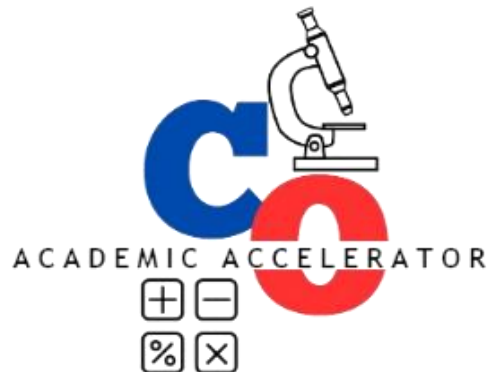




Topic Area

- A. [General Questions](#)
- B. [Definition and Description of Terms](#)
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A. GENERAL

Q: We are concerned about being able to hit the minimum 5 hours per week of programming requirements. Can you discuss how that looks? What was the thinking process behind limiting the minimum 5 hours, maximum 10 hours per week?

A: The minimum 5 hours maximum 10 hours of programming was decided because some schools have 4-day school weeks, and the 5th day could serve as one day a week for all program hours. Also, in our stakeholder feedback, many were concerned about high turnover and the challenge of hiring program staff. At least 5 hours could be dispersed in many ways. Also, because the focus of programs is specific to math and science, evidence-informed and best practices limit the amount of dosage for this subject matter.

Several scheduling ideas can help sites to hit the minimum number of hours.

For example

- Applicants can run programs Monday through Friday before and after school but can adapt their programming days if it equals a minimum of 5 hours a week.
- Sites can also take advantage of weekend times if that works for your program design, as well as school year breaks including spring, fall, winter and summer break.
- For schools on four-day school weeks, programs can run for the entire 5 hours to meet the requirement.

Q: For rural communities where there is not a CBO (Community Based Organization) such as Boys & Girls Club or YMCA to partner with, how does a school still take advantage of this opportunity?

A: If a school district is applying, collaboration with a CBO is not required but is recommended to help with increasing resources for the program, helping to meet staffing needs, and augmenting programming.

If the applicant is a CBO, that applicant is required to work with a school district to create a program design based on student needs, align with school day instruction, utilize space (if the Center will be operating at the school, and to gain access to testing results and outcomes for students.

A few examples for rural schools could include:

- Partner with other programs within the district
- Utilize community volunteers
- Work with a community college or university locally or remotely

Please note, applicants could provide more than one of these ideas in their program

Applicant can also explore other options that align with the CO-AAP (Colorado Academic Accelerator Program) RFA requirements and the applicants' program needs

Q: As a small charter school, we are curious about what to do with grades that do not take CMAS- what other assessment data can we use?

A: Please refer to the following Appendix items in the CO-AAP RFA:

1. Appendix A: Standard Academic Assessments by Grade Level with Score Ranges
2. Appendix E: State Performance Measure Worksheet
 - PM #1 located on page 33 states: *that By the end of each year of the grant, [insert percentage (must be at least 50 percent)] of participating students will demonstrate [growth OR proficiency OR growth and proficiency] in [math OR both math and science] as measured by objective data from [CMAS (Colorado Measures of Academic Success), NWEA MAPS, or other summative assessments as approved by the state office].*
 - *Other summative assessments would be accepted if approved by the state office.*

Q: Is the RFA available for applicants to print out to use as a guide, or can we only access it from logging in to GAINS?

A: Yes, a [PDF](#) and a [Word version](#) of the RFA are available. Both versions can be printed out as a hard copy for applicant needs. Please note that the only way to submit the application is through the [GAINS](#) system.

Q: Must the only program topics we can offer be things like Robotics or Math Tutoring? Do we have leeway to offer creative options that utilize math and science, like cooking classes, for example?

A: Applicants can be creative when using evidence-based, and/or evidence informed strategies for programming. Although Robotics is naturally STEM related, other types of evidence-based activities can be provided based on student needs and interests.

Q: Our school struggles with growth, because over half of our instructors are in the first 5 years of their teaching careers and most are alternatively licensed. Instead of focusing on 'growth' can we instead focus on acceleration?

A: Growth is the focus of programs, due to the slide in math and science scores for Colorado. Although acceleration is often built with STEM programs, growth is the primary focus.

Q: Are funds available to provide teacher resources for Professional Development?

The CDE Math and Science SIS (Standards and Instructional Support) teams are helping to provide teacher resources for professional development that will be linked on the CO-AAP website: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/studentssupport/coaap> . The grant does not pay for certifications and licenses. However, professional development such as approved conferences and trainings are allowable.

Q: Can we use time before school as well as after school for programs?

A: Out-of-school time includes any time NOT during the regular school day. Applicants can offer programs before school, after school, fifth day for schools on a four-day week, on weekends, breaks including Spring and Fall, as well as summer break.

Q: Can you provide information on what a year of programming might look like?

A: Applicants are required to run programs during the school year and summer for 24 weeks total. This could look several different ways. For example, students starting back in August could have until the beginning of September to register for the program. The program could run September -May for 22 weeks with a 2-week summer program, taking the total number of weeks to 24.

Q: Do I understand correctly that we are only allowed to apply to provide our STEM program to four centers?

A: Located on page 5 of the RFA under Application Limits category it states the following:

Due to the highly competitive nature of this funding opportunity, the number of centers for each individual grant application cannot exceed four. Eligible entities (fiscal agents) may apply for a maximum number of four centers across all submitted CO-AAP applications. A maximum of four centers will be funded for each eligible entity awarded funds through this funding opportunity. It is important to note that services and student target populations to be served cannot be duplicated across proposed centers.

