



# THE OPPORTUNITY TRUST

## SUBGRANT REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA)

**RF#: 202401**

Federal Program Title	Expanding Opportunity Through Quality Charter Schools Program (CSP)–Grants to State Entities
Federal Agency	U.S. Department of Education
State Entity (Charter School Support Organization)	The Opportunity Trust
CFDA Number	84.282A
Award Name	The Opportunity Trust (OT) - CSP-Missouri (CSP-MO) - Expanding Access to Quality Public Schools in Missouri
Award Number	S282A230004

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# Background & Purpose

## **The Federal Charter Schools Program (CSP)**

The Charter Schools Program (CSP) is authorized by Title IV, part C - Expanding Quality Through Quality Charter Schools of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by Every Student Succeeds Act (ESEA) [20 U.S.C. 7221-7221j]. The CSP State Entity program provides financial assistance to State entities to support charter schools that serve elementary and secondary school students in a given State. Charter schools receiving funds under the CSP State Entity program also may serve students in early childhood education programs or postsecondary students.

The major purposes of the CSP are to expand opportunities for all students, particularly traditionally underserved students, to attend charter schools and meet challenging State academic standards; provide financial assistance for the planning, program design, and initial implementation of public charter schools; increase the number of high-quality charter schools available to students across the United States; evaluate the impact of charter schools on student achievement, families, and communities; share best practices between charter schools and other public schools; encourage States to provide facilities support to charter schools; and support efforts to strengthen the charter school authorizing process.

The CSP Grants to State Entities program (84.282A) is a competitive grant program that enables State entities to award subgrants to eligible applicants in their State to open and prepare for the operation of new charter schools and to replicate and expand high-quality charter schools. Grant funds must also be used by the State entity to provide technical assistance to eligible applicants and authorized public chartering agencies in opening and preparing for the operation of new charter schools, or replicating or expanding high-quality charter schools; and to work with authorized public chartering agencies to improve authorizing quality, including developing capacity for, and conducting, fiscal oversight and auditing of charter schools.

In September 2023, The Opportunity Trust was awarded \$35.5 million over 5 years for the *CSP-Missouri (CSP-MO) - Expanding Access to Quality Public Schools in Missouri* program by the U.S. Department of Education (Department) under the FY 2023 CSP State Entities Grants Program.

# About The Opportunity Trust

The grant is to be administered by The Opportunity Trust (OT), a St. Louis-based nonprofit focused on ensuring every child in Missouri is prepared to thrive through empowering parents, building the capacity of educators to improve learning outcomes, and supporting an ecosystem of innovation and improvement in public education. Since our inception, we have helped expand access to high-quality public schools in high-need communities by supporting the addition of 4,764 seats at successful charter schools and by working with 8 talented educators to design and launch 6 new schools with strong community support and robust enrollment. These new schools have brought innovative models such as personalized learning, place-based learning, and student leadership-centered pedagogy to Missouri's education ecosystem.

In the scope of this grant award, OT plans to award CSP subgrants to charter schools and charter school developers<sup>1</sup> in Missouri to carry out one of the following activities:

1. Open and prepare for the operation of **new** charter schools.
2. **Replicate** and open high-quality charter schools.
3. **Expand** high-quality charter schools.

## Objectives for the CSP State Entity Program in Missouri

CSP-MO will catalyze the development of over 5,000 high-quality seats at new, expanding, or replicating schools in order to provide more children with access to a great education. The program is structured around two objectives: (1) increase the number of high-quality public school seats for educationally disadvantaged students by supporting the creation and expansion of diverse and innovative charter models, and (2) strengthen charter school operation and authorization across the state. The activities that will ensure these objects are met include:

- Running subgrant competitions;
- Providing technical assistance to quality subgrant applicants;
- Monitoring subgrantees for fiscal, operational, and academic performance;
- Providing technical assistance to authorizers to ensure quality oversight and accountability practices;
- Providing technical assistance to charter schools to improve performance and capture best practices of high-performing schools; and
- Disseminating best practices across the state through communities of practice for both authorizers and LEAs.

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<sup>1</sup> From ESEA §4310 (7) (Page 267 / 449) The term "developer" means an individual or group of individuals (including a public or private nonprofit organization), which may include teachers, administrators and other school staff, parents, or other members of the local community in which a charter school project will be carried out. See Appendix 1 for all definitions.

# Parameters of the Subgrant Competition

In carrying out these objectives the CSP-MO team will provide subgrants to qualified charter school developers to provide financial support and technical assistance for the initial implementation of expanding, replicating, or opening new charter schools. At least 90% (or approximately \$32 million) of the federal grant will be awarded as subgrants. At least 7% (approximately \$2.5 million) will be deployed towards technical assistance, with the remainder (no more than 3%, or approximately \$1 million) to be utilized by OT for the purposes of administering the program.

## Size and Duration of Subgrants

Through a competitive subgrant process, all OT subgrantees will be eligible for a maximum award of \$2,000,000 for an anticipated term of up to 36 months. For the current federal fiscal year OT intends to award seven grants across two grant cycles this year, including expansion, new growth, and replication. For planning purposes, OT estimates that the spend down of the grants will be according to the timelines laid out in Table 1: Size and Structure of Subgrants. However, applicants have the flexibility to request different funding amounts in Years 1, 2, or 3, staying within the maximum allowed budget award for that year. Regardless of the distribution timing of funds, planning periods for any subgrantee shall not exceed 18 months. Subgrantees have full autonomy over the structure of their budget request but must present plans to utilize CSP funding over a period of no more than five years and align with the parameters of Missouri’s Allowable Cost Guidelines.

Should subgrant recipients end up receiving less than the full maximum award amount – either by request or by virtue of failing to hit the targets that would trigger escalation above the base award amount – after approval by the Department of Education, OT may make additional awards in accordance with grant objectives with funds that have been rolled over. Under ESEA §4303 (2) (A) each charter school receiving funds through the State entity’s program will have a high degree of autonomy over budget and operations, including autonomy over personnel decisions.

OT anticipates dividing the available funds for this Request for Application (RFA 202401) as follows:

Table 1: Size and Structure of Subgrants

	Target	Amount	Timing
1	<b>Base Award</b> Satisfactory completion of applications requirements, noting additional points for high schools and rural areas (see rubric)	\$1,400,000	Assessed at the time of application review.

2	<b>Serving Economically Disadvantaged Students</b> School enrolls at least 100 new educationally disadvantaged students in CSP-funded grades	\$200,000	Assessed at the time of application review, based on enrollment projections.
3	<b>Exceptional Community Engagement and Support</b> Families, community organizations, representatives	\$200,000	Assessed at the time of application review.
4	<b>Diverse Charter Model</b> Meeting an unmet need through an innovative model that does not currently exist in the community	\$200,000	Assessed at the time of application review.
	<b>Total Possible Award Amount</b>	\$2,000,000	

Interested applicants will complete the attached RFA Application and submit budget proposals for the purpose of opening **high-quality new** charter schools, **expanding high-quality** charter schools, or **replicating high-quality** charter schools (see Appendix 1 for definitions in bold, italicized terms).

Schools seeking OT funding to expand or replicate will need to affirm on the Letter of Intent (LOI)/Eligibility Check submission (see Appendix 2) that they have sought authorization to open, expand, or replicate. While schools are permitted to apply for CSP funds *before* authorization is complete, OT will not permit schools to begin drawing down reimbursements until that approval has been received. Subgrantees requesting funds for both planning and implementation periods will have access to planning funds upon finalization of the subgrant contract. Access to implementation funding will be contingent on successful completion of the planning period as determined through ongoing subgrant monitoring. Subgrantees requesting funds exclusively for implementation purposes will have access to one year of funding at a time with access to funds corresponding to proposed expenses in each ensuing year conditioned upon satisfactory monitoring reports. The LOI will also require schools to disclose whether they have already received CSP funding through the federally-run Developer or CMO programs; those that have will be ineligible to receive an OT subgrant to carry out the same or substantially similar activities, though they may remain eligible for a subgrant to support further expansion. For further eligibility details please refer to Appendix 2.

### **New schools**

All schools applying for a new school grant are eligible for the maximum award amount of \$2,000,000. New school grants are expected to be awarded for spend-down within a period of three years (36 months). Subgrantees requesting funding to open a new school should note that the *planning* period is the time between the grant award and up to the first day of school and can be no longer than 18 months. The *implementation* period begins no sooner than the first day of

school. Schools may purchase supplies and materials, technology, furniture, etc. designated for implementation up to 90 days before the first day of school.

All items in the school's budget request must be clearly designated as being part of the planning or implementation phase, and sub-recipients should reference their grant award letter for specific time periods. For guidance and a description of allowable costs in the planning and or implementation phases please refer to [2 CFR Part 200, non-regulatory guidance](#), and the Allowable Cost Guide as a reference when constructing the budget request.

