**Supporting the Mental Health and Wellbeing of Newcomer, Homeless Students**

**in Emergency Shelter Expansion Sites**

This grant program prioritizes funds to support the mental health and wellbeing, and education of students who are placed in eligible new emergency assistance family shelter (or hotel or other facility used as a shelter) that was opened by the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (HLC), formerly DHCD, during the 2023-2024 or 2022-2023 school year.

This grant prioritizes engaging and serving students who are homeless in culturally responsive, high-quality programming that advances equity, including racial equity, in any or all of the following areas:

* To address the immediate basic needs of newcomer, homeless students;
* To ensure students who are homeless have access to the educational programming, services, and opportunities they need;
* To develop comprehensive, integrated multi-tiered systems for student, family, and educator social-emotional and/or mental health supports, and to ensure newcomer, homeless students and their families are engaged in/have access to these systems; and
* To build sustainable infrastructure to facilitate integrated coordination between school students, families, school staff, and community-based services and/or providers.

**Key Grant Requirements**

* Use funds to build or expand capacities for wellness and trauma informed services to welcome, support and engage newcomer, homeless students and their families;
* Identify a team of staff to engage in one or more professional learning communities (PLCs) with other participating districts on topics related to welcoming, supporting and engaging newcomer, homeless students and their families, including but not limited to:
	+ Trauma-Informed Practices
	+ Supporting the Wellbeing of Immigrant and Refugee Populations
	+ Family Engagement Strategies

**Allowable Fund Use**

* Stipends for staff (educators, student support staff, administrators, etc.) to participate in professional development and coaching outside of normal work hours.
* Stipends for staff doing additional coordination/planning outside of normal work hours.
* Materials and supplies, including those to support the basic needs of newcomer, homeless students (e.g., eyeglasses, school supplies, personal care items, technological devices to enable the youth and their families to attend and fully participate in school activities, etc.).
* Contracts with DESE-pre-qualified vendor(s) to support team participation in one or more PLCs, including costs in addition to the vendor aside amount (e.g. substitutes, additional coaching, and associated materials)
* Contracts to support other professional development activities aligned with the priorities of this grant, including substitutes, related coaching and associated materials.
* Contracting with partners who provide services aligned with the priorities of this grant (e.g., telehealth/tele-behavioral health, transportation for students and families to access services, etc.)
* Travel or other costs (e.g., substitutes if needed, etc.) to support participation in professional development and/or provide support to students and families.
* Other costs aligned with the priorities of this grant.

**Funding**

Applicants may apply for up to $40,000. See below for required DESE-approved vendor set-asides for the PLC.

**Vendor Set-Aside**

As noted above, DESE has a number of currently approved vendors with which grantees under this category can work to provide professional development and support for this project.  This list may be updated during the grant award period. DESE will select one or more pre-qualified vendors to provide these services based on the number of awarded grantees intending to participate in topic-specific PLCs and share the information with awarded grantees when confirmed. Grantees must budget the following that will go directly to the selected approved vendor for participation:

* $2,500 (flat rate/topic) to the DESE-selected vendor for participation in a DESE-coordinated PLC.

**Note:** If the district would like to work with a district-selected or one of the DESE-selected vendors to deliver additional professional development, coaching/site visits, and/or coordinate an in-district PLC(s) and/or provide associated materials to support this project, please reach out to the vendor directly for a quote to include in the grant submission.