



## GRANT INFORMATION GUIDE

# Local Early Childhood Advisory Council Quality Improvement Grant Fiscal Year 2024

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**Maryland State Department of Education**  
200 West Baltimore Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

**Deadline**  
August 31, 2023  
No later than 5:00 p.m. EDT

## MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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## Program Description

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The Local Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) Quality Improvement Grant Fiscal Year 2024 is a competitive grant administered by the Division of Early Childhood at the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). It provides funding for the 24 local early childhood advisory councils throughout Maryland.

The Local ECAC Quality Improvement grant serves to support advisory councils in the required periodic assessment of local early childhood needs, identifying the opportunities and barriers to collaboration and coordination of programs, and assessing the capacity and effectiveness of local programs for developing early childhood educators. This program provides the resources for local early childhood advisory councils to compile data and conduct activities necessary to facilitate the State Early Childhood Advisory Council in achieving its goals.

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future (Blueprint) seeks to significantly increase investment in high-quality early childhood education so that all children can begin kindergarten ready to learn. The Local ECAC Quality Improvement grant supports the Blueprint's strategy toward substantially increasing the availability of early childhood education opportunities and the number of early childhood educators entering and remaining in the field.

### Authorization

Head Start Act, as amended., [U.S. Code Citation: 42 USC § 9831 et seq.](#)

Child Care and Development Block Grant, [U.S. Code Citation: 42 USC § 9857 et seq](#)

State Early Childhood Advisory Council, [MD Code, Education, § 9.5-208](#)

## GRANT OVERVIEW

### Name of Grant Program

Local Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) Quality Improvement Grant FY24

### Purpose

To build capacity and professional development within the Local Early Childhood Advisory Council.

- Leadership training and member training
- Recruitment of members
- Website design to promote initiatives within the advisory council

To increase capacity to serve infants and toddlers (age 0-3), and their families, in programs that promote behavioral, mental health and parent relational outcomes for infants and toddlers by demonstrating fidelity to an evidence-based model, including but not limited to:

- Attachment Biobehavioral Catch-Up (ABC)
- Circle of Security Parenting (COS-P)

- Healthy Steps
- Facilitating Attuned Interactions (FAN)
- Family Connect MD

To increase access to resources for infants and toddlers, and their families, particularly those who are facing adverse experiences, including poverty, substance abuse or misuse, homelessness, housing instability, or other forms of trauma; residence in a rural area; special needs or disabilities, foster care; incarcerated caregivers; immigration; and multilingualism.

To assist with overcoming school readiness achievement gaps for children with high needs, including those in low-income families, children with disabilities, and English learners.

To address trauma-informed care and early childhood risk factors.

To conduct a needs assessment concerning the quality and availability of early childhood education and development programs and services.

### **Dissemination**

This Grant Information Guide (GIG) was released on June 29, 2023.

### **Deadline**

Proposals are due no later than 5pm on August 31, 2023

### **Grant Period**

September 1, 2023 -June 30, 2024

### **Funding Amount Available**

\$600,000

Awards in the amount of \$25,000 per council

The amount of total funds available is contingent upon the continuing availability of federal funding for the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

### **Estimated Number of Grants**

Twenty-four (24)

### **Eligibility**

This funding opportunity is designed for the identified fiscal agent of the Local Early Childhood Advisory Councils in the State of Maryland, as verified by the MSDE program manager.

MSDE reserves the right to take into consideration geographic distribution when making awards.

### **Submission Instructions**

Grant applications must be submitted by 5:00pm August 31, 2023 via email to [alberta.stokes1@maryland.gov](mailto:alberta.stokes1@maryland.gov).