### **Expansion Schools**

The term "expand" from [ESEA §4310 \(7\)](#), when used with respect to a high-quality<sup>2</sup> charter school (as defined in [ESEA §4310 \(7\)](#)), means to increase enrollment or add one or more grades to the high-quality charter school.

OT will consider a prospective applicant to be eligible for a CSP subgrant award for expansion if the applicant proposes an approved addition of one or more grades (or grade sections) to a high-quality public charter school. This grade expansion will equal the number of additional seats approved by the authorizer.

Expansion schools are eligible for a maximum award of \$2,000,000 (inclusive of all escalators). OT anticipates expansion grants to run for one to three years (12-36 months).

### **Replication Schools**

The term "replicate" from [ESEA §4310 \(9\)](#) (Page 267 / 449) when used with respect to a high-quality<sup>3</sup> charter school (as defined in [ESEA §4310 \(7\)](#)), means to open a new charter school, or a new campus of a high-quality charter school, based on the educational model of an existing high-quality charter school, under an existing charter or an additional charter, if permitted or required by State law.

OT anticipates replication grants to run for one to three years (12-36 months). Schools applying for replication grants may choose to include a planning period (not to exceed 18 months), followed by up to an additional 18-month time period for implementation. The planning period is meant to allow subgrantees 18 months of funding for planning activities for the successful opening of a new charter school. Please refer to the Allowable Cost Guide for a description of costs allowed in the planning and implementation periods.

## **Application Process**

The application process consists of several stages.

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<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 1 for full definition of 'high-quality.'

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix 1 for full definition of 'high-quality.'

## Letter of Intent / Eligibility Check

The LOI is essentially an eligibility check. This check is to ensure interested applicants meet federal and state requirements for participation in the subgrant competition. It is structured as a comprehensive checklist (see Appendix 2 Letter of Intent / Eligibility Checklist). The LOI must be completed and submitted on the application platform by 5:00 p.m. Central on Tuesday, February 6, 2024.

In the interest of fairness to applicants submitting complete submissions in a timely manner, applicants submitting the Eligibility Check after the deadline may not be invited to participate in the full RFA. All accompanying documentation requested in the check must also be submitted by the required deadline. OT will host office hours during the eligibility check completion period to answer queries (see Table 2 for dates). Applicants eligible to move to the second round (Subgrant Application stage) will be notified via email by Tuesday, February 12, 2024.

Table 2: Key Steps in the Application and Awards Process

Key Information	
Request for Applications Title	OT Subgrant Application
RFA ID	RFA 202401
RFA Issuing Office	The Opportunity Trust
Program and RFA Questions	csp@theopportunitytrust.org
Budget Questions	cspfinance@theopportunitytrust.org
Grant Application Portal	Visit <a href="https://theopportunitytrust.org">theopportunitytrust.org</a> for submission instructions
Key Events	Key Dates
Intro to CSP webinar	January 16, 2024
Pre RFA webinar (applicants strongly advised to attend)	January 23, 2024
Budget support webinar (applicants strongly advised to attend)	January 26, 2024
Letter of Intent (LOI) / Eligibility Check submission window	January 26 to February 6, 2024
OT to hold office hours for LOI related questions	January 26 – February 5, 2024

OT to notify eligible candidates after LOI review	February 12, 2024
RFA opens for eligible applicants	February 13, 2024
OT to hold office hours for RFA related questions	February 13 - March 22, 2024
RFA submission deadline	March 22, 2024
RFA respondents to complete CSP-MO administration feedback survey (mandatory)	February 19 - 23, 2024
Peer review period	March 25 - April 5, 2024
Capacity Interviews with finalists	April 8 - 12, 2024
Awards to be announced	Week of April 15, 2024
Post-award call to finalize monitoring and reporting requirements	April 29-30, 2024
202301 RFA Cycle Fiscal Year begins	May 01, 2024

### **Request for Applications (RFA)**

Applicants invited to participate in the RFA will be able to access the RFA application beginning February 13, 2024. The deadline to submit applications is March 22, 2024. RFA applications and accompanying documents must be submitted online on the grant application portal.

Appendix 3 outlines the Selection Criteria Rubric for scoring applications. Candidates are encouraged to use the rubric as a guide to structuring the project application narrative. Appendix 4 lists the required accompanying documents required for each application. These documents are intended to support the project narrative, additional documents may be included as a supplement to support the application. We urge applicants to be concise and judicious in selecting and submitting additional supporting documentation.

The RFA narrative and accompanying documents must be submitted in PDF format (except for the budget submission which must be completed using the pre-populated Excel template provided by OT). Narrative attachments (in PDF format) must be letter-size documents, double-spaced and with one-inch margins, and all text should be size 11 or 12 in Arial, Calibri, or Times New Roman font. Applicants should be succinct in their responses; the narrative should not exceed 30 pages.

Applications must be time-stamped as having been received by 5:00 p.m. Central on Tuesday,

February 6, 2024. Applicants are encouraged to submit the application well in advance of the deadline to avoid any technical issues or unforeseen delays. OT will host office hours to provide technical assistance to applicants from February 13 - March 22, 2024. Applications received after the deadline will not be considered for this cycle's subgrant competition.

### **Subgrant Budget Instructions**

All applications must be accompanied by a three-year program budget for CSP-related activities, accompanying CSP budget narrative, and a five-year school operating budget. For purposes of this subgrant, the first subgrant year is expected to begin on May 1, 2024, and end on April 30, 2025.

#### *CSP Budget Instructions*

Applicants must submit a budget that details proposed expenditures for each year in the subgrant period. The school's CSP budget must identify all budget line items by General Ledger Account Code ("G/L" Code"), in conformance with the [Missouri Financial Accounting Manual](#).

If new school and replication applicants choose to include a planning period, the planning period cannot exceed 18 months in their grant application. Applicants are required to familiarize themselves with the specific grant administration requirements in [2 CFR 200](#), non-regulatory guidance, and may also refer to the Allowable Cost Guide for more details of allowable expenses in each project period. A cost is allowable if the goods and services purchased are assignable to the grant. All applicants are required to be knowledgeable about the different types of allowability, by different phases of the project (e.g. planning vs. implementation).

There can be no commingling of CSP and general operating funds, which applicants can account for by establishing a separate class in their accounting structure for the coding of CSP-related expenditures. Items purchased using CSP money must be appropriately labeled stating the source of funding and appropriate grant information.

Budget templates will be made available to applicants through the application portal. OT will host a budget preparation technical assistance webinar before the RFA opening and schedule office hours to provide budget assistance once the RFA is open to eligible applicants.

#### *CSP Budget Narrative Instructions*

The CSP budget narrative should tie in with the activities outlined in the project narrative and should detail the viability of the school after the CSP grant funding ends. Prospective subgrantees will need to articulate the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Timebound) Goals around which their project will be oriented. All proposed expenditures and grant-supported activities will need to align with at least one SMART Goal. The narrative must detail activities in the planning and implementation periods. The narrative should also describe

how the school intends to maintain financial sustainability after the end of the subgrant period.

The budget narrative must be no more than five pages. Narrative attachments (in PDF format) must be letter-size documents, double-spaced and with one-inch margins, and all text should be size 11 or 12 in Arial, Calibri, or Times New Roman font.

If schools wish to provide additional supporting documents (e.g. a brief narrative for the five-year school operating budget, or a facilities plan), they may include this as part of the supplemental appendices) these must tie in to, and support the project narrative. We urge schools to submit documents judiciously, restricting them to documents that strongly support the activities the school foresees supporting with CSP funding.

### *General Budget Guidelines & Restrictions*

The intent of CSP funding is that grant-funded expenditures are meant to supplement, not supplant, state and local funding, and the budget created as part of this application should focus solely on the purpose and goals of the CSP project. Costs per budget line item must be specific, not estimates, and applicants should avail themselves of the notes space and backup budgeting tabs in the budget template to describe assumptions and explain whether the related expenses are for planning or implementation phases of the grant. Budget costs must qualify as being necessary, [reasonable](#), and [allowable](#). As defined in [2 CFR 200.404](#) a cost is reasonable if, in its nature and amount, it does not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person under the circumstances prevailing at the time the decision was made to incur the cost. In determining the reasonableness of a given cost, consideration must be given to whether the cost is of a type generally recognized as ordinary and necessary for the operation of the non-Federal entity or the proper and efficient performance of the Federal award, and market prices for comparable goods or services for the geographic area.

As a general matter, allowable costs include fundable activities defined in [ESEA §4303 \(h\)1-6](#) (page 255 of 449). General examples of allowable costs include **(but are not limited to)**<sup>4</sup>:

- Personnel expenses, including fringe benefits, incurred either before or after the school's opening, provided that these expenses are associated with initial planning activities (i.e., as opposed to ongoing operations), such as program and curriculum development and integration, and teacher and staff recruiting.
- Professional development activities related to the school opening or expansion (as opposed to regular, ongoing professional development) including staff training, instruction and curriculum development, and organizational development.
- Travel costs for school leaders, staff, and school board to attend conferences and training, including visits to other charter schools.

