

PART B - NARRATIVE COMPONENT

There are 4 priorities in this program. Each priority will support proposals that create robust, technology-infused environments (e.g. high speed broadband connections, up-to-date computers) that sustain each priority area. The applicant may select only ONE priority for each application.

Priority 1: Online Courses and Course Modules for students: This grant will fund projects that work collaboratively with the Department to create, implement, and evaluate online courses/modules for underserved high school students in alternative education, credit recovery, or credit acceleration programs. Grant recipients may adapt an online course/module or partner with an organization to design and develop the online courses/modules that align with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks or the Massachusetts High School Program of Studies (MassCore). Products created must be in a format that can be shared with the Department, and successful models will be disseminated and used by other districts.

Description of the Initiative

The Department is providing funding to a high-need district or collaborating districts with at least one high-need district to pilot one or more online courses that serve high school students in alternative education programs or schools (including education collaboratives), or students participating in credit recovery or credit acceleration options (see below for definitions).

District(s) will adapt or develop online coursework aligned to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks or the Massachusetts High School Course of Studies (MassCore). It must include a professional development component for teachers and other staff to learn how to use the course or module to ensure that the targeted population of students is engaged and is able to master course standards. Priority will be given to courses that engage teachers and/or support staff who are present in a classroom to assist and provide support to students. Priority will also be given to proposals to design courses that are typically for graduation requirements e.g. English, Mathematics, Science, US History.

Each program will be evaluated based on overall efficacy and student outcomes. Products created must be in a format that can be shared with the Department. Effective program designs will be disseminated to other districts. Proposals should incorporate evidence-based practices into the design and implementation. For a recent analysis of existing models, see:

<http://www.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/tech/evidence-based-practices/finalreport.pdf><http://www.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/tech/evidence-based-practices/finalreport.pdf>

Definition of Online Courses/Curriculum

A course where technology is the primary mode of instruction and more than 50 percent of the course content is delivered electronically.

Definition of Credit Recovery

For the purposes of this RFP, credit recovery refers to a student passing, and receiving credit for, a course that the student previously attempted but was unsuccessful in earning academic credit towards graduation. Credit recovery most commonly includes courses that are required for graduation, and therefore must be repeated if a student was unsuccessful in earning credit for the course the first time they enrolled in the course. Credit recovery programs, in general, have a primary focus of helping students stay in school and graduate on time.

Definition of Credit Acceleration

For the purposes of this RFP, credit acceleration refers to a student passing, and receiving credit for, a course that is specifically targeted for students that may be most at-risk for not graduating on-time due to a lack of credits. Credit acceleration differs from credit recovery because the primary intention is not to repeat a course the student previously attempted but did not pass. Rather, credit acceleration may allow students to earn credits beyond what is included in a typical class schedule. Credit acceleration may allow students most at-risk for not graduation on time to get a "head start" on credits or provide students an opportunity to "catch up" on the credits needed for graduation.

Students most likely to benefit from credit acceleration opportunities include, but are not limited to: students transitioning into grade nine in need of extra support, students retained in a high school grade, and students that have educational gaps (due to a variety of reasons including: transiency, homelessness, illness, pregnancy/parenting, or previously dropped out). Credit acceleration programs, in general, have a primary focus of helping students stay in school and graduate on time

Definition of Alternative Education

For the ESE definition of alternative education, see website below.

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/iep/sld/default.html#http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/iep/sld/default.html>

Ownership and Copyright of Course/Modules

The purpose of the grant is to provide distance learning courses at low cost and to schools throughout the Commonwealth. To that end, ESE must either a) share the copyright of all the materials with the district and/or partner through an agreement, or b) ensure that the per-student cost of receiving the online and media components of the course are reduced to ensure a low cost to districts.”

Priority 1: Online Courses and Modules for Students

REQUIRED PROGRAM INFORMATION - NARRATIVE COMPONENT

Listed below are the required components in the order that they must appear in the proposal.

Each application must include information on the following items.

Priority 1A: Context

- A. Describe all existing credit recovery, credit acceleration, and/or alternative education programs or schools in your district(s). Will this grant be used to improve these existing programs? If yes, please briefly explain how the existing programs will be improved as a result of receiving this grant. If you do not have credit recovery, credit acceleration, and/or alternative education programs or schools in your district(s) please skip to question "B."
- B. Will this grant help create new credit recovery, credit acceleration, and/or alternative education programs or schools in your district(s)? If yes, please briefly explain the need for a new program and how this grant will help create a new program in your district(s).

