

Frequently Asked Questions

- 1. Is the Mathematics and Science Partnership (MSP) Grant funded through state or federal funds?**
 - A. Federal
- 2. How is a partnership defined?**
 - A. A partnership is made up of one Institution of Higher Education (IHE) and at least one high-needs Local Education Agency (LEA). Other entities such as: businesses, nonprofit or for-profit organizations that demonstrate effectiveness in improving the quality of math and science teachers, or other engineering, math, science, or teacher training departments of other IHEs may be brought on in addition.
- 3. Define LEA.**
 - A. For the purposes of this grant, ISBE defines a local education agency (LEA) in accordance with the **Code of Federal Regulations, 34 CFR 77.1**. This code states a local education agency is a public board of education or other public authority; a public elementary or secondary school.
- 4. Can a private school be a part of the partnership without a public school?**
 - A. Private schools can be brought in on the partnership. However, a public LEA must also be involved.
- 5. Can there be more than one Local Education Agency (LEA) in the partnership?**
 - A. Yes. There can be multiple LEAs within the partnership, as long as at least one of the LEAs meets the high-needs definition.
- 6. If we are going to work with multiple LEAs, can the focus be slightly different for each LEA based on their needs?**
 - A. Yes. The data gathered from evaluating teacher content knowledge, knowledge around math and science standards, and teacher's ability to identify, design, or align learning tasks to Illinois math and science learning standards should drive the trainings for the LEAs.
- 7. What is considered high-needs?**
 - A. Illinois State Board of Education defines high-needs as having 25% or more of the student population eligible for free and reduced price lunch.
- 8. Can private schools apply?**
 - A. Yes, private schools can apply; however, private schools have to enter into the partnership with a local education agency.
- 9. Does my Regional Office of Education (ROE) or Intermediate Service Center (ISC) have to be included?**
 - A. No. The minimum requirement is one high needs LEA and one IHE.
- 10. Does the Professional Development (PD) have to be P-12?**
 - A. No. Professional development can be aimed at various grade bands depending on identified need.

- 11. Can Professional Development occur during the school year?**
- A. Professional development must occur as summer workshops or institutes and must include at least 4 trainings during the year.
- 12. How long does the summer institute last?**
- A. Summer institutes have to be equivalent to two weeks.
- 13. Can follow up trainings occur prior to the summer institutes?**
- A. Yes. The follow up trainings can occur before or after the summer institute. All trainings need to be completed by September 20, 2019.
- 14. Can follow up trainings be conducted virtually/online?**
- A. Follow up trainings can be conducted virtually.
- 15. Are all teachers required to participate in the two weeks of PD or could a subset receive more or less?**
- A. Yes, all teachers need to participate in PD.
- 16. Can the focus of the grant can be exclusively math / stem/ science?**
- A. The focus of the grant should come from the needs identified through the teacher and student data collected.
- 17. Can funds be used to run camps for students that serve as a learning lab for teachers?**
- A. Funds must be used to increase teacher content knowledge, knowledge around math and science standards, and teacher's ability to identify, design, or align learning tasks to Illinois math and science learning standards.
- 18. Can funds cover the costs of a camp for students?**
- A. Funds must be used to increase teacher content knowledge, knowledge around math and science standards, and teacher's ability to identify, design, or align learning tasks to Illinois math and science learning standards.
- 19. What is the expected scope of the project-statewide/number of teachers/students served?**
- A. The scope of the project should align with the program objectives, performance standards, measures, deliverables, and how many LEAs are entered into the partnership.
- 20. What should drive/guide the IHEs work in terms of the Professional Development they must create?**
- A. The IHE must evaluate teacher needs to provide appropriate PD, which will bridge the gaps in teacher understanding of the objectives detailed in the RFP.
- 21. What should drive/guide the IHEs + LEAs work in terms of Learning Tasks they create?**
- A. The IHE must evaluate the LEAs summative assessment data to determine gaps in student understanding. The evaluation data will guide the development of learning tasks.
- 22. Can you expand on / define, "learning tasks?"**
- A. Learning tasks are based on scientific research, aligned to Illinois learning standards and are authentic and contextualized. These should align to the areas where students show misunderstanding.