Q: Concerning the planning period, what is the amount of grant funds we can allocate to the planning months?

A: Page 5 of CO-AAP RFA states: The first three-month planning period occurring from April 1, 2024, to June 30, 2024 (FY2023-24) is intended to provide time and funding for awarded applicants (grantees) to better

understand current needs of students, engage stakeholders, and design detailed implementation plans. Common activities will include a focus on systems for data collection, needs analysis, identifying staffing needs and hiring staff, and development of interventions in math and science. For Year 1, which is inclusive of FY2023-24 (April 1, 2024, to June 30, 2024) and FY2024-25 (July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025) applicants can apply for a maximum of 10% of their proposed first-year budget to dedicate toward planning. All applicants should budget for planning, regardless of whether they are establishing or expanding community learning centers or out-of-school time (OST) services.

Q: We are applying for a center that serves two schools in one center, both located in the same school building (e.g., K-5 and 6-8). How do I calculate student participation targets?

A: If applying for one center, applicants do not need to parse out student participation targets out by each school. Instead, build participation targets based on projected attendance for a combination of both student groups combined for the one center.

Q: Is a community-based organization applicant allowed to apply as one center serving students from multiple schools? Are off-site, non-school center locations allowed?

A: The CO-AAP RFA placed a maximum on the number of Centers but does not limit feeder schools serving the centers. Many applicants serve one school per Center. However, technically nothing prohibits applicants from applying for more than one school within a Center. It is important to ensure students are available, and applicants must meet requirements for each school within the Center.

For example, all following criteria must be collected from each school:

- teacher surveys from each school,
- data-specific indicators from each school for program outcome and evaluation reporting,
- Principal letters signed from each school,
- Descriptions on how each school prioritizes students at each location,
- Description of each individual school regarding the area being targeted for participation based on student needs.

Also, all schools within each Center must meet the priority points criteria to qualify for those points.

Applicants must also provide individualized data from each of the schools, how they chose the target populations at each school based on student needs and how they designed programs to meet the student needs in each individual school.

Please also describe within your narrative where requested, how each school and each school's stakeholders were involved in the creation and development of the application.

Q: We are a Colorado charter school, and I am wondering if we would be considered "another public or private entity" allowing us to apply for the CO-APP grant on our own? Or would we need to use the DCSD as our fiscal agent?

A: You would need to use the district as your fiscal agent.

Q: I am a BOCES, working with CMAS/PSAT/SAT data from small schools. Most of our schools do not have published data due to small numbers and privacy. I know the schools have their data, is the grant considered private for this information within the grant? I need to be able to answer that question for several of our schools.

A: Please refer to the PII section of the RFA located on page 7, and state that no PII should be submitted with the application. When discussing data from small schools, an applicant can add percentages and not n-counts.

- For example, if an applicant tests only 10 students and 6 of them are below grade level, an applicant can report that 60% of students are below grade level without providing the number of students. Student data including test scores must be accessible by applicants. Page 17 Section A: Demonstration of Need provides points for applicants that provide appropriate objective student data to demonstrate need.
- Page 21 of the RFA is a Principal sign off that ensures student data will be shared with the appropriate entities. Applicants would need one of these signatures for every school they plan to serve.

B. DEFINITION AND DESCRIPTION OF TERMS

Q: Do we need to track family participation as part of the ADA (Average Daily Attendance)?

A: We do not require applicants to track Average Daily Attendance (ADA) for families. ADA is required for students in Section C: Participation Targets, page 13 in the RFA:

A definition and calculation for student ADA can be found in the Glossary Section, page 41 of the RFA:
ADA: Average Daily Attendance for CO-AAP To determine the ADA, divide the total monthly attendance by the number of program days in the month.

The RFA does require collecting unduplicated family attendance and engagement data in:

- Section C: Participation Targets.
- Performance Measure #4 starting on page 35 of the RFA; and
- Reporting and Evaluation Section, page 37 of the RFA:

Q: Can neighboring districts team up to benefit from grant dollars?

A: Yes. Please see the **'eligible entities'** definition on page 3 of the RFA: Notably, a consortium of school districts may apply for this funding opportunity. Also, per page 42 of the CO-AAP RFA regarding consortium grants:

Consortium: One of the categories of eligible entities for the CO-AAP Grant. A group of two or more eligible entities, which can include community-based organizations and school districts. A consortium of entities may apply together to provide services for centers. One organization must be designated as the lead fiscal agent of the consortium. In addition, an applicant consortium must designate one individual, a Program Director, who will be responsible for communication and coordination across all centers within the consortium. Please note this does not include applications that meet the minimum requirement for partnering with a school. The collaboration outlined in the application must include detailed information regarding partnership management, programmatic collaboration, and fiscal collaboration and cooperation.

Additionally, consortium applications:

- Must demonstrate the strength and quality of the proposed collaboration throughout the entire grant application. The LEP and other organization(s) must work extensively in the planning and design of the program.
- Each must have substantial roles in the delivery of services.
- Each must share grant resources to implement the proposed project effectively.
- Each must be involved in the management and oversight of the proposed program; and
- Must have a signed agreement, also known as a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), between both entities stating the collaboration of efforts, resources, and funding must be submitted with the grant application. This document must clearly define and detail the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved with explicit expectations outlined.

Q: What is meant by “high impact tutoring” and what is the expectation of what that looks like?

A: A glossary of terms for this, and several other phrases can be found in Appendix H of the CO-AAP RFA: The definition below can be found on page 43.