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<sup>4</sup>This list is NOT comprehensive, and applicants MUST go through [CFR 200, non-regulatory guidance](#), and the Allowable Cost Guide prior to submitting their budget as part of their application.

- Costs associated with creating and implementing office functions, such as accounting systems, attendance and registration systems, and human resources policies.
- Costs associated with the installation of computers, data systems, networks, and telephones, instructional, staff, and administrative computer hardware and software, computer lab equipment, and other instructional equipment.
- Furniture and fixtures, classroom equipment, lab equipment, school library/media center equipment.
- Textbooks, curriculum, library/classroom books, and reference materials (includes electronic media).
- Playground structures and equipment.
- Rental or occupancy costs for the school facility for a reasonable period of time in preparation for the school's opening.
- Communications and promotional materials.
- Carrying out community engagement activities, which may include paying the cost of student and staff recruitment.

Unallowable costs include **(but are not limited to)**:

- Facility construction, renovation, or other capital improvement costs, except as described above.
- Apparel.
- Lobbying.
- Student activities.
- Utilities and other facility operating expenses on or after the first day of school.
- Salaries or related fringe benefits after the school opens.
- Funding cannot be redirected for other uses (e.g. traditional public schools that are not charters).

This list is not inclusive but is presented to show typical items that cannot be covered with grant funds.

### **Scoring Process**

To ensure subgrants are awarded to the most capable applicants, each proposal for a CSP subgrant will be reviewed by an external, independent Peer Review Working Group selected through an application process. At any given time, the panel will consist of between 5-7 members. All subgrant applications will be scored by no fewer than three and no more than five reviewers, and no peer reviewer will be assigned more than five subgrants to review during any single competition cycle. These reviewers will receive training on the effective use of the Selection Criteria Rubric outlined in Appendix 3 and will use the rubric to rate potential subgrant proposals. Individuals selected as peer reviewers will have relevant expertise in charter school operation, governance, authorization, finance, administration, leadership, and law. The group will include individuals from diverse backgrounds, including from underrepresented groups. Reviewers must sign an assurance regarding conflict of interest to ensure that all applications

are reviewed in a bias-free manner. Reviewers will be required to recuse themselves from the evaluation of any application for which they have a perceived or real conflict of interest. All peer reviewers will be offered a small stipend to reflect the value of their expertise and time spent reviewing the subgrant applications, and to broaden the pool of interested peer reviewer applicants.

The CSP subgrant is competitive; therefore, high scores from peer reviewers can increase an application's likelihood of getting funded. OT staff will conduct the final review of applications to ensure that applications comply with all requirements and will determine the final budget for each subgrant recipient after evaluating whether proposed activities are reasonable, allowable, and necessary. Only applications meeting the minimum required scores (70% of total available points) will be considered for funding. In instances where there are more successful applications than available funding, the highest-scoring applications will be considered for funding. There is no guarantee that submitting an application will result in funding, or in a proposal being funded at the requested level.

### **Award Process and Start Date**

Applicants and the grant recipient's authorizer will receive notification on the status of their application in the week of April 15, 2024. If approved for funding the award letter will notify the applicant of any additional information, including budget modification, required before final approval. Successful subgrantees will be required to participate in a CSP Subgrant Post-Award call to be scheduled between April 29-30, 2024. Following the post-award call applicants will receive notice of final approval. This email will contain the start date of the grant and a grant agreement which must be signed by the subgrantee's leadership, and by the chairperson of the Board of Trustees. This agreement must be emailed back to OT and uploaded to the subgrantee's grant folder on the portal.

## **Reporting and Monitoring Requirements**

### **Reporting requirements**

OT is required to track specific information as part of the administration of a successful and compliant CSP subgrant. Any subgrantee awarded a CSP subgrant will be required to:

1. File an Annual Progress Report (APR) within 90 days following each grant award year. If an APR is not filed, subgrantees risk losing their funds for the following year. This report comprises:
  - a. Summary of progress towards grant goals.
  - b. A copy of the Monitoring Rubric, which must be completed and submitted annually (at a minimum). This tool measures performance towards project goals, helps to ensure compliance with reporting, and ensures that Corrective Action Plans (if any are adhered to) and Technical Assistance is documented.

- c. Reporting on academic achievement and growth at the school and specifically for CSP-funded grades. This will include a copy of the school's annual performance report.
  - d. Annual Financial Report (AFR) section that details all grant expenditures. The financial narrative will document grant expenditures for the year, variances against budget, reasons for these, and how the grantee intends to spend grant funds for the remainder of the grant period.
  - e. Property inventory for items purchased with CSP grant funds.
2. File a Final Grant Report within 90 days of the end of the final grant year. This report should contain the following:
  - a. Brief Executive Summary summarizing the subgrantees' performance against grant objectives.
  - b. Report on each grant goal, including a summary of annual, and final progress towards each goal.
  - c. A report on the academic achievement and growth of the school, including a copy of the school's most recent [annual report to their authorizer](#).
  - d. Financial narrative report detailing how the grant was expended for each year of the grant, and totals for the entire span of the grant
  - e. Expenditure report that details 100% of awarded grant funds and includes a property inventory of all equipment and non-consumable goods purchased with grant funds (in accordance with Management Standards for property purchased with CSP subgrant award funds as outlined in [2 CFR 200.318](#)).
3. Provide information requested in annual surveys (for example, but not limited to, parents survey, RFA survey) and other data collection projects.
4. Provide contact information for current board members (identifying officers), including a phone number and email address for each board member.
5. Notify OT of any transition in administration, leadership, or board at the school during the period for which the subgrant is awarded. Changes in the school grant contact will require the new school grant contact to complete the OT Grant Post-Award webinar within fifteen business days of joining the subgrantee.

### **Monitoring parameters**

OT will utilize the subgrantee's response to the "Certifications and Assurances & Financial Controls and Audits Assurances" (see Appendix 6) to determine the depth and breadth of monitoring required. Subgrantees are expected to participate in all technical assistance, monitoring, and reporting elements as a condition of receiving grant funds. All subgrantees will have access to the Monitoring Guide and must complete the Monitoring Rubric Sheet, at the very least on an annual basis.

All subgrantees will participate in a desk review, yearly onsite visits, and technical assistance as required. In addition, OT is required to ensure that applicants that receive subgrants under the CSP-MO Program grant implement the activities described in the subgrantee's application with fidelity, adhere to federal rules and regulations, and accomplish their performance goals.

This monitoring system reviews subgrantees each year. At the close of each grant fiscal year, subgrantees will submit an annual progress report to OT delineating their progress against their performance agreement, and if necessary, explain adjustments to future plans to ensure all outcomes and goals are met.

### **Year 0 Planning**

If grantees request a planning period (new school, and replication applicants only), a desk review will be conducted quarterly. At the beginning of the grant period OT will ensure that there is a signed contract on file, and at the end of the first year OT will ensure that technical assistance is completed, the grant award spending is timely, and an APR has been submitted. All subgrantees will receive an onsite monitoring visit within the first 12 months of school operation to ensure activities occur as approved within the grant and for OT to gather information regarding future technical assistance.

### **Year 1 through Year 3 Implementation**

A site visit will be conducted by grant program staff and/ or outside experts (as needed) reviewing a list of indicators to identify progress toward grant objectives, spending according to budget, educational programming, enrollment procedures, receipt of other federal funds and compliance to various other requirements, including fulfillment of TA, review of certifications, and submission of the APR. This comprehensive review looks at academic performance, the learning environment, organizational effectiveness, governance, and quality leadership through a variety of lenses. The school is provided with a final written report that includes suggestions for both short- and long-term school improvements.

### **Ongoing Desk Review**

Subgrantees shall submit documentation of progress toward meeting specific goals and objectives listed within the grant through the Annual Progress Report, as outlined above in the reporting requirements section. Additionally, personnel or staff funded through the grant will be compensated monthly through a reimbursement process, and the APR will contain details in an annual financial expenditure report (AFR). OT staff shall review financial records to ensure appropriate evidence of expenditures and record keeping.

Subgrantees that do not receive satisfactory reports and fail to address corrective actions shall be considered for non-renewal of further awards and may be subject to further sanctions. Schools that fail to adhere to subgrantee RFP and/or federal guidelines or fail to demonstrate

high academic achievement will be subject to corrective action and placed on high-risk status until concerns are resolved. At a minimum, Corrective Action Plans include a description of the corrective action, expected date of completion, responsible parties, notification to School Board and Authorizer, evidence required of correction and evidence of changes moving forward to address the concern.

