

**After-School and Out-of School Time Quality Program**  
**Fund Code: 530**

**Question & Answer Document**  
(Relevant FY 07 and FY 08 submissions)

APPLICATION/SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Q1. *If a program is not able to meet the August 6th deadline for a letter of intent, does this mean it is not eligible to apply? Is there a specific format that should be followed when writing the LOI?*

A1. The Letter of Intent (LOI) is recommended, not required. Therefore, an applicant would not be penalized in the application/grant review process if a Letter of Intent were not submitted. The LOIs allow the Department to have a sense of the number of applications that will be submitted in order to prepare for the grant review process. Also, submission of a Letter of Intent does not obligate the organization to actually apply; it is a merely a statement that there is an intent to submit an application.

The Letter of Intent can be simple and short and just include the name of the agency applying, any partner agencies and a 1-2 paragraph description of the proposal plan, including an estimated total budget request.

Q2. *Is there a standard format/guidelines that should be used for the proposal submission (layout of proposal, page limits, attachment requirements/ limits, font / spacing / margin requirements, etc)?*

A2. The RFP stipulates Part III – Required Program Information: Sections A-D cannot exceed 8 pages with 1” margins and must be no smaller than 10-pt Times New Roman font.

Q3. *If we’re applying for both school year and summer ’09 funding, do we need to submit 3 sets of each proposal since there’s a different signature page declaration for each?*

A3. No. An applicant that is proposing both school year and summer services should submit 3 copies of one application (proposal should address both school year and summer services together) that contains two Signature Pages and two sets of budget detail pages.

Q4. *Any chance I could speak with you briefly via telephone regarding our application?*

- A4. Due to the competitive nature of this RFP, individual guidance cannot be given and questions cannot be answered regarding an applicant's proposed program or services. This Question & Answer document serves this purpose.
- Q5. *Can the grant be submitted electronically on the August 20<sup>th</sup> with a faxed or PDF version of the signature page?*
- A5. No. By 4:30 on Wednesday, August 20<sup>th</sup>, the Department must receive the application in hard copy. It is acceptable for the proposal to be hand-delivered or mailed. If the applicant plans to deliver the proposal to the Department, it should be delivered to the receptionist on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. Staff will collect the proposals from the receptionist at 4:30 on Wednesday, the 20<sup>th</sup>.
- Q6. *Does the Letter of Intent need to be approved before we submit the proposal?*
- A6. No. The Department will not verify receipt of, comment on or approve Letters of Intent. Once the LOI is submitted, applicants should move forward in writing their grant and submitting it by August 20<sup>th</sup>.
- Q7. *Can we include "documented support" letters from community collaborators and, if so, will those letters count toward the page number restriction under Part III of the proposal?*
- A7. Documented letters of support can be included with the proposal and will not be counted towards the 8 page maximum for Part III.
- Q8. *For Attachment B: Required Program Information – Sections A-D, do you want our response under each question on the form you provided or would you like them in a separate document?*
- A8. The RFP does not require a certain format in terms of how to respond to questions. However, applicants must be sure to answer each applicable question asked.
- Q9. *We submitted a Letter of Intent on July 29th. Our staff was wondering if it is acceptable to change the content of our letter to reflect our desire to submit a proposal that is different from what we have previously outlined. Not only would we like to change our program ask, but also the amount of funding. Is any of that acceptable? If so, should we submit a new Letter of Intent before the application deadline?*
- A9. The purpose of the Letter of Intent is to notify the Department that you intend to submit an application. It does not obligate you to move forward with what you propose in the letter. You are certainly able to change your plan. You do not need to notify the Department of this change.

Q10. *For an organization with multiple locations, would you prefer we apply by program or as an overall organization? We have approximately 15 centers with school-age programs that meet your criteria for grant eligibility. Please advise.*

A10. Due to the competitive nature of this grant, the Department cannot advise an applicant on the issues related to the development of its proposal(s). Answers #15 and #16 respond to similar questions.

Q11. *In the event we miss the deadline for this grant, is this opportunity or something similar likely to become available again in the near future?*

A11. Availability of additional funding will depend on budget appropriation in any given fiscal year.

Q12. *We are a CBO working with our school system to submit a proposal. The school system submitted the Letter of Intent but in the interim, it was decided that we would serve as the applicant. Is this okay?*

A12. Yes.

#### ELIGIBILITY

Q13. *Can a community-based organization be the grant recipient of the funds?*

A13. Yes.

Q14. *Is an individual public school eligible to apply or must the application come for the public school district?*

A14. The public school district must apply for the funds for one of its public school buildings.

Q15. *Can a public school district, non public school or community-based organization apply for more than one after-school site?*

A15. Any organization, including the public school district, can submit more than one application if it operates after-school programs at multiple sites.

Any organization wishing to submit a proposal for more than one site is strongly encouraged to submit the individual proposals together in one packet with a cover letter indicating how it would prioritize the applications. Due to the competitive nature of this Request for Proposals (RFP), if the Department is not able to fund all the proposals submitted by an organization, the information in the cover letter will help make determinations about how to prioritize funding recommendations.

- Q16. *If we want to start after-school programs in 2 elementary schools, would we submit one proposal for each building (site) or combined proposal for both buildings?*
- A16. As stated in Question/Answer 15, the district can submit one proposal for each site or a combined proposal can be submitted; however, in a combined proposal, only one funding amount can be applied for and, based on the example given, the funds would have to spread across the two sites.
- Q17. *Is this grant program just focused on EEC- licensed after-school programs or school-based programs?*
- A17. No. The statement “Adherence to applicable EEC regulations or ESE Program Standards must be demonstrated” only refers to an eligibility requirement of programs that are required to meet these regulations or standards. Programs that are not required to meet these regulations or standards but who are still considered non public schools or community-based organizations and who operate after-school and out-of-school time programs are eligible to apply.
- Q18. *Are drop- in programs, like most of those offered by Boys & Girls Clubs, eligible?*
- A18. Programs offered by the Boys & Girls Clubs are eligible to apply.
- Q19. *We have two elementary schools that are starting extended day programs in September. I do not believe these schools have summer program funding. Is [Fund Code] 530 something that we could write for with one or both of these schools to request a summer program?*
- A19. Yes. Schools that wish to provide 2009 summer services may apply for funds but only for the portion of the programming that is outside of the regular school year schedule. Summer programming would be considered outside of the regular school schedule and, as such, would be eligible for funding. See Question 15 and its answer for more information regarding applying for funds for programs that are operated at more than one school building/site.
- Q20. *Does the grant program assume there is already an existing ASOST program that grant funds will enhance?*
- A20. The grant does not assume there already exists ASOST programs that grant funds will enhance. “Fund Use” addresses the development of new programs.
- Q21. *Most of these kinds of grants go to urban, high poverty districts. I have written several competitive grants here and am always disappointed to see smaller districts out of the loop. Is the focus for this grant on the urban high poverty districts or should I give it a shot?*