- For specific information regarding “**High Impact Tutoring**” the appendix states: *“A form of teaching, one-on-one or in a small group, towards a specific goal (such as accelerating student learning in math and science) that leads to substantial learning gains for students by supplementing (but not replacing) students’ classroom experiences and responding to individual needs and complements students’ existing curriculum. We recognize high impact tutoring programs as those that either have directly demonstrated significant gains in student learning through state-of-the art research studies or have characteristics that have proven to accelerate student learning. These characteristics of high-impact tutoring programs currently include substantial time each week of required tutoring, sustained and strong relationships between students and their tutors, close monitoring of student knowledge and skills, alignment with school curriculum, and oversight of tutors to assure quality interactions.”*

Q: What does “high needs schools and students” mean?

A: From Appendix H: High-need schools are- High-poverty, low-performing schools that have not historically had the resources or capacity to provide high quality math (and science) instruction and enrichment programs, as evidenced by:

1. A K-12th grade Free and Reduced Lunch rate of 40 percent and above in 2022-23.
2. Low proficiency and/or low growth on CMAS Math and/or PSAT/SAT Math, compared to the state averages for those assessments in 2021-22 and/or 2022-23.
3. Students in disaggregated groups that have low proficiency and/or low growth on CMAS Math and/or PSAT/SAT Math, compared to the state averages for those disaggregated student groups in 2021-22 and/or 2022-23.
4. A significant number of students (as determined by applicant) who are below grade level or struggling in math (and science) based on a body of evidence, including local assessments.
5. A demonstrated need for additional support and services according to Census Data (by county, community and/or block, such as household income, education, etc.) or other relevant data.

High-need students are- Students who attend high-needs schools, as defined in this Glossary of Terms above.

Q: Please explain what ‘use digital math accelerator programs’ means on page 4 of the RFA:

A: Please refer to Appendix H:

Digital math accelerator programs are- *Online, digital, and/or virtual platforms used for student learning in math. Examples include but are not limited to Zearn, Khan Academy, MAP Accelerator, Smart Lab Learning, and so forth. As a state, Colorado has invested in Zearn. Zearn is the online math learning platform that is provided at no cost to schools and school districts statewide that opt-in to participate, as well as for use in the community learning centers funded by the CO-AAP grant.”*

See “Zearn” in this Glossary of Terms for more information and learn more about Zearn Math in Colorado.

C. ELIGIBILITY

Q: Can a new school in a public school district apply for this grant or must the school already be in operation?

A: If the school will be hosting and serving students in the 2024-25 school year, they may apply for the grant with the school district as the fiscal agent. It is important to remember that there are application limits due to the highly competitive nature of this funding opportunity. The number of centers for each individual grant application cannot exceed four. Eligible entities (fiscal agents) may apply for a maximum number of four centers across all submitted CO-AAP applications. A maximum of four centers will be funded for each eligible entity awarded funds through this funding opportunity. Services and student target populations to be served cannot be duplicated across proposed centers.

Q: We are a charter school in a school district. Can we apply independently of the district, or will our application count as one of the four sites limit as stated in the RFA?

A: You are free to apply independently with the district as your fiscal agent or as a part of a multi-site application from the district. There is no limit to the number of applications submitted by a district, but the number of funded sites per district is limited to four as stated on page 5 of the RFA:

Q: What if a Science Center wants to apply for this grant, do they need to coordinate with the school who will lead?

A: There are a couple of options for eligibility and application leads:

- A Science center as the lead applicant and apply as a consortium to show your established presence.
- Another avenue to explore is to go through the BOCES (Board of Cooperative Educational Services,) and apply as the lead site.

Q: Do you have a list of eligible schools within school districts (like the 21st Century Learning Center grants which identified schools that were eligible to apply this year). Or is it just in general "high needs schools and students" with "lower than state average CMAS in math and science as determined by site?

A: CO-AAP does not have a list of eligible schools or a list of priority schools like the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant Program. It is the applicant’s responsibility to respond to the priority areas for which they qualify, including demonstrating how the applicant’s proposed community learning center(s) will serve

“high needs schools” and “high needs students.” These definitions and parameters are in Appendix H of the RFA: This includes your example of lower-than-state average assessment scores and some other parameters.

Q: We are a middle school and would like to apply to establish a community learning center. The school proposes to create a community learning center for students outside of our school and not currently enrolled with us. The proposed partner schools would be charter schools and private schools in Larimer County. Would this be an eligible way to apply under the criteria?

A: The CO-AAP grant is set up for school-based programs, and CDE highly encourages all CO-AAP grantees to establish or expand community learning centers in recipient school(s) to meet the needs of the target population(s) of students while reducing barriers to participation such as transportation and staffing. A CO-AAP applicant may apply to serve multiple schools at one community learning center, if the applicant addresses how it will coordinate transportation, staffing, services, and other considerations in their program design to accommodate target population(s) of students from different schools.

Q: We plan to service multiple rural towns with one application program. We are applying as one center. Can we apply as a single entity serving several districts weekly? Is that all right if we need to hit the 5-hour minimum, 10-hour maximum number of program hours per week? Are the hours/week estimated as a per-student number or a per-center number?

A: If applicants are serving multiple districts at one central site location, the hours are based on the center’s hours not each school’s hours. Applicants are required to demonstrate the need for each school and the multiple districts within that one center, being the lead center for all districts under that grant application.

Q: Can you clarify how a consortium made of several districts can apply?

A: Regardless of how applicants submit, grants are given by the number of programs per school. The school must be the main cohort so if an application has a consortium with 4 separate schools, please see the RFA on Page 5 which states, “Due to the highly competitive nature of this funding opportunity, the number of centers for each individual grant application cannot exceed four. Eligible entities (fiscal agents) may apply for a maximum number of four centers across all submitted CO-AAP applications. A maximum of four centers will be funded for each eligible entity awarded funds through this funding opportunity. It is important to note that services and student target populations to be served cannot be duplicated across proposed centers.”