## Appendix 1: Definitions from Governing Legislation and Other Sources

**Charter School:** From ([ESEA §4310](#) (2) (page 265/449), a charter school is defined as a public school that—

- (A) in accordance with a specific State statute authorizing the granting of charters to schools, is exempt from significant State or local rules that inhibit the flexible operation and management of public schools, but not from any rules relating to the other requirements of this paragraph;
- (B) is created by a developer as a public school, or is adapted by a developer from an existing public school, and is operated under public supervision and direction;
- (C) operates in pursuit of a specific set of educational objectives determined by the school's developer and agreed to by the authorized public chartering agency;
- (D) provides a program of elementary or secondary education, or both; • (E) is nonsectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations, and is not affiliated with a sectarian school or religious institution;
- (F) does not charge tuition;
- (G) complies with the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.), section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g) (commonly referred to as the "Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974"), and part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;
- (H) is a school to which parents choose to send their children, and that
  - (i) admits students on the basis of a lottery, consistent with section 4303(c)(3)(A), if more students apply for admission than can be accommodated;  
or
  - (ii) in the case of a school that has an affiliated charter school (such as a school that is part of the same network of schools), automatically enrolls students who are enrolled in the immediate prior grade level of the affiliated charter school and, for any additional student openings or student openings created through regular attrition in student enrollment in the affiliated charter school and the enrolling school, admits students on the basis of a lottery as described in clause (i);
- (I) agrees to comply with the same Federal and State audit requirements as do other elementary schools and secondary schools in the State, unless such State audit requirements are waived by the State;

- (J) meets all applicable Federal, State, and local health and safety requirements; • (K) operates in accordance with State law;
- (L) has a written performance contract with the authorized public chartering agency in the State that includes a description of how student performance will be measured in charter schools pursuant to State assessments that are required of other schools and pursuant to any other assessments mutually agreeable to the authorized public chartering agency and the charter school; and
- (M) may serve students in early childhood education programs or postsecondary students.

**Developer:** (from [ESEA §4310](#) (5) (Page 267 / 449)) The term “developer” means an individual or group of individuals (including a public or private nonprofit organization), which may include teachers, administrators and other school staff, parents, or other members of the local community in which a charter school project will be carried out.

**Expansion:** (from [ESEA §4310](#) (7) (Page 267 / 449)) The term “expand”, when used with respect to a high-quality charter school, means to significantly increase enrollment or add one or more grades to the high-quality charter school.

**High-quality charter school:** (from [ESEA §4310](#) (8) (Page 267 / 449)) means a charter school that—

- (A) shows evidence of strong academic results, which may include strong student academic growth, as determined by a State;
- (B) has no significant issues in the areas of student safety, financial and operational management, or statutory or regulatory compliance;
- (C) has demonstrated success in significantly increasing student academic achievement, including graduation rates where applicable, for all students served by the charter school; and
- (D) has demonstrated success in increasing student academic achievement, including graduation rates where applicable, for each of the subgroups of students, as defined in section 1111(c)(2), except that such demonstration is not required in a case in which the number of students in a group is insufficient to yield statistically reliable information or the results would reveal personally identifiable information about an individual student.

OT further defines ‘high quality’ as a school where the last year’s composite proficiency rate (Math + ELA) in the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) is at least five percentage points higher than the district in which the school resides, excluding selective enrollment schools.

**Replication:** (from [ESEA §4310](#) (9) (Page 267 / 449)) The term “replicate”, when used with respect to a high-quality charter school, means to open a new charter school, or a new campus

of a high-quality charter school, based on the educational model of an existing high-quality charter school, under an existing charter or an additional charter, if permitted or required by State law.

# Appendix 2: Letter of Intent/Eligibility Check

(The Eligibility Checklist must be completed on the portal with the deadlines outlined in Table 2)

The Letter of Intent/Eligibility Check is the first stage of the OT CSP Grant Application. All applicants applying for OT CSP funding must complete the Letter of Intent/Eligibility Check AND submit required documentation on the portal.

## Content from the Eligibility Checklist

Please check the relevant application category:

- New
- Expansion
- Replication

Please list your sponsor<sup>5</sup>: \_\_\_\_\_

Please answer the following questions:

1. For new schools: Have you received your charter approval letter (affirmative vote) from the Missouri State Board of Education (SBOE)?
  - Yes
  - No

If no on #1, have you submitted a letter of intent to your sponsor?

  - Yes
  - No
  
2. For currently operating schools: Have you received at least a three-year authorization/renewal in the past two years *and* received the sponsor's (for a material amendment) or the authorizer's approval to expand or replicate (see [ESEA§ 4310](#) for the definition of expansion and replication)?
  - Yes
  - No

For replication applicants: Are you replicating within the host district boundary?

  - Yes
  - No

<sup>5</sup> <https://mcpssc.mo.gov/media/pdf/understanding-charter-public-schools-accountability>

3. Applicants must demonstrate that they **meet the federal definition of a charter school** by marking yes to the questions outlined below ([ESEA §4310](#) (2) (page 265/449). All boxes must be checked on the portal in order to meet the definition of a federal charter school:
- (A) in accordance with a specific State statute authorizing the granting of charters to schools, is exempt from significant State or local rules that inhibit the flexible operation and management of public schools, but not from any rules relating to the other requirements of this paragraph;
  - (B) is created by a developer as a public school, or is adapted by a developer from an existing public school, and is operated under public supervision and direction;
  - (C) operates in pursuit of a specific set of educational objectives determined by the school's developer and agreed to by the authorized public chartering agency;
  - (D) provides a program of elementary or secondary education, or both; • (E) is nonsectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations, and is not affiliated with a sectarian school or religious institution;
  - (F) does not charge tuition;
  - (G) complies with the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.), section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g) (commonly referred to as the "Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974"), and part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;
  - (H) is a school to which parents choose to send their children, and that
    - (i) admits students on the basis of a lottery, consistent with section 4303(c)(3)(A), if more students apply for admission than can be accommodated; or
    - (ii) in the case of a school that has an affiliated charter school (such as a school that is part of the same network of schools), automatically enrolls students who are enrolled in the immediate prior grade level of the affiliated charter school and, for any additional student openings or student openings created through regular attrition in student enrollment in the affiliated charter school and the enrolling school, admits students on the basis of a lottery as described in clause (i);
  - (I) agrees to comply with the same Federal and State audit requirements as do other elementary schools and secondary schools in the State, unless such State audit requirements are waived by the State;
  - (J) meets all applicable Federal, State, and local health and safety requirements; • (K) operates in accordance with State law;

- (L) has a written performance contract with the authorized public chartering agency in the State that includes a description of how student performance will be measured in charter schools pursuant to State assessments that are required of other schools and pursuant to any other assessments mutually agreeable to the authorized public chartering agency and the charter school; and
  - (M) may serve students in early childhood education programs or postsecondary students.
4. Accompanying documents for **all school types** must include those listed below and any additional documents required in the sections below relative to subgrant type:
- Authorized charter letter (approved State Board of Education Resolution) to open a new school, expand, or replicate a high-quality charter school. For new schools, documentation of charter application submission is required for eligibility (see application process, above).
    - Note: *If the expansion is proposed within the host district boundary, please provide additional documentation with your sponsor's approval of the charter's material amendment.*
  - Documentation indicating that the applicant is a high-quality candidate (see definition in Appendix 1).
  - A completed Notification Letter to the sponsor and the authorizer that the school intends to apply for CSP funding.
5. To be considered for a CSP grant **new** school applicants must demonstrate they are high-quality applicants by providing the documents listed below.
- Evidence of a committed board of directors to lead the project. (Please provide complete bios for all board members).
  - Identified a high-quality instructional and/or organizational leader who has a track record that indicates they would likely facilitate a strong new school opening (Please provide the bio.)
  - Evidence of need for the school.
6. High-quality **expansion** or **replication** schools must also provide the following documents.
- Evidence of strong academic results, such as above-average scores relative to the host district/state in academic growth and achievement scores (provide the previous year's assessment results)
  - No significant issues identified by authorizer in the areas listed below (provide school's most recent renewal resolution)
    - Student safety
    - School finances
    - Operational management

