

RECENT RFP QUESTIONS 6/24/24

1. How do I find out if my program is eligible for the CSDE After-school Snack Program?

Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) eligibility information can be found @ [Afterschool Snack Program \(ASP\)--Eligibility \(ct.gov\)](#). Applicants must complete an annual online application for each site and submit to the CSDE for approval. The application must be approved by the CSDE before the site is eligible to receive federal reimbursements. New sites that start during the school year must have approved applications.

Any school that is part of a school food authority (SFA) that participates in the [National School Lunch Program \(NSLP\)](#) is eligible to operate the ASP. Schools that are approved by the CSDE to operate the ASP must agree to assume full responsibility for complying with all program requirements. To participate in the ASP, the school must meet the preliminary requirements below.

1. The school must be participating in the NSLP.
2. The school must be sponsoring or operating an after-school care program for children ages 3-18 that:
 - provides regularly scheduled activities in an organized, structured and supervised environment.
 - includes educational or enrichment activities such as mentoring/tutoring programs; and
 - meets state or local licensing requirements and health and safety standards.
3. The SFA must complete an annual online application for each site and submit to the CSDE for approval. The application must be approved by the CSDE before the site is eligible to receive federal reimbursements. New sites that start during the school year must have approved applications.

For more information, refer to the CSDE's [Afterschool Snack Program Handbook \(ct.gov\)](#), or contact the school nutrition programs staff at the Connecticut State Department of Education, Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841, Phone: 860-807-2050.

Link to the After School Snack Program Eligibility Checklist:

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/ASP/Forms/%E2%80%8CSchool_Eligibility_Checklist ASP.pdf

21st CCLC Bidder's Conference Questions 5/23/24

1. If the LEA is applying as the lead and is a Title I school, does that meet the new priority?

If the LEA is applying as the lead, is a Title I school and submits jointly with another eligible entity, they will receive five priority points (Priority Point #2).

2. Are current grantees of 21 century learning centers eligible to apply?

If you are applying to serve an existing 21st CCLC program, your application must propose to expand existing services and/or increase the number of target students. In addition, current grantees can apply to serve students at new school sites.

3. If the CBO applying is a public library, can the library offer internships at the public library for students?

Applicants seeking the Student Internship supplemental funding are required to assist elementary or middle school students. Consequently, high school interns will have the opportunity to support enrolled elementary and middle school students in the 21st CCLC program. In the event that the library serves as the program location, the 21st CCLC Student Interns can provide assistance to students there. However, it is important to note that this funding cannot be utilized to support Student Interns in their library-related tasks. Its purpose is to build staff capacity to support the 21st CCLC program and foster a deeper understanding and interest in education career pathways.

4. Can supplemental monies be used at all 21c sites or just the site applied for?

Supplemental funding should primarily be allocated to assist the sites and students specified in the application. In certain cases, exceptions may be made to employ a student intern temporarily to support a 21st CCLC program site funded through a separate proposal, either due to staffing shortages or the requirement of a specialized skill set.

5. How many total applications can we apply for?

There is not a maximum number of applications an eligible entity can apply for.

6. Can staffing costs be stipends?

If the stipend is equal to or higher than the minimum wage, it is permissible. It is crucial to recruit and compensate certified and professional staff adequately to ensure high-quality programming. This is because 21st CCLC programs are required to offer academic support, including homework assistance and tutorial services, to

students attending schools with a proven need for such services. These programs aim to help students meet state and local performance standards in core academic subjects like reading, mathematics, and science.

7. If clerical staff covers the front desk and is the liaison between program and families, is this considered administrative?

If the position is solely necessary due to the grant and directly and primarily only engages with students and families served by the grant, (only during 21st CCLC program hours) it would be classified as direct service.

8. If the ability of a SpEd student requires a one-on-one Special Education Para, the cost per student would be much more than \$18 or \$23. How do other programs deal with this financial difficulty?

Special Education funding can help cover the cost of the individualized para by including it in the student's IEP. Additionally, the 21st CCLC grant may contribute to the expense as long as it does not impact the program's ability to serve the approved target number of students. If the 21st CCLC program is authorized to generate income, that revenue can also be used to support this cost.

9. If a nonprofit org provider works within public schools in close coordination with the schools, utilizing the schools' daytime certified teachers as program coordinators afterschool, what is the LICENSING requirement?

The licensing requirement is dependent on the physical location of the program. If the program is located within a school building, the partner school district must provide the waiver. If the program is located within a community based organization (CBO) facility, the CBO must provide proof of licensure.

10. Under the provisions of the new grant, if a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) specifies the requirement for a dedicated one-on-one staff member to support the student, is the program obligated to provide this accommodation?