A21. The RFP has several priorities that are listed in the RFP. They include providing services in high-need communities as evidenced by low income level and need for academic improvement by: assisting programs to expand upon quality initiatives related to the guidelines established by the Departments of Elementary and Secondary Education and Early Education and Care; addressing barriers to student participation; and increasing comprehensive after-school and out-of-school time programming for children and youth during the school year and summer. The grant proposals will be reviewed based on these priorities.

In addition, several considerations will be made when making recommendations to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. These considerations include: ensuring a geographic distribution of grants; funding a cross-section of program organizations and program sizes in order to ensure that grant recipients are reflective of the state's mixed delivery system; and supporting proposals that are cost-effective.

Applicants should take all these priorities and considerations into account when deciding whether or not to submit an application.

Q22. *We are not an urban [district] and we have a low percentage of free and reduced lunch. We do have a non-public school and a private business that we could involve in this grant, which is listed as a preferential goal. We are very interested, but would just like to know if we would have a good chance of securing funding given our situation.*

A22. See the response to Question 21.

Q23. *Is a 501(c)(3) theatre company eligible to apply as a community-based organization?*

A23. Yes.

Q24. *I am wondering who I can speak to in order to find out if my non-profit, preschool literacy and arts program is eligible for your initiative.*

A24. The eligible population for this after-school and out-of-school time RFP is students in Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Programs that serve preschool-aged children are not eligible to apply.

Q25. *Are grants being awarded to new programs or only to programs currently in operation?*

A25. Both.

Q26. *As a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center run by a CBO and in partnership with a public school, do we meet the criteria in order to apply?*

A26. Yes.

Q27. *Can a parochial school be a lead agent?*

A27. Yes. Parochial schools can be the lead agent or a partner in the application process. Please note that in order to be eligible to receive state funds as a parochial school, several conditions must be met:

- As with public school programs, the after-school and out-of-school time program must be open to any child in the community. Applications should include documentation, including applicable policies that reflect the school's willingness to accept all children, not just those participating in the parochial school.
- The after-school program may not use grant funds to provide religious instruction to students. Applications should include an outline of the curriculum in order to document this.

Q28. *Can the Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts apply for this grant?*

A28. As a community-based organization, the Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts would be eligible to apply for funding. The organization must meet any other criteria associated with the funding as well.

Q29. *Does this grant allow for programs serving 4 year olds? Does this grant allow for programs with a mixed classroom model (4 & 5 year old children)?*

A29. These funds can be used in programs that serve students in Kindergarten (i.e., 5 years old by the locally defined cut-off date) through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Programs serving preschool-aged children are not eligible recipients of the funds.

Q30. *We are a private non-profit organization that has received support from the Massachusetts Cultural Council. Would we be eligible to apply for this grant given our current relationship with the MCC (operating funding only, not for specific programs)?*

A30. As a community-based organization, you are eligible to apply for funds assuming that any other criteria required with the funding are also met.

Q31. *It appears that a collaboration with another organization/school is not necessary to apply for funding—is this so?*

A31. No. Attachment A lists Partnerships as a required enhancement. In addition, under eligibility in the RFP, it states that preference will be given to proposals developed by public schools (districts), non-public schools and community-based organizations.

Q32. *Are collaboratives eligible to apply for this grant? If so, would there be any consideration of a higher funding level based on the anticipated enrollment exceeding that of a single school district?*

- A32. Yes, collaboratives are eligible to apply for funds. The funding eligibility is based on what the applicant determines reasonable to provide the level of services and/or enhancements to a given number of children.
- Q33. *It appears that since we have not received state or federal money for our work in the schools in the past, all grants have been private, that we cannot apply for this grant but we could be named as the collaborating organization. Is this true?*
- A33. This is not the case. Eligible applicants are public school districts, non-public schools and community-based organizations. If the applicant does not have experience in administering state or federal grants and would like to apply for the funds, fiscal responsibility and experience in receiving similar amounts of funding as that applied for through this grant (either through local funds, private grants or foundations) must be demonstrated.
- Q34. *May a CBO be the lead agency on more than one proposal?*
- A34. Yes.
- Q35. *What is the requirement for a partnership? Is it two partners or three? Is it a public school and an organization? A non-public school and an organization? A public and a non-public and an organization?*
- A35. Please see response to Question 31.
- Q36. *We currently run a locally funded summer program for middle school students. Are we eligible to apply?*
- A36. If the organization is a public school, non-public school or a community-based organization, it is eligible to apply for the funds. Other required criteria for the funding must also be met in order for an organization to be able to apply.
- Q37. *Although we receive Title I funding, our poverty percentage from the US Census is just over 3%. Are we eligible to apply? Do you recommend that we spend considerable amounts of time writing this grant when we have relatively low numbers of low income and ELL students?*
- A37. Eligibility for this grant is not based on poverty levels or size of special populations. Refer to the answer to Question 21 for more information on priorities and funding considerations.
- Q38. *We are a private, EEC-licensed center and were wondering about our eligibility in applying for this grant.*
- A38. As an EEC-licensed school-age program, you are eligible to apply for the funds, assuming that the other requirements/criteria are met.

