



## **Connecticut High-Dosage Tutoring Program**

### **Connecticut's Statewide Plan for High-Dosage Tutoring (HDT) in Grades 6-9 Mathematics**

**Purpose:** Given the extensive impact of the pandemic on student performance in middle-school and secondary math, states and districts across the country are seeking to identify and implement viable methods to accelerate learning. High-Dosage Tutoring (HDT) is a well-researched strategy to address learning loss, ensuring students have intensive, curriculum-aligned support to close academic gaps. The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is allocating \$10M in American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) funding to local education agencies (LEAs) to implement the Connecticut HDT Program in Grades 6-9 Mathematics in accordance with evidence-based guidelines. Connecticut's State Plan, [Reimagining Schools to Transform Student Lives](#), provides these fiscal resources through a competitive grant process to LEAs meeting the criteria established in this competitive grant application. The criteria within the grant application originate from contemporary research, paired with authentic implementation experiences from Colorado, Tennessee, Oklahoma and select Connecticut LEAs.

The grant period aligns to the ARP ESSER timeline and grant revision protocols, with applications to the High-Dosage Tutoring Program due no later than September 1, 2023 at 5:00 PM and awards announced by October 2, 2023. The grant period ends January 30, 2025, the date by which funds must be expended.

All HDT programs for successful applicants must be ready to implement no later than January 8, 2024.

**LEAs may apply on CSDE's [website](#). Questions may be directed to John Scianimanico ([john.scianimanico@ct.gov](mailto:john.scianimanico@ct.gov)) and Charles Kenyon ([Charles.Kenyon@ct.gov](mailto:Charles.Kenyon@ct.gov)).** All interested applicants are also welcome and encouraged to join an online application webinar on June 28, 2023 from 1:00-2:00 PM to learn more about the process. [Registration is required.](#)

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## I. Introduction

### *High-Dosage Tutoring*

According to contemporary research, HDT is an effective strategy to accelerate learning and provide equity in accessing tutoring for all students. The intensity and frequency of HDT has been shown to accelerate learning [more than any other academic intervention](#). An exemplary HDT model is made accessible intentionally, embedding small-group and/or individual instruction *during* the school day. Instructed by highly-qualified tutors, every session focuses on students' identified needs with standards-based content aligned to the LEA's curriculum, grade level performance goals, and high school course requirements.

### *Research and Results*

Research on successful HDT models reveals a significant impact on academic progress when tutoring focuses on Mathematics in Grades 6-9. Not all tutoring is effective if certain program elements are not in place, such as minimum dosages, tutor-student ratios, tutor-teacher communication, high-quality tutor training, and standards-aligned curriculum. Research outcomes indicate that intensive models of tutoring, when implemented with fidelity, can produce learning gains for students as high as [one to two years in math](#) beyond what students typically achieve in the classroom, with reductions in [failure rates by more than 50 percent](#). **As such, this grant program will focus on learning acceleration for middle (Grades 6-8) and high school (Grade 9) students in Math.**

### *Need and Equity in Connecticut*

The need for robust accelerated learning interventions in Connecticut has never been greater. Analysis of [2022 Smarter Balanced Assessment scores](#) shows “declines in student proficiency of around 6 to 8 percentage points in ELA and math.” Students in grades 6-8 “may be 5-7 months behind in ELA and a year or more behind in math.” And, [recent National Assessment for Educational Progress \(NAEP\) results](#) in Connecticut reveal significant declines in math and reading scores since the assessment was first administered in 1990.

LEAs interested in applying for Connecticut HDT funding or using remaining ARP ESSER allocations to develop or expand HDT programming should focus these resources on grade levels and student cohorts outlined in this document. LEAs may also consider employing HDT as a long-term strategy in district goals, the LEA's Accountability Plan or School Improvement Plan.

## II. Program Vision and Outcomes

### *Program Vision*

The vision of the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) High-Dosage Tutoring (HDT) program is to provide high-quality, evidence-based, rigorous instruction to accelerate and transform learning for Connecticut students.