### **Program Contact**

#### **Alberta Stokes**

Early Childhood Coordinator

Division of Early Childhood

410-767-0112

[alberta.stokes1@maryland.gov](mailto:alberta.stokes1@maryland.gov)

### **State Responsibilities**

MSDE is responsible for providing required information, data, documentation, and technical assistance to facilitate the grantee's performance of the work. MSDE program staff will be available and make every effort to support on demand additional assistance when requested throughout the grant period. In addition, MSDE will monitor program implementation throughout the grant performance period to ensure each council is on target to meet its goals and fully expend its awarded program resources.

## Use of Funds

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The following are examples of approved uses for the grant funds in accordance with the purpose of the grant. Other costs not listed here may be presented to the grant manager for determination of allowable expenditures.

Funds may be used for:

- Materials and supplies (i.e., instructional materials, books, related supplies for family involvement or staff involvement).
- Costs incurred for needs assessment.
- Increasing the capacity of the Local Early Childhood Advisor Council to host professional development training and build membership.
- Registration fees to attend conferences or professional development training.
- Contracts with trained facilitator.
- Professional development for partnering agencies.
- Travel reimbursement, and stipends to attend professional development.
- Substitute wages needed to allow teachers to attend professional development.
- Indirect costs (may not exceed 10% or the total fund request).
- Personnel costs, including payroll and salaries or similar compensation for an employee (including all costs associated with).
- Rent (including rent under a lease agreement) or payment on any mortgage obligation, utilities, facility maintenance or improvements, or insurance
- Personal protective equipment, cleaning and sanitization supplies and services, or training and professional development related to health and safety practices.
- Purchases of our updates to equipment and supplies to respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency as well as goods and services to maintain or resume child care services; including mental health support for children and employees.
- Goods and services necessary to maintain or resume child care services; including mental health supports for children and employees

Funds may not be used for:

- Supplanting existing program funds.
- Capital improvements.
- Purchase of gift cards.
- Purchase of office furniture and equipment.
- Cost(s) incurred prior to the approval of the grant.

# Application Requirements

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## PROPOSAL COVER PAGE

Proposals must include a completed Proposal Cover Page provided in the application for participation. The cover page should not contain any graphics or additional information and must be signed by the Superintendent of Schools/ Head of Grantee Agency. The subsequent information must be clearly stated in the following order:

- Name of applicant/Jurisdiction
- Name of contact person
- Address of contact person
- Telephone and email address of contact person
- Project Partners
- Amount requested.

## PROJECT NARRATIVE

The project narrative consists of the following sections. These sections will be scored by reviewers.

- Project Abstract
- Extent of Need
- Evidence of Impact
- Goals, Measurable Outcomes and Milestones
- Strategies
- Management Plan
- Evaluation and Dissemination
- Sustainability Plan
- Project Timeline
- Budget and Budget Narrative

## PROJECT ABSTRACT

The project statement should briefly describe the project's outcome(s) and strategies (i.e., what the project will do and how it will do it.) Do not exceed the 100-word limit. This statement may be used in press releases, board exhibits, etc.



## EXTENT OF NEED

Identify a clearly defined problem, and how the use of these funds will address the problem. Applicants should include a brief overview of the target audience and expected outcomes. A compelling proposal will have a clearly defined problem supported by a needs assessment. A needs assessment is a systematic review of information collected from a variety of sources, analyzed to determine strengths and weaknesses, and prioritized for action in the proposal.

The extent of need should reflect the findings of a local needs assessment conducted within the last 12 months, including needs assessments conducted by Local Early Childhood Advisory Councils; Head Start/Early Head Start; and state agencies, including MSDE and the Department of Health. The Division of Early Childhood's publication, [Developing an Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Professional Development System in Maryland](#) may also be consulted.

