Pennsylvania Charter
Schools Program Grant

PACSP Meet and Greet
PACSP Project Year 2
1/19/2022

About PCPCS

o Founded in 2005, the Pennsylvania Coalition of Public Charter Schools (PCPCS) represents charter schools throughout the Keystone State. As the state's largest and most active charter organization, PCPCS advocates for both brick-and-mortar and cyber charter schools. Our work spans across the state including regional training events, school tours, legislative engagement, and media relations.

Fast Facts

o PCPCS was awarded $30 million for the Charter School Programs (CSP) Grants to State Entities over the period, 2021-2025.

o Two overriding outcomes:

  o Increase the number of high-quality charter schools that educate substantial at-risk student populations, and;

  o Improve student outcomes in PA charter schools, particularly for at-risk students.

o 90% of funds are to be used for the development, expansion, and replication of 18 high quality brick and mortar charter schools in PA.

o 3% of funds for administrative activities and 7% of funds are for technical assistance activities to provide support to district authorizers, prospective applicants, and subgrantees.

True or False

o   I have to be a member of PCPCS in order to be eligible to receive PACSP grant funds.

o   Cyber charter schools are eligible to receive PACSP grant funds.

o   New charter school development, expansions, and replications are all eligible to receive up to a maximum of $1.5 million for 3 years.

o   The PCPCS Board of Trustees will make the subgrant determinations.

o   Applicants must have an approved charter from a Pennsylvania authorizer in order to be apply for PACSP.

o   Subgrantee funds can be used for new building construction.

Eligible Applicants

o Brick and Mortar Charter Schools Only

o APPROVED charter from a Pennsylvania authorizer. *PACSP cannot fund schools that are in the charter application process.*

o Applicants do not have to be PCPCS members, however we would love for you to join!

o [Applicants must conform to the federal ESSA definitions: P.L.114-95, section 4310(2)](#)

o PACSP has additionally developed an Eligibility Guide to help prospective applicants. It can be viewed:

      o [PACSP Preparing to Apply](#)

Development of new charter schools

o   School must be a brick-and-mortar charter school;

o   School must have an approved charter in the state of
   Pennsylvania; and

o   School must meet the federal ESSA definition of a charter school
   as defined on **page 2 of the Eligibility Guide.**

Expansion of existing high-quality charter schools

o School must be a brick-and-mortar charter school;

o School must have an approved charter in the state of Pennsylvania;

o School must meet the federal ESSA definitions of a charter school, expansion, and high-quality;

o School can either "significantly increase enrollment", **OR** add one or more grades to the existing high-quality charter school

   PACSP defines "significantly increase enrollment": a verified increase in overall total enrollment by 20% (rounded to the nearest whole number and not limited to the year in which the prospective applicant intends to apply)

Replication of existing high-quality charter schools

o School must be a brick-and-mortar charter school;

o School must have an approved charter in the state of Pennsylvania;

o School must meet the federal ESSA definitions of a charter school, replication, and high-quality;

o Replication is defined as: "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."

Award Structure

o Maximum award size for all subgrantees is $1,500,000

Grant period for subgrantees is three years:

o Year 1, subgrantee eligible for up to $1,100,000

o Year 2, subgrantee eligible for up to $200,000

o Year 3, subgrantee eligible for up to $200,000

o Funding amounts are based on conditions seen to the right

Condition	Amount	Timing
Base Award	$900,000	20% allocated upon preliminary notice of grant award; remainder upon finalized subgrant contract
School either (a) is located in a QOZ or (b) draws at least 40% of its student population from neighboring QOZs	$200,000	First verified enrollment count in Subgrant Year 1
At least 60% of School's students are economically disadvantaged and at least 75% of a school's students are Black or Hispanic	$200,000	First verified enrollment count in Subgrant Year 1
School educates at least 150 economically disadvantaged students in CSP-funded grades	$200,000	First verified enrollment count in Subgrant Year 2

Use of Funds

o Subgrantees funded on a **reimbursable basis**
  o Submit allowable and approved expenses to the PACSP team quarterly
  o Specific documentation necessary for reimbursement of costs

o Please review the **Allowable Cost Guide.** It can be viewed:
  o PACSP Preparing to Apply

Allowable Uses:
o Preparing teachers, school leaders, and specialized instructional support personnel;
o Acquiring supplies, training, equipment (including technology), and educational materials (including developing and acquiring instructional materials);
o Carrying out necessary renovations to ensure that a new school building complies with applicable statutes and regulations, and minor facilities repairs (excluding construction);
o Providing one-time, startup costs associated with providing transportation to students to and from the charter school.

Unallowable Costs

o   Construction of a new facility;

o   Lobbying or related expenses;

o   Expenses not related to the funded expansion;

o   Supplanting an existing contract;

o   Addition of permanent structural improvement or restoration of some aspect of a property that will either enhance the property's overall value or increase its useful life.

Peer Review Team

A PRT has been established for the Project Year 2 Application review:

o   Disinterested member of PCPCS Board;

o   Successful charter school founder;

o   Expert in charter school business management and finance;

o   Representative from PA institution of higher education;

o   Member of the PCPCS Legal Advisory Council.

Conflict of Interest:

o   PRT disclosed any potential conflict of interest during application process.

o   There are alternates in case of a conflict of interest with any applicants.

o   PRT will disclose conflict of interest again prior to beginning the review process.

Scoring Criteria

- New School/Development Applicants complete three narrative sections.