Priority 1B: Overall Structure and Design

- A. Describe the student population (including participating schools, number of students, history of academic performance, etc.) you intend to serve with the use of this grant and why they would benefit from an online -based approach. How will students be chosen to participate (e.g. faculty recommendations and/or student volunteers)?

- B. What roles do you envision for staff present in the classroom during the online course (e.g., support, guidance, keeping students on task, content level of knowledge)? What qualifications will they need to possess?
- C. Describe all of the key staff that will be participating in the development and implementation of this initiative and their roles and responsibilities. This may include existing as well as new staff.
- D. Have you identified external organizations, services, or people that would support the development and implementation of online courses? Please note these may include free services such as Open Source Course Management Systems (e.g., Moodle) and Open Courseware opportunities, as well as fee-based organizations and consultants. If yes, who are they and through what process did you choose them? If not, what are your plans for the process to identify external services to support the online course development and implementation? Briefly describe what role(s) and responsibilities the external organizations/people will have in the development and implementation of the online courses.

Priority 1C: Detailed Description of Implementation

- A. Provide a complete description of the online course(s) you plan to offer.
 - a. How many online courses do you plan to offer and what subject area(s) do you plan to include?
 - b. What are the qualifications of the “virtual instructor(s)” that will be primarily responsible for the content delivery? What will the process be to select the virtual instructor(s)? How will the virtual instructor(s) work with the staff that are present in the classroom?
 - c. When will these courses be offered (what part of the year, time of day, etc.)? In what ways will the course(s) be available to non-traditional students that require scheduling flexibility?
- B. Describe the technology resources that you will need to successfully support the delivery of the online courses. Itemize the hardware, software, networking, and professional development implementation you will procure using grant funds.
- C. Describe your professional development plans, including the types of opportunities you plan to offer and the audience(s) for the professional development. Include in your professional development plans opportunities targeted for: 1) program classroom staff, 2) virtual instructors, and 3) other staff in the school/district(s).
- D. Provide a timeline that includes at a minimum: 1) working with external organizations to develop and implement the online courses, 2) the purchase of new technology and other materials, 3) selection of any new/existing staff for program implementation— including virtual instructors as well as staff that will be present in the classroom, 4) professional development for staff, and 5) the implementation of the online course(s).

Priority 1D: Quality Assurance

- A. How will you ensure that the online courses are aligned to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks or the Massachusetts High School of Studies (MassCore) and that the online courses will provide high quality, engaging curriculum aimed at meeting the needs of students that are most at-risk for not graduating on time?
- B. The purpose of the grant is to provide distance learning courses at low cost and to schools throughout the Commonwealth. Do you propose to share the copyright of all of the grant-related course components with the Department? If not, describe what materials or components will not be shared with the Department and how you will ensure that these materials/components will be available for other districts and at a lower per-student cost as a result of this grant?

Priority 2 Technology Supporting Current Tiered Instruction Projects: Grant funds will support projects that create effective technology-rich environments that support current tiered-instruction in English language arts and/or mathematics. The tiered-instruction may include all three levels: core instruction, supplemental instruction, and intensive intervention or any one level.

Implementation of Tiered Instruction

The project should include instructional teams that use clear learning expectations and pacing guides; a method for screening all students; and assessments for monitoring progress, data analysis, interventions and supplementary instruction, and program evaluation. In addition, evidence should be given to show administrative, classroom and parental support teams.

Mathematics: Guidelines for Tiered Instruction

A Continuum for this work in mathematics has been developed to help districts self-assess what elements they have in place and what they need to successfully implement and sustain a Tiered Instructional model. See link below.

http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/summit/TImodel_ssscontinuum.doc

ELA: Guidelines for Tiered Instruction

Classroom Instruction

- At least 90 minutes of core reading instruction for all students, including reading authentic literature and informational text
- Students receive 20-30 minutes of whole group instruction, primarily focusing on comprehension and vocabulary. Students then receive 60-70 minutes of small-group, differentiated instruction targeting student needs in decoding and fluency as well as vocabulary and comprehension.
- Students have opportunities to apply new skills in practice centers that are closely aligned to the instruction they have received in small group.