- Q39. *We are a community-based organization partnering with another community-based organization and seeking funding for an existing after-school program. We would like to know if we are eligible or if we need to be partnered with a public or private school?*
- A39. Yes. You are eligible to apply. However, in accordance with the legislative budget language, priority will be given to proposals developed collaboratively by public schools, non-public schools and private community-based programs.
- Q40. *We are a CBO. We operate a public school-based program, so it is in partnership with the school (and by inference, therefore, with the district as well). We would be the applicant. Should we list as our partner the school or the district?*
- A40. The school would be listed as the partner but you should include in the partner's name, the district of which they are a part.
- Q41. *Are for-profit community-based organizations eligible?*
- A41. Yes.
- Q42. *Our organization provides arts based professional development and direct service to several after-school, out-of-school and extended day programs. However, we do not run any of these programs ourselves. Is it possible for us to apply for one grant under this RFP for funding programs at several sites? If yes, do independent service providers like ours simply leave the District Code number blank?*
- A42. Yes. Refer to Question and Answer #16. Regarding the district code, please leave it blank if the provider/organization is not currently a Department of Elementary and Secondary Education grant recipient.
- Q43. *Are weekend (out-of-school, as opposed to after-school) programs eligible for support?*
- A43. Yes, assuming the other eligibility criteria associated with the funding are met.
- Q44. *Is the collaboration between two community-based institutions eligible for support?*
- A44. Yes. Refer to Question and Answer #31 for more information.
- Q45. *If a CBO has not solidified a partnership with a public school or a district by the August 20<sup>th</sup> deadline, is it still possible to submit a proposal and will it be considered?*

- A45. Funding under this RFP requires a partnership between a public school, non-public school and/or a community-based organization. While any organization or district can apply for the funds, if a partnership does not exist, the proposal will not be considered.
- Q46. *Does the RFP require specific “Documentation” for all the requirements outlined in the RFP as well as the additional “Quality enhancement criteria” for the funding? Can some of these areas be addressed in the narrative when applicable?*
- A46. The RFP does not outline which specific documents are needed in order to verify that the applicant meets the requirements for the funding. Instead, the applicant should provide whatever support (either specific documents or through narrative pieces) necessary to convince the grant reader that the eligibility criteria are met. Refer to Question #49 for additional information.
- Q47. *We are an early childhood education center and have contacted the LEA in our service area regarding the letter of support, MOU, etc. The LEA has offered input into program design however are hesitant to provide a letter because they themselves are applying and feel it would decrease their chances and/or their school system has a policy of not providing letters. Please advise as this component is part of the evaluation criteria.*
- A47. Refer to Question and Answer #59.

#### PROGRAMMATIC

- Q48. *Under the Funding heading, it states that: applicants must demonstrate adherence to applicable EEC regulations or ESE Program Standards for Public School Operated After-School Programs. What are the ESE Program Standards for Public School Operated After-School Programs and where can we get a copy of them?*
- A48. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s *Quality Standards for Public School Operated School-Age Child Care Programs* came about as a result of the Extended School Services Law (Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 26 A-B). This law permits local school committees, upon approval of the city council or selectmen, to establish and maintain school-age child care programs. The law requires that the Commissioner of Elementary & Secondary Education approve public school operated programs based on standards established by the Commissioner of Education in consultation with the Department of Public Health.

A copy of the ESE Program Standards can be accessed at [www.doe.mass.edu/ess/ta/](http://www.doe.mass.edu/ess/ta/). EEC licensing regulations can be found at [http://www.eec.state.ma.us/oo\\_licensing.aspx](http://www.eec.state.ma.us/oo_licensing.aspx)

- Q49. *How do we demonstrate adherence to and use of “EEC regulations or ESE Program Standards” for after-school programs? What documentation is required?*
- A49. If EEC licenses the program, a license number will be sufficient documentation that the program adheres to EEC licensing regulations. If the after-school program is operated by the public school, a statement assuring the Department that the program adheres to the ESE program standards should be included with your application. If funded, your program will be visited to ensure compliance with these program standards.
- Q50. *We have reduced staff significantly due to budget limitations and would like to use these grant funds to hire someone to manage an after-school program. Is that possible? Please advise.*
- A50. Staff and coordinator salaries are listed as appropriate uses of funds. The proposal should indicate how funds to hire a coordinator/manager would help to advance one or more of the quality enhancement criteria (depending on the level of funding). In addition, please keep in mind that the RFP places a cap of 10% on Program Coordination activities. Other requirements associated with the various funding levels must also be met.
- Q51. *Does the ASOST have to be year-round, or can it be limited to part of the school year (e.g., September through November)?*
- A51. The budget language does not indicate a requirement in terms of length of services. However, given that the funds would likely not be available until October, the proposal would have to indicate what program enhancements would be added to an already existing program. In addition, the proposal will need to be clear on the anticipated outcomes of a short-term program.
- Q52. *We have an existing School-Age Program. My question is do we need to add more children or can we enhance our existing program?*
- A52. Applicants are required to address Priority #1: Quality Enhancement. However, the decision to also address Priority #2: Addressing Barriers to Student Participation and/or Priority #3: Comprehensive Programming is up to the individual applicant.
- Q53. *You mention the ability/willingness to serve students with disabilities. When you say disabilities, are you referring to either learning or physical disabilities? Or does an organization have to be able to serve both students with learning and physical disabilities?*