Q: Can you clarify how we can fulfill local collaboration for our evidence-based STEM curriculum program to apply for CO-AAP?

A: All applicants for funding must partner with Colorado schools. Eligible entities include:

- a local educational provider* (a school district, a Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), a district charter school, an Institute Charter School).
- community-based organization*.
- Indian tribe or tribal organization*.
- another public or private entity; and
- a consortium* of two or more such agencies, organizations, or entities.

Further, all applicants must have an established presence and relationship in the community they are proposing to serve. If a community-based organization applies, the community-based organization must be experienced in out-of-school time (OST) supports and must partner with a local education provider to be an eligible entity (C.R. S. 22-2-146.6).

Note: An out-of-state entity cannot receive CO-AAP funds unless they have a letter of commitment from an in-state entity.

D. PRIORITY CONSIDERATIONS AND POINTS

Q: If a student is at a grade level where SAT tests would tell a better story, must I use only CMAS data or can I use other forms of assessment? Can we use SAT data for students eligible to take this standardized test, or must we only use CMAS data?

A: If CMAS data is available for students to be served, refer to that data before others. If CMAS data is not available, other assessments such as SAT, PSAT, ACCESS, and other summative assessments approved by CDE can be used as well. Remember the data source selected must be tracked by the site coordinator. Because CMAS is not given in all grades and not given to all students, please use the most reasonable standard test for the grade level of students measured. Since Colorado has adopted the PSAT for 10th graders and the SAT for 11th graders as official statewide assessments because of their alignment to the high school Colorado Academic Standards, PSAT/SAT tests may be used in place and/or in addition to CMAS data for applicable grade levels. Please refer to Appendix E State Performance Measures Worksheets for more details of acceptable assessments.

Q What happens if a school is improving students' scores? Those students are still considered high needs and are still in need of support from the grant to continue their improvement, but the school might not be considered high needs as a school. Does this affect the eligibility to apply?

A: Any of the listed eligibility entities listed on page 3 of the RFA may apply. Priority points are given for both high needs students and high needs schools. Please see the glossary of terms located in Appendix H of the RFA with specific definitions on pages 43-44.

E. FUNDING AND AWARD PARAMETERS

Q: What is the anticipated award date for CO-AAP Grants?

A: The CO-APP RFA opened on Dec. 15, 2023, and the deadline for application submission is 4pm on Feb. 15, 2024. Grant Applications will then go through the peer review and scoring process. Applicants will be notified of final award status by Friday, March 15, 2024. (This may be subject to change.)

Q: We offer science education, typically e based. Are scholarships an allowable expense, or must we waive costs like 21st CCLCs?

A: Students are not allowed scholarships. Applicants should waive fees so that students at the site can access CO-AAP programs without barriers.

Q: The grant indicates it will support 60 students at \$3,000 per student per learning center. Do the students supported at one learning center need to remain the same for an entire school year, or would it be possible to serve 60 students during the first semester and a different 60 student during the second semester? We would still request \$3000 per student for 60 students for the year, but we are wondering if the students being supported can be flexible within the course of a year.

A: The recommendation that 60 students be served at a cost per student of up to \$3,000 for a total award request of \$180,000 is explained on page 5 of the RFA: CO-AAP applicants may choose to serve more or fewer students, and the cost per student may vary depending on the number of students to be served and the cost per student. Please keep in mind that the \$3,000 maximum cost per student using CO-AAP funding may not be exceeded by applicants. Additionally, applicant may propose a “cohort” model for student participants, where one group of students participate at the community learning center one semester, and another group of students participate the other semester. However, in the application narrative, applicants must be able to 1) justify this type of program design to align with students’ needs and interests in *Section A*, 2) explain how data collections and evaluations on all students regardless of cohort will be consistent and accurate to successfully complete all reporting and evaluation requirements in *Section D*.

Q: The grant information states that up to \$180,000 can be awarded for each center per year or \$3,000 per student. So, does each center serve 60 students?

A: According to the RFA on page 42

- Cost per student rate is defined as: The amount of funding requested must be reasonable and based on the number of students proposed to attend programming at each center on a daily basis across the entire program year, inclusive of school year and summer programs.
- When calculating the annual cost per student for a center, applicants should consider all programming costs, including hiring and paying staff, staff professional development costs, fulfilling all administrative grant requirements, purchasing curriculum, materials, and supplies, family engagement activities, student transportation, and so forth.
- For example, an applicant may request an award amount of \$180,000 per year per center and may anticipate serving 60 students throughout the year at a cost per student of \$3,000. However, an applicant may also request an award amount of less than \$180,000 to serve fewer students at a cost per student of \$3,000. The cost per student and requested award amount must be adequately justified in the submitted application.

Note: Approximately \$8 million in state funds is available to be awarded through this funding opportunity for each year of the three-year grant and the number of funded centers is dependent on application scoring and funds requested in those applications. Grants will be awarded for a three-year term beginning in the 2023-2024 fiscal year. Additional grant funding for subsequent years will be contingent upon grantees meeting all grant, fiscal, and reporting requirements. There will be no carryover of funds for any year of the grant.

F. APPLICATION COMPONENTS

Q: Will there be training to help applicants who have never developed grant programs? In addition to attending office hours and the recorded online training webinar to fill out the Request for Applications (RFA), what other training should we attend?