Here are some suggestions for writing the extent of need:

- Clearly state the main problem your proposed project will focus on.
- State who is affected by the problem.
- State when and where the problem exists.
- Document the factors contributing to the problem.
- Discuss the consequences of not dealing with the problem.
- Cite current research and data that support the need for the project from both a broad (i.e., National, State, regional) perspective and the local perspective most relevant to the target population.
- State what data were collected and cite the source of the data.
- Utilize both easily measured quantitative data (e.g., test scores, absentee rates) and qualitative data in support of quantitative data (e.g., interview, focus groups).
- Use multiple methods to document the problem when collecting local data (e.g., surveys, analysis of school records, previous studies, focus groups) and include various stakeholders such as teachers, students, parents, etc. in your data.
- Include relevant demographics and other statistics about each population you intend to serve.
- Include all relevant data from the Maryland School Performance Program (MSPP).

## EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

Discuss your history of impact on the target population, what has worked, what has not worked, and your track record in effectuating change. Document current or past efforts to address the problem. Show why those efforts failed or are inadequate to address the total need. Discuss how past performance has informed the proposed activities, and the future impact your proposed key activities are likely to have on the target population. Briefly identify new or other proposed evidence-based strategies that will be implemented and how they will be measured to determine the impact on the target population.

## GOALS, MEASURABLE OUTCOMES, AND MILESTONES

**Goals:** State the overall goal(s) of the project. The goal should address the main problem identified at the beginning of the needs assessment. While there should be at least one goal, it is possible to have multiple goals; however, the more goals established the more complex the project becomes. Goals must have long-term deadlines. If the project period covers multiple years, the goal should be set for the end of the project. Goals and objectives should directly align to the needs assessment. Include all relevant groups and individuals in the target population. Think about how to measure the change projected in each objective. If there is no way to measure a goal, it is not measurable and should be rewritten. The strongest applications will directly connect to the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future.

**Measurable Outcomes:** Measurable Outcomes are the anticipated outcomes to be accomplished for each year of the project and must be related to a goal. Outcomes break the long-term goal into steps or address the factors contributing to the problem addressed by the goal. It is imperative that outcomes be established for every target population the project is designed to affect. For instance, if the project seeks to increase student achievement by training teachers, there must be outcomes for both students and teachers. There may be multiple outcomes aligned to the same goal.

**Milestones:** Ongoing evaluation is essential to the management of a project. Since goals and outcomes are not evaluated until the end of the year, milestones must be established to measure progress during the year. Milestones should be evaluated during the year, either quarterly or semiannually.

Since milestones are intended to indicate progress towards an outcome, each milestone must be related to a stated outcome. Keep in mind that milestones are indicators of progress and may not use the same measurement tool as the outcome to which they are related. A project may take months before there is an impact on clients, or the rate of improvement may level off over time. Milestones should anticipate this and be gauged accordingly. Be sure that milestones are ambitious, yet attainable.

### Goals, Outcomes, and Milestones Worksheet

<p><b>Goal 1:</b> The project will increase the overall number of children served.</p>
<p><b>Outcome(s):</b> The number of children served will increase from _____ to _____ constituting an increase of _____% from last year as determined by attendance data at planned project events.</p>
<p><b>Milestone(s):</b> By December 2023, project staff will have attended two (2) outreach events and collected contact information for at least fifty (50) new families.</p>

## STRATEGIES

Strategies are broad approaches (methods, procedures, techniques) employed to reach milestones, realize outcomes, and ultimately accomplish goals. Begin this section with a justification as to why specific strategies were chosen and how they will help in accomplishing the stated goals, including those identified in the Evidence of Impact. The justification should cite research to support the strategies. It is essential that the project include strategies for each outcome, and outcomes for each strategy.

Once the question of why strategies were chosen is addressed, discuss how the strategies will be adapted to fit the project. What clients are targeted, and how will they use or be affected by the services the project provides? How many clients from each client group will ultimately be serviced by the project, both directly and indirectly? Explain how the number of indirect clients served was determined.

