

Learner Engagement and Attendance Program (LEAP) Grant (RFP 865)



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CONNECTICUT
Education
2025-2026

Connecticut State Department of Education – 6/11/2026, 3 to 4 p.m.



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RFP 865

Learner Engagement and Attendance Program (LEAP)

Request for Proposals (RFP 865)

[Public Act 25-168, Section 315](#) of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.)

Competitive Grant Application ([RFP 865](#))

Application Due Date: July 8, 2026

Total Funding: Up to \$7,000,000 (subject to the availability of funds)

Grant Period: July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027



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Bidders' Conference Protocols and RFP Communication Rules

- This Bidders' Conference is for informational purposes only.
- Verbal statements are not binding.
- Only written addenda or official written responses modify the RFP.
- It's important that all applicants receive the same information.
- Submit all questions in writing to Kari.Sullivan@ct.gov or **place in the chat**.
- Presentation slides, recording of this call, and an FAQ will be posted on the [CSDE RFP portal](#).



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LEAP RFP Process

RFP at a glance

Key dates, format, and applicant responsibilities



- Only one submission per district will be accepted
- Applicants are responsible for complete and accurate responses at the time of the submission.
- Late or incomplete applications may not be considered.



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Program Overview and Research Base

- LEAP is a targeted attendance intervention embedded within district attendance systems and multi-tiered systems of support.
- **LEAP leverages trained home visitors to build trust with families, identify barriers to attendance, and connect students and families to coordinated supports.**
- Research summarized in [CCERC Report Executive Summary: LEAP](#) demonstrates positive and sustained impacts on student attendance and family engagement.



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LEAP Model

- LEAP is Connecticut's research-based, relational home visiting model designed to improve student attendance and engagement.
- LEAP is a targeted Tier II intervention within a broader Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS).
- The model shifts from compliance-driven responses to a relationship-centered, strengths-based approach.
- Students who are chronically absent or at risk are identified through data and referred for scheduled, voluntary home visits.
- Home visits are conducted by trained school staff or community partners **in pairs**.
- Visits focus on building trust, understanding family strengths and goals, and addressing barriers such as health, housing, transportation, and school connectedness.
- LEAP is a multi-visit model, recognizing that meaningful engagement develops over time.



LEAP Core Principles

LEAP Implementation is grounded in the following core principles:

- trusting relationships: relationships are the foundation of engagement and change;
- family partnerships: families are valued as equal partners in supporting student success;
- cultural responsiveness: engagement reflects and honors the strengths of diverse families and communities;
- data-informed practice: data is used to identify students, monitor progress, and guide improvement;
- flexible and responsive implementation: strategies are adapted to local context and family needs; and
- voluntary participation: participation is voluntary to promote trust and authentic engagement.



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LEAP Implementation

LEAP implementation includes:

- delivery as a Tier II attendance and engagement strategy;
 - multiple home visits and follow-up contacts over time;
 - alignment with attendance teams and MTSS structures;
 - use of data to monitor progress and guide improvement; and
 - ongoing training, coaching, and support for staff.
1. The LEAP model is fully described in [The LEAP Effect: Taking a Systemic Approach to Improving Attendance & Engagement](#) .
 2. All LEAP programs and activities must align to the [Full, Equal and Equitable Partnership with Families: Connecticut's Definition and Framework for Family Engagement](#).



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Staff Training and Oversight

- Districts must establish a clear staffing structure with defined roles for home visitors and supervisors.
- District leadership should provide active oversight and align LEAP with DART, SART, and MTSS.
- All staff must complete required Connecticut Home Visit Hub training, including LEAP 101.
- Ongoing professional learning should focus on relationship-building, identifying barriers, and connecting families to support.
- Districts should provide regular supervision and coaching to ensure quality and consistency.
- Districts must document visits in the State's online home visit log.
- Leadership must review home visit data to monitor implementation, data quality, trends, attendance strategies, and continuous improvement.



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Eligible Applicants

- Connecticut public school districts are eligible to apply.
- Eligible applicants include:
 - districts currently funded through LEAP; and
 - local districts seeking to implement LEAP for the first time.