Essential elements of HDT include well-trained tutors working consistently with small groups of students *during* the school day, using high-quality materials and LEA curricula aligned to CT Core Math Standards. The Connecticut HDT Program's design draws extensively on research and school-based models with a demonstrable record of success. Tutoring sessions will not focus on remediation, but will prioritize grade-level content and mastery of prerequisite concepts and skills required for continued academic success during tutoring and in class.

### *Outcomes*

The Connecticut HDT Program anticipates achieving the following outcomes:

1. Grade 6-8 students who received HDT will demonstrate solid academic growth in Mathematics and achieve 100% of their growth targets on the Smarter Balanced Assessment.
2. Grade 9 students who received HDT will successfully complete their Grade 9 mathematics course with a B or better.
3. LEAs, educators, and families will sustain HDT beyond the grant period as a result of increased achievement.
4. The educator pipeline will expand by creating in-person tutor positions beyond the grant period.

### III. Eligible Applicants and Grant Supports

Eligible applicants include public schools (K-12), Regional Education Services Centers (RESCs), the governing authority for a state charter school, state technical high schools, incorporated endowed high schools or academy, nonpublic, and private schools.

Successful applicants for this competitive grant will receive the following resources and supports:

1. A maximum grant award of up to \$2,500 per student served through the program.<sup>\*</sup> Section VII outlines priority students that LEAs should target through this grant. LEAs may use remaining ARP ESSER funding for this program. *Please note grant funding will be on a reimbursement basis only.*
2. Access to trained, qualified tutors provided by organizations that have been vetted and approved by the Connecticut State Department of Education. LEAs receiving grant funding through this program will be able to contract with at least one of the organizations selected by the CSDE, but not external organizations. Districts may also choose to use their own school-based staff as tutors and have them trained by one of the selected tutor organizations. All tutors must adhere to the Program Elements in Section V. and all other requirements of this application.
3. Ongoing technical assistance, coaching, and participation in a Community of Practice provided by a third-party organization.

<sup>\*</sup> While all local education agencies (LEAs) are eligible to apply to this competitive grant program, grant funding will be prioritized towards those LEAs that received smaller allotments of American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) funds. Applicants not granted funds will still have access to other resources (#2 and #3) via this program.

## **IV. Eligible Activities and Spending**

### *A. Eligible Grant Activities*

LEAs must commit to using HDT funding to support one of the two activities:

- Expand or enhance an existing HDT program to conform to all elements outlined in Section V, with a focus on students Grades 6-8 and/or Grade 9 in Mathematics content area only; or
- Create a new HDT program in a school (s) that targets students in Grades 6-8 and/or Grade 9 in Mathematics content area only.

### *B. Eligible Spending Categories*

LEAs may use HDT or existing ARP ESSER funds to support any number of the following activities:

- Contracting with a third-party tutoring organization, responsible for hiring, training, and managing a cadre of tutors (who could include paraprofessionals, retired teachers, AmeriCorps members, and community members) to ensure staffing needs are complete;
- Providing stipends to existing school-based tutors and educators responsible for providing services directly to students;
- Hiring and/or providing a stipend to a district- and/or school-level personnel and other administrative roles to oversee creation, design, and implement the program across identified school(s);
- Procuring any necessary curriculum, assessments, materials, hardware, and software to facilitate tutoring;
- Providing stipends to existing LEA- or school-level personnel to serve as mentors and coaches for tutors;
- Providing initial and ongoing training, coaching and professional development for tutors, as needed; or
- Covering the costs of rent for a larger facility or more space in order to expand high-dosage tutoring.

### *C. Ineligible Spending Categories*

- Student stipends, vouchers paid directly to families/students, gift cards/certificates given directly to families/students, or other cash benefits directly to families/students;
- Mortgage, maintenance, hardware and software upgrades, and utility costs that do not directly support one of the eligible grant activities listed in Section IV.A; or,
- Construction related to creating additional HDT space.