A: Multiple resources available for CO-AAP RFA technical assistance:

- A [recorded webinar](#) is available with help to fill out the Request for Application.
- For help with filling out the electronic submission form, the state has [training available to navigate the new GAINS system](#). The RFA is now electronically entered into GAINS, CDE's online grant application system, and applications will not be accepted via email.
- A PDF and Word version of the RFA is available on the CO-AAP webpage for reading outside of the GAINS system. The CO-AAP team will also be posting additional planning resources on the [CO-AAP webpage](#) in early January.
- In addition to the training webinar and online resources, weekly office hours for CO-AAP are available every Thursday morning from 9-9:30 via Zoom. [Please register for CO-AAP office hours here](#). Additionally, GAINS' office hours are also available weekly. Please register for GAINS office hours [here](#).

Q: Regarding the location for community learning centers, can we use the same space as the school, or must we provide a separate location?

A: Often the center is at the school, if it is another location from the school then transportation must be provided, as well as ensuring that the alternate site is housed in a safe and accessible building. See the question from the narrative that describes these requirements below. It can also be found on page 14 of the RFA:

- *a) each community learning center is housed in a safe and accessible building.*
- *b) the transportation needs of participating students will be met (traveling to and from the center(s)); and*
- *c) information about the program(s) are disseminated to the community in a manner that is understandable, accessible, and ongoing*

Q: Must we start in the summer of this school year, 2023-24 and why?

A: Summer Programming is required to be included in the first year of the grant. Grant year one is July 1st, 2024-June 30th, 2025. CO-AAP summer programming can occur in the following months July 2024, August 2024 and/or June 2025 and must meet the 40-hour minimum listed in the RFA: Applicants can choose the start month/week/day of the program, but it must be within the summer months listed above to count as summer programming. Programs are not required to start summer programs in July and August 2024, although they may if they have the planning and capacity to do so.

Below are a couple of examples of summer programming schedules:

- Five days of full-time programming (8 hours times 5 days equaling 40 hours) to fulfill the Year 1 requirement.
- Three times a week, Monday for 2 hours, Wednesday for 2 hours and Thursday for 1 hour for a total of 8 weeks of programming to complete the 40-hour minimum.

Q: What are some recommendations you can provide for measuring math attitude?

A: The Colorado Department of Education’s Standards and Instruction Support (SIS) Math and Science Team has been diligent in providing resources to explain math attitude and provide support regarding it as well. CO-AAP Lead Consultants are also collecting “Math-i-tudes” stories from stakeholders, to convey the deep-rooted beliefs about math, and the effect it has on our learning of it. To become part of this public movement and tell your math story, please check out [this information](#).

Q: How many of the 5-10 program hours must be focused specifically on math and STEM programming? For example, if we have a student snack time or recess time as a part of the programming, and then have our math-based high impact tutoring, is this allowed?

A: Math and STEM activities should be the primary programming within the 5–10-hour range. However, snacks and recess as well as other activities that help to prepare and ground student learning are allowed as part of the overall programming hour totals. Flexibility has been provided to ensure applicants can design their program based on student needs and program schedule. Rationale for any hours outside of STEM, particularly math and science programming and overall program design should be explained in the application.

Q: Can you share more about the requirements for family services as outlined in the RFA and if that fits separately from the student hours?

A: Page 35 of the RFA states: “To increase active and meaningful engagement in their children’s education, community learning centers funded through CO-AAP will provide services, programs, and activities for parents and caregivers of students served. This performance measure can include parent/family activities that provide educational opportunities for parents/ guardians to re-engage in their students’ education in STEM, particularly math and science. Parent/family activities include activities designed with the Two-Generation (2Gen) Approach* or Whole Family Approach*, culturally responsive activities, and engaging parents/families in student outcomes.”

Q: On the Readiness Assessment on page 25 of the RFA, it talks about stakeholder engagement. Attaining stakeholder feedback may prove to be difficult given the timeframe the grant came out. How do you recommend applicants address this issue?

A: The CO-AAP team did hold extensive focus groups with stakeholders and students in age ranges 3rd-5th and 9th-12th grades. We understood that the timing was different, so we prioritized collecting data to inform the writing of the RFA: CDE’s [Stakeholder Engagement Report](#) is now on our website.

Key stakeholders (including school leadership/staff, families/caregivers, students, and community partners) have been engaged to discuss the readiness and capacity of the lead applicant to design and implement a comprehensive STEM-focused out-of-school time program (OST) at proposed school(s).

For applying for the CO-AAP grant, applicants must initially engage stakeholders for the planning and implementation of their grant program if funded. The nature, frequency, and degree of stakeholder engagement will vary among applicants. If applicants demonstrate in their application that initial stakeholder engagement has occurred and will occur if the applicant is awarded, this will suffice for the application review process. The RFA states that for initial stakeholder engagement, stakeholders must include the students to be served, key

program leadership and staff. Stakeholders should also include other school and school district leadership/staff, parents and caregivers, and community partners.

Q: If a school district is applying for centers at several schools for the school year, can we consolidate to one site for summer school? We would provide transportation for participants from each school site. We believe this would allow us to provide more extensive programming and allow sites to share cost. For example, if we bring an assembly, guest speakers or programming from our community partners, it would be one cost rather than times 4.

A: Yes, if a school district is approved for multiple Centers summer programming could be consolidated to one site. It will be important to ensure that the location is safe and accessible, and safe and adequate transportation is provided to and from the summer program site. Also, the summer programming should follow what is outlined in the approved grant application for each Center. Regarding data collection, each Center should track the students in their program that are in attendance. Other participants who are not in that Center's program should not be included in the Center's data collection and submission to the state office.