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Funding and Grant Award Period

- The state budget allocated **\$7 million** for FY 2026-27.
- Awards depend on proposal quality, request size, student need, district capacity, past performance, and available funds.
- Funding is contingent on state allocation approval and any rescissions.
- CSDE may cancel or modify awards based on available funding.
- Grant period: **July 1, 2026–June 30, 2027.**



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Funding Guidance

- Applicants should request an amount that is reasonable and proportionate to the proposed LEAP implementation.
- Requests should reflect:
 - size and scope of implementation;
 - number of chronically absent students to be served;
 - district need; and
 - district capacity to implement a high-quality, relationship-based home visiting model.
- CSDE developed estimated funding levels using March 2026 EdSight chronic absence data.
- Funding ranges are intended to help districts develop appropriately scaled proposals and budgets.



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Estimated Funding Levels

- **Small — One School or Pilot Implementation**
 - Fewer than 500 chronically absent students
 - Up to \$125,000
- **Small District Implementation**
 - 501 to 1,500 chronically absent students
 - \$125,001 to \$200,000
- **Mid-Size District Implementation**
 - 1,501 to 4,000 chronically absent students
 - \$200,001 to \$400,000
- **Large District Implementation**
 - 4,001 or more chronically absent students
 - \$400,001 to \$500,000



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Funding Requests and Justification

- Requested funding amounts are not guaranteed.
- Final award amounts will be determined through the RFP review and scoring process.
- Awards may be adjusted upward or downward based on:
 - application quality;
 - demonstrated need;
 - implementation capacity; and
 - availability of funds.
- Districts requesting funding above the estimated level must provide a clear justification in the Statement of Need.
- Districts requesting funding below the estimated level are encouraged to explain how the amount supports a focused, achievable implementation plan.



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 - application quality;
 - demonstrated need;
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- Districts requesting funding below the estimated level are encouraged to explain how the amount supports a focused, achievable implementation plan.



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Pilot or Smaller Implementation

- Districts with fewer than 500 chronically absent students may apply for a one-school or pilot implementation grant.
- Pilot proposals should identify the:
 - school;
 - grade span;
 - student group; or
 - attendance priority area.
- Proposals should explain how funds will establish or expand relationship-based home visiting as part of the district's attendance and engagement strategy.



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Existing LEAP Districts

- Continued funding for existing LEAP districts is not automatic.
- Final awards will consider:
 - proposed implementation plan;
 - budget justification;
 - prior LEAP implementation data; and
 - alignment with the LEAP model.
- CSDE may reduce, condition, or adjust awards for districts that demonstrate underperformance during the current grant period.



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Examples of Underperformance

- Low home visit volume relative to funding received.
- Inefficient use of funds or limited expenditure of prior grant funds.
- Proposed activities not clearly aligned with the LEAP model.
- Insufficient evidence of relationship-based home visiting implementation.
- Failure to participate in required training, technical assistance, or coordinator meetings.
- Incomplete, inaccurate, or late reporting of required data.
- Failure to meet other reporting or grant management requirements.



Final Funding Decisions

- Funding decisions will be based on:
 - Appendix B scoring form;
 - quality and completeness of the application;
 - proposed use of funds;
 - demonstrated need;
 - implementation capacity; and
 - review of prior LEAP implementation and fiscal data.
- CSDE reserves the right to adjust awards based on:
 - total funding available;
 - number of eligible applications;
 - strength of the implementation plan;
 - budget alignment with LEAP priorities;
 - prior implementation performance; and
 - district capacity.



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LEAP Funding Pathways

The LEAP grant includes three funding pathways to support relationship-based home visits. Applicants must apply for Pathway A or Pathway B to be eligible for Pathway C.

- **Pathway A: Existing LEAP Districts**

- Continue funding to sustain and strengthen current programs.
- May request expanded funding to scale LEAP implementation.

- **Pathway B: New LEAP Districts**

- Launch LEAP for the first time.
- Demonstrate need and readiness to implement the model.

- **Pathway C: Alternative Education Programs**

- Optional additional funding for districts applying under Pathway A or B.
- Extends LEAP services to students in alternative education programs.



