

REGULATION

MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Related Entries: CND, DAA

Responsible Office: Financial Services
Management, Budget, and Planning

Seeking and Securing Federal, State, and Private Grants

I. PURPOSE

To prescribe the procedures for seeking and receiving grants within Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS).

II. BACKGROUND

This regulation applies only to MCPS offices, departments, divisions, and schools. The grants approval process does not extend to funds obtained and administered by parent and community groups, private nonprofit organizations and foundations, and individuals. Funds from these sources must comply with Board Policy CND, *School-Related Fund Raising*.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. A *grant* is an agreement with a foundation, government agency, corporation, or other external source that provides funds for a particular purpose over a definite period of time to fulfill the goals and desires of the funding source. MCPS seeks grant funding to support projects that address critical unmet needs or supplement existing programs and are consistent with *Our Call to Action: Pursuit of Excellence*, the MCPS strategic plan.
- B. An *MCPS-instituted grant* is a grant that is offered by MCPS or organizations working explicitly on behalf of MCPS. The Department of Financial Services will review the criteria established by MCPS divisions, departments, or organizations working explicitly on behalf of MCPS to determine if the grant program is an MCPS-instituted grant.
- C. A *restricted program financial report* is a report that must be filed annually with a grantor agency. Grants funded by the federal government directly or by the federal government through another agency or organization always require restricted annual

financial reports. Grants from the state or a nongovernmental grantor may require a restricted annual financial report at the discretion of the grantor. A nonspecific, general request to inform a grantor of program results, including how funds were expended, does not constitute a restricted annual financial report.

- D. A *small grant* is a grant that is less than \$20,000, does not require restricted annual financial reporting, does not require cash or in-kind match nor a commitment of MCPS resources, and is not used to employ personnel, other than substitutes, in the schools during the regular school day.
- E. A *supported project grant* is a grant that meets one or more of the following criteria:
 - 1. Amount of grant is greater than or equal to \$20,000;
 - 2. Funding source requires restricted annual financial reporting;
 - 3. Grant requires cash or in-kind matching funds or commitment of MCPS resources; and
 - 4. Grant funds are used to employ personnel other than substitutes in schools during the school day.

IV. IDENTIFYING GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

- A. The grants specialist
 - 1. Works closely with program staff to research appropriate funding opportunities. Funding opportunities are identified in a variety of ways, including the following:
 - a) Outreach and involvement with professional and community organizations; coordination with other school systems, county agencies, and community organizations seeking grant funding; and relationships with federal and state agencies and private funding sources; and
 - b) Receipt of information from MCPS personnel, including principals and program staff, who have learned of grant funding opportunities through contact with professional organizations.
 - 2. Conducts training sessions on seeking grant funding and encourages participants to develop materials and contacts which will be of assistance in the search for grant support.

- B. The grants specialist or appropriate MCPS personnel obtains the grant application or funding guidelines from the funding source.
- C. The department or division of MCPS or the organization working explicitly on behalf of MCPS will announce availability of MCPS-instituted grants.
- D. All grant seekers must contact the grants specialist with information about programs and projects for which grant support is desired.

V. DEVELOPING THE GRANT APPLICATION OR PROPOSAL

A. Identifying Project Personnel

- 1. The responsible administrator appoints a project manager. The project manager and the grants specialist review the terms and conditions in the application.
 - a) If the grant is for more than one school or the grant is initiated centrally, the project manager is a central office staff member.
 - b) If the grant is for a program or project at one school only and the school initiated the grant, the principal may be the project manager. The principal may delegate project management tasks to other school staff members, but the principal must retain overall project management responsibility.
- 2. The project manager's responsibilities specific to the development of the application or proposal include the following:
 - a) Coordinating the involvement of program and other staff in project planning,
 - b) Preparing the grant application or proposal, and
 - c) Ensuring timely submission of the grant application or proposal.
 - d) Overseeing additional project management responsibilities described in Section VII, *Implementing and Administering the Grant*.
- 3. The grants specialist facilitates contacts between the project manager, the funding source, and other MCPS personnel, as needed.