Q: I'm trying to get clarification around whether a formal partnership is required. Our project is to benefit middle school students who are within our school. New/incoming students will be included but we do not have a formal, external partnership as a part of the project.

A: If you are a school, you do not need to partner with a CBO. If you are a CBO, you would need to partner with a school. School and district partnership guidelines are provided on page 3 of the RFA, which states "All applicants must have an established presence and relationship in the community they are proposing to serve. If a community-based organization applies, the community-based organization must be experienced in out-of-school time (OST) supports and must partner with a local education provider to be an eligible entity (C.R.S. 22-2-146.6)."

Q: Regarding attendance, if we offer an hour of programming before school, and 2 hrs after school, must we have 60 students every single hour?

A: Student average daily attendance is based on a daily rate. Applicants determine the numbers of students served and provide that information in the RFA: The applicant should determine the number of students to be served based on student needs and program design.

Q: Are we able to provide more than the 5-hour minimum, 10-hour maximum program hours?

A: The 10-hour maximum is based on what can be reasonably met. Applicants can go over the 10-hour range without penalty. Justification for the hour range chosen should be provided in the RFA.

Q: When developing the Performance Measure #1: Core Academics goal, I am curious how you typically measure "students will demonstrate growth or proficiency". What do you consider constitutes a student demonstrating growth or proficiency? Increasing their SGP? Increasing their performance level? Increasing their scale score?

A: Page 33 of the RFA states: If CMAS data is available for students to be served, refer to that data before others. Students in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 take CMAS for math and students in grades 5, 8, and 11 take CMAS for science. If you are serving more than one grade level, please include the assessment(s) for each grade level. Please refer to Appendix A for more information about academic assessments, including standard assessments by grade and state averages for CMAS Math proficiency and growth.

Q: Is the number of students participating entirely up to our school/center? We understand that this must be based on both "high needs" students and" high needs schools," correct?

A: The number 60 is listed in our RFA on page 5 to demonstrate how applicants could allocate the maximum of \$3,000 per student cost. Applicants may serve more than 60 students and therefore have programming that is less than \$3000 per student. However, for applicants where costs per student are above \$3,000, justification must be provided.

It is up to the applicant to determine the number of students served within the grant and it should be based on the needs of students and program design. If applicants are requesting funding that is above the \$3,000 per student annual cost (inclusive of school year and summer programs), applicants would need to justify the additional cost per student. Please see the glossary of terms for "high needs students" and "high needs schools" on pages 43-44 of the RFA.

Q: When applicants are designing programs, should applicants assume all students we plan to serve (up to 60 if requesting \$180,000) will need to take all programs we offer?

A: Applicants need to look at intentionally setting participation goals based on student data including needs and interests. Applicants should be designing their programs to positively impact performance achievement growth for as many students as possible in relation to the amount of money requested. Students and their parents/guardians along with student data, will be considered when determining which programs to offer and which would most benefit students.

Q: Can you confirm that an applicant could start their summer programming in June 2025?

A: Yes. Please see page 5 of the RFA

Q: Where can applicants view examples of parent engagement resources to get ideas for the application requirement for the family engagement aspect of CO-AAP?

A: Applicants can visit the CDE website and available various focuses under [math](#), [science](#), and [family engagement websites](#) as well as investigate additional external resources.

Q: What are the required additional attachments according to the CO-AAP RFA and are there templates available? Any other additional details about this requirement?

A: Page 8 of the RFA, under Part III: Required Attachments states that items that need to be furnished by applicants are:

- Center Expectation: Principal Sign-Off Form (Attachment A) – complete for all participating schools
- Job Description(s) of Key Personnel and/or organizational chart(s)

Applicants have the choice to provide job descriptions of key personnel that are needed to facilitate all roles of the grant or provide organizational charts. If this choice is made, applicants can create an organizational chart of roles, CDE does not provide an example chart within the RFA.

Q: Is it required for applicants to receive and submit an MOU for every potential partnership an applicant plans to use, or just a few just in case?

A: Applicants can submit multiple MOUs as needed in their request for application for CO-AAP. Grantees will be able to submit a budget revision once awarded if the MOU needs to be changed. However, grantees are not able to change the participation goals set for students within the application after being awarded unless student enrollment decreases at the schools to be served. So, MOUs should reflect how the grantee plans to serve the proposed number of students regardless of how many MOUs or partnerships are proposed or in place.

Q: What happens if a school district's principal/ superintendent changes after an applicant already had the previous principal's approval?

A: Applicants may submit all forms with signatures of current school and district leadership, including authorized representatives, prior to submission of their applications by February 15, 2024. In the event that individuals, including authorized representatives, change prior to or after grant award notifications are sent, it is the responsibility of the applicant to inform CDE of these changes and resubmit the required forms with signatures to CDE for review and approval.

Q: Regarding the work plan, since the RFA is asking specifically about what is taking place in the 3-month planning period, should those benchmarks and timeline be within the planning period? Or should an applicant consider benchmarks and timeline for these activities over the course of year 1 of this grant, or all 3 years in our timeline?

A: From the RFA: A work plan to be completed during the planning period must be submitted with the application. For applicants recommended for funding, CDE may suggest changes to the applicant's submitted work plan during the "required changes" phase of the grant application review period. Funded applicants may propose modifications to their approved work plan during the planning period of Year 1 (April through June 2024).

In Section B Program Development in the RFA RUBRIC: Applicant provided a detailed work plan to be accomplished during the three-month planning period. The work plan identifies major activities, interim benchmarks, the expected timeline, and the person(s) responsible for each task.