If these accommodations, modifications, and supports are listed on the IEP, then the District or Supervisory Union may use special education resources to provide them. If a child's accommodations, modifications, and supports are not listed on an IEP, they may be supported with 21st CCLC funds, other agency funds, or, if a school district sponsors or partners with the program, general funds.

11. High-dosage tutoring: must use a provider approved by CSDE? Or can I use certified staff?

Successful applicants may use their own staff and may partner as appropriate with one of the approved external tutoring organizations for HDT training of their staff. Successful applicants also have the option to procure trained, high-quality tutors from a list of eligible vendors vetted and approved by the CSDE. External tutoring organizations who have not been vetted and approved by CSDE will be required to submit additional information to the CSDE for review and approval. A list of the vetted and approved organizations can be found on the CSDE's High-Dosage Tutoring Webpage and in the Related Documents section of this electronic grant application. The most competitive vendors will provide tutors, particularly those new to the profession, with

upfront training on relevant topics. External tutoring organizations who have not been vetted and approved by CSDE will be required to submit additional information to the CSDE for review and approval.

12. Can this funding be used for preschool?

Yes, the funding is to support PreK - 12th Grade. However, the funding cannot be used to create full day Pre-K. It must be an “afterschool” program not mandatory for all students to attend. There must be a clear delineation between the school day and the after school program.

FAQs

Eligibility

13. Can we compete for both State and Federal grants to serve the same schools/population?

You can submit applications to serve the same school/population for different funding, but if notified of the award, you must choose one funding source to accept.

14. Can we submit the same application for the State and 21st CCLC funding?

Each funding opportunity has its own application. A single application cannot be used for multiple funding opportunities.

15. Can we blend the SDE and 21st CCLC funding?

You can supplement but not supplant funding.

16. Can you write a grant for additional services at a current site, without adding new students?

Yes, you can write a grant to supplement programming, however, supplemental grants must be able to function independently once the original funding expires.

17. If we applied for other funding, do we have to share that information in the application?

You don't have to share information on money you haven't received yet.

18. Can we apply for new 21st CCLC funding if we are in year 5?

Yes.

19. Can we write a grant that serves three schools within our district?

Yes. You can serve multiple schools within a district as long as each school meets the requirement where at least 40% of the children served lunch are eligible for free or reduced price meals.

20. Can different community based organizations apply for different grants at the same school?

Yes, but the programs should communicate with each other and align offerings so that they are not in competition.

21. How do you know if there is another agency running programming in the school for which you hope to apply?

The principal must sign all applications and should share the information about current programming and other applications for programming at the school. Required

22. In high school, if students do not self-report their free/reduced lunch status, but we know the school demographics would support eligibility, how can we prove eligibility?

If all feeder middle schools meet the 40% or more free/reduced lunch eligibility, the high school may be eligible to apply. Applicants must get pre-approval from CSDE to ensure eligibility.

23. Can the same program serve both middle and high school students?

In order to serve both middle and high school students, two separate applications would need to be written and approved, as they are different.

24. Can faith-based organizations that run a private school meet the low income eligibility threshold to qualify for funding?

Yes they can. Private schools that participate in the National School Lunch Program will have eligibility data determined through direct certification and household income applications for school meals. Direct certification is the process by which families are determined automatically eligible for free school meals based on their participation in SNAP, TFA (formally known as TANF) and other programs. If you do not participate in the National School Lunch Program and think your school population has at least 40% or more of its students eligible for free/reduced lunch, please call Shelby Pons at 860-807-2103.

25. Is the licensing requirement applicable to high school programs?

No, licensing requirements are only for PK-8 programs.

Program Elements

26. What is the minimum amount of programming hours that must be provided?

The minimum dosage requirements are outlined in the request for proposal (RFP) under Overview and Guidance, Section IV. After-school Program Dosage Requirements, Traditional Grant Award and Supplemental Funding Information

27. Do you have to serve the same students over the course of the three year grant?

Each year the program must try to enroll and serve the same students throughout the funding year. As long as the students do not age out of the program, the goal is to recruit and retain the same students for as long as possible.

28. When are grantees required to begin programming?

Programs must start operation as outlined in the grant proposal notwithstanding a delay in funding. Programs are expected to begin operating after notification of award. Programs should begin the first day of school, or the date detailed in the grant proposal.

29. Is it a disadvantage to submit a proposal for gender-specific programming?

Yes, programming must be open to all eligible students at the site.

30. If I am writing for a K-8 school but am only seeking to serve the middle school population, what dosage do I have to provide?

The dosage must meet the middle school requirement as outlined under Overview and Guidance, Section IV. After-school Program Dosage Requirements, Traditional Grant Award and Supplemental Funding Information

31. Does homework help have to be provided every day?

Yes, homework must be provided daily for elementary school students. However, it is allowable for programs to design a “Fun Fridays” model where homework is not required on Fridays to provide incentive for participants on days when there is typically less homework given. For middle and high school programs, space and support for homework help must be offered daily, but student attendance should be based on need.