- A53. The term *Students with disabilities* refers to students who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP). These students may have a learning or a physical disability but their disability may be in other developmental domains as well.
- Q54. *In terms of the waitlist, can schools partnering with qualified agencies select 50% of the students from their school populations and 50% from the state's waitlist for subsidized child care?*
- A54. Yes.
- Q55. *Do Spanish and Portuguese language translation service for all written materials and a professional translator present at parent/OST staff meetings count as means for increasing Family Involvement?*
- A55. Yes.
- Q56. *Does ESE accept, as part of the criterion, "Serving Students with Disabilities (#3a)," the hiring of Special Education teachers to implement the OST program as a quality enhancement?*
- A56. Hiring Special Education teachers is considered an appropriate use of funds to advance criterion #3a. It does not, however, fulfill the pre-requisites of meeting criterion 3a as indicated in the *Funding* section of the RFP in that programs need to be willing/able to serve students with disabilities at the time of submitting the application.
- Q57. *Are we required to use the artists registered with the [MA cultural] council or can the artist/composer be from a distance away? I would like to organize a musical theater offering. Many of the choreographers are from the Boston area. I really want to find choreographers/dance instructors from the Worcester area. As long as we use artists registered with the council, how should we be coordinating with them in other ways?*
- A57. We recommend that you work with the Massachusetts Cultural Council or your local cultural council to discuss possible avenues for coordination.
- Q58. *What does it mean to be an "existing" program? Does one necessarily need to already be getting funds from ESE for after school programming in order to qualify?*
- A58. No. Refer to the answer to Question 20 for more information.
- Q59. *As a community-based non-profit, I assume that you want to see a letter of commitment from our school district. Is that correct? Should this be from central administration or from principals of specific schools?*
- A59. If a proposed new program will be operated by a community-based organization in a public school building, then documented support from the principal and the superintendent would be necessary to ensure that the commitment and space is available. If, however, the program will be operated elsewhere or is a well-established program with a committed space in a public school building and is

operated by a community-based organization, then support from the school building principal(s) from where the participating students come is sufficient in order to ensure a strong connection and partnership with the school(s).

Q60. *Are you interested/willing to fund projects with expansion as a goal?*

A60. Yes.

Q61. *The RFP requires “adherence to applicable EEC regulations or ESE Program Standards for Public School Operated After-School Programs.” Is it correct to assume that each of these agencies has formal certification processes through which eligible organizations can document that they meet all requirements? However, I imagine that our organization cannot be certified since it is a non-profit and not a public school and since the adolescents we serve probably are outside the EEC age range; is that correct? Will ESE give preference to programs with EEC or ESE certification?*

A61. Most of these questions are answered in Question 17. Please refer to that section for more information.

As a non-profit organization that is not a public school, you would not be required to adhere to ESE Program Standards for Public School Operated After-School Programs. EEC licensing regulations define school-age programs as those serving students who are in kindergarten and sufficiently old enough to enroll in 1<sup>st</sup> grade the following year up to students enrolled in older grades but not more than 14 years of age. Programs can serve students with special needs who are under the age of 16. Based on this information, you should make a determination as to whether you are required to meet EEC-Licensing Regulations.

Priority will not be given to applicants solely on the basis of whether they are EEC-licensed or ESE-certified.

Q62. *Clearly the RFP requires a commitment to having highly qualified staff in programs, but are there specific qualifications or certifications that you require or prefer? A teaching certificate or college or graduate degree would be examples of possible requirements.*

A62. The examples provided in this question would be appropriate advancements under Criterion 6.

Q63. *Does the ESE look favorably upon partnerships that include university or college support?*

A63. Colleges and universities are considered appropriate partners and are listed as such under the eligibility section of the RFP.

- Q64. *Must existing programs be enhanced or expanded in order to be eligible for funding, or will you also consider funding an existing, successful program as it is currently operated?*
- A64. Please refer to the response to Question 52.
- Q65. *Can you provide any more detail regarding what you consider to be a “comprehensive evaluation system” that would be sufficient to meet the quality enhancement criterion for an evaluation system in Attachment A?*
- A65. As stated in Attachment A, the criterion focusing on evaluation systems seeks a comprehensive, holistic approach to evaluation that looks at both programmatic and student outcomes. In addition, activities under this criterion look for systems that extend beyond activities proposed in this proposal to the overall after-school and out-of-school time program. Use of evaluation data is included in these system-building efforts.
- Q66. *Is there someplace on the web where I could find the Early Education and Care requirements for subsidized school-age services referenced in the RFP?*
- A66. For more information on EEC subsidized child care services, you can visit the EEC website at [www.eec.state.ma.us](http://www.eec.state.ma.us).
- Q67. *The ESE Program Standards for Public School Operated After School Programs contains a Registration form. As a community-based organization, is this something we would have to do and would we have to have it in place at the time we apply?*
- A67. No. Community-based organizations do not need to adhere to the ESE Program Standards nor do they need to register their programs with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The document is only applicable to after-school and out-of-school time programs that are administered and operated by a public school district.
- Q68. *We are a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center site. According to section C, 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC sites should incorporate their evaluation requirements into the design for this particular proposal instead of creating a new process. This includes reporting outcomes data. Does this mean that I should just include my 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC grant response regarding evaluation in my Fund Code 530 evaluation response?*
- A68. It would be fine to include that same section in this proposal. It should, however, also include an explanation of how your 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC evaluation system will provide you with evaluation information that is relevant to this particular proposal design.

- Q69. *Is it the presumption that programs funded through this grant serve a group of children that will stay in the program over the year?*
- A69. Not necessarily. The applicant will need to justify the schedule of the proposed design, student participation and anticipated outcomes against the goals of the design. Together this information will be reviewed and the proposal will be taken into consideration.
- Q70. *Is it acceptable to have an open or drop-in program where students attend only certain aspects of the programming with the result that the number of students will vary over the year?*
- A70. Applicants should submit proposals based on the needs of students and programs in their community. The applicant will need to justify the schedule of the proposed design, student participation and anticipated outcomes against the goals of the design. Together this information will be reviewed and the proposal will be taken into consideration.
- Q71. *May we specify ability to serve children with specific disabilities, or does ability/willingness to serve students with disabilities require that we be able to serve any student with any disability? Along these lines, am I correct in assuming that ability to serve students with cognitive and behavioral disabilities along with their typical peers would qualify as meeting the guidelines for Quality Enhancement #3a?*
- A71. Programs must be able and willing to serve any student with a disability (i.e., a student with an Individualized Education Program). Only having the ability/willingness to serve students with certain disabilities does not qualify as meeting criterion #3a.
- Q72. *What type of entity would a private school have a partnership with if applying for homework assistance for English and math on an after-school program? In this particular case, would a letter from the school committee and principal be sufficient to document community support and the necessity for it?*
- A72. As indicated in the RFP and in the Question & Answer document, this RFP seeks to support after-school and out-of-school time programming through partnerships. A private school could partner with a public school and/or a community-based organization to enhance after-school programs for the students in its community. If the private school seeks a partnership with the local school district, a letter from the school district (see Question #59 for more information on who the letter or letters should come from) indicating that it is in partnership with the private school would be sufficient documentation to verify this partnership.
- Q73. *Scenario: A community-based nonprofit organization is the grant applicant (in collaboration with the town school department with in-kind donations of space,*

