

Arkansas Department of Education Instructions for Completing the 2014 Public Charter School Dissemination Grant Application

BACKGROUND

The 2014 Public Charter School Dissemination Grant Application is made possible by a grant received by the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) from the U.S. Department of Education (USDoE), Public Charter School Program CFDA – 84.282A. Approximately \$100,000 is available for a 2014 Charter School Dissemination Grant with 100% of the program financed with federal money. Funding for the grant is contingent on the receipt by the state of annual funding from the USDoE, and a grant award is not a guarantee of total funding. It is anticipated that two grants of no more than \$50,000 will be funded in this application cycle.

Federal law allows State Education Agencies (SEAs) with federal Charter School Program Grants to award grants to disseminate best practices. Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 5204(f)(6)(B) establishes eligibility as follows:

The charter school has been in operation for at least three consecutive years and has demonstrated overall success, including—

- (i) Substantial progress in improving student academic achievement;
- (ii) High levels of parent satisfaction; and
- (iii) The management and leadership necessary to overcome initial start-up problems and establish a thriving, financially viable charter school.

CFR 5204(f)(6)(B) allows for charter schools to use dissemination grant funds to assist other schools in adapting the charter school's program (or certain aspects of the charter school's program), or to disseminate information about the charter school, through such activities as—

- (i) Assisting other individuals with the planning and start-up of one or more new public schools, including charter schools, that are independent of the assisting charter school and the assisting charter school's developers, and that agree to be held to at least as high a level of accountability as the assisting charter school;
- (ii) Developing partnerships with other public schools, including charter schools, designed to improve student academic achievement in each of the schools participating in the partnership;
- (iii) Developing curriculum materials, assessments, and other materials that promote increased student achievement and are based on successful practices within the assisting charter school; and
- (iv) Conducting evaluations and developing materials that document the successful practices of the assisting charter school and that are designed to improve student performance in other schools.

TIMELINE

Monday, September 1, 2014

Deadline for applicants to email completed applications to the ADE

NOTE

Applications must be received, via email, in the ADE Charter Schools Office no later than 4:00 p.m. on the deadline. Applications received in the Charter Schools Office after 4:00 p.m. on the established date will not be processed. It is the responsibility of the applicant to adhere to all charter application deadlines. **Please take under consideration the length of the time that may be required for electronic submissions to reach the Charter Schools Office.**

September 2-15, 2014

Applications reviewed and scored

September 16-30, 2014

ADE staff members negotiate, as necessary, with successful applicants

October 1, 2014-June 30, 2015

 Dissemination grant period

- Grantee keeps staff in the Charter Schools Office apprised of all dissemination activities
- Grantee provides documentation for reimbursement of expenses
- ADE staff members review receipts, compare to budgets, and release dissemination funds to grantee

June 30, 2015

End of grant period

June 26, 2015

- Final evaluation due
- Final documentation for reimbursement of expenses due
- ADE staff review final evaluations and release last 10% of funding once evaluation and reimbursement requests are complete and accepted

EVALUATION REQUIREMENTS

The grantee must provide a narrative response to the following in the final evaluation:

- Evaluate the progress toward reaching each goal approved in the grant;
- Explain how these grant funds were used to positively impact student academic achievement at other schools.

As part of the final evaluation, the grantee will be required to provide ADE with best practice information to be posted on the ADE website.

INSTRUCTIONS ON COMPLETING THE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL DISSEMINATION GRANT APPLICATION

1. Use the fillable form and template to complete the grant application.

Note the following application requirements:

- There are a limited number of characters allowed for each response. Do not include text that does not fit in the text boxes as it will not be visible to others and, therefore, cannot be reviewed and scored. **It is permissible to include links to websites where supporting information is located.**
- Use the font and font size that are set for responses. If you type the responses in another program, make certain that Arial font, size 10 is used and copied into the text boxes.

2. Sections to be completed by grant applicants include all of the following:

- The coversheet;
- Responses to Required Components 1-4;
- The Charter School Dissemination Grant Budget and Budget Summary
- The assurances and signed board resolution.

Note: The assurances and board resolution template must be used. Complete, print, sign, scan, and attach the assurances and resolution as the last two pages of the grant application.

3. The completed application should be returned as a flattened PDF, created either by using a 'print to PDF' function, or by printing the completed application and rescanning as a new PDF. The signed board resolution must be added as the last page of the application. Save the PDF as "*Charter School's Name* 2014 Dissemination Grant Application."
4. Email the application to ade.charterschools@arkansas.gov so that it is received by 4:00 p.m. on Monday, September 1, 2014. Allow time for the large email attachment to be received by the deadline.

Call the ADE Public Charter Schools Office at (501) 683-5313 or contact Sky Bledsoe by email at sky.bledsoe@arkansas.gov with questions.

NOTES ON SELECTED SECTIONS OF THE APPLICATION

Cover

The individual named on the cover as the contact person must be the same individual designated in the board resolution with the authority to serve as the charter school's authorized representative in negotiating the grant.

The person responsible for direction and management of the program must be an employee and staff member of the school that is the recipient of the grant.

NOTE

When responding to the Required Components, refer to the Charter School Dissemination Grant Scoring Rubric at the end of this document. This is a valuable tool as it describes components of successful responses and the point values for each.

Section 1 - Eligibility

Responses to the prompts in Section 1 should convince reviewers that the applicant is not just minimally eligible to receive the grant, but also is a charter thriving at all levels of operation with practices worthy of emulation.