## MANAGEMENT PLAN

Where many projects fail is in their management. Submit a detailed and time-specific management plan with pre-assigned responsibilities to avoid the following common errors:

- Failure to submit required reports.
- Failure to regularly monitor performance of the project during implementation.
- Failure to start the project on time.
- Failure to keep adequate project documentation.
- Failure to assure continuity and quality of the project considering personnel turnover.
- Changing without approval from MSDE the overall project from that described in the grant proposal.
- Submission of biased or incomplete project evaluation data.
- Having no approved project fiscal procedure in place.
- Disposal of project supplies, equipment, or other assets in unauthorized ways.
- Budget deviations due to unauthorized transfers from one budget category to another.
- Failure to manage inherent conflicts of policies, perspectives, and philosophies between project's host agency and the funder.
- Failure to form partnerships in which all members recognize and fulfill their clearly defined roles, responsibilities, and contributions to the project.
- Failure to complete the project in a timely fashion.

## Steering Committee

The proposal should identify a steering committee composed of the members of the Local Early Childhood Advisory Council who will oversee the implementation of this grant and may include other individuals working in collaboration to fulfill the proposed grant activities. List the names, titles and affiliations of the Local Early Childhood Advisory Council members and other partners with responsibilities in the implementation of this project. The grant related duties of the Local Early Childhood Advisory Council and

its partners include establishing major program policies, reviewing quarterly evaluation reports, and making recommendations for programmatic change.

### Steering Committee Worksheet

Member Name	Title	Affiliations	Time devoted
Jane Doe, PhD	Co-chair	A-Z Child Care Center, Director	

### Partner Plan

Applicants must provide a clear discussion of partners, respective roles in the project, the benefits each expects to receive, and the specific contributions each will make to the project (financial, equipment, personnel, or other resources). It is essential to document each partner's commitments to the project. Append letters of commitment from each, describing roles and quantifying contributions. Never assume that reviewers will automatically know who a proposed partner is, what that partner is capable of or willing to commit to the project, or why the partner is participating.

### Management Plan

This should be a chronological list of all key activities that will take place during the grant period. All proposed grant activities, the steering committee member(s) responsible for ensuring the activities are conducted, and the time frame for which they will occur. Committee meeting dates and purposes should be identified in this section of the application. Applicants should consider all the key tasks or activities that need to be carried out to implement the program successfully, whether each task can realistically begin and end in the proposed time frame, and how long each task will take to complete.

### Management Plan Worksheet

Key Activities	Individual Responsible	Time Frame

## EVALUATION AND DISSEMINATION

Grantees are required to submit an interim progress report that is consistent with the project’s goal and objective(s). Keep in mind that the final evaluation summary will consider the entire project, beginning to end it should not be viewed as what is done after the project’s completion, but as an integral element in the project’s planning, design, and implementation. An ongoing plan that evaluates milestones quarterly helps project staff make informed decisions about needed changes.

Applicants must evaluate the following required measures:

Evaluation Measure	Response (Sample)
<p><b>Evaluation Questions:</b> What questions will the evaluation seek to answer that are based on the project’s goal(s), aligned to the management plan, and address anticipated consequences? Examine the relationship between the expected outcomes, specific efforts, and what is important to evaluate.</p>	<p>The goal is to build and strengthen membership within the Local ECAC by 50%.</p> <p>We seek to discover the reason for the lack of participation and interest in the advisory council, training needs, subcommittee ideas, and administrative support.</p> <p>Surveys and informal meetings with current and formal members will be conducted to determine the lack of participation and interest in the advisory council, training needs, subcommittee ideas and suggestion, and professional training suggestions for leadership and members.</p> <p>Sample questions include:</p> <p>How can we strengthen our advisory council?</p> <p>What professional development do we need to help us evaluate the data, program impact, and support children and families?</p> <p>How can we increase participation in our council?</p> <p>How often are you able to collaborate with members of the councils?</p>

