



COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

Pre-K through Grade 3 Remote Learning Partnership Grant

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Last updated: March 9, 2021

The following information is provided to assist Local Education Agencies and Remote Learning Providers with completing the grant application materials and understanding grant requirements. Please continue to refer to the Request for Response (RFR) for all grant requirements. If you need additional assistance, please email: prek3remotelearningpartnershipgrant@mass.gov.

1. Eligible Entities

- a. Is the PreK- Grade 3 Remote Learning Partnership Grant limited to one grant per community, or could there be multiple grants to multiple lead agents in one community?**

Partnerships in eligible communities include a Local Education Agency (i.e., school district or charter school) and approved Remote Learning Provider(s), with one organization serving as the lead entity. Partnerships may also include Local Education Agencies and approved Remote Learning Providers from neighboring communities. It is possible that communities may receive more than one grant, but coordination and collaboration within communities is encouraged.

Partnerships = Local education agency (i.e., school district or charter school) + one or more Approved Remote Learning Provider(s)

Lead Applicant/Entity = School District, charter school, or one Approved Remote Learning Provider

- b. Our organization is physically located outside of the eligible community. We serve students who attend school within the eligible community and those who attend school outside of the eligible community. Would we be eligible to receive the PreK – Grade 3 Remote Learning Partnership Grant funds?**

Yes, organizations that are located outside of the eligible community but serve students in the eligible community can be part of a partnership that is led by either a Local Education Agency or a Remote Learning Provider in the eligible community. Partnerships may include Local Education Agencies and approved Remote Learning Providers from communities neighboring the listed eligible communities (i.e., Boston and Gateway Cities).

- c. Is there a list of eligible approved Remote Learning Providers that eligible districts can work with? If so, where can I access this list?**

You can find a majority of the approved Remote Learning Providers through the Department of Early Education and Care's child care search function [here](#) by searching for group and school age programs in your community.

- d. Can you please confirm whether or not the grant is strictly limited to the communities listed, or if there's any possibility that other communities would be considered?**

Eligible partnerships for the grant:

- Must be:
 - located in an eligible community (i.e., Boston and Gateway Cities only)
 - where the local school district has been offering hybrid or remote learning for young learners as of January 19, 2021.
- Must also include a local education agency (i.e., charter school or school district) and at least one approved remote learning provider serving young learners from the same eligible community.
- May also be a regional consortium that includes local education agencies in eligible communities and approved remote learning providers from neighboring communities.

- e. I am writing to inquire about a question that several of our potential partners have asked. In the RFP it states that they must serve a significant number of students. Do we have any percentage or number that may be tied to that, that I can share with them?**

No threshold has been set regarding a specific number of students. This grant should extend to as many eligible students as possible. Partnerships that foster and enable serving large numbers of eligible students are strongly encouraged and recommended.

2. Intent to Apply

- a. Is a Letter of Intent mandatory for the PreK-3 Remote Learning Partnership Grant application process?**

No, the intent to apply is not a mandatory part of the grant process, but it is strongly encouraged.

- b. If a community-based provider (CBO) is operating one EEC-approved Remote Learning Center in partnership with an LEA in one eligible community and is operating a totally separate Remote Learning Center with a different LEA in another community, may the CBO serve as the Lead Applicant in the grant application submitted for each district?**

If a CBO is operating EEC-approved Remote Learning Centers in communities deemed eligible for this grant (i.e., Boston and Gateway Cities), then the CBO may submit separate applications for each community.

Additionally, CBOs operating in neighboring eligible communities are able to join partnerships that are centered in the eligible communities (i.e., Boston and Gateway Cities).

- c. When filling out the Intent to Apply, there was no option to submit just Section 1. When I hit submit, it made it so that I could not fill out the rest of the application. Will I be able to have that reset?**

I am trying to submit my letter of intent online in the web portal. If I hit submit will I still have access to the rest of the application?

