/gt-22/eligibility.html>) as consortium members. There may only be one "lead applicant" and one or more "consortium members." An application may not include two BOCES as lead and/or consortium members, even if two BOCES are legally connected to a district. However, applicants, both individual and consortium, may choose to work with third-party organizations, which include another BOCES (as stated on pages 14-15 of the RFP). In the case of a BOCES as a third-party partner, both BOCES should be included in the BOCES Services (Code 49) line of the FS-10 form. Please note: The third-party organization that is working with/partnering with the applicant may not be considered a member of that consortium. The third-party organization acting in the partner capacity cannot increase the value of the overall request. Only the districts/charter schools that are consortium members may be included in the calculation of the overall max award.

- 2. Question:** Can one BOCES lead a consortium of districts that are eligible components of two (or more) different BOCES?

**Answer:** Yes. A BOCES can lead a consortium of districts that are eligible components of more than one BOCES; however, as the answer provided above explains, only one BOCES may be a member of the consortium and it must be the lead applicant.

- 3. Question:** May a BOCES who is the lead applicant also work with or partner with another applicant (either individual/consortium applicant)? Page 14 states that "applicants may choose to work with third-party organizations that are not applicants or consortium members."

**Answer:** The third-party organization may be an applicant or consortium member of a different application. For example, a BOCES may be a lead applicant of one application and may also serve as a partner in a different application.

- 4. Question:** In reading the eligible applicants section of this RFP – I am a bit confused as to whether a BOCES can apply as the lead of a consortium of eligible districts?

**Answer:** As stated in page one of the STLE 2 RFP, an eligible applicant may be a BOCES-led consortium comprising one or more of its component Eligible Districts as consortium members. A BOCES is not an eligible individual applicant.

5. **Question:** Is it acceptable for two public charter schools to apply as a consortium?

**Answer:** An eligible charter school-led consortium comprising eligible charter schools as members are eligible to apply. One eligible charter school must be the lead applicant and one or more additional charter schools must be included in the application as the consortium member(s). Please note: a charter management organization cannot be a lead applicant or be a consortium member.

6. **Question:** Would Non-Public 853 schools be eligible?

**Answer:** Non-Public 853 schools are not eligible to apply. As stated on page 1 of the RFP, only public school districts may apply.

7. **Question:** Are colleges and universities allowed to apply as part of a consortium with a school district?

**Answer:** Institutions of Higher Education are not eligible applicants and therefore cannot apply as a consortium member. However, as stated in pages 14-15 of the RFP, eligible applicants may choose to work with Institutions of Higher Education as third-party organizations. Third-party organizations can provide specific support and/or expertise to the individual applicant or the consortium applicant that is not intended to benefit the partner organization.

8. **Question:** Our school does not appear on the eligibility list. Is there another list that I should reference? If not, can you please tell me why our school has been excluded from the current eligibility list, as we meet the requirement of having "at least 25% of students from low-income families"?

**Answer:** Per the RFP, public school districts and public charter schools must have at least 25% of students from low-income families as determined using the criteria specified in Code 0198 (Poverty - from low-income family) in the New York State Student Information Repository System (SIRS), also known as the Level 2 Statewide data warehouse, for the 2011-2012 school year. These data were submitted and certified by each district and charter school. Districts or charter schools that claim to meet the low-income threshold of at least 25% through alternate data sources are not considered eligible school districts. Any school district or charter school that does not meet the minimum eligibility requirement of 25% students from low-income families using the data source stated in the RFP, is not eligible for this grant.

9. **Question:** We are a newly approved charter school whose model includes a four rung career-ladder with differentiated salaries. We are not on the list of eligible applicants. I assume this is because as a new school we have yet to input attendance data into the system. However, based on our enrollment information we expect to far exceed the 25% poverty rate the grant requires. Can we still be eligible despite the fact that our school is not on the list?

**Answer:** If a charter school just opened for its inaugural school year (2012-2013 school year) and will be fully implementing Education Law §3012-c (meaning will have an approved APPR plan by September 1, 2013), and has at least 25% of its students from low-income families, then the new charter school is eligible. The new school should submit its application per the instructions and submit an additional letter signed by the Chief Administrative Officer stating that the school is new and meets the eligibility criteria. The letter should include the date the school opened as well as the total student enrollment based on BEDS Day and the percent of students from low-income families. This data must have been previously submitted to NYSED/Office for Information and Reporting Services. Both the student enrollment and poverty percentage should include the source and date of the data. The data provided will be confirmed with the Office for Information and Reporting Services and, if confirmed, the applicant will be eligible. If the data is not confirmed, then the applicant will be disqualified and notified as such.

10. **Question:** Do charter schools have to do everything a district does to be in compliance with §3012-c or do they just have to do what is outlined in the guidance document under O?

