**FY2026**

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

**Questions and Answers**

Please email questions to [achievement@mass.gov](mailto:achievement@mass.gov) with the

Subject Line: FY2026 FC 0122 Question

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

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

**Answer:** All eligibility information could be found on the [RFP](https://www.doe.mass.edu/grants/2026/0122/) including the list of [eligible districts](https://mass.egrantsmanagement.com/DocumentLibrary/ViewDocument.aspx?DocumentGuid=409eb93a-6c3e-4d37-9a40-67d3bb99189d&inline=true) (download).

1. **Question (a):** We need to provide training in restorative practices for our counseling staff.  Could the scope of this grant be used exclusively for the purpose of hiring a vendor to deliver quality PD on restorative practices for counseling staff?

**Answer:** The district should propose a budget and narrative aligned with the fund use and priorities of the grant. As detailed in the Fund Use section of the [RFP](https://www.doe.mass.edu/grants/2026/0122/):

“Specifically, vendors and/or consultants can support awarded 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. Practices can include but are not limited to conducting document reviews with the goal of updating codes of conduct, elevating student and family voice, implementing programs and initiatives including collaborative problem solving, mediation, restorative practices, and conflict resolution.

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.”

**Question (b):** Can we focus our work strictly on the PD for counseling staff and not engage a team in the RD Network?

**Answer:** As written in the [RFP](https://www.doe.mass.edu/grants/2026/0122/), funding includes a priority of supporting grantees to collaborate with one another in a cohort-based model to share promising practices and be able to share successes, challenges, and implications of their action plan implementation. Also, as written in the grant assurances, grantees are expected to “participate in professional development (e.g., conferences, webinars, and/or regional events, etc.) to be held by the Department including the spring 2026 Student Voice Showcase (date and location to be determined).”

1. **Question:** Are collaboratives are included in your grant opportunity (fund code 0122) "Rethinking Discipline Initiative Competitive Grant Program"?

**Answer:** Collaboratives are eligible to apply on behalf of one or more eligible school district, if the eligible district(s) are not applying directly. This would need to be done in consultation with the eligible district(s). If the district(s) and collaborative agree upon this, they need to email the Department in order to be able to access the application in GEM$. Email [achievement@mass.gov](mailto:achievement@mass.gov) if this situation applies to your collaborative/district(s).

1. **Question:** Can you confirm if districts can use vendors who are not on the pre-qualified list?

**Answer:** Yes, as written in the fund use section of the [RFP](https://www.doe.mass.edu/grants/2026/0122/), “funds may be used to work with one of DESE's identified vendors from the [Office of Student and Family Support's master agreement](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/?section=partnerships) list **or** with a locally selected external (non-school/district staff) vendor(s) and/or consultants.”

1. **Question:** Does the money all have to be utilized during the FY26 school year, or can I create a multi-year plan?

**Answer**: Funds have to utilize funds in FY26 and cannot be used multiyear.

1. **Question (a):** Can a district apply separately as a district and a school?

**Answer (a)**: Please see question #1 regarding eligibility. Please note only one application will be accepted per eligible district.

**Question (b):** A district wants to reapply for the grant they were awarded last year and add their alternative school. Can they do so separately or should they try to apply together?

**Answer (b):** As written in the [RFP](https://www.doe.mass.edu/grants/2026/0122/), only one application will be accepted per eligible entity. As stated in question #1, only eligible districts may apply for the grant. If the district and a particular school want to participate, then the narrative responses and the budget should reflect those multiple participants.

1. **Question:** There is a current Cohort I&II. If we are accepted for this grant, would we be considered Cohort III?

**Answer:** No, Rethinking Discipline cohorts are limited to schools and districts that have been specifically identified as part of the Rethinking Discipline Initiative. If selected for funding, districts would then be designated as Rethinking Discipline Initiative Grant recipients.

1. **Question:** Can we use the funding for this first year for planning purposes, with an intention of implementation next year?

**Answer:** No, as listed in the RFP, this grant does not come with continuation funds please refer to Question and Answer 5 above. Additionally, please review Question and Answer 2a above, for details regarding fund use.

1. **Question:** Is a train the trainer course for PBIS an allowable expense if it is from out of state?

**Answer:** As written in the [RFP](https://www.doe.mass.edu/grants/2026/0122/),"Funds cannot be used for: electronics (such as iPads, computers, tablets, etc.), building/construction projects or curricular programs, and for travel outside of Massachusetts.” A vendor can be from out of state and a vendor may travel to your district, however, participants may not use these grant funds to travel outside of Massachusetts.