

Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant

Early Literacy Project

As of July 15, 2020

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Are there any existing tools to measure the 4-years-old language growth?
The federal guidance does not identify a specific assessment tool, rather it is up to the State to determine a tool that has been evaluated and validated. During the planning year or year 1 of the project, State will identify and inform all selected applicants of the approved measure to gather oral language gains of the 4-years-old children in the participating programs.
2. Can P-20 provide a list of what other States have considered using as their assessment tools to meet the federal objectives?
The assessment tools include Ages and Stages Questionnaires, Brigance Screens, Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test – Expressive or Receptive Language, Teaching Strategies GOLD. Most commonly used assessment tool seems to be TS GOLD. Please note that this is not a comprehensive list.
3. When will the approved assessment that will be used for the grant be determined?
The State is looking at the aforementioned tools in question #2 as well as what is currently being used in Hawaii for fit and usability beyond the life of the grant. It is anticipated that the tool will be identified during the planning year of the project.
4. How is “community” defined?
It will be up to the applicant to define their community and specify literacy needs of the community. For example, a community could potentially be identified as HIDOE’s complex area. Certain complex areas include multiple islands and so, each island could potentially be a community.
5. Would an EOEL public Prekindergarten classroom be considered center-based?
Yes, EOEL Public Prekindergarten Program administers center-based classes. Applicants who are interested in partnering with elementary schools with EOEL Public Prekindergarten should contact the EOEL Office.
6. Could Family-Child Interaction Learning programs (for example, FCIL classes in Keolu and Kalihi Uka Elementary Schools) and Pre-Plus programs contracted by EOEL be part of this project?
These are contracted programs and not a part of the EOEL Public Prekindergarten Program so they can apply for the CLSD Early Literacy project should they choose to do so.
7. Do the neighbor island applicants have the same deadline? In order to have the application packet arrive on Oahu, the neighbor island applicants would have to mail in 2-days before the due date.
The submission information on the RFA has been revised to include “postmarked”. For example, as long as the packet is postmarked and emailed before or at 4:00 p.m. of the due date, the proposal will be read and scored.
8. What if the literacy intervention/practice is not listed on What Works Clearinghouse? Can it be funded by the grant?
The CLSD grant requires implementation of evidence-based literacy interventions/practices. As noted, the list of programs, practices, interventions, and activities in Appendix F is not comprehensive. If the early literacy practice is not found on the What Works Clearinghouse website, the applicant must include in the proposal an explanation and a reference document that there is at least one external evaluation/research conducted to show a strong (level 1 or experimental/randomized study), moderate (level 2 or quasi-experimental/matched study) or promising (level 3 or correlational study) levels of evidence of positive

literacy outcomes. For detailed definition of the different levels of evidence, please see Appendix E of the RFA.

9. Do the infant/toddler and preschool providers have to use the same literacy practices?
No, not necessarily, since evidence-based practices for preschoolers may not be developmentally appropriate for infants/toddlers. The proposed project must identify an evidence-based practice or intervention for the age group and justify how/why they have chosen that particular practice/intervention. The proposed projects should include how the project will customize the evidence-based practices for preschoolers to meet the needs of the infants and toddlers. It is recommended to use the Hexagon Tool that is included in the RFA and posted on the Hawaii P-20 CLSD website.
10. Does expansion include additional families or just additional sites?
The proposed projects that are expanding access of the evidence-based practices to additional families and/or additional sites would be considered supplementing and not supplanting. The project would need to clearly state what the current number of families or sites are and how many more families or sites are being added using the proposed funds.
11. How would the awards be released to the selected programs?
*Hawaii P-20 will work with the selected subgrantee to identify an **initial** working capital budget during the contract development stage. Because the CLSD EL project is federally funded, grant funding cannot be released in advance of the project start date. Payments will be released as reimbursements to the subgrantee, upon receipt of an expenditure report accompanied by an invoice. The frequency of payment is dependent on how often the subgrantee submits the required documentation, either monthly or quarterly, which will be outlined in the contract.*
12. Can an agency be a fiscal agent for multiple applications?
Yes, an agency can be a fiscal agent for multiple applications, provided that it is not the agency that is submitting a proposal. Please note indirect and/or administrative costs are considered not allowable costs in this grant.
13. If an application is submitted as a consortium of multiple programs, can an applicant request more than \$1.40 million for 4 years?
Each application package, regardless of the number of participating partners, has a potential to be selected for a sub-award and can request up to \$1.40 million for 4 years. Because the first year is a planning year, we expect the first year budget request to be less than those of year 2, 3, and 4.
14. Can an applicant include an indirect cost?
Because this is federally funded, an indirect cost is allowable if the applicant has a currently-approved Indirect Cost Rate agreement, negotiated with and approved by, the applicant's cognizant agency (such as the U.S. Department of Education). A copy of the agreement is required and must be included in the proposal. If the applicant does not have an agreement, then the indirect cost is considered an unallowable cost. (RFA, page 24)
15. Can an applicant include utilities and rent to the project?
Utilities and rent are considered recurring operational expenses which are unauthorized expenses under the CLSD grant. (RFA, page 7)
16. Can the applicant include administrative costs?
No, administrative costs are considered recurring operational expenses which are unauthorized expenses under the CLSD grant (RFA, page 7). The Early Literacy Coordinator is responsible for both programmatic and fiscal management of the grant, including quarterly and annual reporting requirements. Other personnel needs will be based on the needs of the applicant's plan and positions justified in the budget narrative.

