

Office of Gifted Education
Exceptional Student Services Unit

Submission Due Date
June 27, 2018

Gifted Education Regional Grant Program
for
Consultant Services, Professional Development, and Statewide
Collaboration and Monitoring

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Email to washington_j@cde.state.co.us

Introduction

Colorado retains a philosophy of support for educational regions that assist educators, deliver student instructional services, and align with statewide values, programs, and accountability obligations. The concept of regional areas is supported in C.R.S. 22-5.5-102, called the Regional Service Areas Act. This Act facilitates alignment of the State's education system and declares that regional services maximize the State's limited resources to improve achievement.

The Gifted Education Regional Grant Program provides expertise and support to gifted education directors and coordinators through a regional system. The gifted education regional system includes 8 regions most often utilized in the Department's work. At times, up to 12 regions are supported when resources are available.

The Gifted Education Regional Grant Program was established to extend the capacity of CDE to provide technical assistance and professional development in the field of gifted education through qualified staff living in or in close proximity to the local region. The regional system aligns with state and administrative unit goals, initiatives and targets for the ongoing improvement of gifted programs for students and families. This alignment models elements of change theory (Fullen) and continues to use implementation research to improve practice.

Every administrative unit's (AU's) gifted education director or coordinator has access to support from a Gifted Education Regional Consultant (GERC). The GERC coordinates regularly scheduled regional network meetings for benefit of AU staff, facilitates the organization and delivery of selected professional development, and maintains the statewide system for development of common materials/resources and monitoring obligations. The GERC works with directors and coordinators on the implementation of program plans, accountability performance targets, and technical assistance in building family partnerships.

The implementation of the statewide gifted education program is a shared, collaborative responsibility of AU gifted education leads, the state, and other designated leadership as determined by an AU. The Gifted Education Regional Grant Program provides a network for shared resources, collaboration among regions, discussions by settings, and efforts to build capacity in instructional and social-emotional practices around a common theme.

Purpose

The purpose of the Gifted Education Regional Grant Program is to:

- Provide funds for a gifted education regional consultant who will support a specific regional AU network
- Provide support, consultation and technical assistance to AU directors and coordinators of gifted programs
- Foster collaboration and sharing of resources among AU directors/coordinators in the region and across the state for implementation of program plans and accountability practices
- Provide selected professional development experiences coordinated with the regional AU directors/coordinators and other AU leadership as identified, to increase capacity of educators to identify and program for students with exceptional potential
- Provide the alignment, common resources, and consistency of the State's provisions for gifted education through GERC participation in statewide reviews, resource development efforts, and GERC meetings
- Create an attitude of "esprit de corps" among educators and families in gifted education with a focus on relationships and integrity of work and collaboration

DEFINITIONS

Administrative Unit (Definition) and Gifted Education

“Administrative Unit” means a school district, a board of cooperative services, or the state charter school institute that is providing educational services to exceptional children and that is responsible for the local administration of this Act - ECEA (Exceptional Children’s Education Act). Gifted education is administered and funded through the administrative unit, same as special education. Provisions for the implementation of identification of exceptional children, gifted education program elements, and accountability are supported through the administrative unit.

Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES)

BOCES is an educational service agency that provides programs and services to member districts that can be more efficiently provided across school districts. The number of Colorado school districts within a BOCES is 2 to 20 districts.

Fiscal Agent

For purposes of the Gifted Education Regional Grant Program, the fiscal agent is the administrative unit within a region that agrees to manage the receipt of grant funds, payment of grant expenditures for the region, and facilitates the employment or contractor agreement with the GERC.

Gifted Education Lead

A gifted education lead is the director, coordinator, or administrator in the administrative unit that is responsible for the implementation of the AU’s gifted program plan, services/programming, and professional development. In some AU’s, an additional person may be identified to be a gifted education co-lead (e.g., Curriculum Director, BOCES Executive Director).

Gifted Education Regional Consultant (GERC)

The GERC is a member of a statewide grant team that serves regional AUs and collaborates on statewide initiatives, materials, and reviews for the benefit of administrative units. The GERC is an employee or a consultant of the administrative unit with fiscal duties of the grant. However, the GERC serves all administrative units in a region.

