

Request for Applications: January 2026
Ninth Grade Success Grant
Option A: School Based Implementation

This document includes an overview of Option A and the questions that are included in the Request for Applications. All materials are available on the [Ninth Grade Success webpage](#).

Overview

Option A is an application for new applicants to target funds to a specific school to develop or expand the Ninth Grade Success model.

- **New grantees:** Applicants who are not receiving funds as part of cohort 2.
- Applicants will complete a two-year proposed budget focused on school-based implementation.
- Applicants may request up to \$100,000 per school per year
- Applicants may apply for up to 3 schools per district for a total of up to \$300,000
- Approximately \$650,000, in total, is available for Option A, depending on applicants

Narrative Questions (Option A: Two Year School-Based Implementation)

Section A: Needs Assessment

- 1) Describe the need for the proposed program, based on analysis of relevant student, staff, and family outcomes. This should include:
- Academic performance of ninth-grade students, including math performance if this is a focus of the application.
 - Trends in course completion and on-track rate for ninth-grade students.
 - Trends in four-year, five-year, and six-year graduation rates.

If the analysis in the school's 2025 Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) includes all the items listed, indicate "Included in 2023 UIP" and provide additional context if desired. Currently posted UIPs are available on [CDE's webpage](#). If indicated here, reviewers will review the "Current Status" section of the UIP for this question.

- 2) Identify current needs related to implementation of components of ninth-grade success and gaps the proposal is intended to address that may include:
- Ninth Grade Success Teams
 - Structures for teacher and staff coordination and collaboration
 - Data Systems
 - Data systems for identification of ninth-grade students at-risk of dropping out due to attendance, academic performance, and/or behavior;
 - Instructional Supports
 - Instructional supports (e.g., common instructional practices, content-specific academic interventions, tutoring, course-completion programs);
 - Supports to meet student needs (social-emotional, behavioral, service connections, and student skill building support).
 - Ninth Grade Transitions
 - Transition services for eighth- to ninth-grade students;

- Ninth grade orientation, advisory, or freshman seminar type support

If applying for multiple schools in Option A, please include a response for each school if structures are substantially different.

Section B: Program Description

1) Program Management and Data Systems - Describe in a narrative response the following items:

- How will the district support implementation and ensure accountability of this grant for the school(s)?
- How will the district and school ensure a data system is in place that will allow school leaders and teachers to obtain real-time access to integrated data concerning a student's behavior, attendance, and grades and allow for comparison of the data across demographic categories and student groups, as well as transfer of data from middle school to high school?

2) Ninth Grade Success Team - The items below are all part of the Ninth Grade Success Team, one of the four required implementation components:

- a. Creating and implementing a cross-disciplinary success team comprised of all ninth-grade teachers who teach core classes and support staff, which must include (to the extent practicable) at least one school counselor, school mental health professional, or school social worker.
- b. Convene the success team at least every two weeks throughout the school year to collaborate on identifying and implementing strategies to improve outcomes for ninth-grade students who are found to be at risk of dropping out of school before graduation and to address systems-level barriers to success for all ninth-grade students.
- c. Use ninth-grade students' behavior, attendance, and grades across demographic categories and student groups to inform strategies.
- d. To the extent practicable, the ninth-grade classes are taught by a single group of teachers who teach only or mostly ninth-grade classes.

Describe in a narrative response the following things that will support implementation.

- How the applicant will select a member of the success team to serve as the success team leader and how this will fit with other responsibilities. Duties include preparing team meeting agendas, gathering needed information and facilitating team meetings.
- Approach to scheduling and facilitation of success team meetings.

3) Instructional Support and Transitions - The items below are all part of the Instructional Support and Transitions, two of the four required implementation components:

- a. All ninth-grade teachers (of the students served through this grant) receive data concerning the incoming ninth-grade students before the start of the school year, receive professional development concerning how to use the data to inform instruction for the students, and have time to review information and plan course work and support.
- b. Provide summer orientation and ongoing support for incoming ninth-grade students and their parents to introduce students to the behavioral and academic expectations of high school. Note that this often includes summer orientation or bridge programs and advisory or Freshman Seminar type classes.
- c. Identify and prioritize services for ninth-grade students who are at risk of academic failure in ninth grade.

- d. Provide instructional support for ninth-grade students to ensure core experiences and support. This could include attendance support, content specific academic interventions, tutoring, course-completion programs, social-emotional learning, and trauma-informed instruction.
- e. If applicable, selecting programming focused on evidence-informed mathematic skills, intervention strategies, and acceleration strategies, including a focus on students who are below grade level or struggling in mathematics.

Describe in narrative how the applicant will address the following:

- The applicant’s approach to transition programming, including staffing.
- The applicant’s approach to instructional support (core practices and interventions).

- 4) If focusing on mathematics performance, describe the programming that the school will undertake to support improved mathematics performance.
- 5) Provide information about how the applicant will approach the first six months of the grant in these categories:
 - a. Hiring/Staffing
 - b. Stakeholder Engagement
 - c. Data Systems (Development and Use)
 - d. Training/Awareness
 - e. Planning for Summer Orientation/Transition Programs

Information should include point person, description of approach and key actions.

For example:

Category (a-e)	Point Person	Description of Approach and Key Actions

Section C: Program Goals and Evaluation

- 1) For the two core goals and one optional goal, indicate your current 2024-2025 data.
 - Program Goal 1:** Increase the percentage of ninth-grade courses passed.
 - Program Goal 2:** Increase the percentage of ninth-grade students that move to tenth grade with no more than one course failure.
 - Program Goal 3 (optional):** Increase the mathematics performance of ninth-grade students.

Program Goal 1	2024-2025 Courses Attempted/Passed		
School 1 Name			
Program Goal 2	2024-2025 On-Track Rate		
School 1 Name			
Program Goal 3 (optional)	Metric To Be Used (assessment, grades, etc.)	2024-2025 Current Baseline	2025-2026 Goal
School 1 Name			

- 2) Describe the school and district-based systems that will be used to help collect data, track, and monitor program goals.
- 3) Indicate who will be responsible for completion of end-of-year evaluation reports that will include summary information on students served and outcomes, and summary information on program implementation?

These are required components of the Ninth Grade Success Grant:

- a. Results will be used to inform program and school improvement, including the development of the school's Unified Improvement Plan.
 - b. Results should be shared with stakeholders.
- 4) Describe how and when results will be shared with key stakeholders, such as the Ninth Grade Success Team, District leadership, members of the School Board, other school staff, parents, and community members, etc.
 - 5) Describe the process for how evaluation results will be used to inform program and school improvement.

Section D: Program Budget

Note: Per statute, 22-14-109.5(3)(a), an LEP or charter school that is selected to receive a grant must, as a condition of accepting the grant, provide a grant match, which may include in-kind contributions, in an amount set by the state board, which amount must not exceed: (i) fifteen percent of the grant amount for an LEP that is a small rural school district or for a charter school; and (ii) twenty-five percent of the grant amount for all other LEPs. A description of how the applicant will meet this matching requirement must be included in the Budget Narrative.

- 1) Provide a narrative explanation that summarizes the proposed uses of grant funds by budget category or proposed program strategies. Refer to all uses of funds described in Budget to ensure they are all justified expenses for components of the proposed program. Include description of matching funds.
- 2) Complete your proposed program budget in GAINS.
- 3) Costs are reasonable and sufficient in relation to the measurable objectives, design, scope, sustainability, and duration of project activities. Use of funds are connected to grant goals and activities. To receive maximum points, the budget and budget narrative should provide justification for activities, strategies and/or staffing referenced in Section B: Program Description.