17. Can you give an example of supplies and materials but not core curriculum?

If an applicant is currently using Creative Curriculum (CC), for example, as core curriculum for their preschool classes, then instructional manuals, training, coaching, etc. specific to implementing CC would not be considered allowable supplies and materials under the CLSD grant. This would be considered supplanting. If the applicant is considering, but not currently using, "Dialogic Reading (DR)," for example, as an evidence-based early literacy intervention, then the specific supplies and materials related to implement DR, such as instructional and training manuals, instructional materials, training, etc., are considered allowable if it is part of the applicant's plan.

18. Could you clarify – that in year 1 you can have less \$ say \$200,000 and then in year 2 you could have \$400,000?

As indicated in the RFA instruction, a maximum award per grant is \$350,000 per year (RFA, page 4).

19. Have you decided on an assessment tool? Is the assessment tool in Hawaiian? Will there be only one state-approved oral language assessment? Can you give us an idea what the tool will be similar to? The PPVT?

A recommendation for a state-approved measure has been made. The assessment tool is in English and Spanish. Currently, we are not aware of an evidence-based assessment tool in Hawaiian language. Because the federal reporting requirement is oral language gains of 4-year-olds, there will be only one state-approved performance measure. Similar to PPVT, the state-approved assessment tool will be a validated, reliable instrument that is developmentally appropriate to be used with young children.

As of July 1, 2020, HIDOE has decided on Teaching Strategies GOLD as the state approved performance measure to report on oral language gains of 4-year-olds. In the budget, the purchasing of annual license per child, teacher training days, and teacher sub-days to complete and submit the assessment information would be part of the 5 to 7% of the evaluation cost. Applicants can also include GOLD for progress monitoring to report on state and local level child outcomes information, without purchasing another tool. If the applicant is planning to use GOLD for all children, then GOLD license and manuals, teacher training time, and implementation time would be additional costs to allocate in Budget Table 3: Professional Learning and Budget Table 4: Instructional Program and Supplemental Materials.

GOLD objectives and dimensions that correspond to oral language development include:

- Obj. 8: a. Comprehend language; b. Follows directions*
- Obj. 9: a. Uses an expanding expressive vocabulary; b. Speaks clearly; c. Uses conventional grammar; & d. Tells about another time or place*
- Obj. 10: a. Engages in conversations; b. Uses social rules of language*

20. So, the tool that P-20 selects cost would be less than 7% of the grant? Can a percentage higher than 7% be allowed for evaluation?

Applicants should allocate 5 to 7% of their total budget request for evaluation purposes, which includes the implementation of the state-approved measure. If the percentage is higher than 7%, the applicant must explain the reason in the budget narrative. See Question 19 and corresponding response.

21. Is it possible for you to notify us when the measure is selected so that we can include it in our proposal as well as in our budget just in case there is a cost involved?

All applicants should allocate 5 to 7% of their total budget request to cover the cost of purchasing the tool as well as training, rather than wait for the notification. See Question #19 and its corresponding response.

22. Who does the evaluation? Hawaii P-20? So the 5-7% can't be used to hire an evaluation consultant?

Hawaii P-20 will be monitoring programmatic and fiscal activities of the selected sub-grantees, including at least one site visit annually (RFA, page 6). Although Hawaii P-20 will not be conducting the "evaluation" to address, for example, the effectiveness of project training and project outcomes, as well as quality and fidelity of project implementation, each selected sub-grantee will be reporting effectiveness of their early

literacy project based on their evaluation plan - please see evaluation questions in the RFA instruction (RFA, page 8). Should this information change based on federal and state CLSD requirements, Hawaii P-20 will notify the sub-awardees. If the applicant is planning to hire an external evaluator, the cost should be part of the 5 to 7% of the grant budget. The cost of the evaluation consultant must be explained in the budget narrative.

23. Is there a statewide baseline for oral language development of 4-year-olds?

Currently, there is no statewide baseline information on the oral language development of 4-year-olds.

24. Do trainers need to be qualified/verified a certain way in order to do trainings with our staff?
Example: submit a curriculum vitae or specific qualification?