Region

A region is a service area of the state defined by the State Board of Education. The original eight areas were: Metro, North Central, Northeast, Northwest, Pikes Peak, Southeast, Southwest, and West Central. As GERC personnel are available, the grant supports the splitting of large geographical areas of Northeast, Southeast, Southwest, or Northwest. In FY2018, the grant supported 11 service areas. The number of Colorado administrative units within a region ranges from one to thirteen.

Regional Network

A regional network is the group of administrative units within the boundaries of a particular region represented by gifted education directors, coordinators, and other interested AU leadership.

General Directions for Application

1. After receipt of the award announcement and application form, the fiscal agent for the region coordinates with the Gifted Education Regional Consultant to complete the Cover Page and Budget Page of the application form.
2. The budget page must include allowances for GERC salary and expenses, and expenses for professional development or student instructional activities based upon the region's needs assessment and state obligations.
3. Submit the two pages of the application form to Joyce Washington, Washington_j@cde.state.co.us, by June 27, 2018.

Who should apply for the regional grant?

The Gifted Education Regional Grant is submitted by one designated AU in the region who will serve as the fiscal agent for the region. The fiscal agent manages grant funds including payment of grant expenditures and arrangements for an employee or contractor agreement with the GERC. While only one AU submits the grant application, the GERC serves all AUs in the region.

Application Period

Application is during the month of June.

Duration of the Grant

The Regional Grant Program is one fiscal year. No carry forward funds are permitted.

Reporting

The fiscal agent, in collaboration with the GERC, completes the End-of-Year Expenditure column on the original grant form and submits the report by August 15, 2018 to staff in the Office of Gifted Education.

Submission Process and Deadline

An electronic copy of the application must be received by the Office of Gifted Education according to directions by June 27, 2018.

Technical Assistance

For additional program information, please contact the Office of Gifted Education.

Application Format and Required Elements

- Applications should include only the required elements on the application form. The application is comprised of a Cover Page and a Narrative - Budget Page. An example of the application is at the end of this packet.

Questions about the Regional Grant Program

What are factors in the grant formula?

The budget is an annual regional distribution based upon a formula considering the following main factors: GERC days, salary, travel, PERA benefits, professional development and/or gifted student instructional opportunities. In addition to the basic GERC expenses, each region receives a base of \$10,000 or \$15,000 professional development/gifted student instructional funds dependent upon the number of gifted students, plus a per gifted student rate.

How is the budget processed?

After determination of each region's allocation by CDE, the fiscal agent receives a memo of appreciation and application directions with a grant application template and timeline for submission. The GERC salary, PERA benefits and travel expenses are standard priorities in the budget. An annual needs assessment conducted with the AU leads and other designated AU staff will influence budget decisions. The AU leads and the GERC discuss other eligible expenditures of the grant: professional development, materials, books, substitute teachers, student events/activities, speaker expenses, facility costs, and travel expenses for educators participating in gifted education professional development. The GERC facilitates conversation with the fiscal agent to finalize details and submission of the grant. An end-of-year expenditure report is due using the original grant submission template and completing the expenditure column on the form.

Who determines the fiscal agent?

The administrative unit directors, coordinators and other interested AU leadership determine who will be the fiscal agent. The fiscal agent may be a long-term assignment, or a rotated responsibility of the regional AUs. If no determination is agreed upon, CDE staff may approach an AU to request support with fiscal agent tasks.

What are the tasks of the fiscal agent?

The fiscal agent completes the annual grant application in collaboration with the GERC. The fiscal agent receives grant funds for the region and processes grant expenditures. When there is a GERC vacancy, the fiscal agent along with the other gifted education AU leads and the Office of Gifted Education collaborate to hire or to contract with a new regional consultant to serve the region. The fiscal agent submits an end-of-year report comprised of completing a column on the budget chart provided on the original application.

How does the region prioritize its grant budget?