Statutory / regulatory compliance

7. All applicants must provide an IRS **501(c)(3) tax determination letter**
8. Evidence of the **school's admission policies**, which must include use of a lottery in the case of oversubscription
9. If your school has **received CSP funding in the past** then please provide the following documentation:
  - At least three years of improved educational results. Compliance with ESEA [§4310 \(8\) parts A through D](#) (page 267/449), i.e. is a charter school that –
    - shows evidence of strong academic results, which may include strong student academic growth, as determined by a State; has no significant issues in the areas of student safety, financial and operational management, or statutory or regulatory compliance; (e.g. could be evidenced by renewal notice)
    - has demonstrated success in significantly increasing student academic achievement, including graduation rates where applicable, for all students served by the charter school; and
    - has demonstrated success in increasing student academic achievement, including graduation rates where applicable, for each of the subgroups of students, as defined in section 1111(c)(2), except that such
    - demonstration is not required in a case in which the number of students in a group is insufficient to yield statistically reliable information or the results would reveal personally identifiable information about an individual student.
  - Evidence that the previous CSP grant received is not for the same activities for which OT CSP funding is being sought. (e.g. could be evidenced by grant narrative, interim / final grant reports etc.).
10. If applicable, for any existing or proposed contract between a charter and a for-profit management organization (including a nonprofit management organization operated by or on behalf of a for-profit entity), without regard to whether the management organization or its related entities exercises full or substantial administrative control over the charter school or the CSP project, the applicant must provide a management contract (or draft) that details the following information or equivalent information that the applicant has submitted to the authorized public chartering agency–
  - (A) A copy of the existing contract with the for-profit management organization or a description of the terms of the contract, including the name and contact information of the management organization; the cost (i.e., fixed costs and estimates of any ongoing costs or fees), including the amount of CSP funds

proposed to be used toward such cost, and the percentage such cost represents of the school's overall funding; the duration; roles and responsibilities of the management organization; and steps the applicant will take to ensure that it pays fair market value for any services or other items purchased or leased from the management organization, makes all programmatic decisions, maintains control over all CSP funds, and directly administers or supervises the administration of the grant in accordance with 34 CFR 75.701;

- (B) A description of any business or financial relationship between the charter school developer and the management organization, including payments, contract terms, and any property owned, operated, or controlled by the management organization or related individuals or entities that will be used by the charter school;
- (C) The name and contact information for each member of the governing board of the charter school and a list of the management organization's officers, chief administrator, or other administrators, and any staff involved in approving or executing the management contract; and a description of any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including financial interests, and how the applicant will resolve any actual or perceived conflicts of interest to ensure compliance with 2 CFR 200.318(c);
- (D) A description of how the applicant will ensure that members of the governing board of the charter school are not selected, removed, controlled, or employed by the management organization and that the charter school's legal, accounting, and auditing services will be procured independently from the management organization;
- (E) An explanation of how the applicant will ensure that the management contract is severable, severing the management contract will not cause the proposed charter school to close, the duration of the management contract will not extend beyond the expiration date of the school's charter, and renewal of the management contract will not occur without approval and affirmative action by the governing board of the charter school; and
- (F) A description of the steps the applicant will take to ensure that it maintains control over all student records and has a process in place to provide those records to another public school or school district in a timely manner upon the transfer of a student from the charter school to another public school, including due to closure of the charter school, in accordance with section 4308 of the ESEA (2022 NFP).
- A description of the quality controls agreed to between the eligible applicant and the authorized public chartering agency involved, such as a contract or performance agreement, how a school's performance in the State's accountability system and impact on student achievement (which may include student academic growth) will be one of the most important factors for renewal or revocation of the school's charter, and how the State entity and the authorized

public chartering agency involved will reserve the right to revoke or not renew a school's charter based on financial, structural, or operational factors involving the management of the school (4303(f)).

# Appendix 3: Selection Criteria Rubric

(Proposed) Charter School Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_/\_\_/\_\_

The rubric in this section will be used by peer reviewers to evaluate the application as a whole for a total of 86 points. Addressing the Priority Points section is optional; all other parts of the rubric must be addressed in the application. Priority points will be applied to applicants demonstrating they meet the criteria for each, allowing for a total possible score of 16 priority points. To be considered for funding applicants must score at least 70% of the total possible points, i.e. at least 60 points and all required parts must be addressed.

Directions to peer reviewers: Using the rubric below please score each section of the RFP on a scale of 0-4. Enter the total score for each section on the final **Application Total Points Checklist**. Please enter comments expanding on the rationale behind scoring, on the space provided for comments after each section.

Review Standards	
0-1	<b>Limited or Weak Evidence:</b> Applicant provides inadequate justification to support key elements of the project goals. There are insufficient descriptions / details of the plan to assess alignment of design elements with stated project goals.
2	<b>Moderate Evidence:</b> The response indicates a grasp of the key issues, as demonstrated by a reasonable and comprehensive response. It addresses the review criteria with information showing some preparation and a reasonable picture of how the school will operate.
3	<b>Good Evidence:</b> Applicant shows sound understanding of project requirements, makes clear linkages between resources and effort required for successful grant implementation. No major deficiencies exist and most responses are comprehensive and well-reasoned.
4	<b>Strong Evidence:</b> The applicant is able to justify the response and has a thorough understanding of key issues. The response indicates subject matter expertise and articulates key elements and critical drivers of success aligned to project goals.

<b>Application Total Points Checklist</b>		
<b>CSP-MO</b>	<b>Points Awarded</b>	<b>Points Available</b>
<b>Section A - Academic Plan - Design and Capacity</b>		<b>32 (4 for each subsection)</b>
<b>Section B - Organizational Plan and Capacity</b>		<b>24 (4 for each subsection)</b>
<b>Section C - Financial Plan and Capacity</b>		<b>20 (4 for each subsection)</b>
<b>Section D - Project Plan</b>		<b>10 points (total)</b> 2.5x points in the review standard points scale (0-4)
<b>Section E - Priority Points</b>		<b>16 (4 for each subsection)</b>  <i>don't count to the denominator</i>
<b>TOTAL</b>	(cut score is 70% of available points, 60)	<b>86 points total for requirements</b>  with 102 available (if all priority points are awarded)

# Appendix 4: Application Narrative Requirements

<p><b>CSP-MO School Project Application Narrative Overview</b></p>
<p><b>Section A - Academic Plan - Design and Capacity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A1 - Mission, vision, and goals</li> <li>● A2 - Educational program and curriculum</li> <li>● A3 - Assessing student performance</li> <li>● A4 - School calendar and daily schedule</li> <li>● A5 - Students the school will serve</li> <li>● A6 - Plans for serving educationally disadvantaged student populations (including students with disabilities, English Learners, and low-income students)</li> <li>● A7 - Grant project goals</li> <li>● A8 - School climate and culture</li> </ul>
<p><b>Section B - Organizational Plan and Capacity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● B1 - Governance &amp; governing documents</li> <li>● B2 - Personnel - roles and responsibilities</li> <li>● B3 - Personnel - recruitment, retention, replacement, and professional development</li> <li>● B4 - Student recruitment and enrollment</li> <li>● B5 - Parent, educator, and community involvement</li> </ul>
<p><b>Section C - Financial Plan and Capacity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● C1 - Budget</li> <li>● C2 - Financial management</li> <li>● C3 - Facility</li> <li>● C4 - Transportation Plan</li> <li>● C5 - Plan for post-grant sustainability</li> </ul>
<p><b>Section D - Project Plan</b></p>
<p><b>Section E - Priority Points</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Schools serving rural populations</li> <li>● Adding or creating high schools</li> <li>● Diverse and innovative charter models</li> <li>● High-quality educator- and community-centered school design models for expansion, replication, or new start designs</li> </ul>
<p><b>Section 6 - Appendix</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Charter Management Organization (CMO) or University Partnership - <i>if applicable</i></li> </ul>



## **Section A: Academic Plan Design and Capacity**

### A1 Mission, Vision, and Goals

A response that provides strong evidence will include the following:

- A compelling one or two sentence mission statement that defines the purpose of the school; a mission statement should articulate what the school intends to do, for whom, and to what extent;
- A coherent and concise vision statement describing what impact the school will have for students, staff, and the community in 5 years and 10 years if it is achieving its mission;
- A description of any innovative or unique features of the proposed school or educational model. The applicant should explain how these features will support the school's mission and foster student success; and
- A description of the school's projected population, how projections were made, and how this specific school will meet the needs of the anticipated student population.
- A coherent and concise summary of performance goals over the term of the charter.

### A2 Educational Program and Curriculum

A response that provides strong evidence will include the following:

- A description of the educational program, including the planned curriculum and instructional models;
- An explanation of why this program was chosen in light of the school's mission, vision, and projected student population;
- A coherent and concise description of the school's educational philosophy with priorities that are meaningful, manageable, measurable, and focused on improving student outcomes; and
- Citations to research that shows the chosen curriculum and instructional model will lead to the intended outcomes for the project student population.

### A3 Assessing Student Performance

A response that provides strong evidence will include the following:

- An outline of the school's approach to evaluating student progress through state-required assessments and other means specific to the school. This description should include:
  - Why the applicant chose these assessments,
  - How the applicant will measure progress toward performance goals,
  - How and by whom teachers will be trained to gather, analyze, and use performance data to improve instruction,
  - When the board will review what performance data,
  - How performance data will be used, and when, to modify programming for individual students, groups of students, or classes, and

- o How performance will affect student promotion and, if applicable, graduation.