## V. Program Elements

LEAs wishing to apply for the HDT Competitive Grant funding will propose a plan that incorporates the following program elements.

### A. LEA Champion and Point of Contact

For this program to be successful, LEAs will need to appoint a specific individual with time and administrative power to coordinate efforts across the participating school(s), tutor vendor, CSDE, and other partners. This person will be the primary champion of the program, overseeing its implementation and supporting schools making the necessary changes to allow students to access high-quality tutoring services. LEAs should designate an individual with the capacity to achieve critical program milestones, including coordinating and procuring tutors from external providers, navigating school schedule changes, participating in Community of Practice sessions, and ensuring high levels of participation from students and families.

### B. Tutoring Personnel

Having well-trained, consistent tutors is the most critical component to build an effective HDT program. Highly-qualified tutors can come from a variety of backgrounds, including former, current or retired educators, private/contracted tutors, paraprofessionals, AmeriCorps members, or college students. Regardless of tutor background, [research](#) finds those who show up consistently and form deep relationships with students have the biggest impact on student learning.

LEAs chosen for this program will be able to procure trained, high-quality tutors from a list of eligible vendors that will be determined by the CSDE. LEAs may also use their own staff, and are encouraged to partner as appropriate with one of the approved organizations for HDT training of their staff. Tutors obtained from external organizations not approved by CSDE will not be permitted. A list of these vetted and approved organizations can be found on the [CSDE's High Dosage Tutoring Webpage](#). The most competitive vendors will provide tutors, particularly those new to the profession, with upfront training on relevant topics including and facilitating small groups, managing student behavior, instructing students with learning differences and/or Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), responding to students' socio-emotional needs, and using data to inform instruction. LEAs may also require tutors to receive district-specific professional development and coaching opportunities prior to or during the school year. Retaining and hiring local tutors following the completion of their tutoring service is also an excellent way to diversify the LEA's educator workforce and bring new talent into the classroom.



Note that these funds are intended to supplement staff capacity, and not supplant the work of individuals who may already be in existing instructional support roles. Furthermore, since this program will expect tutors to work closely with the Connecticut certified mathematics teachers of record, districts are strongly encouraged to consider the time and resource needs of both the tutor and certified teacher when planning for this tutoring intervention. LEAs should consult with their teacher unions, paraeducator unions, and other relevant bargaining units within their districts about this application and ensure that the district's planned approach is compliant with all current collectively bargained labor agreements. If desired, LEAs and bargaining units may establish Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) outlining responsibilities of district leadership, educators, and other relevant staff responsible for ensuring the success of this program for all students.

#### *C. Content Area and Grade Level*

Based on the most recent [Smarter Balanced Assessment data](#), students in middle school grades (6-8) may be a year or more behind in math. **As such, this grant application will focus on learning acceleration for middle (Grades 6-8) and high school (Grade 9) students in Math only.**

#### *D. Tutoring Dosage*

[Research](#) finds that at least three (3) sessions per week lasting 30-50 minutes each is required for HDT to have the biggest impact. At a minimum, schools should offer tutoring sessions three (3) times a week for at least 30 minutes per session.

#### *E. Tutor-Student Ratio*

Tutors should work with groups no larger than 4 students (1:4) at a time, with the same tutor working with the same groups of students each week. It helps to pair English Learners (ELs) together, particularly if their tutor speaks their native language.

#### *F. Instruction Timing and Delivery*

Based on rigorous evidence, it is strongly encouraged that LEAs embed HDT both in person and during the regular school day wherever possible to maximize regular student attendance, ensure coordination with teachers, and build a culture of academic engagement and collaboration. [Research](#) has found that learning from school-day tutoring sessions is twice as powerful as learning sessions conducted outside the school day. Schools can provide time for tutors to meet with students during intervention periods, double-blocked content-area courses, or by creating an elective-for-credit course for students.