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Optional Alternative Education Component

- Districts may request up to **\$25,000** in additional funding.
- Funding supports in-person, individualized, home-based visits and related outreach only.
- Intended for students in alternative programs, including credit-recovery, re-engagement, or therapeutic settings.
- Proposals should explain the program context, student population, barriers, and need for personalized home visits.



Bidders' Conference and Submission Requirements

- Virtual Bidders' Conference: Thursday, June 11, 2026, 3–4 p.m.
- Applications must be submitted electronically through the LEAP Grant Application form.
- Only one submission per district will be accepted.
- If multiple applications are submitted, CSDE will consider the first application received.
- Applications must be complete and accurate at the time of submission.
- Late or incomplete applications may not be considered.



Required Application Materials

Applicants must complete the required sections for their selected pathway.

Pathway A: Existing LEAP Districts

- Includes district information, need, infrastructure, implementation, staffing, past performance, funding plan, budget, and budget narrative.

Pathway B: New LEAP Districts

- Includes district information, need, infrastructure, implementation, staffing, funding plan, budget, and budget narrative.

Pathway C: Alternative Education

Optional for Pathway A or B applicants.

- Includes program description, budget form, and budget narrative.

Appendix A and Appendix D must be completed, signed, and emailed by the deadline.



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Budget Requirements and Allowable Uses

- At least **85% of funds** must support direct services.
- Up to **15% of funds** may be used for training and necessary supplies.
- Funds may not be used for:
 - residency verification;
 - disciplinary or truancy enforcement; or
 - supplanting existing district-funded services.
- Budgets must align with relationship-building, addressing barriers to attendance, and expanding current supports.



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Budget Focus

- Budgets must focus on costs directly tied to in-person home visits.
- Allowable costs may include:
 - staff time;
 - mileage;
 - materials; and
 - training.
- Strong applications will include:
 - a clear staffing and oversight plan;
 - adaptation of the LEAP model for individualized home engagement; and
 - measurable outcomes that can be achieved through consistent, relationship-centered visits.
- Budget amounts, justifications, and cost assumptions must be accurate, reasonable, and aligned with the narrative.



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Review, Scoring, and Selection

- Applications will be scored using the reader scoring form in Appendix B.
- Scores may inform:
 - funding decisions;
 - funding levels;
 - conditional awards; or
 - required revisions.



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Award Conditions

- Awardees must designate a district-level LEAP District Coordinator.
- Awardees must participate in:
 - LEAP District Coordinator Meetings;
 - regular check-ins with CSDE and partners;
 - required LEAP training;
 - required reporting; and
 - evaluation efforts.



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Standard Application Requirements

- Grantees must maintain complete management control of the grant and funding.
- CSDE staff may be consulted for expertise but will not be directly responsible for:
 - selecting sub-grantees or vendors; or
 - expending or paying grant funds.
- Proposals are subject to the Connecticut Freedom of Information Act.
- Each application must include a signed Standard Statement of Assurances.



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Appendices

- Appendix A: LEAP Application Packet
- Appendix B: LEAP Grant Reader Scoring Form
- Appendix C: Budget Forms and Narrative
- Appendix D: Standard Statement of Assurances for Grant Programs



Appendix A: LEAP Application Packet

- Applicants must complete the Microsoft Forms application.
- Two signed attachments must be emailed separately to Kari.Sullivan@ct.gov:
 - Cover Page; and
 - Statement of Assurances for Grant Programs.
- The Cover Page must include applicant information, primary contact, and requested funding amount.
- The Cover Page must be signed by the superintendent or other authorized official.
- The Statement of Assurances must also be signed by the superintendent or other authorized official.
- Required attachments must be submitted as PDFs by the final RFP submission date.
- Email subject line: **LEAP RFP Required Attachments – [District Name]**
- Applications are not complete unless CSDE receives both the Microsoft Forms application and signed required attachments by the deadline.



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Cover Page

Cover Page

Office of Student Supports
FY27
Learner Engagement and Attendance Program

Email signed and completed Cover Page with your district's Statement of Assurances for Grant Programs (Appendix D) to Kari.Sullivan@ct.gov on or before the grant submission deadline.