	<p>What collaborative activities do you engage in with members of the councils? How often?</p> <p>How do you feel about the length and duration of our meetings? (Choices too often, just right, not often enough/too short)</p> <p>The data will be analyzed, and recommendations and initiatives will be formed based on the findings.</p>
<p><b>Evaluation Strategy:</b> What approach will be taken to find answers to the evaluation questions? What criteria will be used to assess lessons learned from the project? What populations will be included in your evaluation?</p>	
<p><b>Data:</b> The type of data and method of data collection will depend upon the nature of the program, the questions, and the evaluation strategy. What measurement instruments will be used? How will the baseline be established? There should be a combination of quantitative and qualitative data identified. How will project staff collect data from the various sites and organizations involved in the project? When considering data collection techniques, ensure that the resources are sufficient to use the proposed data collection techniques.</p>	
<p><b>Evaluator(s):</b> Specify the individuals or groups who will conduct the evaluation. What are specific qualifications? What are the responsibilities of key personnel?</p>	
<p><b>Budgeting of resources and staffing for evaluation:</b> The application's budget should reflect sufficient funds to carry out a thorough and useful evaluation. <b>Note:</b> The evaluation will be an internal self-evaluation/reflection and can be completed by Chair/Co-Chair of the Council or a designee at no cost.</p>	
<p><b>Dissemination:</b> Details on how the project's findings will be disseminated to the major stakeholders, individuals with an interest in the project. Information, requirements, and dissemination methods differ from stakeholder to stakeholder. Will there be a presence on the internet and/or attending important national conferences to present lessons from the project? How and when will demonstrations of your project be made available? Also consider including descriptions of the types</p>	

of reports and other by-products that will be produced during the project.	
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Evaluation and quarterly progress reports should be consistent with the project’s goals and objectives. An effective ongoing plan should evaluate milestones and help project staff make informed decisions.

**SUSTAINABILITY PLAN**

Describe plans for continuing the project beyond the funding cycle. Answer questions such as; how the project will be sustained after funding ends, what are the plans for maintaining the project’s partnerships, and how are transitions of council members planned for and their impact on the effectiveness of the council.

## Budget and Budget Narrative

The project's budget should detail all related project expenses in a separate itemized budget. It should demonstrate the extent to which the budget is reasonable, cost-effective, and integrates other sources of funding. All costs described in the project narrative should appear in the budget narrative and must have a corresponding entry in the itemized budget for that year. Reviewers should be able to see a clear connection between the management plan and the budget line items.

Begin the budget with a narrative, justifying any line-item expenses that are not obvious from the project narrative. Explain how the estimated cost of each line item was derived if the rationale is not obvious.

Following the budget narrative, include a line-item description using the format in the example below. Group line items according to the following categories: Salaries & Wages, Contracted Services, Supplies & Materials, Other Charges, Equipment, and Transfers. Total each category. Each line must be detailed and specific. General expenses should be broken down into specific line items. For example, "meeting expenses" can be broken down into room rental, photocopying and refreshments. Clearly show the requested funds and in-kind contributions for each line item. Indicate the source of the in-kind contribution. Both requested and in-kind funds must be reasonable with current market prices. Show how the expense was calculated for each line item. Reviewers will use this information to determine if the budget is reasonable and cost-effective. There is no page limit for the budget, so be as detailed as possible.

Use the format indicated by the following excerpt from a sample Budget Narrative.

### Salaries and Wages (list separately for each position)

Line item	Calculation	Requested	In-Kind	Total
Project Manager	\$50/hr. x 40 hrs. per week x 52 weeks	\$83,200	\$20,800	\$104,000
<b>Total for salaries &amp; wages:</b>		\$83,200	\$20,800	\$104,000

### Contract Services

Line item	Calculation	Requested	In-Kind	Total
Support to convert presentation to virtual platform that includes closed captioning.	\$3000			\$3000
<b>Total for contract services:</b>				\$3000



## Appendices

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The following appendices must be included but not apply to the page limit of the Project Narrative. Include other appendices as deemed necessary.