*energy, etc.) and the CBO would be running the program if funded. BUT the new after-school program would be held at the public middle school. Would we need to meet EEC guidelines and/or ESE program standards because the program will be held at the public school and submit accordingly? In this scenario, is it best to have the school department apply? Or does it matter? Please advise.*

A73. In the end, the need to meet EEC licensing regulations or ESE Program Standards is not related to which agency applies for the funds. The answer to the question is which entity has final jurisdiction over the program. If the school district applies for these funds but the CBO ultimately administers and is responsible for the new program, then it must meet EEC licensing regulations. If the school committee and the school district administer and oversee the operation of the after-school program, then it must adhere to ESE Program Standards.

Q74. *What is your definition of a “collaborative” as described in Question 32?*

A74. As described in Chapter 40, Section 4E of Massachusetts General Laws, an Education Collaborative is defined as: “...two or more school committees of cities, towns and regional school districts may enter into a written agreement to conduct education programs and services which shall complement and strengthen the school programs of member school committees and increase educational opportunities for children. The school committees shall collaborate to offer such programs and services, and the association of school committees which is formed pursuant hereof to deliver such programs and services shall be known as an education collaborative.”

Q75. *We are a nonprofit organization that operates an after-school program primarily on school property as the managing partner in a 21<sup>st</sup> Century grant. We also do program independent of the school. Our school is not registered as a child care provider, nor are we licensed as such. We don’t consider ourselves child care providers, since our youth (middle and high school) come and go as they please. Are we required to be licensed?*

A75. Refer to Question 61 for an answer.

Q76. *Would the APT tool be appropriate to use as part of the program evaluation if the afterschool program is not part of the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program?*

A76. It is difficult to know if the APT is an appropriate tool without knowing the outcomes you are trying to evaluate. The APT is certainly a valid evaluation tool that is used by 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC sites.

Q77. *Are the “priorities for funding” identified prioritized in descending order or are all of equal weight? In addition, are the 3 types of organizations, public schools, private schools and community organizations prioritized in descending order or will all carry equal weight?*

A77. No. Neither the priorities nor the types of organizations are listed in order of priority.

#### FUNDING/BUDGET

Q78. *When would this money become available?*

A78. Decisions regarding funding will be made no later than September 30, 2008. Once approved, the grant funds will be available to the chosen recipients within approximately 3-6 weeks (on average), as the Department staff need time to file paperwork related to our grants and financial systems, process the budget request and enter it onto the state system.

Q79. *Does this Budget Detail include the entire budget for the program or just the amount requested in this application? Does the Budget Detail Narrative refer to the entire program or the amount requested in this application?*

A79. Both the Budget Detail Pages and the Budget Narrative should reflect the amount of money applied for through this RFP and not the entire program.

Q80. *Applicants are instructed to submit two budgets, if both after-school and summer programs are being proposed. In this scenario, how would the children be counted? For example, a child attends the after-school program and then attends the summer program. Would this count as one child for after-school AND one child for summer?*

A80. No. When responding to the questions related to number of children served, if the applicant proposes to focus on school year and summer services and the children attend both then the number of children served should be an unduplicated count.

Q81. *Could you please clarify whether the 15% match is on top of the amount requested or if it is included in the amount being requested? In other words for a request of \$50,000 would the in-kind be \$7,500? Or, does the request actually need to be for \$42,500 with the in-kind being valued at \$7,500, which together equal \$50,000?*

A81. The 15% matching requirement requests that applicants have 15% of the requested amount above and beyond the grant proposal. In the example provided above, the applicant would need to demonstrate a \$7,000 match.

Q82. *Can 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center funds be considered in-kind/matching funds?*

A82. No. State or federal funds already received by the applicant from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education or the Department of Early Education and Care cannot be considered matching.

- Q83. *Since we can't use 21<sup>st</sup> Century funds or other ESE funds as part of the match, does this mean that a new site can only operate using funds awarded through this ASOST grant and the other funds from the 15% match? In other words, if we have our match from other sources, can we still allocate 21<sup>st</sup> Century funds to help support the new site?*
- A83. This grant and the matching funds do not have to be the only funds used to operate the program.
- Q84. *We charge some fees for our 21<sup>st</sup> Century program. We put the proceeds in a revolving account to use for extra expenses. I consider that to belong to our public school district. Can that money be used for the match?*
- A84. No.
- Q85. *The RFP shows a maximum budget. Does this maximum budget mean our total program budget or the maximum amount of money we can request?*
- A85. The maximum budget shown in the RFP represents the maximum amount of funds an applicant can request at that level.
- Q86. *If we request school year funds, do the funds need to be used by June 2009?*
- A86. The budget language allows funds under this grant program to be used for services rendered up through August 31, 2009. For the purposes of the state's grants management system, one budget must be submitted for services to be delivered upon approval of the grant through June 30, 2009. Services to be provided between July 1, 2009 and August 31, 2009 must be documented on separate budget pages. Where the school year services ends and the summer services begin is not as important as separating out the budgets based on the costs associated with the above two timeframes.
- Q87. *Does the minimum/maximum budget refer to the overall organizational budget or the program budget*
- A87. The minimum/maximum budget refers to the budget that can be applied for under this Request for Proposals.
- Q88. *Is the # of children served in Section D based on student enrollment, anticipated after school program enrollment or actual TBD once program is offered?*
- A88. The number of students served should be based on projected enrollment in the after-school and out-of-school time program (for the 2008-2009 school year) applying for the funds. Projections can be based on actual enrollments from the previous program year.