Note: Since "required changes" may be asked of awarded applicants, choose general benchmarks and timeline aspects in accordance with your grant's program needs.

Q: Can you provide an outline example of potential benchmarks and timeline that could be provided within the required RFA, for example family engagement over the course of the year?

A: Benchmarks and timelines will be specific and unique to each applicant depending on where an applicants' organization/ school implements each CO-AAP requirement.

In relation to your example of family engagement, here are some potential examples.

Timeline Example:

- By October: focus on parent outreach and registration
- By November: focus on parent participation of all students enrolled in COAAP programs by ensuring parents are aware of more than attending just one activity. By January: most families will have participated in at least one event.
- By March: parent survey
- By June: most families will have participated in at least three events.

Benchmark Example: How many parents attend unduplicated and how many times throughout the year (yr. 1 data to inform year 2)

Q: I notice that the prompts for priority areas and Section C are similar, as the priority prompt asks: "*List and describe the evidence-informed programs the applicant will use in the program(s) at the community learning center(s) that build student skills in STEM (particularly math and science);*"

In Section C the prompt asks: "*Describe the programming proposed for each community learning center for students and their families. Describe how the activities for each community learning center are evidence informed and include citations of any objective data or studies as well as the documented needs and interests of students and families.*"

I am finding that I am repeating a lot of information in drafting these two responses. Should I repeat all the information that I include in the Priority Areas response, or just refer back to it? What do you see as the differences between these two questions?

A: Although these items might seem similar, these questions are different. The first question focuses on the specifics of STEM (particularly math and Science) programming while the second question focuses on the population you are looking to serve.

Page 4 of the RFA states: Available grant funding will be distributed to eligible entities with school(s) demonstrating need and readiness based on Priority Criteria: CDE will prioritize eligible entities that demonstrate in their applications how the eligible entity will:

1. Adopt one or more intervention strategies*.
2. Use evidence-informed* programs that build student skills in STEM* (particularly mathematics and science);
3. Use digital math accelerator programs*.
4. Serve high-needs students* attending high-needs schools*.
5. Meet the needs of diverse student populations*; and
6. Target students who transition from elementary school to middle school and middle school to high school, as well as students who transition from Pre-Kindergarten to Kindergarten.

Priority points are available in the scoring rubric to support priority areas listed above. Applicants may be eligible to receive priority points for one or more of the priority areas based on information provided in their submitted application as well as data available and verified by CDE. See Appendix H for Glossary of Terms and information on priority areas.”

Section C asks applicants to “Describe the programming proposed for each community learning center for students and their families. Describe how the activities for each community learning center are evidence informed and include citations of any objective data or studies as well as the documented needs and interests of students and families.”

G. BUDGET

Q: Can we budget grant funds for any indirect costs we incur for this grant?

A: No, indirect costs are unallowable because this is a state grant governed by Colorado Revised Statutes, which do not allow for indirect costs to be charged to a state grant program. Therefore, no indirect costs may be budgeted for by applicants or grantees for the CO-AAP grant.

Q: Can funds be used to reimburse transportation costs?

A: Transportation is a program requirement according to the Narrative and Budget section in the RFA on page 14 listed under other program requirements.

- *Other Program Requirements. Applicant described how, if funded, it will fulfill other program requirements, specifically that:*
 - *b) the transportation needs of participating students will be met (traveling to and from the center(s))*

- In The Appendix D located on page 31, it lists allowable costs and under **Other Necessary grant costs** its lists the following:
 - *Ensuring the transportation needs of participating students will be met (traveling to and from programs), inclusive of hiring and pay bus drivers, adding bus routes, chartering vehicles, buying public transportation passes, paying for shared ride services, etc. as determined by the school district or organization to be allowable.*

Q: Can we pay high school students to be program instructors since we are experiencing a shortage of teachers in our area?

A: Yes. High school students and other non-students hired as program facilitators should be put through a hiring process, training, etc. and a job description should also be posted. For a sample job description, please see page 52 in the RFA under Appendix L. Please note that if students are hired, they cannot also be counted as program participants if they are paid by the programs.

Q: How might an applicant structure a minimum .5 FTE role to accomplish the measures of the grant?

A: Please refer to the sample budget on page 50, appendix K in the RFA.

Q: What is different about Excel way of doing the budget compared to the new GAINS system?

A: Grants fiscal needs to match the site's general ledger so it is important to talk with your fiscal person to see how to set it up and have it in the description. Everything will be handled in GAINS moving forward, including budget revisions. This is a forward funded grant as CO-AAP is state funded not Federally funded.

Q: I see that transportation costs are an allowable expenditure. Would an administrator to support the learning center and childcare personnel also be supported? We are thinking we will need to pay for para support/childcare while our tutors are transitioning from school to the learning center each day.

A: The *Program Requirements & Recommendations* states the following:

- To adequately plan and implement the program(s), CDE recommends applicants dedicate and budget for at least a 0.5 FTE program director and a dedicated primary fiscal contact. For potential applicants to assess the capacity and readiness for applying for the CO-AAP grant, CDE has created a Readiness Assessment Tool (see *Appendix B*).

Q: When determining the costs for the planning period, can it be zero because of other funding sources? Could it be documented as in-kind?

A: Applicants have the option to use up to 10% of funds during the planning period but are not required to use it.

Q: What percentage of funds can be used for staffing? Is there a restriction on administrative salaries?

A: According to CDE's Grants Fiscal Unit, this is an applicants' decision using the following RFA information as a guide:

- Staff salaries and benefits for program delivery, program support, grant management and administration.
- Costs associated with tracking and completing the required grant reporting and evaluation components (not to exceed 5% of total proposed budget);
- Costs associated with attending site visits and state-mandated training days hosted by CDE; and
- Professional development for staff working directly with CO-AAP-funded programs (not to exceed 5% of proposed budget, PD costs above \$1,000 need to have prior CDE approval).