B. Developing the Project

1. For all grants, grant seekers will follow procedures outlined in the announcement materials and the grant application or request for proposal.
2. The project manager completes the grant application or proposal, incorporating feedback from the grants specialist and key program staff where appropriate.
 - a) The project manager and grants specialist may seek letters of support from individuals and/or organizations to be included in the proposal or application. These letters are reviewed during the MCPS approval process along with the final grant application or proposal.
 - b) For supported project grants, the project manager completes MCPS Form 280-60, *Approval to Submit Proposal for Grant Funding*, with guidance from the grants specialist as soon as a decision to apply has been made.
3. The project must be developed in consultation with any offices incurring project responsibilities.

C. Developing the Budget

1. The appropriate management and budget specialist in the Department of Management, Budget, and Planning (DMBP) provides guidance to the project manager on the development of a proposal budget that meets both MCPS regulations and funder requirements.
2. Funds from MCPS-instituted grants or small grants cannot be used to employ personnel other than substitutes in the schools during the school day.
3. No grant funds may be used to pay MCPS employees as consultants.
4. Grant funds must be budgeted to support the reporting of student information, if required by the grantor.
5. Funds may be used to support OSA, if OSA is required to conduct evaluations or provide summary information for the grant.
6. Grant funds must be budgeted to hire external evaluator(s), if required by the grantor. External evaluators are responsible for submitting the evaluation

plan, MCPS Forms 495-1: *Request for a Research Activity*, and 226-17: *Data Acquisition Clearance Request*, and for obtaining an Institutional Review Board (IRB) decision from OSA.

7. The director of DMBP ensures that cost calculations are accurate, and that fixed costs (such as audit costs and indirect expenses, where allowed) and personnel costs are included in the budget at the correct rates, as per MCPS and funder regulations.

D. Obtaining Approval

1. All small grant funds that focus on school-based programs require the approval of the principal and the chief school performance officer on the grant application or proposal.
2. If the grant requires reporting of student information and/or a project evaluation, the project manager must submit the grant application or proposal to the OSA director or associate superintendent for approval.
3. The project manager, with the assistance of the grants specialist, obtains the required approvals and submits the grant application or proposal.
4. If required, the grants specialist submits a copy of the grant application or proposal to the State Single Point of Contact (as stated in Executive Order 12372).
5. The project manager submits a copy of the grant application or proposal to DMBP and to the funding source.

VI. RECEIVING GRANT FUNDS

- A. The grantor must make grant checks payable to MCPS or to the school.
- B. Receiving Small Grant and MCPS-Instituted Grant Funds

Upon receipt of grant funds the project manager:

1. Notifies the director of DMBP of the award. DMBP maintains this information for inclusion in the status report on small grants provided annually to the Board of Education (Board).
2. Deposits the funds in an account following the procedures in accordance with MCPS Regulation DIA-RB, *Payments for Personal Services and*

Reimbursements for Expenses from School Independent Activity Funds (IAFs).

3. Forwards all funds budgeted for MCPS personnel (including stipends, salaries, benefits, and substitutes) to the MCPS Division of Controller along with MCPS Form 460-2, *Request for Temporary Employment* and MCPS Form 430-12, *PACS Timesheet Temporary Part Time*. Payment of substitute teachers is completed by use of MCPS Form 430-1, *Leave Request*.

C. Receiving Supported Project Grant Funds:

1. Budgeted Grant

The Board approves budgeted grants as part of the annual operating budget request.

2. Grant Funding Not Provided for in the Annual Operating Budget

- a) Provision for Future Supported Projects

The provision for future supported projects appropriation allows MCPS to establish supported projects without having to request a supplemental appropriation from the County Council.

