

OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY

NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

FY2021 EQUIPMENT ASSISTANCE GRANT

Request for Application Release Date: Friday, October 26, 2020, 3:00 p.m.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020, (Public Law 116-94), authorized grants to the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE), Division of Health and Wellness, for providing equipment assistance to School Food Authorities participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). The District of Columbia has been selected to receive funding in the amount of \$68,306.

Eligibility and Selection Criteria: These funds will be available through a competitive grant process to public schools (i.e., schools within the District of Columbia Public Schools), and public charter schools and participating private/non-public schools. Applications will be scored on the following selection criteria: project vision and implementation, project justification, sustainability, benefit to students with disabilities, and budget justification.

These funds will make a significant investment by allowing the purchase of capital equipment used to serve healthier meals, meet the nutritional standards with emphasis on more fresh fruits and vegetables in school meals, improve food safety and expand accessibility to food services.

In order to make the most effective use of these grant funds, equipment requests must address at least one of the following focus areas:

- Equipment that lends itself to improving the quality of school food service meals that meet the dietary guidelines (e.g., purchasing an equipment alternative to a deep fryer or steam ovens that improve quality of prepared fresh or fresh-frozen vegetables)
- Equipment that improves the safety of food served in the school meal programs (e.g., cold/hot holding bags/equipment, dish washing equipment, refrigeration, milk coolers, freezers, blast chillers, etc.)
- Equipment that improves the overall energy efficiency of the school food service operations (e.g. purchase of an energy-efficient walk in freezer replacing an outdated, energy-demanding freezer)
- Equipment that allows sponsors to support expanded participation in a school meal program (e.g., equipment for serving meals in a non-traditional setting or to better utilize cafeteria space)
- Equipment that aides in strategies for adopting smarter lunchrooms (e.g. lunchroom changes that appeals to student population; highlighting convenience, healthy choices, and supporting menu changes to healthier options)

Length of the Award: All funds must be expended by September 30, 2022.

Available Funding for Award: The District of Columbia has been selected to receive funding in the amount of \$68,306. The estimated number of award ranges from six to eight with the minimum award amount being \$1,000 and the maximum award amount being \$15,000. Determinations regarding the number of competitive grant awards will be based on the quality and number of applications received and available funding. Successful applicants may be awarded amounts less than requested. Grant funds shall only be used to support activities authorized by the relevant statutes and included in the applicant's submission.

Application Process:

An external review panel or panels will be convened to review, score, and rank each application for a competitive grant. The review panel(s) will be composed of external neutral, qualified, professional individuals selected for their expertise, knowledge or related experiences. Each application will be scored against a rubric and applications will have multiple reviewers to ensure accurate scoring. Upon completion of its review, the panel(s) shall make recommendations for awards based on the scoring rubric(s). The State Superintendent or her designee will make all final award decisions. Applications must be submitted by December 4, 2020 at 3:00 p.m. Awards will be announced by January, 2020.

Pre-Application Question Period:

To ensure an equal opportunity for all applicants, OSSE requests that applicants submit questions regarding the RFA electronically to Elysia DiCamillo by 3 p.m. on November 10, 2020. To ensure a fair process, questions submitted after November 10, 2020 will not receive responses. Responses to questions will be published by November 17, 2020.

- Applicants are strongly encouraged to participate in the following webinar information session. A recording of the information session will be available on the OSSE website.
- Pre-application webinar: November 5, 2020 2:00-3:00 pm. Register [here](#).

To receive more information or for a copy of this RFA, please contact:

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The Requests for Applications (RFAs) for the competitive grant programs as well as the instructions for completing the Equipment Assistance grant application will be available on OSSE's website at www.osse.dc.gov. All applications will be submitted through the Enterprise Grants Management System (EGMS) at grants.osse.dc.gov.