- Q89. *Should the # of children served in Section D be based on capacity of the program, or a number of different students reached? For example, we have a fall and spring internship program that reaches 20 students each session, a total of 40 students. If some students apply to be in both sessions, can we still apply for funding for 40 students?*
- A89. No. The # of students served should use the unduplicated count of students projected to be served during the program year. The projection can be based on actual enrollments from the 2007-2008 program year if the actual enrollments are not known at the time of submission.
- Q90. *If funded, can ESE funds be used for program operating costs related to program enhancement and/or expansion or will funds be restricted to directly support short-term capacity building, TA, consultants, curriculum development, etc.?*
- A90. Applicants can utilize funds for program coordination related to the expansion or enhancement but that amount must not exceed 10% of the requested amount through this proposal.
- Q91. *It says that funds may be used for contracts/subsidy payments with provider agencies. What are you referring to with that statement?*
- A91. Applicants may have contractual arrangements with partnering agencies/organizations to provide some or all of the ASOST services described in the proposal. In addition, the RFP allows for subsidy payments that could include either funding for increased per-child reimbursement rates for serving students with disabilities or if the applicant proposes to create a new program, funds may be used to subsidize students on the state waitlist for subsidized after-school services.
- Q92. *As a non-profit 501 (c)(3) educational, youth services agency, what should we write in the District Code box?*
- A92. If you are not a current ESE grant recipient, do not write anything in the District Code box. In the event that you are awarded funds through this grant program, a code will be assigned to your organization.
- Q93. *Can funds be used to purchase equipment such as computers and software?*
- A93. Yes. Please note that the review process will give priority to applications that maximize direct services to students and minimize administration and indirect costs.
- Q94. *My program is a small one and received one grant for my project last year. In what way can I prove that I can be fiscally responsible for a larger grant?*

- A94. A copy of your latest audit would be considered appropriate documentation. If no audit has been conducted, a copy of your entity's tax return and also references from other grantors would be appropriate.
- Q95. *In the application, should we include our existing homework center information and funding as part of the project or only the new programming that we are proposing to add using the grant money?*
- A95. You would include information on your existing homework center as well as a description of the enhancement or expansion of it as part of your proposal design.
- Q96. *A major issue for rural program success is late busing. Is there a limit to the percent of the grant that is used for transportation of students?*
- A96. No. The RFP only states that there is a 10% cap on Program Coordination. However, transportation would not be considered Program Coordination.
- Q97. *Will funds for sites that are awarded the grant be fully disbursed in the fall?*
- A97. As of FY 2008, the Department has a new system for requesting funds. For more information please click on the following link:  
[http://finance1.doe.mass.edu/Grants/procedure/how\\_ma.html](http://finance1.doe.mass.edu/Grants/procedure/how_ma.html).
- Q98. *Is the After-School time grant only being offered this year, or will it be offered on a yearly basis?*
- A98. The grant is part of the FY 2009 budget. Future funding will depend on future budget appropriations.
- Q99. *Is the scoring rubric available?*
- A99. The following points will be awarded to each section: Section A: Overview – 5 points; Section B: Proposed Use of ASOST Funds – 50 points; Section C: Program Evaluation – 15 points; Section D: Budget and Budget Narrative – 25 points; and Section E: ASOST Community Resource Map – 5 points. It is anticipated that additional consideration will be awarded based on the priorities outlined in the RFP.
- Q100. *Is the grant only to be spent on program enhancements or can it also fund pre-existing activities if they already meet the guidelines for quality programs specified in Attachment A?*
- A100. Please refer to the response to Question #64.

Q101. *Can the district charge students to supplement after school- programs under the grant, with scholarships available for those who need it? If not, can the organization that is providing matching funds charge students?*

A101. Chapter 71, Section 26(b) allows public schools operating after-school programs to collect fees. Families of students who attend the public-school program and whose participation is supported by an EEC subsidy are expected to pay a fee based on the state's sliding fee scale.

Q102. *I am making doubly sure that the very recently announced state funding for after school grant is for funding to be spent this fiscal year starting July 1, 2008 and ending June 30, 2009.*

A102. The legislative budget language allows for these grant funds to be expended upon approval through August 31, 2009. See the answer to Question #86 for more information on budget requirements if summer services are planned.

Q103. *From my reading of the grant, funds can be used for subsidies only when serving special populations (i.e., children with disabilities and English Language Learners). Is this correct?*

A103. No. Please refer to Question and Answer #91.

Q104. *The RFP indicates that "Indirect costs are not an allowable expenditure under this grant." Several of the community centers preparing proposals have questions about what constitutes "indirect costs" for this grant program. Would you please describe those costs that would be disallowed as "indirect costs" for this grant program?*

A104. Indirect costs are generally those types of costs that you know are associated with the operation of your program but that can't be definitively calculated. For example, an organization that runs multiple after-school programs in one building has costs for electricity, heat, water, etc. These are the types of costs that may be lumped into indirect costs as it provides a pre-approved percentage of the grant to be allocated to cover such costs.

*The following new questions were submitted in July 2008:*

Q105. *I was wondering if a list of programs funded during the last After-School and Out-of-School Time Quality grant cycle is available.*

A105. FY 2008 ASOST Quality grantees can be found at:  
<http://finance1.doe.mass.edu/Grants/grants08/awards/530.html>

Q106. *In the past, has funding primarily gone to programs serving elementary school children, or is the funding equally distributed among programs serving all ages, including older middle and high school youth.*

A106. The funds do not prioritize a particular age group but instead can be used to support programs that serve children and youth in Kindergarten through Grade 12. While final evaluation reports for FY 08 aren't due until the fall, mid-year progress report data indicate that services and enhancements focus primarily on elementary and middle school age students. However, the number of students served at the high school level has grown by over 5 times the number in FY 2007.

Q107. *[As an FY 2008 ASOST Quality grant recipient], do I reapply for the ASOST grant?*

A107. Yes.

Q108. *Is the grant restricted to past recipients of [Fund] Code 530 funding?*

A108. No.

Q109. *Can the After-School and Out-of-School Time grant be used for a girls only program?*

A109. Yes.

Q110. *Will full-day summer day camps with an academic component be considered for this program?*

A110. Yes.

Q111. *If a community-based organization and LEA in the same district both applied for ASOST funding, would they be in competition for grant funds with each other, even if they were applying for different sites? If so, would it be better to have the CBO and the LEAD do a collaborative grant application?*

A111. The answer to the first question is yes. To answer the second question, it is up to the local programs to determine whether it makes more sense for them to submit applications separately or in partnership with one another.