23. Are learning tasks intended to be a part of the evaluation?

A. Yes. Learning tasks should be a part of the teacher's professional development.

24. Are learning tasks intended to be a part of the PD?

A. Yes.

25. What is the relationship between the learning tasks, the objectives, the standard, and the measures?

A. Learning tasks are part of the program objective as it relates to PD. It may be determined teachers need PD aligning, creating, and identifying specific learning tasks that coincide with student misconception. The evaluation of the learning tasks will be evident through the teacher growth evaluations.

26. Will instructional resources/tasks be shared?

A. Yes. All resources/learning tasks that are created with and for the LEAs will be made available for all teachers across Illinois to access. ISBE will determine the online platform in which those resources will be shared.

27. Do I have to include a projected timeline?

A. Providing a projected timeline is part of the scoring rubric.

28. Do we have to use an external evaluator?

A. An external program evaluator may be utilized, but it is not a requirement. The evaluator may be internal.

29. What should the evaluator monitor?

A. The evaluator needs to monitor the grant for impact. Three performance standards that must be monitored, evaluated, and reported on include:

- i. participation of teachers in grant activities
- ii. increasing teacher content knowledge, knowledge around math and science standards, and the teacher's ability to identify, design, or align learning tasks to Illinois math and science learning standards
- iii. providing learning tasks aligned to student misconceptions

30. Is there any restriction on one evaluator creating different proposals for multiple competing entities?

A. No restrictions.

31. Do you need to have a rigorous evaluation design?

A. Yes. Rigorous design is one that accurately measures projected outcomes with fidelity. The project expects evaluation to be aligned with the referenced guide on page 5 of the RFP.

32. Who is the data collector? Can the program evaluator and the data collector be the same person or organization?

A. Yes. They can be the same person, however, the data at each LEA in the partnership will be different. The evaluator may want to be the overall evaluator who communicates with the data collector if there are many LEAs.

33. Do we need to provide a list of participants with our grant application submission?

- A. Yes. The IHE needs to be clearly identified including all staff participants, titles, and departments. Each LEA within the partnership needs to be named including all the names of participating staff.
- 34. Does a budget need to be included in the proposal?**
- A. Yes, a budget outlining projected costs must be included within the proposal. Proposed expenditures must align and be proportionate with MSP objectives, activities, number of students/teachers served staffing levels, and evaluation of the project.
- 35. We understand that you want one IHE in the partnership. We put together a collaborative with 6 IHEs state-wide. We intend to designate 1 for the “partnership” in terms of the Grant Application and the Grant Award BUT have others supporting. Please note the expenditures from the supporting IHEs would be only DIRECT expenses for things like hosting local workshops, faculty and staff time & benefits (at actual rates), etc. These supporting IHEs would work under the IHE in the Partnership and work under the supervision of the Partnership’s Fiscal Agent (basically functioning as vendors). Given this design, is involving other IHEs allowed?**
- A. The RFP states one Institution of Higher Education (IHE) be designated as part of the partnership. Other entities such as: businesses, nonprofit or for-profit organizations that demonstrate effectiveness in improving the quality of math and science teachers, or other engineering, math, science, or teacher training departments of other IHEs may be brought on in addition.
- 36. What are the reporting requirements?**
- A. The reporting requirements can be found on pages 6 and 9 of the RFP.
- 37. Since the PD will take place after students have completed annual assessments, what student data should be collected?**
- A. Preliminary student data can be collected to establish a baseline for identifying student achievement gaps at each LEA.
- 38. If we are partnering with a district and individual schools ROE/ISC signoff required on Attachment 2?**
- A. Attachment 2 is declaring the fiscal agent. You are required to have a signature from the determined fiscal agent and the superintendent or principal of the LEA. If you are not bringing in your ROE/ISC to be the fiscal agent, then you do not have to have their signature.
- 39. If partnering with a district as an LEA, is a principal signature required on Attachment 2A?**
- A. Attachment 2A is the LEA commitment form. In this commitment agreement, you will need the signature of both the principal and superintendent.
- 40. If partnering with a private school, is Superintendent Signature required? Or would he school’s principal be sufficient?**
- A. If partnering with a private school, the principal can sign in place of the superintendent.