LEAs may provide virtual tutoring in cases where hiring in-person talent is not feasible, although designated staff may need to be present to ensure students attend the session and can navigate tutoring software. For schools that cannot accommodate tutoring during the school day, schools may use grant funds to provide for before- or after-school tutoring, though in-person tutoring is strongly encouraged. See Table 1 for CSDE’s recommendations for the instruction timing and delivery of tutoring services.

**Table 1: CSDE’s Recommendations for Instruction Timing and Delivery**

	<b>During School Day</b>	<b>Before/After School Day</b>
<b>In-Person Tutoring</b>	Strongly Encouraged	Acceptable
<b>Virtual Tutoring</b>	Acceptable	Strongly Discouraged

*G. Curriculum*

LEAs have flexibility in choosing Connecticut State Standards-based programs, evidenced-based instructional strategies, and associated materials aligned to curriculum, course, and grade level performance goals. LEAs should not use HDT as a remediation tool or rely solely on simpler materials from earlier grade levels. Rather, the program should focus on building foundational skills directly relevant to grade-level content and core curriculum. High-quality curricula and programs, including digital materials, foster rigor and student engagement with a focus on accelerating learning for every student. To ensure students whose learning has been significantly impacted by the pandemic can access instruction, LEAs should include an array of formative assessments adaptable to meet different proficiency levels.

*H. Data and Evaluation*

CSDE will work with LEAs and an evaluation team from the Connecticut COVID-19 Education Research Collaborative (CCERC) to evaluate the end-of-year outcomes of the HDT program. While the evaluation team will determine the type, frequency, and means of specific data elements collected, LEAs will need to collect specific data elements including:

- Attendance and dosage of tutoring received per student
- Curriculum-embedded and other formative measures
- Course grades
- Feedback from students, families, educators, and tutors on the program

LEAs receiving grant funding and those LEAs using existing ARP ESSER funds are required to track students receiving HDT and provide SASID and tutoring participation data to the CSDE.



## **VI. Priority Students**

The HDT Competitive Grant provides funding to LEAs to accelerate learning growth and address the unprecedented out-of-school time that occurred during the height of the pandemic. As a needs-driven program, LEAs should use HDT funding to prioritize students who, based on recent data from Smarter Balanced Assessment and/or Benchmark Assessments (Interim Assessment Blocks, proprietary benchmarking systems), are performing below grade level, are classified as high need, are from historically underserved backgrounds, and/or who would benefit the most from this intensive intervention model. In some schools, this may be the entire population, entire grade levels, or a select cohort of students.

As such, LEAs should consider the following criteria when determining how many and which students will participate:

- Students performing below proficiency, according to the 2022 or 2023 Smarter Balanced Assessment, or the Connecticut Alternate Assessment.
- Students classified as high need, including students receiving Free- or Reduced- Priced Meals, students who are English Learners, and students with an IEP.
- Students who experience homelessness, including those currently homeless, formerly homeless, or are at risk of homelessness.
- Students listed as chronically absent during the 2021-22 or 2022-23 school year.

Schools should communicate to families/guardians/caregivers that their child has been selected to participate in the program for the 2023-24 school year. Wherever possible, schools should mandate participation, particularly if the tutoring occurs during the regular school day.

## VII. Application Questions

All applications may be completed online using [this link](#).

### Application Completer Information

First Name

Last Name

Title

District Name

Total District ARP ESSER Allocation

Telephone

Email

### I. Statement of Need and Current Status

1. Describe the need in your district/school to expand or create a High-Dosage Tutoring program. Provide any recent summative assessment data and student demographic data that demonstrate this need. Applicants should also complete Tables A, B, and C, documenting the total number of students in each grade level scoring below proficiency on the respective assessment, number of chronically absent students, and the number of high-need students.