Q112. *Will you accept letters of support (i.e., from superintendents, legislators, mayors, selectman, etc.) as attachments to the proposal?*

A112. Yes.

Q113. *Please provide an acceptable weekly per pupil cost (or cost range) for a program that operates 5 days a week, from 2:30 to 5:30.*

A113. The Department has not yet conducted a cost study of the varied and diverse services supported by the After-School and Out-of-School Time Quality grant. Section D: Budget and Budget Narrative ask that you provide information on the amount of the request, number of children to benefit or be served by this grant and a description of the proposed budget expenditures, in order that the reviewers can determine the extent to which the budget request is reasonable given the scope of services.

Q114. *For our after-school program, we will recruit kids in the neighborhood as participants but they may go to various schools, some even quite far away, given that Boston does not have neighborhood-based schools. Is it a requirement that among the partners in a proposal, one of them must be a school, especially a public school? We are a Boston social service agency with four partners in the community?*

A114. No. Refer to the response to Question 31 for more information.

Q115. *We will propose an arts based program. We understand that we must collaborate with the MA Cultural Council, a local council or a grantee (s) of a council. What depth or extent did you have in mind for such a collaboration?*

A115. In order to support the various stages of partnership development, the RFP does not specifically define what a partnership should look like nor does it describe the depth or extent of that partnership. Applicants should define their partnerships as they currently exist and include any proposed efforts to strengthen those partnerships through this grant, if applicable.

Q116. *If the application is a collaborative one that serves a number of unrelated programs, does the limit still hold for school year and summer programming?*

A116. Yes. Refer to responses to Questions 15 and 16 for more information.

Q117. *If the application is for a planning process where community and school partners develop strategies for how to better address needs, can it be a 3-year proposal, given that the strategic plan is not yet developed?*

A117. Applicants interested in developing a community/strategic planning process to better address their local needs are eligible to apply for funds under this grant program. However, availability of 3 years of funding for such a process cannot be guaranteed at this time.

Q118. *Are there any specific restrictions on where the 15% match comes from and what kind of assurance do we need to include that we will have those dollars?*

A118. Please refer to the responses to Questions 81-84 for more information on match restrictions. The response to Question 46 will also address your question about documentation. In general, the RFP does not specifically identify the necessary documentation to verify adherence to various requirements. Instead, applications should identify those forms of documentation that would best verify to a reader that they meet the requirement(s).

Q119. *In addressing Priority #3: Increasing Comprehensive After-School and Out-of-School Time Programs, can the extension of program weeks be considered as means to increase comprehensive programming?*

A119. Yes.

Q120. *We received an ASOST Quality grant in FY 07, and are wondering if we are still eligible to apply for FY 09. We are a university-based program that operates in collaboration with the Boston Public Schools. The eligibility requirement states, "Massachusetts public school districts, non-public schools, and public and private community-based programs are eligible." As a program at a public university, are we eligible for this grant?*

A120. The RFP states: "Massachusetts public school districts, non-public schools, and public and private community-based programs are eligible to apply for funding. In order to provide children and youth with the chance to experience and aspire to post-secondary opportunities, applicants are encouraged to partner with institutions of higher education where possible."

Q121. *If an agency partners with a new charter school, we are assuming there is no NCLB Accountability status nor a performance index (page 1, summary cover sheet). Would we then check serving low-income as the competitive priority (verifying disability and ELL status would need to be checked against enrollment whereas low-income is a city-wide phenomena)?*

A121. The Program Summary Cover Sheet lists one of the competitive priorities as programs that "serve at least 50% of children who are low-income (receiving free- or reduced-lunch) and/or who receive contracts and/or vouchers under the Department of Early Education and Care." This would reflect the need to verify the low-income information for the population served by the program, similar to verifying whether the children and youth served are English language learners or have a disability.

Q122. *Can former 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center sites continue to use the SAYO as an evaluation tool?*

A122. Yes, however, staff from ESE will not analyze SAYO data for ASOST sites that no longer receive 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC funds as part of the end-of-year evaluation activities. Analyzing and reporting these data will be the responsibility of the grantee.

Q123. *Besides teachers, can teaching assistants provide remedial services to students?*

A123. This is a local program decision. The RFP does not set forth specific requirements for qualifications of staff providing the services other than those that may apply as part of EEC licensing or adherence to ESE's *Quality Standards for Public School Operated School-Age Child Care Programs*.

Q124. *Can the 15% match in additional funds be in the form of in-kind services?*

A124. Yes.

Q125. *Is there a percentage cut-off for defining low-income level?*

A125. The Program Summary Cover Sheet lists one of the competitive priorities as programs that “serve at least 50% of children who are low-income (receiving free- or reduced-lunch) and/or who receive contracts and/or vouchers under the Department of Early Education and Care.”

Q126. *Are districts in corrective action considered a priority?*

A126. The Program Summary Cover Sheet lists one of the competitive priorities as programs that “partner with school(s) designated with an *NCLB Accountability Status*, including either “Improvement, Corrective Action, or Restructuring under Title 1.”

Q127. *What qualifies as collaboration with the Massachusetts Cultural Council?*

A127. Collaboration with the Massachusetts Cultural Council may include but not be limited to partnering with an organization that is member of the MA Cultural Council, currently receives funding from the MA Cultural Council; is a member of a local cultural council; and/or currently receives funds from a local cultural council.

Q128. *If part of your program is funded by the MA Cultural Council, is this considered to be a collaboration?*

A128. Yes.

Q129. *In the Purpose section under section “c”, are “art” programs inclusive of media and photography programming?*

A129. Yes.

Q130. *Does an applicant need to address All Quality Enhancement Criteria in their application (see the Attachment A Guidelines for Quality Enhancements in After-School and Out-of-School Time Programs)?*

A130. No

Q131. *Will there be priority given to a particular age population or region?*

A131. The funds can be used to support programs that serve children and youth in Kindergarten through Grade 12. In addition, the RFP states that “Funding recommendations will strive to have this grant program: a. represent a geographic distribution in order to reach children and youth in need of services throughout the Commonwealth...”