**Answer:** A public school district or public charter school must be in “full accordance with the requirements of Education Law §3012-c and Subpart 30-2 of the Rules of the Board of Regents” and either have an approved APPR plan for 2013-2014 or will have its APPR plan approved by NYSED by September 1, 2013. For purposes of this RFP, a charter school must fully comply with Education Law §3012-c the same as a school district does. As stated in the Attachment III, Assurance of Joint Commitment and Collaboration Form, to receive and maintain funding under STLE 2, all applicants (and consortium members) must continuously and fully implement the APPR plan approved by the Department for all principals and teachers for the entire grant period (October 1, 2013-June 30, 2015). To complete the APPR plan application and review process for the 2013-2014 school year and beyond, please contact NYSED at the following e-mail address to request a password and access to a Review Room account: [educatoreval@mail.nysed.gov](mailto:educatoreval@mail.nysed.gov). Review Room may be found at the following link: <https://nysed-appr2.myreviewroom.com>.

11. **Question:** We understand that the request is based on a formula of \$125 per student x student enrollment. However, two FS-10 forms must be submitted (one for each year of the project). Is the calculated amount for each individual year, or is each year one-half of the calculated amounts?

**Answer:** Maximum funding requests are for the overall program period of the grant: Year 1 (2013-14) and Year 2 (2014-15). Individual public school districts and public charter schools calculate maximum award based on \$125 per student, based on student enrollment included in the Eligibility

List (<http://usny.nysed.gov/rttt/rfp/gt-22/eligibility.html>), up to the funding maximums for each region identified in Table 1 on page 15. Consortium applicants calculate maximum award based on \$125 per student, based on the enrollment included in the Eligibility List, for each public school district and public charter school included in the application, up to the maximum of \$24.5 million.

- 12. Question:** Are there any restrictions or guidelines on the distribution of grant funds over the two years of the grant-funded period? For instance, should districts aim for roughly equal distribution? Or, if it meets the needs of the proposed program, could a district front-load most of its grant funds for use in Year 1 or, conversely, save most of its grant funds for Year 2?

**Answer:** There is no requirement in terms of how funds are divided between Year 1 and Year 2. Applicants need to provide what is appropriate based on the initiatives proposed and provide adequate explanation for the funding requested in the application.

- 13. Question:** Can you please provide additional information regarding expectations of applicants regarding "Career Ladder"?

**Answer:** Career ladders should provide career advancement opportunities as well as facilitate dialogue between teachers and principals in order to share their expertise with colleagues to improve student achievement. Per the STLE 2 RFP, "NYSED will not mandate or create the specific duties and responsibilities of the career ladder continuum; rather, NYSED will offer districts and public charter schools the opportunity to create, or build upon, career ladders for teachers and principals that provide opportunities for additional duties and compensation, in addition to supporting recruitment, retention and equitable distribution of the most effective educators." However, this RFP requires applicants to develop eligibility criteria for all titles/positions in the proposed career ladder. Eligibility criteria must include, at a minimum, the NYSED-specified minimum eligibility criteria included in Attachment VI. Applicants may choose to include additional criteria beyond the NYSED-specified minimum, if applicable to their proposal. A career ladder webinar for STLE 2 applicants focusing on the implementation of career ladders for teachers (<http://www.engageny.org/resource/improving-practice-teachers>) and leaders (<http://www.engageny.org/resource/improving-practice-principals>) has been posted on EngageNY. Further guidance on career ladders can be found on pages 7-11 of the STLE 2 RFP (<http://usny.nysed.gov/rttt/rfp/gt-22/eligibility.html>).

- 14. Question:** If the second rung of our career ladder is Mentor teacher and teachers would be expected to meet specific criteria to reach this level, do we have to compensate every teacher that reaches that level or only those who we actually select to be teacher mentors? Many teachers might meet the general criteria but not all would be selected to mentor. A similar situation might exist for administrators.

**Answer:** NYSED will not mandate specific compensation requirements for teachers and/or leaders. Districts and charter schools should determine how they will compensate teachers and leaders who

have met career ladder criteria. However, clear expectations regarding all phases of the career ladder process should be communicated to teachers and leaders. Applicants must include in their application a communication plan that clearly explains how and when the career ladder will be discussed with all relevant stakeholders. Please note, single district applicants' career ladders must be district-wide; individual charter school applicants' career ladders must be school-wide; consortium applicants' career ladder(s) must be implemented across all consortium members, including the lead applicant unless the lead applicant is a BOCES.

**15. Question:** Are applicants required to have six different career ladder positions - two each for Novice (teacher and principal), Professional (teacher and principal) and Leader (teacher and principal)?

**Answer:** Yes. For the purposes of this RFP, career ladders must include three positions for **both** teachers and principals (Novice Teacher and Novice Principal, Professional Teacher and Professional Principal, Teacher Leader and Principal Leader).