Q: Also, I just want to confirm that \$3k/student is just an idea; you must justify those expenses in your budget, correct?

A: Yes, all budgeted expenses must be justified and align with student needs and program design. Additionally, budgeted expenses must be considered reasonable, appropriate and allowable. Applicants may have programming that is less than \$3000 per student. However, for applicants where costs per student are above \$3,000, justification must be provided.

Q: Would training for tutors/teachers during the planning period be considered a planning cost, or implementation cost?

A: On page 6 of the CO-AAP RFA under "Use of funds," it states that the following can be applied to the planning period funding: engagement with stakeholders, building of systems to track and report student progress and improvement, recruiting and hiring staff, and providing training for staff. This could include salary, benefits, training, extra duty planning time and other costs associated with establishing the program. A work plan to be completed during the planning period must be submitted with the application.

H. SIGNATURES

Q: Is the requirement for an Memorandums of Understanding (MOU), in addition to the Center Expectations Sign off form?

A: Yes, the MOU is a separate document from the Center Expectations Sign off.

Q: Is [an MOU] only required for organizational partnerships or consortiums and not for a single school district?

A: There are state statute requirements around partnerships between LEPs and CBOs for CO-AAP. It is best practice for any applicant to have an MOU with any established partner. The CO-AAP RFA states: “all the requirements of an application and an MOU is required from every partner an applicant plans to use for the CO-AAP application.”

If a school is not planning on partnering with an outside organization, an MOU is not required.

I. APPLICATION SCORING

Q:

A:

J. ONLINE APPLICATION SYSTEM

Q: How in GAINS can you showcase multiple schools included in one single application?

A: For applications in GAINS that will allow site-level submissions (like CO-AAP and 21st CCLC), it is recommended that applicants preface their narrative description in the budget item detail with the site for which the expenditure will apply. For example:

[Site name 1] – Salary for Site Manager overseeing afterschool programming. .5 FTE at \$50,000/year = \$25,000

[Site name 1] – Benefits for Site Manager overseeing afterschool programming. 10% of \$50,000 @ .5 FTE = \$2,500.

[Site name 2] – Salary for Site Manager overseeing afterschool programming. .5 FTE at \$50,000/year = \$25,000

[Site name 2] – Benefits for Site Manager overseeing afterschool programming. 10% of \$50,000 @ .5 FTE = \$2,500.

With multiple sites/centers, it is recommended that applicants keep them all together if the programming, student populations, goals, grade levels, etc., are all similar. If applicants are serving multiple sites that could have significant differences in programming, etc., they might consider submitting separate proposals.

Q: Will there be an option to include attachments (tables, graphs, etc.) with the submission of the application?

A: Yes, you will have the ability to upload documents with the application.

Q: How do I get access to the GAINS system?

A: Go to [GAINS Training Webpage](#). (CDE provided training for District Local Access Managers (LAMs) to prepare for their capacity to continue supporting district users with their system access. Please reach out to your Local Access Manager if you need Access to GAINS.)

CBO/ any other person applying:

- Must complete FORMS for gains access
- Charter School GAINS Access Request Form - <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/6cb9159d35894e76b6875bebc7232d56>
- Non-District Organization GAINS Access Request Form - <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/33fd3633609c48e5bbd656db720f5bfe>

For a walkthrough of the system check out this link <https://vimeo.com/895068107?share=copy>

Reminder: The [Intent to apply](#)- due February 1st.

For questions, please see access the general GAINS Email address: GAINS@cde.state.co.us

Q: We understand we can upload additional attachments in GAINS. Will those attachments be considered in the scoring process when reviewers evaluate our application if we clearly reference the attachments in our narratives?

A: The narrative spaces host your answers, so do not put in the answer box “see attached.” Items that do not have any other way to be added in to the GAINS system will provide directions on how and what to attach, additionally.

Q: Can I add additional people to our GAINS system other than our school and district/authorizer? I am working with a non-profit and grant writer, and I was hoping to add them as collaborators.

A: The GAINS administration can add any users to the profile in GAINS. It is recommended that external contractors only be given ‘updater’ roles for the specific application they need to access. If applicants need more information on the roles available in GAINS, please send an email to GAINS@cde.state.co.us.

Q: Are there any grant-specific GAINS walk-throughs for this grant?

A: GAINS holds office hours and has trainings separate from the CO-AAP training and office hours. Applicants can find helpful information on the website <https://www.cde.state.co.us/gains> including links to training and office hours.

Q: Does an applicant have to state data specific for each center or is it an average of all centers? Can we add an attachment in the GAINS to describe more details?

A: Yes, data for each center is required. GAINS will prompt for specific attachments needed. Additional attachments are not recommended as there are word limits in the RFA: If applicants need more words, they might consider submitting individually instead of several centers in one GAINS application. That decision is entirely up to the applicant. CDE does not provide recommendations on how applicants should apply.

Q: In GAINS, there are two different boxes per performance measure. In the first box, we will paste the performance measure. In the second box, we will paste the rationale. Do we have 250 words total for both boxes combined, or is it 250 words per box, or do we have 250 words to use for the performance measure and unlimited words to use for the rationale?



A: Per our GAINS administration team, there is no word limit in the Performance Measure box. However, the answers should be short, as applicants are filling in the blanks of the prompts. Applicants will need to adhere to the prompt answer and be brief. For the rationale box, there is a 250-word limit per Performance Measure.