LEA Name: _____

Grant Contact Name and Title: _____

Grant Contact Phone: _____

Grant Contact Email: _____

Amount of funding requested: _____

Pathway Selection

Check all that apply:

Pathway A: Existing LEAP Districts

For districts currently implementing LEAP that are applying to continue or expand implementation.

Pathway B: New Districts

For districts not currently implementing LEAP that are applying to begin implementation.

Pathway C: Alternative Education Funding Add-On

For districts applying under Pathway A or Pathway B that are also requesting additional funding to support LEAP implementation in alternative education programs.

Signatures:

I hereby certify that the information contained in this application is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Superintendent / RESC Director Name: _____

Superintendent / RESC Director Signature: _____

Date: _____

Instructions: E-mail a complete and signed copy of this Cover Page with the Statement of Assurances for Grant Programs to Kari.Sullivan@ct.gov on or before the final submission date for this RFP.



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Application Submission

- Submit the LEAP Grant Application electronically through Microsoft Forms.
<https://forms.office.com/g/0LjNJNgcXh>.
- Applicants should draft and save responses in a separate Word document before entering them into Microsoft Forms.
- Microsoft Forms should be used for final submission only.
- Only one submission per district will be accepted.
- If more than one application is submitted, CSDE will consider the first application received.
- Applications must be complete, accurate, and submitted by the stated deadline.
- Late or incomplete applications may not be considered.



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Section 1: District Information (Rubric Weight: 5 points)

1. District name
2. Primary Contact Name
3. Primary Contact Position Title
4. Primary Contact Email
5. Superintendent's Name



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Section 2: Statement of Need (Rubric Weight: 15 points)

- 6) Describe current chronic absence rates (overall and high need), including trends over the past 2–3 years.
- 7) Identify student groups with the highest rates of chronic absence (e.g., grade levels, student subgroups, schools).
- 8) Describe the primary non-academic barriers contributing to absenteeism (e.g., health, transportation, housing, school climate, family engagement).
- 9) Clearly explain why LEAP funding is needed now and how it will address identified gaps.



Section 3: Attendance Infrastructure (Rubric Weight: 15 points)

- 10) Describe your District Attendance Review Team (DART) and School Attendance Review Teams (SARTs), including:
 - membership (roles/titles)
 - meeting frequency
 - core responsibilities
- 11) Explain how attendance work is aligned within your district's Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework.
- 12) Describe your data systems (e.g., EdSight, SIS, local dashboards) and how attendance data is accessed and shared.



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Section 4: LEAP Implementation Plan (Rubric Weight: 20 points)

13) Describe how your program will align with LEAP core principles, including:

- relationship-based, voluntary engagement
- two-person home visit model
- multi-visit
- strength-based, non-punitive approach

14) Identify:

- number of students to be served
- schools/grade levels included
- criteria for selecting students (e.g., attendance thresholds, referrals)

15) Describe your home visit model, including:

- how visits will be scheduled and conducted
- who will participate in visits
- frequency of visits

16) Explain how follow-up support will be provided after visits (e.g., resource connection, ongoing communication, school-based supports).



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Section 5: Staffing & Oversight (Rubric Weight: 15 points)

- 17) Provide a detailed staffing model, including:
 - roles and responsibilities (e.g., home visitors, coordinators, administrators)
 - estimated time commitment (FTE or percentage of time)
- 18) Describe how staff will be:
 - trained (initial and ongoing)
 - supported and supervised
- 19) Are you a currently funded LEAP District? Choice: Yes or No.
- 20) If expanding and requesting a larger budget allocation, describe how the program will scale effectively. (Existing districts only)



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Section 6: Past Performance (Required of Returning Districts) (Rubric Weight: 15 points)

- 21) Demonstrate prior success and effective use of LEAP funding from July 1, 2024, through the end of current school year. Include number of students receiving home visits, number of home visits conducted, and time covered.
- 22) Describe the impact on attendance (include data where possible).
- 23) Explain how funds were used to support:
 - direct services
 - student/family needs
- 24) Describe lessons learned and how they will inform your 2026–27 plan. If applicable, explain any challenges and how they were addressed.