32. What do we do if the district won't pay for 1:1 services for children in the program? If the IEP team determines that the student needs the 1:1 paraeducator to participate in 21st CCLC programming. The 1:1 paraeducator must be provided to afford the student an equal opportunity for participation in 21st CCLC programming. For more information refer to the Overview and Guidance, Section VII New Initiatives, #3. Students Experiencing Disabilities. In addition, included is the following reference document. [Children with Disabilities and Participation in 21st Century Community Learning Center Funded Programs.](#)

33. Can grant funds exclusively support an intensive summer program if it meets the dosage requirements?

No.

34. Can the PK-5 homework requirement be time working on a digital platform that aligns with the curriculum?

Only if this is a supplemental activity offered after homework help/tutoring is offered for all students.

Partnership & Collaboration

35. Does the school require a Letter of Commitment with outside agency partners for State Assigned Student Identifiers (SASID) sharing?

The lead applicant must submit the “Mandatory Superintendent, CBO and Principal Signature Document”. This document confirms the Superintendent of Schools is agreeing to provide the Lead Applicant access to participants’ Student Assigned State Identifier (SASID) numbers for reporting purposes. This document is found on the Cover Page of the RFP.

36. If a Community Based Organization (CBO) applies as the lead applicant are they required to submit a letter of commitment from the school district’s superintendent?

Yes. Every grant application submitted by a CBO must include a letter of commitment from the superintendent and administration. Letters of commitment from the Superintendent and Principal(s) that programs have a capacity to invest time and resources to support program start-up and implementation as specified in the grant proposal notwithstanding a delay in funding. These signatures serve as attestation to the accuracy of the information provided in the proposal and certify compliance with State and Federal laws and regulations, including the sharing of State Assigned Student Identifier (SASID) numbers for the CSDE data collection and reporting. The letter from the Superintendent must include the district level administrative position responsible for afterschool, including the title of the position, contact information, percentage of time, and responsibilities. Section B. Partnerships and Collaboration, Question # 4

37. If we propose to serve more than one school in our application do we need another signature page for additional school principals?

Yes, you must have a principal signature from each school you plan to serve in your grant application. This can be included in the “Mandatory Superintendent, CBO and Principal Signature Document”. This document is found on the Cover Page of the RFP.

38. How do we get signatures into the eGrants system?

Print out the signature page from the eGrants system, have all parties sign and then scan the signed document and upload into the eGrants system.

39. If the district is the lead applicant and working with a community partner, is a letter of commitment needed?

Yes. Include a detailed letter of commitment from the lead partner which must include a commitment of program staff to participate in all 21st CCLC activities, including, but not limited to evaluations, data collection and reporting, networking meetings and all mandated professional development, technical assistance, data collection, trainings and meetings associated with the grant program for the duration of the grant. The letter must include an administrative level position responsible and include signature, printed typed name, title, organization, contact information and date. Section B. Partnerships and Collaboration, Question #5

40. If a lead applicant is sub-contracting to CBO's outside of the lead partner, are they still considered collaborators?

Yes, they are considered collaborators.

Program Administration

41. Do the coordinator and data entry person have to be separate positions?

Responsibilities regarding Coordinator and Data Entry positions are outlined in the RFP under D. Program Administration. It is highly recommended that these are two separate positions.

42. Is it a requirement to have certified teachers as staff in your program?

It's highly recommended that programs hire certified teachers to help build academic programming and align learning with school day objectives.

43. For scheduled training/PD, can we give approximate dates and times?

Yes.

44. Can we send staff to any professional development or offer in-district training?

Yes, programs have the autonomy to choose the training they will provide for staff as long as the training meets the needs of the after school program. Grant applications should clearly reflect the professional development and training offerings that will be provided to staff.

45. Can we provide professional development during the after school time?

Yes, but the program should still be held with proper supervision

Budget

46. Can you use 21st CCLC funds to provide summer programs?

Yes, funds can be used to provide a summer program component however the summer component must serve the same students that participate during the school year. Funds will be available until September 30th.

47. Can you use grant funds to support a before school program?

Yes. However, in order for the students to be counted, they MUST attend in the morning and afternoon.

48. Can I charge fees to families?

Yes, per Federal guidance, all low-income students should be enrolled first in 21st CCLC programs with no expectation of them paying a fee. The generation of program income through parent fees must NOT be a barrier to the most vulnerable population of participants. More Information regarding federal guidance is outlined on Section C. Program Elements, Question #10.