Q132. *Will the grant prioritize breadth versus depth of programming? Will there be a different emphasis on serving more children or on quality?*

A132. The Department aims to award grants to a diverse group of programs that reflect a breadth of programming, depth in programming, access to direct services for children and youth as well as quality enhancements.

Q133. *Can an applicant apply for a one year planning grant?*

A133. Yes.

Q134. *Will preference be given to proposals that prioritize EEC waitlisted children?*

A134. The Program Summary Cover Sheet lists one of the competitive priorities as programs that “serve at least 50% of children who are low-income (receiving free- or reduced-lunch) and/or who receive contracts and/or vouchers under the Department of Early Education and Care.”

Q135. *Where can I locate “Department Program Standards for Public School Operated After-School Programs”?*

A135. ESE’s *Quality Standards for Public School Operated School-Age Child Care Programs* can be accessed at: [www.doe.mass.edu/ess/ta/](http://www.doe.mass.edu/ess/ta/).

Q136. *If I am applying for a three year grant for both academic and summer programming (the full year), does my program have to serve the very same children during the school year and the summer time? Can they be some of the same children with new children added? Can they be entirely different children who are served by our programming during the academic year and the summer time?*

A136. The RFP doesn't stipulate requirements around children served by the program. Applications should be clear on whether they anticipate children to participate in both school year and summer programming or whether they target different populations for each program. Refer to the response to Question 69 for more information.

Q137. *If I am applying for a three-year grant for both academic and summer programming (the full year), does my program content have to be the same during the school year and summer time? Can some of it be the same or can it be entirely different content?*

A137. This is a local program decision.

Q138. *Is there a difference if one program submits one proposal for the academic year and one proposal for the summer time, versus submitting one for the entire year?*

A138. Applicants proposing school year and summer programming must submit one application.

Q139. *Is there any more information that can be given about the types of community-planning activities that are allowable under this grant?*

A139. Applicants proposing a community planning process can do so under this grant so long as the goal is to plan for how to address strategies/needs under one or more of the 3 priorities listed in the RFP. Appropriate use of funds related to this activity must still adhere to requirements in the RFP under the *Fund Use* section.

Q140. *Where can a program access the necessary data in order to complete the Community Resource Map?*

A140. At a minimum, applicants should check the EEC website to locate EEC-licensed school-age child care programs ([www.eec.state.ma.us](http://www.eec.state.ma.us)) as well as to check with their local school district to identify any public school operated after-school and out-of-school time programs. Information on other community-based organizations that operate after-school and out-of-school time programs (e.g., libraries, local recreation departments, Boys & Girls Clubs, etc.) should also be included.

Q141. *[For the Community Resource Map], can ESE define "local"? What is the area/radius in which we need to gather data? How many programs and organizations are we required to list?*

A141. Based on the population of children the applicant proposes to serve, the applicant can choose to define community as either a city or town or a local neighborhood.

Discretion is left to the applicant to make the reader aware of what programs exist locally that either identify needs/gaps in services so as to justify the proposed program and/or to assure the reader that the proposed program does not duplicate existing services.

Q142. *We have successfully administered a pilot program (FY 08) funded via DOE through a City program. Our monthly claims and final report were audited by the City. Must these valid, reimbursed claims and/or final report be submitted as proof of fiscal responsibility?*

A142. You do not need to submit the validated claims but instead could submit a copy of the audit report.

Q143. *If we categorize our staff in line items #1 and #2, must we also necessarily support #4b (fringe benefits) for them, or is this categorization simply a way of identifying jobs for ASOST grant purposes? If the answer is yes, then may we continue to pay instructors and coordinator as contractors for the few hours they work per week?*

A143. Expenditures listed on Lines 1 through 3 of the budget pages are for positions/individuals that are employed by the lead agency and whose salary is either paid in part-time or in full by this grant or who receive stipends for hours worked above and beyond their regular time as a result of this grant. Identification of expenditures on Lines 1 through 3 doesn't automatically assume expenditures will be covered on Line 4b; instead, required FICA, contributions to retirement systems and health insurance contributions (if applicable) could be covered with other program dollars. Positions listed on Line 5 of the budget pages reflect individuals who are contracted by lead agency to provide services as part of the grant program but who are not employed by the lead agency.

Q144. *Stipend boxes for line items 1 and 2 are greyed out, yet the Procedural Manual cites the possibility of itemizing stipends for these line items. Should this greyed out area be simply filled in if need be?*

A144. Stipend amounts should be listed under *Column H - Amount* of the budget pages on Lines 1 and 2, which is not greyed out.

Q145. *Does insurance for space fall into line item #8?*

A145. Insurance for space is considered an indirect cost. Indirect costs are not allowable under this grant.

Q146. *Does the 10% cap include space expenses as well as administrative personnel costs?*

A146. Yes. Please refer to definitions under *Fund Use* in the RFP for further clarification on the extent to which staff may be considered a direct services expense or a program coordination/administration cost.

Q147. *Our FY 08 program was developed collaboratively between our organization, a State entity, and 2 public schools. Could we now collaborate with a private institution of higher education, using their resources and adult students as potential mentors, which would also qualify as a “non public school”?*

A147. The Department encourages applicants to partner with institutions of higher education (IHE). However, IHEs would not be considered a non public school.

Q148. *Does past participation in MAP meetings and Get on BASE credit hours count in this application?*

A148. The Program Summary Cover Page does not list participation in state or local professional organizations as one of the competitive priorities.

Q149. *Must we designate our interest in multi-year funding at this point in time?*

A149 While applicants can indicate interest in one year or multi-year funding, the Department will make the final determination on activities that will be funded for one or more years.

Q150. *How is the per child reimbursement rate for children and youth who are English language learners determined?*

A150. This is calculated at the local level by the program.

Q151. *What is the in-kind/cash match requirement for requests less than \$50K?*

A151. There is no in-kind cash match requirement for requests less than \$50,000.

Q152. *Are indirect costs allowable under this grant program? Where do we research CFR34 S76.561?*

A152. Indirect costs are not allowable expenditures under this grant.