The applicant must describe the resources (i.e., trainer) and include desired qualifications, skills, and knowledge of the professional learning providers (RFA, page 16). Submitting a curriculum vitae of a trainer(s) is not a requirement for the grant application.

25. There is no specific 2020-2030 student success indicators for early learning. Can you identify ones that would be relevant?

*If there is no specific 2020-2030 student success indicator for early learning in the 2030 Promise Plan, the applicant should identify at least two priority action items in the 2019-2024 Hawaii Early Childhood State Plan. The priority action items are found from page 11 of the 2019-2024 Hawaii Early Childhood State Plan (Comprehensive): <https://earlylearning.hawaii.gov/hawaii-early-childhood-state-plan/>. The alignment with state initiatives is to address either the 2030 Promise Plan **or** the 2019-2024 Hawaii Early Childhood State Plan. (RFA, page 15)*

26. Is the applicant required to have audited financial statements if they are less than \$750,000 in annual revenue?

No, the applicants do not need to have audited financial statements if they are not required by federal guidelines. However, once selected, the applicants will need to complete the S-2 Subrecipient Questionnaire and Hawaii P-20 will need to ensure that the sub-awardees are aware of the rules, policies, and guidelines required under the grant. (RFA, page 25)

27. Can you give me an idea of the level of detail that the expenditure reports will require? I have seen a range of reporting (from scanning every receipt and paycheck to keeping receipts on file in-house and sending an invoice) in the past and would like to gauge how much time it will take to prepare monthly expenditure reports.

Generally, Hawaii P-20 will not require every receipt and paycheck to be submitted with an invoice. In most cases, a certified summary of expenditures (i.e., an accounting report or ledger downloaded from your financial system or software) can be submitted as backup. However, we may request additional information, including copies of receipts/invoices and/or pay stubs, if there are questionable expenses that do not appear to align with the applicant's approved budget. Because this is a federal grant, all sub-awardees should be prepared to be audited by the federal government and keep all programmatic and fiscal documents in-house up to 5 years beyond 2024.

28. Can an agency apply as the applicant and subcontract partners to provide literacy programming?

The grant does not allow a sub-awardee to subcontract another agency or partner. If needed, the partner would be considered a resource and included in the budget as a consultant with an explanation of how their role and responsibilities differ from that of the Literacy Coordinator, who is responsible for providing literacy programming.

29. Should we attach letters of support or intent to partner with our submission or will listing the partnerships in the grant narrative suffice? If letters are recommended, do they count towards the grant narrative page count?

Letters of support or intent to partner are not required documents. Listing the partnerships in the grant narrative is sufficient. Please note, Form 3: Participants in the Development of the CLSD Early Literacy Project Application is a required form. The completed form will not count towards the grant narrative page count. (RFA, page 21)

30. What if the DOE schools are not using a rigorous program for their kindergarten literacy program? It might affect alignment with our proposed intervention.

Section 5: Coordination and Communication of the RFA asks the applicant to describe how the proposed projects will coordinate the involvement of the elementary schools and principals (RFA, page 15). It will be up to the applicant to describe what the coordination and involvement will look like irrespective of the type of programs being used in kindergarten.

31. So there is no allocation from the state to attend the quarterly TA sessions and are the sessions mandatory?

The quarterly TA sessions are mandatory and convened with K-12 subgrantees on Oahu. Applicants from the neighbor islands should include estimated travel expenses to Oahu in their budget proposal. Given the current COVID-19 situation, the convening will be virtual, until further notice.

32. Who should attend the quarterly TA?

The Literacy Coordinator is the representative to attend the quarterly TA sessions.

33. When selecting communities, does it have to be in one area or can it be multiple areas?

The community is defined by the applicant. See question #4 and its corresponding response.

34. What if there is an application for statewide early literacy initiative and another that is site-specific, is it going to affect the site-specific application?

Each proposal, statewide or site-specific, will be reviewed and scored based on the scoring rubric and scoring guide on Section 3: Application Evaluation Criteria (RFA, pages 13 to 16) and not the location of the project.

35. Have you seen a grant in home-based programs?

The eligible applicants include public and private early care and education program and service providers, and community organizations who work with families with young children. Home-based programs are eligible to apply. If the interested applicant provides early childhood services for infants and toddlers only, then the applicant must partner with a program(s) that services preschool-aged children. The target population is children from birth through kindergarten entry age continuum. (RFA, page 2)

36. Can the application include multiple evidence-based early literacy interventions?

Yes. Applicants may choose to include multiple evidence-based early literacy interventions: for example, an intervention at the child-level and a family literacy intervention that supports the child-level intervention. The maximum award of up to \$350,000 per year (maximum of \$1.4 million for 4 years) remains the same, irrespective of the number of evidence-based interventions the applicant is proposing to adopt.