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Section 7: Proposed Funding Plan (Rubric Weight: 15 points)

- 25) Provide a clear and aligned budget plan. Describe how funds will directly support:
- home visits
 - student and family engagement
 - barrier removal
- 26) Confirm that LEAP funds will not be used for any of the following purposes: residency verification, disciplinary or truancy enforcement, or supplanting existing services. (choice)
- yes, I confirm
 - no



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Section 8: Grant Budget Form – ED114 (Rubric Weight: 10 points)

27 – 34) Using the online form, provide budget amounts for each line item and the total amount of funding requested. (Questions 27 – 33). See sample in Appendix C of the RFP.

FY27 ED114 LEAP Grant

The Grant Budget Form and Grant Budget Narrative, on the following page, should be completed in the [Microsoft Forms LEAP Grant Application](#). If applying for Pathway C, Alternative Education Program applications should have a separate ED114.

Grant Title: Learner Attendance and Engagement Program		
Project Title:		
Core-CT Classification: <u>Fund: 11000</u> SPID: <u>17115</u> Program: <u>82154</u>		
Budget Reference: <u>2027</u> <u>Chartfield 1:</u> <u>Chartfield 2:</u>		
Grant Period: 07/01/2026 - 06/30/2027 Authorized Amount: \$		
Codes	Descriptions	FY27 Budget
100	Personal Services - Salaries	
200	Personal Services – Employee Benefits	
300	Purchased Professional and Technical Services	
400	Purchased Property Services	
500	Other Purchased Services	
600	Supplies	
700	Property	
	Total	



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Section 9: Grant Budget Narrative (Rubric Weight: 10 points)

- 35 - 41) Using the online form, provide detailed budget narratives for each line item and the total amount of funding requested. (Questions 34 – 38). See sample in Appendix C of the RFP.
- 42) Are you interested in applying for additional funds to support LEAP services for students in alternative education programs? If yes, applicants will be taken to Section 10: Alternative Education Programs (Optional)
- yes
 - no

FY27 Budget Narrative

Applicant:		
Code	Object	Amount
100	Personal Services- Salaries: Amounts paid to both permanent and temporary grantee employees, including personnel substituting for those in permanent positions. This can include stipends for teachers, staff, etc.	
200	Personal Services – Employee Benefits: Amounts paid by the grantee on behalf of the employees whose salaries are reported in objects 100. These amounts are not included in the gross salary but are in addition to that amount.	
300	Purchased Professional and Technical Services: Services that can be performed only by <u>persons</u> or firms with specialized skills and knowledge.	
400	Purchased Property Services: Services purchased to operate, repair, maintain, and rent property owned or used by the grantee. These services are performed by <u>persons</u> other than <u>grantee</u> employees. While a product may or may not result from the transaction, the primary reason for the purchase is the service provided.	
500	Other Purchased Services: Amounts paid for services rendered by organizations or personnel not on the payroll of the grantee (separate from professional, technical or property services). While a product may or may not result from the transaction, the primary reason for the purchase is the service provided.	
600	Supplies: Amounts paid for items that are consumed, worn out or deteriorated through use; or items that lose their identity through fabrication or incorporation into different or more complex units or substances, which includes instructional technology with a value under \$5,000 and a useful <u>life</u> less than five years.	



Section 10: Alternative Education Program Description (Rubric Weight: 20 points)

(Complete only if applying to serve additional students in alternative education programs.)

- 43) Provide location and grades to be receiving LEAP home visits.
- 44) Describe the alternative education population(s) to be served.
- 45) Identify specific attendance challenges and barriers unique to these students.
- 46) Explain how the LEAP model will be implemented to meet their needs.
- 47) Describe expected outcomes and measures of success.
- 48) Provide a clear and aligned budget plan. Describe how funds will directly support:
 - home visits
 - student and family engagement
 - barrier removal
- 49) Confirm that LEAP funds will not be used for any of the following purposes: residency verification, disciplinary or truancy enforcement, or supplanting existing services. (choice)
 - yes, I confirm
 - no



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Section 11: Alt. Ed. Programs: Grant Budget Form – ED114 (Rubric Weight: 10 points)

50) Using the online form, provide budget amounts for each line item and the total amount of funding requested. (Questions 50 – 57). See sample in Appendix C of the RFP.

