*****Massachusetts Department of***

***Elementary and Secondary Education***

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| Jeffrey C. Riley  *Commissioner* |  |

January 2023

Dear Applicant:

I am pleased to release the FY2024-FY2028 Open and Competitive MassSTEP ABE and MassSTEP ESOL Requests for Proposals (RFPs). This grant offers applicants the opportunity to apply for both optional planning grants and implementation grants.

MassSTEP services are accelerated models that allow participants to take adult education classes simultaneously with workforce training, in addition to workforce preparation activities. New applicants are encouraged to consider applying for planning grants for funds to determine potential needs for MassSTEP services.

The following priorities have been established for the planning grants:

* Provide evidence of a collaboration that includes adult education, training, business, and workforce partners
* Develop a plan and timeline to conduct a MassSTEP ABE or MassSTEP ESOL program analysis
* Identify a lead person to orient the direct work of the collaboration
* Provide evidence of outreach to local [MassHire workforce partners](https://www.mass.gov/service-details/connect-with-your-local-masshire-workforce-board) in the local workforce area in which the business partner is located and demonstrate alignment with local [Workforce Investment and Opportunity Agenda (WIOA) plans](https://www.mass.gov/service-details/wioa-local-plan-packages)
* Identify a target occupation
* Assess the collaboration’s readiness to design and deliver a program that adheres to the *FY24–FY28 Policies for Effective MassSTEP Programs in Community Adult Learning Centers and Correctional Institutions.*

The following priorities have been established for the implementation grants:

* A need for MassSTEP ABE and/or MassSTEP ESOL services
* Career pathway development in priority occupations as shown in the [WIOA local plan](https://www.mass.gov/service-details/wioa-local-plan-packages)
* Concurrent and contextualized adult education instruction, workforce preparation activities, civics education (MassSTEP ESOL), and workforce training
* A program design about 16 weeks in length (requirement)
* Partnership with one or more local area employers in the occupation that includes but is not limited to assistance with job placement/employment (requirement)
* Student attainment of one or more IRCs (requirement) and a high school credential (MassSTEP ABE)
* Collaborations with local MassHire Workforce Boards, MassHire Career Centers, and/or [Career/Vocational Technical Education](https://www.doe.mass.edu/ccte/cvte/) programs.
* Commitment to delivering a program that adheres to the *FY24–FY28 Policies for Effective MassSTEP Programs in Community Adult Learning Centers and Correctional Institutions and* [*MassSTEP Brand Standards and Implementation Guide*](https://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/MassSTEP/standards-guide.pdf)

Programs may submit multiple planning and implementation proposals. For example, an applicant could submit a proposal for a MassSTEP ESOL advanced manufacturing and another for a MassSTEP ABE welding.

I hope you review the RFP and consider applying to join the growing Massachusetts MassSTEP system.

Sincerely,

Wyvonne Stevens-Carter

Adult Education State Director