**FY2025**

**FC 0122 – Rethinking Discipline Initiative Grant (competitive)**

**Questions and Answers**

Please email questions to achievement@mass.gov with the

Subject Line: FY2025 FC 0122 Question

*Questions and responses will be posted here and updated periodically until the grant due date.*

1. **Question:** Was the grant submission due date extended to August 30?

**Answer:** Yes, the new submission due date is Friday, August 30.

1. **Question:** The RFP mentions DESE's Master Agreement list of vendors for this project. Where would I find that list? Is there a list of vendors (either within that master list or otherwise) who specifically works with building common expectations for behavior and behavioral response school-wide?

**Answer:** The Office of Student & Family Support’s master agreement list of vendors is still being worked on and should be available for public view this fall. In the meantime, you can review DESE’s System for Student Success’ master agreement list: <https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfss/partnerships/>. There is also a similar question in a Q and A for the Office of Student and Family Support Master Agreement RFR that can be reviewed as well - [COMMBUYS - Bid Solicitation](https://www.commbuys.com/bso/external/bidDetail.sdo?docId=BD-24-1026-DOE02-DOE01-98418&external=true&parentUrl=bid).

1. **Question:** Is software that supports behavioral threat assessment & management considered an allowable cost?

**Answer:** Applicants can propose activities that meet the needs of their district and that are aligned to the fund use section of the RFP. Specifically, funds may be used to select external (non-school/district staff) vendors and/or consultants to support Rethinking Discipline action planning, which are focused on implementing practices and models that reduce exclusionary discipline and enhance a positive climate and culture through the use of relationship building, enhancing student voice, and integrating family engagement.

1. **Question:** My district is not in the Rethinking Discipline Cohort; however, we are on the eligibility list, can we still apply for this grant?

**Answer:** Yes, if your district is on the eligibility list, you can apply for up to $40,000 to support efforts in one or more schools in the district.

1. **Question:** Is my district eligible to apply?

**Answer**: All eligibility information could be found on the [RFP](https://www.doe.mass.edu/grants/2025/0122/) including the list of [eligible districts (](https://www.doe.mass.edu/grants/2025/0122/eligible-districts.xlsx)download).

1. **Question:** My district is not listed on the eligibility list, can we be apply for the grant?

**Answer:** At this time, only districts on the eligibility list are able to apply for the grant.

1. **Question:** My district is in the Rethinking Discipline Initiative Phase II Cohort I. We have three schools in the district and want two of the three to be recipients of this grant. Can we apply for the full $100,000?

**Answer:** It is highly encouraged for districts to consider including all schools in district in the planning and implementation related to this grant, however, it is not required and more focused proposals will also be considered. Thus a district with at least 3 schools can apply for up to $100,000 and choose how many schools to include in the proposed activities.

1. **Question:** Is the application for the grant submitted through the GEM$ online portal?

**Answer:** As stated in the RFP, the FY25 FC0122 **Rethinking Discipline Initiative Grant will be submitted in our new GEM$ system.** GEM$ is a cloud-based fiscal and program management grant system that will eventually phase out the use of EdGrants. Please see the Submission Instructions section in the RFP for more information.

1. **Question:** Will the grant fund a clinician/counselor to work directly with at-risk students and families, and a mentor(s) for ongoing support for these students and families? Additionally, do we have to offer PD to our staff as part of the grant?

**Answer:** Funds may be used to select external (non-school/district staff) vendors and/or consultants to support Rethinking Discipline action planning. Specifically, vendors and/or consultants can support identified schools and districts to implement practices and models that reduce exclusionary discipline and enhance a positive climate and culture through the use of relationship building, enhancing student voice, and integrating family engagement.

The vendors/consultants can be from one of (but not limited to) DESE's pre- approved Master Agreement Lists. District selected vendors and/or consultants could assist districts in identifying concerns/challenges in the realm of discipline, implementing solutions through in depth training and coaching, tracking measures of success, and sharing results with DESE and other communities.

Funds may be used to support participation of team members in professional development, including but not limited to asynchronous/virtual professional development, in person professional development opportunities, including regional site visits and statewide conferences, as well as coaching.

Fund use can include coordinator time, travel to in-person professional development, stipends, substitutes, supplies and materials.

Funds cannot be used for: electronics (such as iPads, computers, tablets, etc.). building/construction projects or curricular programs.