- (1) To be eligible, a project must require no local matching funds now or in the future.
- (2) If a project meets criteria (1) above, the project also must meet one of the following criteria to be eligible:
 - (a) The project received grant funding the year before; or
 - (b) The project budget is within the dollar limit for future supported projects as set by the County Council (currently \$200,000 or less).
- (3) Noncash or in-kind contributions may be considered as part of a match.
- (4) The Board advises the County Council and the county executive in writing of each approved project.

b) Request for Supplemental Appropriation

Grant awards that do not meet the Provision for Future-Supported Projects must be approved in advance by the County Council as well as the Board. For these projects, a request for a supplemental appropriation will be forwarded to the county executive and County Council for approval.

3. The appropriate management and budget specialist, with guidance from the grants specialist, prepares a Board resolution to seek authorization to receive and expend grant funds. After Board approval, the request is forwarded to the county executive and the County Council.
4. Once Board and County Council approval has been obtained, the project manager in cooperation with DMBP, completes MCPS Form 280-59, *Data to Establish MCPS Project Number for Supported Programs* and MCPS Form 210-1, *Request/Authorization for Movement of Funds and/or Positions*.

VII. IMPLEMENTING AND ADMINISTERING THE GRANT

A. For all grants, project management responsibilities include:

1. Supervising staff assigned to the project;
2. Reporting to the community superintendent or associate superintendent, if applicable, on the status of the project;
3. Ensuring that the tasks and terms set forth in the grant are completed in accordance with the budget and timeline;
4. Accounting for grants funds;
5. Ensuring that purchases follow MCPS procurement procedures as outlined in the *MCPS Procurement Manual*;
6. Ensuring the quality and timeliness of reports, including restricted program financial reports, financial statements, and other products required under the terms of the grant;
7. Submitting semiannual and annual reports about grant activities to the funder, as required, and the grants specialist. Copies of reports sent to the grants specialist must include a cover sheet indicating the name of the funder,

the name of the grant, the time period of the report and the name of the project manager.

8. Coordinating with other MCPS staff to complete required evaluations, reports, billings, and audits (A-133 audit); and
 9. Cooperating with DMBP to oversee the smooth continuation of a multiyear project and the proper termination of a completed project by ensuring that grant funds are expended or by obtaining written authorization from the funding source to extend the life of the grant.
- B. For externally funded grants the project manager ensures that the terms of the grant are not changed without the written authorization of MCPS and the funding source, informing DMBP of proposed fiscal and program changes.
 - C. Unless otherwise specified, all positions funded by grants are conditional upon future grant funding. The project manager works closely with the Office of Human Resources, whose staff provides guidance to temporary and permanent employees about their rights and responsibilities regarding employment with MCPS upon termination of the grant.
 - D. DMBP and the Division of Controller monitor project spending during the life of the project. DMBP will provide notice of termination of a grant supported project to the project manager 90 days before the scheduled conclusion of the grant funding.

VIII. LETTERS OF SUPPORT FOR PROJECTS THAT BENEFIT MCPS STUDENTS, FAMILIES, AND COMMUNITIES

MCPS may issue letters of support for proposals for projects that benefit MCPS students, families, and communities submitted by parent and community groups, private nonprofit organizations and foundations, and individuals. All letters of support will be reviewed by the grants specialist and approved by the superintendent of schools.

IX. REPORTS TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

- A. The director of DMBP will provide the superintendent of schools and the Board status reports on supported project grants quarterly. The summary will contain information such as source of funds, summary of the project, and the grant amount.
- B. The director of DMBP will provide the superintendent of schools and the Board status reports on small grants and MCPS instituted grants annually. The summary will contain information such as source of funds, the school or office responsible for

administering the grant, summary of the project, grant amount, and duration of the grant.

Regulation History: Formerly Regulation No. 301-4, September 4, 1981; directory information updated January, 1983; reprinted April, 1988; revised November 2, 1998; revised April 21, 2010.