**Table A: Total # of Students by Grade Level Scoring Below Proficiency on the 2022 Smarter Balanced Assessment or the Connecticut Alternate Assessment**

<b>GRADE</b>	<b>Total Number of Students</b>
<b>6</b>	
<b>7</b>	
<b>8</b>	
<b>9</b>	
<b>A TOTAL #</b>	

**Table B: Total # of Students Who Are Identified as High Need (Students with IEPs, English Learners, Eligible for Free or Reduced Priced Meals) or Experiencing Homelessness in 2021-22 or 2022-23.**

GRADE	Total Number of Students
6	
7	
8	
9	
<b>B TOTAL #</b>	

**Table C: Total # of Students listed as chronically absent during the 2021-22 or 2022-23 school year.**

GRADE	Total Number of Students
6	
7	
8	
9	
<b>C TOTAL #</b>	

- Using Data Tables A, B, and C, document in Data Table D how many students you expect to serve through the HDT program. You should build your budget around this bottom-line number! *Note: LEAs may allocate funds to serve all or a subset of the total students listed in Data Table A, B, and/or C.*

**Table D: Total # of Students Recommended for HDT Program**

GRADE	Total Number of Students
6	
7	
8	
9	

<b>D TOTAL #</b>	
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3. What school(s) and grade level(s) will participate in this program, based on the levels of need identified in Data Tables A-C? Describe their approach to implementing effective tiered instruction or intervention (MTSS or SRBI). High schools may also describe current or proposed for-credit courses that provide acceleration instruction and intervention.

**II. High-Dosage Tutoring (HDT) Program Description**

4. Describe the team that will oversee and implement the HDT program at the LEA or school level, including their name(s) and title(s). LEAs should appoint one project director to lead programming across the school(s).
5. Review the list of Approved Tutor Organizations in on the [CSDE's High-Dosage Tutoring Webpage](#). Which organization(s) do you intend to collaborate with? Describe how your LEA will support and integrate new tutors into your school (s) over the course of the year. What ratio of tutor to students will your school(s) follow?
6. Describe your LEA's plan to introduce or expand HDT in your school(s), including weekly dosage, timing (before, during, or after school), and delivery (in person, virtual) of services. Applicants are welcome to include a sample school day schedule.
7. Describe the instructional materials your LEA would use to provide HDT and its alignment to Connecticut state standards.
8. Describe how your LEA will evaluate the progress of students receiving HDT, including any curriculum-embedded assessment measures that will showcase student progress and inform ongoing tutoring and instruction.
9. What communications protocol will your school adopt to ensure teachers and tutors align HDT sessions around daily classroom instruction?

**III. Communication, Collaboration, and System Progress**

10. Describe how your LEA will inform families/guardians and other stakeholders about student participation in the HDT program, including student selection, progress-monitoring, and attendance.

**IV. Budget**

11. Explain your LEA's long-term plan to sustain this program after the grant period concludes and whether your LEA intends to match the Department's grant with any local funding.
12. Provide a budget narrative with specific detail on how the grant funding would be spent in during the 2023-2024 school year. If applicable, include any other sources of additional funding, including in-kind resources such as facilities, that your LEA will use to sustain the program for the next year.

**Example of a High-Quality Budget**

Budget Code	Description of Funded Activity	Cost
100 Personal Services – Employee Salary	1. Half of salary for one full-time LEA-level administrator to oversee program development and implementation across one middle school: \$27,000 2. Stipends for teachers who will meet with tutors to discuss student progress, align around curriculum, and review student data reports: 3 teachers x \$10,000 stipend = \$30,000	\$57,000
200 Personal Services – Employee Benefits	1. Social Security: \$57,000 x 6.2%, totaling \$3,534	\$3,534
300 Purchased Professional and Technical Services	1. Anticipated \$60,000 contract with ABC Tutors to recruit, hire, and train tutors to work virtually in one middle school 3x/week for 45 minutes per session, serving 55 students	\$60,000
400 Purchased Property Services	N/A	\$0
500 Other Purchased Services	N/A	\$0
600 Supplies	1. Family engagement and parent night materials = \$1,000 2. Supplementary curriculum materials and supplies for virtual learners = \$5,000	\$6,000
800 Miscellaneous	DO NOT PUT ANYTHING IN THIS CATEGORY	\$0
Total		\$126,534



### VIII. Review Process and Scoring Criteria

Only the most competitive of applications will be selected to receive grant funding and participate in the program. LEAs will be informed via email of the status of their application.