1. **Question:** Is this a continuation grant only for those who were granted funds in Phase 1 Cohort 1?

**Answer:** This is not a continuation grant; this is a targeted competitive grant. For more information regarding eligibility please see the eligibility section of the [RFP](https://www.doe.mass.edu/grants/2025/0122/?utm_source=DA-Commissioner%27s+Weekly+Update&utm_campaign=bf952d75c4-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2024_07_29_08_04&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-bf952d75c4-%5BLIST_EMAIL_ID%5D)  and/or question 12 below.

1. **Question:** As a collaborative, I saw that we are eligible; however, is it only if one of our member districts are listed?

**Answer:**  Collaboratives are eligible to apply, as long as they are proposing to serve eligible district(s) through the proposed activities, and apply in collaboration with the eligible district(s) – e.g., including a letter of support from the district(s) outlining the involvement of the district(s) in the planning and proposed implementation efforts.

1. **Question:** Why is my district not eligible to apply?

**Answer:** Eligibility information can be found on the grant’s [RFP link](https://www.doe.mass.edu/grants/2025/0122/?utm_source=DA-Commissioner%27s+Weekly+Update&utm_campaign=bf952d75c4-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2024_07_29_08_04&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-bf952d75c4-%5BLIST_EMAIL_ID%5D), specifically in the eligibility section. All districts identified under the Rethinking Discipline initiative Phase II Cohort I are eligible to apply. A list of the [current cohort](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/discipline/pln-update-sy2024.docx) can be found on DESE's [Rethinking Discipline](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/discipline/) webpage.

Additionally, Massachusetts public school districts (including charter schools) are eligible to apply if they meet both of the following criteria:

Massachusetts public school districts and charter public schools with a Local Education Agency (LEA) Need Index\* of 80 or higher, districts with eligible emergency expansion shelter sites, districts with at least 100 homeless students reported in school year 2022-2023 (SY 2023), and/or districts with at least 100 newcomer students reported in October 2023.

\*For the purposes of this grant program, a district's LEA Need Index equals the sum of the district's SY 2022 percent of high needs students, out-of-school suspension rate, and chronic absenteeism rate [missing 20 percent of days] for SY 2022.

**and**

Have a suspension rate: by race/ethnicity and/or students with disabilities that is twice (two times) the state rate (as shown in the table below)

* 1. for out of school suspensions (OSS);
	2. in the non-drug, non-violent, non-criminal (NDNVNC) related offenses;
	3. for SY 2023;
	4. and have a minimum of 50 students in the student group;
	5. **And** be at least twice (two times) the all student state rate (for OSS in NDNVNC in SY 2023).

**Note:** District suspension rate information can be found on the [SSDR Discipline Report – All Offenses](https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/statereport/ssdr.aspx).

| **Student group** | **State Rate for (OSS) in NDNVNC = A** | **2 x A(two times A)** | **Eligibility Threshold***(2xA or 2.0,whichever is greater)* |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| African American/Black | 2 | 4 | 4 |
| American Indian/Alaska Native | 1.8 | 3.6 | 3.6 |
| Asian | 0.2 | 0.4 | 2.0 |
| Hispanic/Latinx | 1.5 | 3 | 3 |
| Multi-race non-Hispanic/Latinx | 1.1 | 2.2 | 2.2 |
| Nat. Haw. or Pacif. Isl. | 1.1 | 2.2 | 2.2 |
| White | 0.6 | 1.2 | 2.0 |
| Students w. Disabilities | 2.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 |
| ***State Rate*** | ***1.0*** | ***2.0*** | ***2.0*** |

If your district is not in the Rethinking Discipline Initiative and does not meet the criteria for the LEA Need Index\* of 80 or higher, districts with eligible emergency expansion shelter sites, districts with at least 100 homeless students reported in school year 2022-2023 (SY 2023), and/or districts with at least 100 newcomer students reported in October 2023 as listed above then they are not eligible to apply for this grant at this time.

If your district does not meet the aforementioned eligibility criteria, we welcome and encourage school and district members to be on the look out for any free professional development opportunity in the realm of Safe & Supportive Schools offered through the Office of Student and Family Support. The [calendar](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/discipline/pd-calendar.docx) (download) should be updated in early fall with the 25SY offerings.