Supplemental Intervention

- Research-based intervention designed for students who are at some risk of not reaching grade-level goals in reading. Students are identified by screening assessments and provided 30 minutes of intervention in addition to the 90 minute block or as a “push-in” time during the reading block.
- Recommendation: student skill development is monitored on a monthly basis to determine if they are responding to instruction.

Intensive Intervention

- Research-based intervention designed for students who are substantially below grade-level. Students are identified using screening assessments and receive more than 30 minutes of small group intervention in addition to the 90 minute core reading block.
- Recommendation: student skill development is monitored on a bi-monthly basis to determine if they are responding to this instruction.

This is a link to a graphic representation of tiered instruction in ELA:

http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/summit/Basystems_tieredmodel.doc

Using Tiered Instruction to Determine Eligibility for Special Education for Specific Learning Disability Included is a link with forms and technical assistance documents that are to be used when determining whether a student is eligible for special education with a Specific Learning Disability (SLD). The forms consist of the following: Specific Learning Disability Team Determination of Eligibility; Historical Review and Educational Assessment; Area of Concern and Evaluation Method (includes using a Response to Scientific, Research-Based Intervention and/or an IQ/Achievement Discrepancy Model); Exclusionary Factors; and Observation.

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/iep/sld/default.html#http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/iep/sld/default.html>

Priority 2: Technology Supporting Current Tiered Instruction Projects

REQUIRED PROGRAM INFORMATION - NARRATIVE COMPONENT

Listed below are the required components in the order that they must appear in the proposal.

Each application must include information on the following items.

Priority 2A: Overview and Planning

- A. Describe the elements of a tiered instruction system that your district has in place and those for which technology resources are needed.
- B. Itemize the hardware, software and networking you will procure using grant funds.

Priority 2B: Implementation and Outcome

- A. Describe how you will use the technology to enhance instruction in ELA and/or mathematics in your district's Tiered Instruction program.
- B. Describe how you will provide professional development on the use of technology for instruction, assessment, and/or supplemental materials in your Tiered Instruction Program. (Provide information on instructors, participants, and timeline.).
- C. Identify the technology-based supplemental instructional materials, describe why and how you choose the ones you did.

Priority 3: Technology Integration and Promising Practices: Grant funds will support projects in which the grant recipients will work collaboratively with the Department's partners (e.g. WGBH Teachers' Domain, Verizon Thinkfinity, etc.) or other research-based successful models, to:

- design, develop, and implement online professional development;
- mentor participating teachers who are teaching in technology rich classrooms;
- support participating teachers to reflect and refine their teaching; and
- select promising practices that integrate technology into curriculum and instruction.

The project should adopt a model that has been proven successful in improving student technology literacy skills and academic learning. The professional development activities may be delivered either through online courses or a combination of face-to-face and online. Online courses must be delivered through MassONE Moodle.

In year one, the funded projects will:

- provide professional development in the fall/winter of 2009
- implement the learning in the classroom in the spring of 2010; and
- reflect and refine classroom practices in the summer of 2010.

In year 2, based on the recommendations of the outside evaluator, each grant recipient

- must revise its professional development and classroom implementation,
- follow year one's schedule for professional development and classroom implementation, and
- submit at least three promising practices to the Department at the end of August 2011.

Applicants must demonstrate that participating teachers have a technology-rich environment (e.g., an up-to-date laptop or desktop computer for every student, as well as other technologies, e.g. interactive white board, projector, video camera, etc.) to implement their lesson plans. All participating schools must have a well-maintained technology infrastructure to support the technology-enhanced instruction.

The Department reserves the right to post course content designed and developed by the grant recipients and their partners in the MassONE TLR (Teaching and Learning Resource) area.

Priority 3: Technology Integration and Promising Practices

REQUIRED PROGRAM INFORMATION - NARRATIVE COMPONENT

Listed below are the required components in the order that they must appear in the proposal.

Each application must include information on the following items.

Priority 3A: Needs Assessment

- A.** Describe the selected curriculum content area(s) for this project and explain why students in the participating schools need to focus on this area(s). Provide measurable evidence for the explanation.
- B.** Describe the current technology proficiency of teachers and students (based on the content of the Massachusetts Technology Self-Assessment Tool and the Massachusetts Technology Literacy Standards and Expectations) and describe the expected technology proficiency of teachers and students after the implementation of the project.