Appendix A: [A signed recipient assurances page](#)

Appendix B: Local Early Childhood Advisory Council By-Laws and Membership

Appendix C: [A signed C-125 MSDE budget form](#)

Appendix D: Evidence of status of a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, if applicable

Appendix E: Resume(s) of Key Personnel

Appendix F: Signed Letter(s) of Commitment from the local Judy Center and other project partner(s) (as it is appropriate)

## The Review Process

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The review of proposals will be a three-part process:

1. Written applications will be pre-screened for submission requirements and inclusion of all required sections. Applications not meeting all pre-screen requirements may be returned to the applicant for revisions.
2. A review committee established by MSDE will evaluate applications using the scoring rubric. The scoring rubric is tailored to the grant program, its intent, and intended impact on the target population.
3. Final approval for awards will be determined by the review committee.

### Review Committee

The committee will be composed of representatives from MSDE and the Division of Early Childhood. Reviewers will assign numerical scores to each proposal based on the criteria on the scoring rubric. Each application will be reviewed and scored based on all documents submitted. Applications may be returned to the applicant if some or all criteria do not meet the criteria standard.

## Local ECAC Quality Improvement Scoring Rubric

Areas	Level 3 Exceeds Criteria	Level 2 Meets Criteria	Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria
<b>Project Abstract</b>	The project abstract outlines a concise and comprehensive summary of the target population, goals, strategies, and partnerships.	The project abstract addresses the required components.	The project abstract is missing or does not address the required components.
<b>Extent of Need</b>	<p>The main problem and contributing factors are clear, concise, and demonstrate considerable understanding of the issues.</p> <p>The proposal details who is affected by the problem, and when and where the problem exists, including historical impacts on the target population(s).</p> <p>Current qualitative and quantitative data is cited to clearly illustrate the problem. Data is derived from a variety of sources, including state and local data references.</p> <p>Applicant demonstrates extensive history of expertise and aligns to evidence-based practices specific to the population they intend to serve that illustrate progress in the addressing the identified problems.</p>	<p>The main problem is clear and concise.</p> <p>The proposal identifies who is affected by the problem and when the problem exists.</p> <p>Data supports the identified problem. Local data is referenced to document the problem and includes demographic and other statistics.</p> <p>Applicant identifies demographics or other statistics relevant for the population(s) intended to be served.</p> <p>Applicant provides an example of their history of expertise or aligns to evidence-based practices specific to the population they intend to serve.</p>	<p>The main problem is missing or is not clear.</p> <p>The proposal does not accurately identify the target population(s).</p> <p>Data has not identified or does not support the problem stated.</p> <p>Applicant does not identify demographics or other statistics of the population(s) intended to be served.</p> <p>No citations or research included in proposal,</p> <p>The proposal lacks details of how the funds will address the problem.</p>

Areas	Level 3 Exceeds Criteria	Level 2 Meets Criteria	Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria
<b>Evidence of Impact</b>	<p>The proposal provides two or more examples that explain the history of impact on the target population including discussion of past efforts, failures, and successes toward influencing change.</p> <p>The proposal clearly explains future impacts of the proposed activity/project and how the target population is expected to be influenced by the efforts of specific to implementing this grant.</p>	<p>The proposal provides at least one example that explains the history of impact on the target population.</p> <p>The proposal describes the future impact of the activity/project and how the target population will be influenced by change.</p>	<p>No examples that explain the history of impact on the target population.</p> <p>The proposal does not describe the future impact of the activity/project.</p>
<b>Goals, Measurable Outcomes, and Milestones</b>	<p>The goal(s) are measurable, clearly aligned to the extent of need, and ambitiously focused on effectuating change.</p> <p>Realistic and attainable outcomes illustrate a distinguishable effort to significant progress.</p> <p>Milestones for each intended outcome ensure continued monitoring for success and include response to meeting targets.</p>	<p>The goal(s) are measurable and aligned to the extent of need.</p> <p>Outcomes are realistic and attainable.</p> <p>Milestones are provided for measuring progress of each intended outcome.</p>	<p>The goal(s) are not measurable are not clearly aligned to the extent of need.</p> <p>Outcomes are not realistic or attainable.</p> <p>Milestones are not provided or do not align to outcomes.</p>
<b>Strategies</b>	<p>The proposal provides several rationales for selecting specific,</p>	<p>The proposal provides a clear rationale for selecting a specific</p>	<p>No rationale for selecting specific strategies and</p>