Table 3 lists the scoring criteria and point value for each category listed. The scoring criteria aligns to the descriptions in the HDT Indicators and Elements of Successful HDT Programs in Table 2.

**Table 2. HDT Application Scoring Sheet. Criteria rated according to the five (5)-, ten (10)-, or fifteen (15)-point scale shown:**

<b>5 Point:</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>10 Point:</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>15 point</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>15</b>
	<b>Not Provided</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Excellent</b>

<b>I. Statement of Need and Current Status (Max 25 pts)</b>	<b>Reader's Score</b>	<b>Reader's Comments</b>
A. LEA Data Tables A, B, C, and D are complete and identify the total number of students expected to be served in the program. (5 pts)		
B. Describes the applicant's process to assess the educational needs of students in secondary math (Grades 6-9) including analysis and number/percentage of students receiving tiered interventions (MTSS, SRBI). (10 pts)		
C. Addresses specific equity needs of students in the LEA, noting any barriers or challenges this grant is intended to address related to academic performance and achievement. (10 pts)		
<b>II. High-Dosage Tutoring (HDT) Program Description (Max 60 pts)</b>	<b>Reader's Score</b>	<b>Reader's Comments</b>
A. Identifies an administrative structure and district and/or school staffing for HDT implementation that lists position(s) and responsibilities. If applicable, this includes HDT subcontractors and their role in the program design. (10 pts)		
B. Describes LEA's HDT program alignment to the HDT model outlined in Section V of this document. Application clearly describes staff professional development (3 points), tutor-student ratio (3 points for ratios of 4:1 or smaller), dosage (3 points for minimum of 3 days/week for at least 30 minutes), timing (3 points for during school, 0 points otherwise), and delivery (3 points for in person, 0 points otherwise) (15 pts)		

C. Describes the standards-based curriculum/programs and instructional strategies, and their alignment to Connecticut standards. (10 pts)		
D. Describes the process to evaluate the success of HDT, using any formative and summative assessment measures aligned with instructional materials. (15 pts)		
E. Describes communication protocol(s) among tutors, teachers, and school leadership detailing how the HDT sessions impact and align to daily classroom performance and progress monitoring. (10 pts)		
<b>III. Communication, Collaboration, and System Progress (Max 5 pts)</b>	<b>Reader's Score</b>	<b>Reader's Comments</b>
A. Identifies protocol to communicate and collaborate with families/guardians and stakeholders to maximize attendance, celebrate progress, and provide opt-out procedures. (5pts)		
<b>IV. Budget (Max 10 pts)</b>	<b>Reader's Score</b>	<b>Reader's Comments</b>
A. Completes HDT budget components describing how funds will be used under each Object selected and aligned to the HDT model. (5 pts)		
B. Describes a plan for which the LEA uses available funds (such as Title I, Title IIa, Title III, IDEA, ESSER) to match Department funding or sustain HDT after grant has terminated. (5 pts)		
<b>TOTAL</b>		

### **IX. Closing Statement**

The CSDE recognizes the urgency in addressing the adverse effect of the pandemic on achievement and is approaching this pervasive challenge, in part, through the HDT Competitive Grant. This ambitious grant provides fiscal and evidence-based resources for LEAs to build a model-based intervention for Mathematics instruction. Designed to spark innovation to benefit every student, HDT raises student achievement when implementation follows the researched model. The CSDE encourages LEAs with interest in embedding HDT as an inclusive improvement strategy to apply for this competitive grant.