The first priority is the budget for the Gifted Education Regional Consultant (GERC), including salary, PERA benefits and travel expenses. Health insurance or other benefits are not allowable grant expenditures. Secondly, network meeting expenditures, if any, are estimated. After these main priorities, the needs assessment and discussion will determine professional development, materials, coaching experiences, district or school team resources, and/or student instructional needs that will be supported in a particular year.

Example: The AU leads plan professional development in math instruction for school teams based upon performance data; plan a regional student experience; and, identify purchases to create a regional bank for identification assessments. Lastly, the AU fiscal agent and the GERC collaborate on the final budget submission.

How is effective communication encouraged?

The GERC and the AU directors/coordinators establish how important information, newsletters, and workshops are communicated in the individual administrative units (districts, BOCES, or multi-district AUs). Typically, it is the AU director/coordinator that distributes the information, except where newsletters are emailed to a broader regional community. GERCs will know and follow the communication protocols within the administrative units. (Note: Clarify with AU leads who should be on the mailing lists.)

In a BOCES, it is recommended to use the Executive Director's structure and protocols for communicating with the superintendents and educators in the districts. A successful communication practice is when the GERC and AU gifted education coordinator are periodically invited to the SAC (Superintendent Advisory Council) meetings. Together, they share important regional happenings and results.

The regional network meeting is a viable and dynamic structure for communication, sharing of resources, learning experiences, and inclusive professional learning communities. AU gifted education leads and other identified AU staff meet on a regular schedule.

It is suggested that a regional network newsletter be widely distributed three times a year. Monthly emails with reminders are appropriate as well.

What is the work year and schedule for GERCs?

The regional consultant typically works 110 days, August through June.

GERCs meet each spring to draft a calendar for the coming year. This calendar is shared with regions and includes both regional and state obligations. (Note: GERCs have similar obligations, but tasks may vary based upon regional needs, the number of AUs in a region, and required state commitments.)

Is a GERC assigned to every administrative unit?

No, the GERC is regionally based. The Gifted Education Regional Consultant supports and serves an entire region composed of multiple administrative units. The network of AUs in a region determine the schedule for network meetings, AU visits, professional development, and degree of need in high priority AUs or those with new directors or coordinators.

Who employs the Gifted Education Regional Consultant?

In practice, each AU and the Office of Gifted Education has a voice in the person hired or with a contract to serve as the Regional Consultant. In protocol, the fiscal agent is the designated AU to hire or contract with the GERC. In that regard, all matters of personnel for employees or contractors of the fiscal agent AU apply to the GERC. (See the Appendix for a description of the GERC role and an example of a Job Description.)

How is a GERC hired in a BOCES or multi-district AU?

The hiring process is shared among AU gifted education leads and the CDE Office of Gifted Education. CDE brings the AU gifted education leads together for collaboration and discussion. All AU leads or a designee in the region have opportunity to participate in the process. AU leads and the Director of Gifted Education meet or video conference to determine: the process, timeline, job description, job announcement, interview procedures, final decision making, and follow-up for introductions and orientation. CDE offers support, advice, assistance in the interview process, examples of job descriptions and interview questions as requested.

What are expectations of the GERC role and who sets expectations?

Expectations of the GERC are shared between the administrative unit leads in the region and the Office of Gifted Education. This unique role has dual obligations to region and state. A description of the GERC role is maintained on the CDE Gifted Education webpage. AU gifted education leads communicate regional needs and schedule visits with the GERC at a network meeting or via electronic methods. The network system for planning and delivery is based upon trust, collaboration, and integrity in time management, as well as familiarity with the AU gifted education directors, coordinators and priorities.

Example:

In April/May, the GERC conducts a needs-assessment with the AU directors/coordinators and other designated AU staff. An end-of-year meeting is used for planning, considering on-boarding plans for new directors/coordinators, UIP targets, state initiatives, and AUs with improvement plans and review preparations. Mid-year adjustments and special topics may be addressed as needed.

What are state obligations and benefit?