We just “submitted” the LOI (Letter of Intent) but the system will not allow us to get back in to edit section due which is due on March 17. Will the system reopen so we can continue to complete the application?

The grant application was posted on February 25. You have access to it through the [same link](#) that you used to submit the Intent to Apply.

3. Eligible Expenses

a. Are we able to use the funding to pay for extra staff for remote learning?

The funds are not expected to be sufficient to pay for additional capacity at remote learning sites. The funds are anticipated to help build and support collaboration and coordination between Local Education Agencies and their partner supporting students in remote learning this school year and beyond.

b. Are we able to use funds to help during school vacations as well?

If the school partnering with the Remote Learning Partner has articulated definitive learning goals for the school vacation week and is coordinating with the Remote Learning Partner, then the funds may be used to support the partnership for that time.

c. We noticed there is a line item for “logistics support” as an allowable expense. Would this line item permit the reimbursement of funds for transportation services and/or purchasing of a transportation vehicle? Both of these options would provide us with a solution to a significant barrier to coordination and access?

May grant funds be used for transportation of students from their school (on in-person learning days) to the remote learning center for before/afterschool programming if space is not available within the school building due to COVID health and safety restrictions to operate such out-of-school time programming?

May grant funds be used for transportation costs for students to attend a summer learning program (to/from the child’s home)?

Transportation of students is not an allowable use of this funding. The grant funding is meant to help promote coordination and communication between schools and remote learning providers; therefore, allowable uses for grant funds include:

- Joint professional development for teachers and remote learning providers;
- Curricula to be accessed and utilized at both school and remote learning sites, with necessary accompanying professional development;
- Planning and implementation of coordinated summer learning sites, with focus on supporting social-emotional well-being and academics to assist young learners with any learning loss issues and preparing for school year 2021-2022;

- Support to assess family needs and/or continued support for communication and coordination with families; materials for remote learners to engage in asynchronous learning activities related to their instructional time;
- Logistics support, including meal delivery from school sites to remote learning providers;
- Planning and implementation of coordinated school schedules and before- and after-school programs for the 2021-2022 school year.

d. May grant funds be used to pay for public school teachers/specialists to work in a summer learning program operated by an EEC-licensed provider to support with implementation of social-emotional and academic learning opportunities?

May grant funds be used to pay for specialized staff positions (i.e. Social Worker position to support social-emotional learning activities and coordination efforts with families)?

Grant funds may be used:

- To pay for staff from the district to assist in a collaborative implementation of a curriculum or other learning opportunities;
- To complement the staffing model and support the development of the partnership. As this is one-time grant funding, it should not be relied upon to support ongoing staffing costs for work with students.

4. Local Match

a. I am looking for some clarification on the local 33% requirement. Is there an option to have in-kind contributions (i.e., work by a staff member) count towards the local match?

Yes, the local match can be demonstrated through a financial commitment by the local education agency and/or remote learning partner(s), through cash or in-kind contributions (i.e., dedicated staff time) at the local education agency and/or remote learning partner(s).

5. Purpose of Grant Opportunity

a. Given the current push to move all schools towards in-person learning, can these funds be used in summer 2021 or SY 21-22 to support in-person activities as children transition back to in-person learning?

Can you tell me if this grant's focus has considered the recent announcement that children will be phasing back into school full time? Just wondering if the funding can support that transition and related supports as well or if this is still strictly to support hybrid and remote learners.

The purpose of this grant is to support collaborations and coordination between remote learning providers and local education agencies in Boston and Gateway Cities whose students were remote or hybrid as of January 19, 2021. As more elementary schools transition back towards in person learning, there will continue to be a need for a) some

remote learning programs during the school day for students whose parents opt-out of in-person learning at school; and b) strengthened coordination and collaboration to support learners during the summer of 2021, and for out-of-school time during the 2021-2022 school year and beyond. Therefore, grant funding can be spent to support eligible expenses for those purposes.