Areas	Level 3 Exceeds Criteria	Level 2 Meets Criteria	Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria
	<p>evidence-based strategies, and precisely how they will be implemented to ensure outcomes are achieved.</p> <p>Multiple broad strategies are identified with detailed and systematic methods, procedures, or techniques for successful implementation.</p>	<p>strategy and how it will help achieve the outcome.</p> <p>Applicant provides broad strategies and includes the methods, procedures, techniques for implementation.</p>	<p>how they will help achieve the outcome.</p> <p>Applicant only states some of the strategies, but does not include the necessary methods, procedures, or techniques for implementing.</p>
<b>Management Plan</b>	<p>The proposal includes a steering committee and partner plan that identifies individuals from a variety of backgrounds with extensive experience toward ensuring successful implementation.</p> <p>All relevant activities listed chronologically indicating a comprehensive management plan throughout the grant period.</p>	<p>The proposal includes a steering committee and partner plan that appears adequate for ensuring implementation.</p> <p>The proposal includes a time-specific management plan.</p>	<p>The proposal does not include a steering committee or partner plan that is adequate for ensuring implementation.</p>
<b>Evaluation and Dissemination</b>	<p>Evaluation questions are included for each goal with considerable guidance toward implementation of aligned strategies and can be effectively and meaningfully evaluated.</p> <p>Clear evaluation strategy that includes alternative scenarios and criteria to</p>	<p>Evaluations questions are based around the goal(s) and outcomes, provide guidance on the implementation, and can be evaluated.</p> <p>Clear evaluation strategy</p>	<p>Limited or no examples of evaluation questions.</p> <p>No evidence of evaluation strategy</p> <p>The data type and collection method are unclear.</p> <p>Evaluator is not identified.</p>

Areas	Level 3 Exceeds Criteria	Level 2 Meets Criteria	Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria
	<p>ensure comprehensive evaluation.</p> <p>Multiple relevant, logical data types and collection methods are identified.</p> <p>Evaluators and their qualifications are indicated.</p> <p>Detailed dissemination plan on how the project findings will be shared to stakeholders, committee members, and the public including examples of how, when and through what methods.</p>	<p>Clear data type(s) and collection method(s) are identified.</p> <p>Evaluator is identified.</p> <p>The dissemination plan includes how the findings will be shared to stakeholders, committee members, and the public.</p>	<p>The dissemination plan does not clearly identify how findings will be shared.</p>
<b>Sustainability Plan</b>	<p>Applicant provides a comprehensive plan for ensuring the ongoing success of the proposal beyond the funding cycle that includes identification of additional resources. A detailed plan for maintaining partnerships and their contribution to sustainability is described</p>	<p>Applicant provides a continuation plan beyond the funding cycle and describes how partnerships will be maintained.</p>	<p>The application does not include a plan to exist after the funding cycle.</p>
<b>Budget and Budget Narrative</b>	<p>The budget narrative is detailed and comprehensive of all activities necessary for successful implementation of proposal. The budget aligns directly to the proposal and does not rely</p>	<p>The budget narrative is complete. The budget aligns to the proposal and is free of mathematical errors. Expenses are reasonable and allowable.</p>	<p>Budget does not align with the proposal, includes cost that are not reasonable or allowable, or has several mathematical errors.</p>