#### A4 School Calendar and Daily Schedule

A response that provides strong evidence will include the following:

- A description of how the calendar and daily schedule support the school's mission;
- An explanation of how the calendar and schedule were informed by the school's educational philosophy and academic strategy (including student performance goals);
- Attach as appendices (1) a school calendar for the first year of the subgrant period, and (2) a sample daily class schedule for one CSP-funded grade in each planned grade level (elementary, middle, and/or high school), showing daily hours of operation and allocation of time for core instruction, supplemental instruction, extra-curricular activity, and afterschool activities, as applicable.

#### A5 Students the School Will Serve

A response that provides strong evidence will include the following:

- An Anticipated Enrollment Table for each year of the CSP project period;
- Evidence, including demographic data, to indicate that school and grade level enrollment projections for each year are realistic; and
- A description of expected student attrition and mobility, and how the school will respond to those trends.

#### A6 Special Student Populations

A response that provides strong evidence will include the following:

- An outline of the school's plan to identify students included in these special student populations (economically disadvantaged, children with disabilities, migrant students, English learners, neglected or delinquent students, homeless students, and/or students who are in foster care);
- An explanation of how the school will develop plans for these students' education—including developing needed individual educational plans—and how their progress will be monitored; this includes the roles board members, leaders, staff, and parents will play in the development and implementation of plans, as well as progress monitoring; and
- If not outlined in previous sections, an explanation of how the school's curriculum and teachers' instruction has been designed and/or will be adapted to serve identified needs of these students;

#### A7 Grant Project Goals

Identify 3-5 SMART Goals aligned to the purpose of the CSP subgrant application.

A response that provides strong evidence will include the following:

- Goals and objectives aligned with the project budget and the activities set forth therein;
- At least one goal addresses student achievement or growth on year-end ELA or Math assessments;
- At least one goal addresses achievement or growth for one or more of the special student populations identified in Section A6; and
- A description of how data will be collected for each goal, i.e., a realistic process for gathering and analyzing data that will be used by the school team internally to track progress toward these goals.

#### A8 School Climate and Culture

A response that provides strong evidence will include the following:

- A description of the desired culture or ethos of the school;
- An explanation of how the desired culture will support the school's mission and promote a positive learning environment;
- A description of how the school will address the social and emotional development of students;
- The school's student behavioral philosophy and its alignment to the educational philosophy, including an outline of the conduct or discipline policy for both the general student population and for students with special needs, addressing how positive behavior will be reinforced and how inappropriate behavior will be discouraged;
- A description of how the school will promote the culture with students, board members, staff, parents, and community members, through training and other means.

## **Section B: Organizational Plan and Capacity**

### B1 Governance

A response that provides strong evidence will include the following:

- A description of the size, composition, and proposed committee structure of the board;
- An explanation of how the board will fulfill its responsibility for strong governance, an effective learning environment, and legal compliance, including a description of how and when the board will
  - Evaluate the success of the school leader, the school, and its own performance,
  - Review academic, organizational, and financial performance data, and
  - Ensure it is meeting basic legal and governance requirements.
- An outline of orientation and training plans for board members to govern effectively, adhere to applicable laws (including the Missouri Sunshine Laws), and ensure sound stewardship of public funds dedicated to the education of the school's students. An explanation of how the board will appoint new members and will develop over time to ensure that the governing body is able to effectively discharge its oversight duties.

### B2 Personnel – Roles and Responsibilities

A response that provides strong evidence will include the following:

- A description of the proposed leadership structure of the school;
- Identify key personnel and describe their qualifications for implementing the proposed program;
- An explanation of how the staffing plan is aligned with the school's mission and adequate to accomplish the school's goals and objectives;
- Attached organizational charts for Year 1 and for when the school is at full capacity. In the charts there is a clear delineation of roles and the reporting structure of the board, leadership, and staff (including teachers);
- A delineation of which functions will be completed by employees and which by contractors;

### B3 Personnel - Recruitment, Retention, Replacement, and Professional Development

A response that provides strong evidence will include the following:

- An explanation of how the school's staffing and training plans will support the school's mission and successful implementation of the educational program (measured by the proposed goals and objectives);
- A description of strategies the school will use to recruit and retain effective teachers;

- Plans for recruiting and training, retaining, and replacing staff over the CSP project period; and
- A description of how training will be adjusted in light of student performance and current staffing.

#### B4 Student Recruitment and Enrollment

A response that provides strong evidence will include the following:

- An explanation of how parents and community members will learn about the proposed school before and after the school opens;
- A description of the proposed enrollment and admissions process, including any necessary lottery and policies for admitting students off waitlists;
  - NOTE: CSP recipients may only utilize the following categories of approved preferences, as required by the CSP nonregulatory guidance Section E-4:
    - a) Students who are enrolled in a public school at the time it is converted into a public charter school;
    - b) Students who are eligible to attend, and are living in the attendance area of, a public school at the time it is converted into a public charter school;
    - c) Siblings of students already admitted to or attending the same charter school;
    - d) Children of a charter school's founders, teachers, and staff (so long as the total number of students allowed under this exemption constitutes only a small percentage (<10%) of the school's total enrollment); or
    - e) Children of employees in a work-site charter school, (so long as the total number of students allowed under this exemption constitutes only a small percentage of the school's total enrollment).
- A description of how the applicant plans to ensure access and equity for at-risk student populations and establish and maintain a racially and socioeconomically diverse student body, including proposed strategies (consistent with state statute and legal requirements) to recruit, admit, enroll, and retain a diverse student body.
  - Applicants that are unlikely to establish and maintain a racially and socioeconomically diverse student body must explain why this is the case, and outline how the anticipated racial and socioeconomic makeup of the student body would promote the purposes of the CSP to provide high-quality educational opportunities to all students; and
- A description of the steps the applicant has taken or will take to ensure that the proposed charter school would not hamper, delay, or negatively affect any desegregation efforts in the community in which the charter school would be located and the public school districts from which students are, or would be, drawn to attend the charter school, including efforts to comply with a court order, statutory obligation, or voluntary efforts to create and maintain desegregated public schools;

- A description of the impact of the proposed charter school on the racial and socio-economic diversity of public schools and school districts from which children would be drawn to attend the charter school.
- NOTE: Charter schools must recruit in a manner that does not discriminate against students of a particular race, color, national origin (including English language learners), religion, or sex, or against students with disabilities.

#### B5 Parent, Educator, and Community Involvement

A response that provides strong evidence will include the following:

- An explanation of how families and the community were, are, or will be engaged in determining the vision and design for the charter school, including specific examples of how families' and the community's input was, is, or is expected to be incorporated into the vision and design for the charter school;
- An explanation of how the charter school will meaningfully engage with both families and the community to create strong and ongoing partnerships;
- An explanation of how the charter school will foster a collaborative culture that involves the families of all students, including underserved students, in ensuring their ongoing input in school decision-making;
- An explanation of how the charter school's recruitment, admissions, enrollment, and retention processes will engage and accommodate families from various backgrounds, including English learners, students with disabilities, and students of color, including by holding enrollment and recruitment events on weekends or during non-standard work hours, making interpreters available, and providing enrollment and recruitment information in widely accessible formats (e.g., hard copy and online in multiple languages; as appropriate, large print or braille for visually-impaired individuals) through widely available and transparent means (e.g., online and at community locations);
- An explanation of how the charter school has engaged or will engage families and the community to develop an instructional model to best serve the targeted student population and their families, including students with disabilities and English learners;
- A description of insights and feedback the community provided regarding the startup of the school, and an explanation of how those insights and feedback have been incorporated into the application;
- A description of how parents and community members were informed or involved in the development of the application (including a description of the public hearing that was held to obtain information and feedback regarding the potential benefit of the proposed school);
- An explanation of how parents, educators, and community members and organizations will be involved in the governance and operation of the school;
- A description of how two-way communication will be fostered between parents and the school; and
- If not previously provided, an explanation of how the school will cultivate and leverage community partners to achieve the school's mission and support student success.

- Applicants may include the attachments, if available (labeled Attachment B.5):
  - o Relevant documentation, such as letters of support, sign-in sheets for events, recordings, transcripts, collateral materials, or commitments to provide or share resources.

## **Section C: Financial Plan and Capacity**

### C1 Budget

- Complete the CSP Budget using the provided template.
- Itemize costs within each category by year. Provide sufficient detail (a) to demonstrate costs that are aligned to initiatives described within the proposal; (b) to adequately explain how such costs are determined (e.g., number of units, costs per unit, rationale, etc.); and (c) to allow peer reviewers to make a RAN (reasonable, allocable, and necessary) determination.
- Provide a budget narrative that addresses each year's anticipated spending plan and provide an explanation for how each year's budget is aligned with the grant project goals and the school's program model.
- Describe how the school will develop the required capacity to sustain implementation and operation in a high-quality manner after the grant expires.

### C2 Financial Management

A response that provides strong evidence will include the following:

- A description of how the board will monitor and provide oversight of the subgrant.
- A plan for timely financial tracking, allocation, and reporting.
- Strong communication protocols between the board, school administration, and management company, if applicable, to review financial performance and plan for variances or unexpected needs.