Note: It is anticipated that 21st CCLC grant funding will encompass the entire expenditure of operating a program with the suggested allocation, without imposing a program fee to generate revenue. Applicants who do not seek to generate program income by charging program fees will receive the highest score in this category. Successful applicants that did not apply to generate program income are not permitted to seek program income generation during their funding cycle.

49. Are indirect costs allowable?

No, unless you have received approval by the CSDE to charge an indirect. If you have received approval the maximum amount you can charge as an indirect is 8%. Refer to the Budget Guidance and Instruction, and the Allowable Cost Guideline document for more information.

50. Is money raised from student snack stands considered program income?

Yes, this is program income and programs must apply to CSDE to charge income before it is charged.

51. Can I pay parents to work in the program?

Yes, parents can be hired to work in the program.

52. Can you pay high school students to work in the elementary programs?

Yes, but you cannot pay high school participants to attend their own after school program.

Note there is a new initiative to the RFP called the Student Internship Supplemental Funding. This is an optional opportunity for qualified applicants seeking a 2024-25 grant to work with students in grades K-8. Qualified applicants have the chance to request up to \$50,000 to enhance their staffing capabilities for both the school year and/or summer 21st CCLC programs. This initiative aims to provide high school students with the opportunity to earn at least minimum wage and to gain a better understanding of and interest in career pathways within the field of education. It also aims to foster connections between students and professionals in the education sector, while equipping them with the necessary skills and knowledge to pursue further education and training in teaching or other related professions.

To access additional details, please consult the Student Internship Supplemental Funding Information Page, which outlines eligibility criteria, priorities, grant requirements, and allowable use of funding. To apply, complete the Student Internship Supplemental Funding Application.

53. Can you purchase food as a supply for a cooking class in the program?

Yes, but the food must go to the participating students and be reflected in the total budget.

54. Can food be purchased for family events?

Yes.

55. Can we use 21stCCLC funds to purchase equipment?

You cannot purchase equipment or pay for construction. An item such as a laptop, to be used by the coordinator and data entry staff, is considered a supply and should be purchased in year one of funding to be used throughout the three year life of the grant. Refer to the Budget Guidance and Instruction, and the Allowable Cost Guideline document for more information.

56. What is a reasonable in-kind contribution from a district/community partner?

The CT State Department of Education does not define minimum or maximum amount.

57. Can you use grant funds to cover transportation costs?

Yes. However, transportation costs cannot exceed 25% of the total budget. Refer to the Budget Guidance and Instruction, and the Allowable Cost Guideline document for more information.

58. If you are reapplying and already paid for a site license, do you still need to set aside 5% for this purpose in year one of grant funding?

Yes, site licenses are purchased annually and the onetime 5% investment is used to cover the costs of the site licenses and evaluation for the three year grant cycle.

59. Does the 40% free/reduced lunch guidelines at the schools served apply after the grant is awarded?

If there is community redistricting and the grant population originally applied for is being moved to a different school/location, the free/reduced lunch guidelines will be looked at for the new school location.

60. Could we incentivize participants with stipends?

No.

61. Can we apply to serve Pre-K students?

Yes. However, the funding cannot be used to create full day Pre-K. It must be an “afterschool” program not mandatory for all students to attend. There must be a clear delineation between the school day and the after school program.

62. Our Kindergarten is half day, can we use 21st CCLC funds to support the rest of the day?

No. However, you can use it to support an afterschool program that is not mandatory. There must be a clear delineation between the school day and the after school program. Students cannot be required to attend.

63. Do you have to notify area private schools every year?

Private schools must be notified of the intent to apply.

64. If an entity is writing for an interdistrict magnet school, do all private schools in all towns served need to be notified?

No, only the private schools in the location of the inter-district magnet school.

65. How do we notify students that may be homeschooled? Are they allowed to participate in the program?

If a student is districted to your school and chooses another educational setting, they still have the opportunity to attend the program as long as space is available. You are responsible for notifying the home school association in your town of the intent to apply as well as program information if awarded a grant.

66. Do the following examples serve as a notice of intent to the community? –Sending letters to parents to inform them about the program. –Posting program information onto the school’s website.

Yes, that is notification of your intent to write, but parents and communities must also be notified of their ability to participate in the program development that goes into the writing of the application.

67. Does private school notification apply to attendance of public magnets and charters?

No, public magnets and charters are not private schools.

68. Does the eGrants system accept charts/visuals in the text boxes?

Yes.

69. If our school building is potentially moving, can we still get 21st CCLC funding?

Only if the majority of the 21st CCLC population moves to the new school location. The funding must follow the majority of 21st CCLC students.

70. Will there be training available for the database system?

Yes, offered multiple times a year and sent out to awarded grantees.

71. Are 21st CCLC funds state or federal funds?

This is federal funding that is passed down to the state. Individual states host competitions and grant awards to successful applicants. Therefore this funding is subject to both federal and state regulations and guidance.