Areas	Level 3 Exceeds Criteria	Level 2 Meets Criteria	Level 1 Does Not Meet Criteria
	<p>entirely on grant funds for successful implementation. There are no mathematical errors, and all expenses are cost effective and appear necessary.</p>		

## Reporting Requirements

Grantees must comply with the following reporting requirements:

Date	Reporting Requirements for Each Year
Ongoing	Fiscal and program monitoring; all invoices must be accompanied with supporting documentation.
October 28, 2023	First interim progress report (C-1-25 C) reflecting the months of September and October is due.
December 30, 2023	Second interim progress report (C-1-25 C) reflecting the months of November and December is due.
February 28, 2024	Third interim progress report (C-1-25-C) reflecting the months of January and February is due.
March - May 2024	Monitoring visit will be conducted.
May 30, 2024	Fourth interim progress report (C-1-25-C) reflecting the months of March through May is due.
On or before 60 days after the grants ends	A final project evaluation (see evaluation section) must be received by MSDE on or before 60 days after the grant end date, June 30, 2024.

Notes: Any requests for amendments must be submitted at least 45 days before the grant period ends, and must be submitted using the C-125-B form found in the [Grant Budget Forms Workbook](#) on the [MSDE grants webpage](#). Final invoices must be submitted no later than 60 days after the grant period ends.

### Grant Application Timeline

This funding opportunity, including all attachments and updates, can be downloaded from the [MSDE Office of Grants Administration and Compliance website](#) and the Local Early Childhood Advisory Councils [webpage](#).

Date	Timeline Event
June 29, 2023	The Grant Information Guide and the application for participating are released.
July 6, 2023	MSDE will hold a virtual customer service support session for interested applicants.
July 11, 2023	MSDE will hold a virtual customer service support session for interested applicants.
July 13, 2023	MSDE will hold a virtual customer service support session for interested applicants.
August 31, 2023	The grant application period closes.



July 20, 2023	MSDE begins reviewing applications for completeness and minimum requirements.
July 20 – August 24, 2023	MSDE Review Committee will evaluate proposals.
August 25, 2023	MSDE will notify applicants of the award status.
September 1, 2023	The grant period begins.
June 30, 2024	The grant period ends.

## Non-Discrimination Statement

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The Maryland State Department of Education does not discriminate on the basis of age, ancestry/national origin, color, disability, gender identity/expression, marital status, race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation in matters affecting employment or in providing access to programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. For inquiries related to Department policy, please contact:

Equity Assurance and Compliance Office  
Office of the Deputy State Superintendent for Operations

Maryland State Department of Education  
200 W. Baltimore Street - 2nd Floor Baltimore,  
Maryland 21201-2595

410-767-0123 - voice

410-767-0431 - fax

410-333-6442 - TTY/TDD

## **The General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) Section 427**

Each application must develop and describe the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the project or activity to be conducted with such assistance, by addressing the special needs of students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries to overcome barriers to equitable participation.

## Customer Service Support Sessions

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The MSDE will hold three customer service support sessions for interested applicants. During these sessions, MSDE personnel will provide an overview of the application process. The sessions will be on:

### Thursday, July 6, 2023

11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Video call link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85855995189>

### Tuesday, July 11, 2023

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Video call link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85855995189>

### Thursday, July 13, 2023

11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Video call link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85855995189>

MSDE staff will also be available to provide technical assistance throughout the grant application process. If you have questions about the application or the process, please contact:

### Program Contact

#### Alberta Stokes

Early Childhood Coordinator

410-767-0112

[alberta.stokes1@maryland.gov](mailto:alberta.stokes1@maryland.gov)

A list of frequently asked questions (FAQ) and answers will be posted to the Local Early Childhood Advisory Councils [webpage](#) following customer service support sessions.

This funding opportunity, including all attachments and updates, can be downloaded from the [MSDE Office of Grants Administration and Compliance website](#).

### Attachments

Local Early Childhood Advisory Council Quality Improvement Grant FY24 Applications for Funding