Prior to completing the application, be certain that the minimum eligibility requirements are met.

Only applications submitted by charters that meet the minimum requirements will be scored and considered for award.

To be eligible to receive the grant, an **open-enrollment charter** will, at a minimum –

- Have operated as a charter for three consecutive school years;
- Have been part of only **voluntary** restructuring efforts, **if restructured at all**, for the last three years;
- Not have been in fiscal distress for at least three years;
- Not have been in academic distress for at least three years;
- Not have any school identified in 2013 Arkansas School ESEA Accountability Reports as a focus or priority school; AND
- Have never received a public charter school dissemination grant.

To be eligible to receive the grant, a **district conversion charter** will, at a minimum –

- Have operated as a charter for three consecutive school years;
- Have been part of only **voluntary** restructuring efforts, **if restructured at all**, for the last three years;
- Not have been part of a district in fiscal distress for at least three years;
- Not have been part of a district in academic distress for at least three years;
- Not have been identified in 2013 Arkansas School ESEA Accountability Reports as a focus or priority school; and
- Have never received a public charter school dissemination grant.

Section 2(a)

Mark the box beside the number and a text box will appear in which to list the goal. The goal can then be typed into the text box. **Unmarking the box beside a number deletes the goal.**

NOTES

Identify the most important three to five goals for the dissemination program. An applicant is NOT required to have five goals. It may be appropriate to have as few as two goals. More than five goals cannot be entered in the form.

When a goal is entered in 2(a), an action plan at the back of the application is generated. The goal is populated on the action plan. The goal can only be revised, edited, or deleted in 2(a). An activity plan must be completed for each goal.

Section 2(b)

Keep in mind that the purpose of the dissemination grant is to improve student academic achievement.

Section 3(e)

All school planning should be coordinated, cohesive, and focused on improving student academic achievement.

Section 4

Responses to the prompts in this section must describe the ways in which the success of the grant program will be evaluated. Success of the program must be measured.

Section 4(b)

Consider interim evaluations of the program and appropriate actions that can be taken if it appears that program goals may not be met.

Budget and Budget Summary

Complete the Dissemination Grant Budget Worksheets. The worksheet will calculate totals.

Be certain that each expenditure is justified on the Dissemination Grant Budget Description Worksheet.

NOTE

Charter school dissemination grant funds may not supplant state or local funds allocated to the school.

Action Plans

Complete an activity plan for each goal.

NOTES

A goal can only be revised, edited, or deleted in 2(a).

Action plans will be evaluated and scored as indicated on the scoring rubric.

Overall Review

Be advised that reviewers of the grant will award points based on the likelihood that the program will positively impact student achievement. See the scoring rubric.

Board Resolution

The individual designated in the board resolution with the authority to serve as the charter school's authorized representative in negotiating the grant must be the same person named on the cover as the contact person.

The person responsible for direction and management of the program must be an employee and staff member of the school that is the recipient of the grant.

Charter School Dissemination Grant Scoring Rubric

SECTION 1 - ELIGIBILITY		Vague	Lacks Some Clarity and/or Detail	Clear and Complete
1 a	Description of the existing school including program, grade levels, and number of students served	1	2	3
1 b	Description of flexibility for the program	1	2	3
1 c	Evidence of parent satisfaction/support	1	2	3
1 d	Evidence of improving student support	1	2	3
1 e	Evidence of financial viability	1	2	3

Total possible points for this section: 15

SECTION 2 - PROPOSED PROGRAM		Vague	Lacks Some Clarity or Not Appropriate for Purpose of the Grant	Clear and Appropriate
2 a	Program goals	1	3	5
2 b	Description of assistance to and partnerships with others	1	3	5
2 c	Description of activities to disseminate services and/or products to others	1	3	5

Total possible points for this section: 15

SECTION 3 - EDUCATIONAL PRIORITIES		Vague	Lacks Some Clarity or Not Appropriate for Purpose of the Grant	Clear and Appropriate
3	Description of the ways in which the program supports educational priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parental/community involvement - Early learning, at-risk students, students receiving special services - Schools identified as focus or priority schools - Basic content areas - Coordination with the school's ACSIP and/or Technology Plan - Partnerships with other schools to improve student achievement - Development of assessments, curriculum and/or other materials to assist in the improvement of student achievement - Other 	5	10	15

Total possible points for this section: 15

SECTION 4 - EVALUATION		Vague	Lacks Some Clarity or Not Appropriate for Purpose of the Grant	Clear and Appropriate
4 a	Description of the scope of the evaluation to be conducted to assess the success of the program	1	3	5
4 b	Explanation of the processes to evaluate the success of the program	1	3	5
4 c	Explanation of the ways in which the evaluation results will show if the goals for the project were met	1	3	5

Total possible points for this section: 15

BUDGET AND BUDGET SUMMARY		Vague	Lacks Some Clarity and/or Detail	Clear, Complete, Appropriate, Necessary, and Reasonable
5	Grant expenditures included and justified	5	10	15

Total possible points for this section: 15

ACTION PLANS		Vague	Lacks Some Clarity and/or Detail	Clear, Complete, and Appropriate
6	Each goal includes activities, timelines, and responsible person with position	5	10	15

Total possible points for this section: 15

OVERALL REVIEW		Not Very Likely	Possibly	Definitely
The program will positively impact student achievement.		0	6	10

Total possible points for this section: 10