FY27 ED114 LEAP Grant

The Grant Budget Form and Grant Budget Narrative, on the following page, should be completed in the [Microsoft Forms LEAP Grant Application](#). If applying for Pathway C, Alternative Education Program applications should have a separate ED114.

Grant Title: Learner Attendance and Engagement Program		
Project Title:		
Core-CT Classification: <u>Fund: 11000</u> SPID: <u>17115</u> Program: <u>82154</u>		
Budget Reference: <u>2027</u> <u>Chartfield 1:</u> <u>Chartfield 2:</u>		
Grant Period: 07/01/2026 - 06/30/2027 Authorized Amount: \$		
Codes	Descriptions	FY27 Budget
100	Personal Services - Salaries	
200	Personal Services – Employee Benefits	
300	Purchased Professional and Technical Services	
400	Purchased Property Services	
500	Other Purchased Services	
600	Supplies	
700	Property	
	Total	



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Section 12: Alt. Ed Programs: Grant Budget Narrative (Rubric Weight: 10 points)

- 58) Using the online form, provide detailed budget narratives for each line item and the total amount of funding requested. (Questions 58 – 64).

FY27 Budget Narrative

Applicant:		
Code	Object	Amount
100	Personal Services- Salaries: Amounts paid to both permanent and temporary grantee employees, including personnel substituting for those in permanent positions. This can include stipends for teachers, staff, etc.	
200	Personal Services – Employee Benefits: Amounts paid by the grantee on behalf of the employees whose salaries are reported in objects 100. These amounts are not included in the gross salary but are in addition to that amount.	
300	Purchased Professional and Technical Services: Services that can be performed only by <u>persons</u> or firms with specialized skills and knowledge.	
400	Purchased Property Services: Services purchased to operate, repair, maintain, and rent property owned or used by the grantee. These services are performed by <u>persons other than grantee</u> employees. While a product may or may not result from the transaction, the primary reason for the purchase is the service provided.	
500	Other Purchased Services: Amounts paid for services rendered by organizations or personnel not on the payroll of the grantee (separate from professional, technical or property services). While a product may or may not result from the transaction, the primary reason for the purchase is the service provided.	
600	Supplies: Amounts paid for items that are consumed, worn out or deteriorated through use; or items that lose their identity through fabrication or incorporation into different or more complex units or substances, which includes instructional technology with a value under \$5,000 and a useful <u>life</u> less than five years.	



Appendix B: LEAP Grant Application (2026-27) Reader Scoring Form

- Applications will be reviewed using the LEAP Grant Reader Scoring Form.
- Reviewers will identify the pathway or pathways included in each application:
 - Pathway A: Existing LEAP Districts — up to **115 points**
 - Pathway B: New Districts — up to **100 points**
 - Pathway C: Alternative Education Funding Add-On — up to **40 points**
- Each application section is scored using a weighted point structure.



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Appendix C: Budget Forms and Narrative

- Complete both the Grant Budget Form and Grant Budget Narrative Form.
- Budgets must align with the project narrative and LEAP implementation activities.
- Budget narratives must clearly explain each cost and show how amounts were calculated.
- Personnel, supplies, and contracted services must include enough detail for reviewers to verify costs.



Budget Restrictions

- At least 85% of funds must support direct services.
- Up to 15% of funds may be used for training and necessary supplies.
- Funds may not be used for:
 - residency verification;
 - disciplinary or truancy enforcement; or
 - supplanting existing district-funded services.
- All expenditures must support relationship-building, barrier removal, and expanded attendance supports.



Appendix D: Standard Statement of Assurances for Grant Programs

- Must be signed and emailed to Kari.Sullivan@ct.gov with the Cover Page (in Appendix A) on or before July 8, 2026.

