

Questions and Answers Summary – RFP 52 (CSP Start-up Grants)

Q1: Is a CMO eligible to apply for this grant opportunity? Do we apply as the CMO or do we apply as the school? The plan is to apply for a grant to fund the expansion of our High School. The award would fund the increase of HS student enrollment from 724 students to 1,200 students by SY 2029–30, an increase of 480 students. FYI the last time we received NYSED grant was in 2020 to open an elementary school. Award was paid out from 2020 through 2022.

Answer: Charter school education corporations operating a new charter school are eligible to apply for a grant through this RFP. Charter management organizations (CMOs) are not eligible to apply. Again, this funding opportunity is for new charter schools. There is a [separate CSP grant RFP offering grant funds to existing charter schools that have been approved to expand](#) by their authorizer.

Q2: If an existing charter school has been approved to add a new set of grades (for example, a middle school adding an approved high school) are they eligible to apply for CSP funding through this RFP?

Answer: No. There is a separate CSP grant RFP offering grant funds to existing charter schools approved to expand significantly. That RFP can be found on NYSED's [Funding Opportunities](#) webpage.

Q3: Can you provide the list of new charter schools that are eligible for this funding?

Answer: No. Potential applicants should consult the Eligibility section of the RFP (pgs. 4-6) to determine if they are eligible to apply. Immediately upon receipt and before the applications are scored by peer reviewers, all applications will be reviewed on a technical basis to determine whether they meet the eligibility requirements.

Q4: What constitutes a "new" charter school? How recently must it have been formed to be eligible?

Answer: There is no timeframe for approval of the new charter school by the New York State Board of Regents that can be applied to eligibility for this grant opportunity. An eligible charter school has to be in its planning (or pre-opening) phase or in its initial five years of operation. It also could not have been awarded a CSP grant by NYSED within the last five years or for the same purpose, and it cannot have benefited from a USDOE-administered CSP grant for the same purpose.

Q5: The grant period begins 9/1/2025 - 8/31/2028. If we are awarded, are we to assume no expenditures are allowed before the grant begins on 9/1/2025?

Answer: Federal regulations require obligations (or encumbrances) to occur within the grant period. Expenditures resulting from the obligations may be made during the grant period or within 90 days after the grant period. For additional information, including the timing of obligations based on the particular activity, please consult the Department's [Fiscal Guidelines for Federal and State Grants](#).

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Q6: Can you confirm if a security deposit to secure a new facility is an allowable cost under the grant?

Answer: Rent or lease expenses for actual space occupied during the planning period but prior to July 1 of the year of the opening of the school are allowable. A security deposit for future space is not allowable.

Q7: The grant does speak to an 18-month period prior to a new school opening for spending. If say a school plans to open in August 2026, does that mean all spending under this grant would need to fall from 9/1/2025 - 6/30/2026?

Answer: The grant period is 9/1/2025 – 8/31/2028. If an eligible charter school is still in its pre-opening phase, the time in the pre-opening phase that falls within the three-year grant period and is prior to July 1 of the year of opening (when the school begins to receive per-pupil tuition from resident school districts) would be the planning phase of the grant. The planning phase of the grant can be no longer than 18 months.

The remainder of the three-year grant is called the implementation phase. If an eligible charter school is past its pre-opening phase when the grant period begins, then the entire three-year grant period would be its implementation phase.

The extent of allowable expenditures during the planning phase and the implementation phase vary significantly. It is important to consult the [NYSED CSP Grant Allowable Cost Guide](#) for more information.

Q8: For the application cover page, can the signature be electronic? Thank you for clarifying.

Answer: Electronic signatures will not be accepted. An original signature of the Chief Administrative Officer is required. Of course, that page can then be scanned for upload.

Q9: Does the exclusion of CMO services from the list of eligible expenses include student and staff recruitment costs?

Answer: Services provided by the CMO, as stipulated in the contract between the CMO and the charter school education corporation, are not allowable.

Q10: Can instructional supplies, technology, and furniture be purchased for students/grades to be served after the end of the grant period, or only for those students/grades served within the term of the grant? For example, can a school purchase laptops for students in year 3 (2027-28; year 2 of operation) for students who will be enrolled in 2028-29/year 3 of operation?

Answer: Yes. However, the budget narrative section of the grant application will be evaluated and scored, including the degree to which proposed expenditures are necessary and reasonable.

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Q11: We are currently considering applying for grant and had a few questions regarding eligibility and timelines, particularly related to the planning phase and proposed school opening date.

- If a school's opening date needs to be adjusted to a later academic year 2026–2027 would the applicant still be eligible to apply under the current grant cycle specifically for the planning stage of the grant?
- Is the funding cycle flexible enough to accommodate schools that are in the early stages of development and may require additional time before opening?
- If we decide not to apply during this current cycle, will this grant opportunity—or a similar one—be offered again in the next year?

Answer:

- Yes. A potential applicant charter school's opening date does not affect eligibility. However, it is important to note that the planning phase of any particular CSP start-up grant application cannot exceed 18 months, no matter the opening date.
- Since the CSP start-up grants are awarded on a competitive basis, successful awardees must stay within the scope of the project as proposed in the grant application. The program office can offer some flexibility with timing, but not the scope of the project, should the awardee have to delay opening. Again, the planning phase cannot extend beyond 18 months.
- NYSED intends to release a subsequent CSP start-up RFP within the next year.

M/WBE Questions

Q12: Are you maintaining a list of MWBE's that applicants can contact? If so, how would we be added?

Answer: There is no list of M/WBE vendors specific to this RFP. CSP Start-up Grant applicants can search the [NYS Directory of Certified Firms](#) to look for M/WBEs vendors to meet their needs.

Q13: Is the 30% M/WBE requirement calculated separately for each year of the grant or for the three-year total budget? If we should meet 30% in each year of the grant, do we provide three sets of M/WBE forms? Are the PDF versions of the M/WBE forms found on the NYSED website acceptable to use?

Answer: Applicants should complete one set of M/WBE documents to cover all three years of the program. In other words, the one M/WBE packet encompasses the total award for the 2025-28 three-year grant cycle contract. The 30% goal needs to be met across the length of the contract. Please use the M/WBE forms included in the RFP, except for the Goal Calculation Worksheet. A revised M/WBE Goal Calculation Worksheet that asks for the total budget is being posted on NYSED's [Funding Opportunities website](#). We ask that you use that form.