### C3 Facility

- Describe the school's facility plan, including how safety, security, suitability for the educational model and projected student population, and sustainability will be ensured. the student enrollment and other available funding will meet the facility needs

### C4 Transportation Plan

- Describe how the charter school has considered the transportation needs of the school's students and provide an overview of the transportation plan.

### C5 Plan for Post-Grant Sustainability

- Describes how the school will develop the required capacity to sustain implementation and operation in a high-quality manner after the CSP grant expires, including management of the operating budget.

## **Section D: Project Plan**

A response that provides strong evidence will include the following:

- A detailed timeline and plan that specifies who will do what, by when, to ensure a successful CSP project;
  - The timeline should include milestones and responsible parties, outlining how the school intends to accomplish the SMART goals created to measure success.

## **Section E: Priority Points**

- A description of if/how the school is serving rural populations
- Confirming whether the applicant is adding or creating high schools
- A description of how the applicant is providing a diverse and innovative charter model (i.e., meeting an unmet need through an innovative model that does not currently exist in the community);
- A description of how the application has an educator and community-centered design
  - *A description of how the applicant's school has been developed either (a) with meaningful and ongoing engagement with current or former teachers and other educators; or (b) using a community-centered approach that includes an assessment of community assets, informs the development of the charter school, and includes the implementation of protocols and practices designed to ensure that the charter school will use and interact with community assets on an ongoing basis to create and maintain strong community ties.*
  - *Applicants seeking points under this priority must provide a high-quality plan that includes a timeline for key milestones that span the course of planning, developing, and implementing the charter school.*

## **Additional Attachments**

### Charter Management Organization/University Partnership - *If Applicable*

- An explanation of how the external services provider (ESP, as defined in [MO 160.415, SB 243](#)) or university was chosen as a partner, including: a description of how the proposal(s) or contract(s) have or will be vetted by financial experts and legal counsel independent of the provider;
- The planned relationship between the school and the ESP or university;
- A coherent delineation of the roles and responsibilities between the school's governing board and the ESP or university;
- A clear description of the services to be provided by the ESP or university and how those services will further the school's mission and program; and
- A description of how the school's governing board will hold the ESP or university accountable for student performance and financial management.

As applicable, applicants should provide the following:

- A list of any other schools currently managed by the ESP or university in the state of Missouri with contact information
- Student performance data, disaggregated by groups, for other schools that the ESP or university has managed (for the most recent three years)
- A list of nonrenewals or revocations of charter schools previously operated by the ESP or university (organized by year of nonrenewal or revocation)
- The services agreement as executed between the governing board and the ESP or university (or template version if not yet executed). This agreement must include provisions for cancelation and any penalties associated with cancelation of the agreement.

# Appendix 5: List of Documents Required with RFA

(only for schools determined to be eligible to apply for RFA)

All attachments must be in PDF format (except for the budget submission which must be completed using the pre-populated Excel template provided). Narrative attachments (in PDF format) must be letter-size documents, all text should be size 11 or 12 Arial, Calibri, or Times New Roman font, double-spaced and with one-inch margins. Applicants should be succinct in their responses.

1. School Project Application Narrative (maximum 30 pages) - details in Appendix 4
2. Two years of Academic Data (for expansion and replication applicants)
3. CSP Project Budget (use Budget Template)
4. CSP Project Budget Narrative (maximum 5 pages)
5. Organizational Chart (as described in section B2)
6. Enrollment table (as described in section A5)
7. School calendar and sample daily schedule (as described in section A4)
8. Five-Year School Operational Budget (the budget is required, a brief one to two page narrative may accompany this, narrative is optional)
9. Compliance Checklist of Certifications & Assurances - Appendix 6
10. Three years of most recent Audit reports (for expansion and replication applicants)
11. Three years of most recent 990 forms (for expansion and replication applicants)
12. Charter Renewal/Modification Certificate certifying compliance and renewal, or Charter Authorizer Contract
13. CMO Contracts (or drafts, if applicable)

# Appendix 6: Certifications and Assurances & Financial Controls and Audits Assurances

(to be completed on the portal)

All applicants applying in the 2023 Grant cycle must certify the following assurances on the platform before submitting the RFA. Signatories to the checklist must include leadership within your organization (e.g. by the person in your organization who would be responsible for administering the CSP grant, if awarded) and by the chairperson of the board of directors.

## Certification and Assurances

1. Subgrant funds will be expended during the specified grant period; standard accounting procedures will be utilized by subgrant recipients and records of all subgrant expenditures will be maintained in an accurate, thorough, and complete manner.
2. Subgrant recipients confirm their understanding that funds for implementation activities will be awarded only if they are an open and operating school, or have an approved charter public school application from the authorizer (and legislative funding appropriated) and plan to open within 18 months.
3. Subgrant recipients will participate in all data reporting and evaluation activities as requested or required by the U.S. Department of Education, DESE, and the school's authorizer, including on-site and desktop monitoring conducted by OT, annual independent audits required by the state that are publicly reported and include financial statements prepared with generally accepted accounting principles, annual reports, and a final expenditure report for the use of subgrant funds. This section includes participation in any federal or state-funded charter public school research or evaluations. Failure to submit required information may result in a withholding of grant funds or a non-renewal of subsequent year funding within the project period.
4. Subgrant recipients will expend implementation funds only for the purpose of implementation activities in a charter public school which is nonsectarian in its programs, admissions, policies, employment practices, and all other operations, and which will be in compliance with all Connecticut laws and administrative rules regarding staff certification and licensure.
5. Subgrant Recipients will be aware of and comply with federal laws including, but not limited to, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.), section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g) (commonly referred to as the "Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974"), and part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and federal regulations applicable to the federal Charter Schools Program, including the Education Department General Administrative Regulations in 34 CFR parts 75-77, 79, 81, 82, 84, 97, 98, and 99, the Office of

Management and Budget Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of the U.S. Department of Education in 2 CFR part 3485, and The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards in 2 CFR Part 200, as adopted and amended in 2 CFR part 3474.

6. Subgrant recipients will comply with all state and local laws and health and safety requirements applicable to charter public schools, including but not limited to all laws related to student admissions and enrollment, non-discrimination, data reporting, compulsory student attendance, and accountability.
7. Subgrant recipients will comply with all provisions of the Public Charter Schools Program of the U.S. Department of Education, including compliance with activities allowable for implementation funds. This section requires compliance with the Non Regulatory Guidance for CSP funds.
8. Subgrant recipients ensure that the charter public school will receive funds through programs administered by the U.S. Department of Education under which funds are allocated on a formulary basis.
9. Subgrant recipients shall include important information on the website of the school to help parents and the community to make informed decisions about the education options available to their children, including information on the educational program, student support services, parent contract requirements (including any financial obligations or fees and information regarding textbook assistance), and enrollment criteria. This section requires the school to provide annual performance and enrollment data for the student body and subgroups of students to OT or its **designated** researcher in order to share through research and grant reports.
10. It is the responsibility of each charter public school that receives funds under this grant to comply with all required federal assurances. Any Charter public school that is deemed to be in noncompliance with federal or state statute and fails to address areas of noncompliance will not be funded. Funded schools will be expected to cooperate with OT in the development of certain reports to meet state and federal guidelines and requirements. Funded projects will be required to maintain appropriate fiscal and program records. Funded schools will be required to participate in desktop and on-site monitoring activities. If any findings of misuse of funds are discovered, project funds must be returned to OT. OT may terminate a grant award upon thirty days' notice if it is deemed by OT that the school is not fulfilling the funded program as specified in the approved project or has not complied with the signed assurances.
11. It is the responsibility of each Charter School that receives funds under this grant to provide OT with evidence of criminal background checks for board members and school staff.
12. For any school receiving E-rate, the recipient school's board certifies that the charter school is in compliance with the requirements of the federal Children's Internet Protection Act.
13. Recipient schools and their authorizer will be aware of and comply with Executive Order 13513, "Federal Leadership on Reducing Text Messaging While Driving," October 1, 2009,

by acknowledging that grant recipients and their personnel are prohibited from text messaging while driving a government-owned vehicle, or while driving their own privately owned vehicle during official grant business, or from using government-supplied electronic equipment to text message or email when driving.