**16. Question:** Must applicants use the NYSED names for the career ladder rungs (Novice, Professional, Leader)? Or, can the applicant use different names for these rungs, if the NYSED minimum qualification requirements remain the same? For instance, could an applicant choose to use the word "Advanced" in place of "Novice"?

**Answer:** In order to begin to create a common language to be used across New York State, NYSED is asking applicants to use the career ladder position names detailed in the STLE 2 RFP, (Novice Teacher and Novice Principal, Professional Teacher and Professional Principal, Teacher Leader and Principal Leader) in their career ladder design. For those school districts/charter schools with career ladder positions already in place, and using career ladder position names other than what is detailed in the STLE 2 RFP, using parentheses, please indicate in the proposal the position equivalent using Novice Teacher and Novice Principal, Professional Teacher and Professional Principal, Teacher Leader and Principal Leader.

**17. Question:** As a recipient of STLE Round 1, there will be a year where the budgets overlap. Am I allowed to extend (not supplant) the work through the initiatives that have previously been started? Am I also allowed to propose and implement initiatives unique to round 2 (including-but not limited too- broadening the number of pathways to achieve teacher leadership especially those that were not previously available for round 1)?

**Answer:** Activities may not duplicate or supplant STLE 1 activities and the applicant must demonstrate that any activities to be extended from STLE 1 are directly related to the proposed STLE 2 initiatives and they must meet all of the requirements set forth in the STLE 2 RFP. Details regarding the three types of activities that may be supported by STLE 2 funds can be found on page 12 of the RFP.

**18. Question:** In STLE round 1, I submitted MOUs for our partners, such as SUNY P, CASDA, and the teacher center. The Consortium form seems to have changed to stipulate "district/charter school" with "student populations" which no longer applies to those partners. So is this form no longer required for "partners" other than public or charter schools?

**Answer:** Per page 16 of the RFP, individual district/charter school applicants should not submit the MOU. Only consortium applicants submit a separate signed MOU with each consortium member. If an applicant chooses to partner with a third-party organization, and if the applicant deems it necessary, the applicant should enter into a Memorandum of Understanding, contract, and/or agreement for this work; however, these documents do not need to be included as part of this application.

**19. Question:** If a LEA has already successfully received a STLE Grant for the period 2012-2014 are they eligible to apply for additional funds for 2013-15?

**Answer:** STLE 1 grant recipients that meet the STLE 2 eligibility requirements may apply as an individual public school districts/public charter schools, but they may not apply as part of a consortium. Additionally, any grantee of the 2012-2014 STLE 1 grant and/or the Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) may not use STLE 2 funds to supplant or duplicate STLE 1 and/or TIF activities. STLE 1 and/or TIF grantees must submit the signed Attachment V, Assurance of Funding, in order to ensure funds will not duplicate or supplant STLE 1 activities and/or TIF activities, as indicated on page 16 of the STLE 2 RFP.

**20. Question:** I am becoming familiar with the RFP and wanted to know if it is mandatory to have Attachment III/ Joint commitment and collaboration for the RFP?

**Answer:** Yes, submitting the Assurance of Joint Commitment and Collaboration Form: Attachment III is a mandatory requirement of this RFP. This form must be signed by the applicant and all associated collective bargaining agent(s) as specified in Attachment III-A for individual district/charter applications and Attachment III-B for consortium applications.

**21. Question:** Should Attachment III: Assurance of Joint Commitment and Collaboration Form be customized or submitted as-is? In the RFP, it is labeled "template."

**Answer:** The Assurance of Joint Commitment and Collaboration Form: Attachment III may not be customized. The only revisions allowable are to the signature pages, as indicated. Please see Attachment III-A, page 41 for Individual Public School Districts/Individual Public Charter School applicants and Attachment III-B, pages 43 and 44 for Consortium applicants.

**22. Question:** The application instructions specify that all text must be double spaced, including text in charts, figures and graphs. However, the sample tables and charts in the RFP are all single spaced. In

our proposals, should text in charts, figures and graphs -- including the ones in the required attachments -- be single or double spaced?

**Answer:** Single spacing is acceptable in charts, figures, and graphs when double spacing is not possible due to the formatting of the template.

**23. Question:** Are the section-by-section pages listed in the RFP guidelines or limits? For instance, under Section A in the RFP it says "5-10 pages."

**Answer:** Applicants should use section page ranges as guidance when completing Sections A-C, with the understanding that consortium applicants may need to go beyond the suggested page limits.

**24. Question:** Is there an overall page limit for the proposal narrative?

**Answer:** There is no overall page limit for the proposal narrative, only the guidelines provided for each section (A through C).

**25. Question:** According to the RFP, Attachment VI is to be included in Section A of the proposal narrative. Will this attachment count against the overall and/or Section A page limit?

**Answer:** Attachment VI, Proposed Career Ladder for Teachers and Principals is a required element of Section A and does not count against the section page guidelines.