- Expansion/Replication Applicants complete four narrative sections – Track Record to demonstrate applicant is a high-quality charter school.

- Each applicant will receive one weighted percent for each application section, that is then summed for a final weighted percent for the whole application.

Application Section	Scoring Rubric	Weighting (Expansion/ Replication Applications)	Weighting (New School Applications)
School Model (Qualitative)	PCPCS Quality Standards Four-Point Scale (Exemplary | Effective | Emerging | Absent)	35%	50%
Track Record (Quantitative)	SDP Academic, Organization, and Financial Metrics Three-Point Scale (Meets Standard | Approaching Standard | Does Not Meet Standard)	35%	N/A
PACSP Project-Specific Narratives	Custom PACSP Scoring Rubric Four-Point Scale (Exceeds Expectations | Meets Expectations | Partially Meets Expectations | Does Not Meet Expectations)	15%	25%
Competitive Preference Priorities	Custom PACSP Scoring Rubric Four-Point Scale (Exceeds Expectations | Meets Expectations | Partially Meets Expectations | Does Not Meet Expectations)	15%	25%

Awarding Eligibility

- PACSP intends to fund 18 new, replication, and expanding charter schools over the five-year grant cycle.

Award Type	Year 1 10/1/20 - 9/30/21	Year 2 10/1/21 - 9/30/22	Year 3 10/1/22 - 9/30/23	Year 4 10/1/23 - 9/30/24	Year 5 10/1/24 - 9/30/25	Total
New CS	1	1	1	2	2	7
Replication	1	1	1	1	1	5
Expansion	1	1	1	1	2	6
Totals	**3**	**3**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**18**

Awarding Structure:

- Applicant must earn at least 75% of all available points.

- The highest scoring applicant(s) per each award type may be selected.

- If no applicant in an award type has scored above 75%, then the next highest scoring applicant(s) of the entire applicant pool may be selected.

Awarded Schools

- All subgrantees will **receive technical assistance** in the form of workshops, webinars, site visits, and coaching for school personnel (including teachers, leaders, and board members).
  - Topics will align to PCPCS' Quality Standards which can be found on the PCPCS website as well as any other areas determined throughout the grant cycle.
  - Format – combination of virtual/in-person training and compliance support (12-15 days/year)
  - A representative from your school is required to attend

- All subgrantees will:
  - attend check-ins with the PACSP team
  - participate in surveys and interviews with the external evaluator
  - maintain precise accounting records of all grant related expenditures
  - participate in best practice sharing with future subgrantees and the charter school movement

- **Our GOAL is to help you achieve the purposes of this grant: increased access and opportunity, along with improved outcomes for at-risk students in Pennsylvania.**

FAQS from Year 1

o **How is PACSP defining "High Quality"?**

PACSP follows Section 4310(2) of the ESSA as outlined below:

High-quality (federal definition). The term "high-quality charter school" 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.

FAQS from Year 1 (cont'd)

o **How is PACSP defining "expansion"?**

To be eligible to apply as an expansion the school must meet the federal ESSA definition of expansion. The school can either "significantly increase enrollment," or add one or more grades to the existing high-quality charter school. PACSP defines "significantly increase enrollment" as the school must verify an increase in overall total enrollment by 20% (round to the nearest whole number and not limited to the year in which the prospective applicant intends to apply).

o **If we are considering expansion, does that expansion need to already be approved by the authorizer?**

Yes, expansion applicants (just like new charter school and replication) need to have an approved charter by the authorizer in order to be eligible to apply for PACSP).

o **If we are replicating...does it have to be the entire Charter school or could it be one building?**

Following the federal ESSA definition of replication, replication is defined: "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." Hence a replication applicant would be eligible if they are looking to open a new campus of the existing high-quality charter school.

FAQS from Year 1 (cont'd)

- **How is funding disbursed if we are selected as subgrantees?**

  Funding is provided on a reimbursement basis. In the event of a cash flow concern, PACSP would be willing to open a special reimbursement cycle.

- **Will there be an effort to spread selected schools across the state?**

  Our application process does ask applicants to provide information to specific competitive preference priorities, one of which being schools location in a qualified opportunity zone. More information regarding qualified opportunity zones and a map tool can be found at U.S. Dept of Treasury Opportunity Zones Resources. We hope this will help to spread subgrantees throughout PA.

  https://www.cdfifund.gov/opportunity-zones

- **What happens if the district refuses to cooperate and sign off on confirmation of receipt?**

  Please let us know if this happens and we will address on a case-by-case basis.

  You can find more FAQS from last year's cycle here: http://pacharters.org/application-faqs/

Next Steps!

- Review the [PACSP Preparing to Apply](#) page on our website

- Schedule a time to meet with the PACSP team to discuss your school and application!

- The application cycle will open on February 1, 2022. Everything needed to apply will be released on February 1. The application cycle will close on March 15, 2022. **We will not accept late submissions.**
  - Look out for more communication from us! We will be hosting webinars to review application components as well as more opportunities for applicants to ask questions.

- The Peer Review Team will review applications upon submission. Applicants and Authorizers will receive information regarding their status of the application by May 6, 2022. Awarded applicants will be announced to the public during National Charter School Week, May 8-14, 2022. Awarded applicants will be asked to provide a quote for the press release.

- The Allowable Cost Guide, the Eligibility Guide, last year's application, and many more resources are all available on the PCPCS website.