14. The recipient school and their authorizer certify that the Charter School Annual Reports submitted annually to OT are the most important factors for renewal or revocation of the school's charter and that the authorizer reserves the right to revoke or not renew a school's charter based on financial, academic, or operational factors involving the management of the school.
15. Recipient schools and their authorizer certify that a high degree of autonomy, such as autonomy over operations, budget, and personnel, is built into its charter contract consistent with the requirements of [ESEA § 4310](#) (2) and [ESEA § 4303](#) (f)(2)(A), and that they have sought, or will seek, all the appropriate automatic and other waivers to support the level of autonomy negotiated in their charter contract.
16. The recipient school and their authorizer certify that any CSP subgrant deliverable created in whole, or part, with federal CSP funds will be openly and publicly licensed, unless otherwise excepted, per 2 CFR part 3474.20(c).
17. The recipient school is required to adhere to Executive Order 12549, Debarment and Suspension, as implemented as 2 CFR 180.200, which requires that recipients do not employ or use contractors that are indicated on the federal debarment listing.
18. Schools receiving CSP funding have not and will not enter into a contract with a for-profit management organization, including a nonprofit management organization operated by or on behalf of a for-profit entity, under which the management organization, or its related entities, exercises full or substantial administrative control over the charter school and, thereby, the CSP project (2022 NFP).
19. Each charter school receiving CSP funding will provide an assurance that any management contract between the charter school and a for-profit management organization, including a nonprofit CMO operated by or on behalf of a for-profit entity, guarantees or will guarantee that— (i) The charter school maintains control over all CSP funds, makes all programmatic decisions, and directly administers or supervises the administration of the subgrant; (ii) The management organization does not exercise full or substantial administrative control over the charter school (and, thereby, the CSP project), except that this does not limit the ability of a charter school to enter into a contract with a management organization for the provision of services that do not constitute full or substantial control of the charter school project funded under the CSP (e.g., food services or payroll services) and that otherwise comply with statutory and regulatory requirements; (iii) The charter school's governing board has access to financial and other data pertaining to the charter school, the management organization, and any related entities; and (iv) The charter school is in compliance with applicable Federal and State laws and regulations governing conflicts of interest, and there are no actual or perceived conflicts of interest between the charter school and the management organization (2022 NFP)
20. Each charter school receiving CSP funding will post on its website, on an annual basis, a

copy of any management contract between the charter school and a for-profit management organization, including a nonprofit management organization operated by or on behalf of a for profit entity, and report information on such contract to the State entity, including— (i) A copy of the existing contract with the for-profit organization or a detailed description of the terms of the contract, including the name and contact information of the management organization, the cost (i.e., fixed costs and estimates of any ongoing cost), including the amount of CSP funds proposed to be used toward such cost, and the percentage such cost represents of the charter school’s total funding, the duration, roles and responsibilities of the management organization, and the steps the charter school is taking to ensure that it makes all programmatic decisions, maintains control over all CSP funds, and directly administers or supervises the administration of the grant or subgrant in accordance with 34 CFR 76.701; (ii) A description of any business or financial relationship between the charter school developer or CMO and the management organization, including payments, contract terms, and any property owned, operated, or controlled by the management organization or related individuals or entities to be used by the charter school; (iii) The names and contact information for each member of the governing boards of the charter school and a list of management organization’s officers, chief administrator, and other administrators, and any staff involved in approving or executing the management contract; and a description of any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including financial interests, and how the applicant resolved or will resolve any actual or perceived conflicts of interest to ensure compliance with 2 CFR 200.318(c); and (iv) A description of how the charter school ensured that such contract is severable and that a change in management companies will not cause the proposed charter school to close (2022 NFP).

21. Each charter school receiving CSP funding will disclose, as part of the enrollment process, any policies and requirements (e.g., purchasing and wearing specific uniforms and other fees, or requirements for family participation), and any services that are or are not provided, that could impact a family’s ability to enroll or remain enrolled in the school (e.g., transportation services or participation in the National School Lunch Program). (2022 NFP)
22. Each charter school receiving CSP funding will hold or participate in a public hearing in the local community in which the proposed charter school would be located to obtain information and feedback regarding the potential benefit of the charter school, which shall at least include information about how the proposed charter school will increase the availability of high-quality public school options for underserved students, promote racial and socioeconomic diversity in such community or have an educational mission to serve primarily underserved students, and not increase racial or socio-economic segregation or isolation in the school districts from which students would be drawn to attend the charter school (consistent with applicable laws). Applicants must ensure that the hearing (and notice thereof) is accessible to individuals with disabilities and limited English proficient individuals as required by law, actively solicit participation in the hearing (i.e., provide widespread and timely notice of the hearing), make good faith efforts to accommodate as many people as possible (e.g., hold the hearing at a

convenient time for families or provide virtual participation options), and submit a summary of the comments received as part of the application. The hearing may be conducted as part of the charter authorizing process, provided that it meets the requirements above. (2022 NFP)

23. No eligible applicant receiving funds under the State entity’s program will use implementation funds for a charter school until after the charter school has received a charter from an authorized public chartering agency and has a contract, lease, mortgage, or other documentation indicating that it has a facility in which to operate. Consistent with sections 4303(b)(1), 4303(h)(1)(B), and 4310(6) of the ESEA, an eligible applicant may use CSP planning funds for post-award planning and design of the educational program of a proposed new or replicated high-quality charter school that has not yet opened, which may include hiring and compensating teachers, school leaders, and specialized instructional support personnel; providing training and professional development to staff; and other critical planning activities that need to occur prior to the charter school opening when such costs cannot be met from other sources. (2022 NFP)
24. Single Audit. A non-Federal entity (a State, local government, Indian tribe, Institution of Higher Education (IHE)<sup>1</sup>, or nonprofit organization) that expends \$750,000 or more during the on-Federal entity’s fiscal year in Federal awards must have a single audit conducted in accordance with 2 CFR 200.501, “Audit Requirements,” except when it elects to have a program specific audit conducted. Grantees are strongly urged to obtain the “OMB Compliance Supplement” and to contact their cognizant agency for single audit technical assistance. The designated cognizant agency for single audit purposes is “the Federal awarding agency that provides the predominant amount of direct funding to the recipient.” Grantees should obtain a copy of the OMB Compliance supplement. This supplement will be instructive to both grantees and their auditors. Appendix III of the supplement provides a list of Federal Agency Contacts for Single Audits, including addresses, phone numbers, fax numbers, and e-mail addresses for technical assistance.

I have read the above and agree to all terms and assurances.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Project Contact

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Signed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Board President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Signed

## Financial Controls and Audits Assurances

1. The recipient school shall maintain accounting records and procedures in accordance with state and federal requirements that ensure proper disbursement of, and accounting for, federal funds, including evidence pertaining to costs incurred, with the provision that the records shall be kept available by the grantee during the grant period and thereafter for five full years from the date of final payment. The school agrees to submit upon request for audit, review, and inspection of its activities, books, documents, papers and other records relating to the expenditures of CSP subgrant proceeds.
2. Recipient schools will use an independent auditor for annual financial audits that is different from their authorizer's auditor.
3. The authorizer is required to review the independent annual audits of financial statements prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and ensure that such audits are publicly reported.
4. Recipient schools and their authorizer will be aware of and comply with ESEA, title V, part B [20 USC 7221c. section 5204, (e)(4)(B)], which states, "A local educational agency may not deduct funds for administrative fees or expenses from a subgrant awarded to an eligible applicant unless the applicant enters voluntarily into a mutually agreed-upon arrangement for administrative services with the relevant local educational agency. Absent such approval, the local educational agency shall distribute all subgrant funds to the eligible applicant without delay."
5. Recipient schools will ensure that the awarded grant funds will be spent or encumbered by the end of each grant period unless extenuating circumstances warrant an extension request. Recipients understand that any such extension request must be made by the Authorizer on their behalf no later than 30 days before the end of the respective grant year and that if an extension request is not approved by on the grounds that extenuating circumstance have not been established the recipient school will be held to the original deadline.
6. Recipients shall ensure that none of the funds authorized under the ESEA, including funds received under this grant program, shall be used (1) to develop or distribute materials, or operate programs or courses of instruction directed at youth, that are designed to promote or encourage sexual activity, whether homosexual or heterosexual; (2) to distribute or to aid in the distribution by any organization of legally obscene materials to minors on school grounds; (3) to provide sex education or HIV-prevention education in schools unless that instruction is age appropriate and includes the health benefits of abstinence; or (4) to operate a program of contraceptive distribution in schools, Pub. L. 107-110, section 9526).
7. Recipient schools are required to keep and maintain all equipment purchased with grant funds in accordance with federal law and regulation. Should the charter school close, the authorizer agrees to notify OT of the reason for the closure and agrees to notify OT regarding the appropriate disposition of assets purchased under this grant.

8. The subgrant recipient must, at a minimum, provide the equivalent insurance coverage for real property and equipment acquired or improved with Federal funds as provided to property owned by the non-Federal entity. Federally-owned property need not be insured unless required by the terms and conditions of the Federal award. [2 CFR 200.310](#)
9. Recipient schools are required not to have expenditures that exceed the approved budget line items by more than a total of 10 percent of the total project period award. If they wish to deviate beyond 10 percent in any budget object core category, they must seek a revision of their budget prior to expenditure or legal obligation of those funds, or they should not be reimbursed for the excess amount.

I have read the above and agree to all terms and assurances.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Project Contact

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Date Signed

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Signature of Board President

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Date Signed