- C. Describe the availability of the technologies (including one-to-one laptop or desktop computer for every student in the participating classrooms, particularly in the middle and high schools), the maintenance of the technologies, and the technology infrastructure.

Priority 3B: Partnership

- A. Describe how the partnership with other district(s) was formed. (The Department encourages the applicant to partner with at least one other school district. Complete Schedule C under Required Forms in the Workbook.) Explain the significance of this partnership.
- B. If the project is collaborating with a higher education institution or a service provider, describe how the collaboration was formed. Provide information about the organization and its qualifications in providing the service. Summarize the qualifications of the instructor(s) implementing the project.
- C. If the project will not involve any outside service provider or other districts, give a clear explanation why it will not do so. Describe the qualifications of the local provider. Describe why the district is not partnering with other districts.

Priority 3C: Professional Development Implementation and Strategies

- A. Describe the professional development model that the project is adopting. (This model has proven success in integrating technology skills into teaching the content areas.) Provide examples of success of this model.
- B. Provide a detailed timeline and description of the professional development activities and content. The timeline should identify the date and time span for each major professional development activity, the content, the instructor(s), and participants. The professional development activities should address the identified needs. (Activities may be workshop series, roundtable discussions, online discussions, etc. The Department may request to review the syllabi before funding the project.) Also, indicate the number of participants in each course.
- C. Include an account of the technologies available for the professional development activities with information on technical support.

Priority 3 D: Classroom Implementation and Strategies

- A. Provide a detailed description of how teachers will be supported by the providers during the classroom implementation.
- B. Include an account of the technologies available for students and teachers to implement their projects in the classroom with information on the technical support.

Priority 3E: Follow-up Activities and Outcomes

- A. Provide a detailed description of the follow-up activities and timeline for teachers to reflect/refine their lesson plans, share their lesson plans, and select promising practices to submit to the Department. Include an account of the role of the providers in supporting the teachers in the follow-up activities.
- B. Describe the outcomes the project will have at the end of the two years, specifically the number of students and teachers who will benefit directly. Describe how the project will continue after the funding period.

Priority 4 Formative, Benchmark, and Summative (MEPA) Assessments: Grant funds will support projects that use appropriate technology effectively to implement formative, benchmark, and summative (MEPA) assessments, particularly in schools that have high number of ELL students.

Priority 4: Formative, Benchmark, and Summative (MEPA) Assessments

REQUIRED PROGRAM INFORMATION - NARRATIVE COMPONENT

Listed below are the required components in the order that they must appear in the proposal.

Each application must include information on the following items.

Priority 4A: Planning

- A. Describe how your district will use technology to support instruction that is based on the Massachusetts English Language Proficiency Benchmarks and Outcomes.
- B. Describe how your district will assist students in acquiring technological skills to enhance student learning and comfortably utilize the MEPA online testing system.
- C. Describe how your district will implement professional development opportunities tied to the use of technology in English Language Learner instruction and assessment including MEPA online testing

Priority 4B: Procurement

- A. Do your schools intranet and internet connections meet the iTest technical specifications document (see RFP, Additional Information, Priority 4 Attachment)?
- B. If improvements would be necessary to bring your schools up to these specifications, how much would they cost? Describe in detail the improvements that would be necessary and enter the amounts in the Allocation of Funds section.
- C. How many computers do you currently have that meet the iTest technical specifications for Proctor Test Workstations (PTW) and Student Test Workstations (STW)? How do these numbers compare to your overall enrollment as well as your ELL enrollment?
- D. How much would it cost to acquire a sufficient number of PTWs and STWs for your schools? Describe if this would include upgrades of existing machines or the purchase of new computers.
- E. Describe in a narrative the proposed expenditures for the budget submitted. Include a rationale for each expenditure.

Priority 4C: Outcomes

- A. Explain what improvements to instruction and assessment will be made in your district because of acquired technology hardware and/or software.
- B. Describe the technological skills the students in your district will acquire as a result of resources provided through this grant.
- C. Describe anticipated “value added” components of the use of technology to teacher effectiveness in English Language Learner instruction and assessment, including the anticipated implications for student learning.