State obligations include common work of the GERC team, commitment to a network system, and statewide priorities for building capacity of gifted programs. State efforts include sharing of resources, ideas, common protocols, expertise, and development of materials for every region. State level work includes participation on monitoring teams, review of grant applications, periodic attendance at a State Advisory Committee meeting, vetting or development of selected resources, and team meetings. In person team meetings are held three times a year in the Metro area and virtual meetings occur periodically throughout the year.

Do GERCs serve in other positions?

A GERC may have other positions or agreements with educational agencies, or companies outside education. Some GERCs retain independent L.C.C. status for their work as an educational consultant. Others may be a coordinator for an AU, a CDE part-time employee, or a resource teacher in a district. When the GERC is a private consultant, there may be no solicitation at regional or state functions.

How are factors of personnel and the grant evaluated?

Personnel evaluation is a matter of contract or part-time employee status shared with the fiscal agent and the Office of Gifted Education and is based on fulfillment of state and regional obligations.

Feedback is solicited from administrative unit leads and the Gifted Education Forum regarding the benefit received from networking, technical assistance, and professional development opportunities provided by the grant.

Colorado Department of Education
Office of Gifted Education

Grant Name:

Gifted Education Regional Grant - XXXXXXX Region

Gifted Education Regional Consultant: XXXXX

APPLICATION FOR GIFTED EDUCATION REGIONAL GRANT
FISCAL YEAR 2018 - 2019

REGIONAL FISCAL AGENT

Award Amount:

Legal Name of Agency

Number and Street Address

City

State

Zip Code

Telephone Number

Name of Authorized Representative

Title

CERTIFICATION BY AUTHORIZED AGENCY ADMINISTRATOR

The Administrative Unit hereby makes application for State Gifted and Talented funds. I am authorized to act as the Administrative Unit's authorized representative, to conduct all business related to the planning, implementation, budget, operation, and evaluation of this grant program, to submit all required reports, and generally conduct business related to the administration of the funds received from this grant. In consideration of the receipt of these grant funds, the AU agrees that the provisions listed in the Narrative and the terms therein are specifically incorporated in this application.

Signature

Date

Typed Name

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF AUTHORIZED STATE AGENCY REPRESENTATIVE

Signature

Date

Grant Name:

Date:

Objectives:

- Provide a Gifted Education Regional Consultant (GERC) in Colorado educational regions for support to administrative unit directors/coordinators in the implementation of program plans and improvement of gifted student performance, including professional development aligned with state goals. A base of \$10,000 was estimated for technical assistance, GERC and network meetings, monitoring activities, materials, and professional development prioritized through needs assessments and discussions.
- Support the development of Gifted Education identification, programming, and accountability in every administrative unit
- Increase capacity of educators to know and understand gifted students' characteristics and needs, programming options, gifted instructional strategies, accountability requirements, and how to write quality advanced learning plans
- Assist in the monitoring of Gifted Program Plans, onsite visits, and support to high priority/turnaround

Activities:

- The fiscal agent must contract with or employ a part-time Gifted Education Regional Consultant. The GERC has obligations to each administrative unit in the region and collaborates with each AU to serve program action plans and needs, including resourcing across administrative units (AUs) and regions.
- Activities facilitated by the Gifted Education Regional Consultant: professional development in Gifted Education; network meetings; gifted student materials and activities; limited equipment; needs assessment, and/or guidance in program evaluation
 - Activities of GERCs related to team meetings, AU reviews, and/or development of materials

Allowable Expenses:

- Salary/Fees: Speaker fee; Coach's fee; GERC salary and PERA - no health benefits
- Facility costs and limited food (reasonable expectations)
- Gifted education books and other materials for students or educators
- Travel expenses: lodging, mileage, airfare, land travel, meals
- Materials and supplies for meetings and professional development
- Substitute teachers and expenses incurred by participants of sponsored activities

Grant Award:

Description	Budget	Actual	Due August 15
Gifted Education Regional Consultant fee			
PERA and/or other benefits			
Travel - GERC			
Student events/activities			
Speaker expenses			
Facility costs			
Professional development, materials, books			
Food			
Substitute teachers			
Other participant expenses:			
Mileage			
Lodging, meals, land travel or airfare			
Laptop to facilitate work			
Other			
Grant total:	\$0.00		