- 41. Can you please specify the number of hours that is to be covered by the follow-up trainings?**
- A. To stay consistent with the last RFP and summer training requirements, 4 follow ups must consist of not less than 16 hours.
- 42. Can an LEA (school district) be a partner on more than one proposal submission?**
- A. Since this grant will be awarded to one partnership, a LEA (school district) can be a part of multiple proposals.
- 43. Can a private school be a part of the partnership without a public school?**
- A. Private schools can be brought in on the partnership but not without a public LEA being involved.
- 44. Is it permissible to include an additional appendix with supplemental information about content and or examples of our learning tasks for participants?**
- A. Yes. However, proposal readers are only required to read to the stated number of page limits. Try to include most pertinent information for determining awards in the required number of pages.
- 45. Must all teacher participants take the content knowledge pre/posttest?**
- A. Yes, all teachers who are in the determined grade band the PD is aimed at must participate with the evaluation. The evaluation plan must document how the program will be measured.
- 46. For the abstract, narrative and evaluation plan (attachments 3-5), do we need to use the forms included in the application packet (with the header)?**
- A. Yes, please use the forms included. You should be able to type directly into the form.
- 47. We are having each of the private schools we work with complete Attachment 8C and principals are signing after our consultations with them. Who needs to sign this as the Administrative Agent? Is that a representative from the IHE?**
- A. The administrative agent should be the same person as the identified fiscal administrative agent (Attachment 2).
- 48. The RFP and legislation states supplanting is not allowed. Is there flexibility on supplanting?**
- A. Supplanting is NOT allowed.
- 49. In the IHE form 2B #1 it says: Commitment to meet federal MSP requirements described in legislation by including faculty from a science, technology, engineering and mathematics department. (Faculty from these departments is not the same as a group of staff {university employees but not technically university faculty} working in teacher education). Is there flexibility here on Attachment 2B #1?**
- A. The RFP MSP program states: an IHE must include faculty from the divisions of teacher preparation from science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) in the partnership. The goal is to bring mathematics and science teachers together with scientists, mathematicians, and engineers to improve their teaching skills.
- 50. Our district-led group is continuing to work on our proposal for the MSP RFP. It seems another group working on a proposal thinks you said there is flexibility with the IHE partner (allowing people who are not university faculty, but rather university staff, in Departments NOT listed**

on this form {Science, Technology, Engineering and Math} to be an eligible partnership. Can you please provide clarification on this?

- A. The RFP states one Institution of Higher Education (IHE) be designated as part of the partnership. To be eligible, an IHE **must** include faculty from the divisions of teacher preparation from science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) in the partnership activities. Other entities such as: businesses, nonprofit or for-profit organizations that demonstrate effectiveness in improving the quality of math and science teachers, or other engineering, math, science, or teacher training departments of other IHEs may be brought on in addition.

51. At the bottom of this form, (2B #1) there are signatures required for all IHE participants from Schools/Departments of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics with 4 Signature lines. Is there flexibility with the signatures so that the IHE does NOT have to list faculty from the 4 required departments {Science, Technology, Engineering and Math} listed on the 4 signature lines on this form?

- A. Only faculty in the proposal design who meet the eligibility requirements of the grant and will be designing, delivering, and responsible for the outcome of grant goals should sign.

52. Can tables or charts be included in the proposal?

- A. Tables and charts will not copy and paste into the PDF form. Please describe the information within the proposal narrative. If a table or chart will help clarify the information, you may include the table or chart as an attachment. However, please note, readers are NOT required to read the attached table or chart.

53. For the narrative and the evaluation plan, must we transfer the text to the form, or can we follow the instructions on page 10, and simply convert our file to PDF and just add it in to the package?

- A. The narrative and evaluation plan do not have to be transferred to the forms. You are allowed to follow the instructions on page 2 and 10 of scanning your documents into a PDF with all supporting documents and required signatures, then submitting them electronically through the attachment manager.