

Connecticut State Department of Education
Turnaround Office



High School Redesign Bond Funding Application

Public Act 13-239 § 32(g)(3), as amended by Public Act 12-189 § 9(e)(3)

Purpose: To dramatically improve student achievement in Connecticut's lowest-performing comprehensive high schools by supporting the adoption and development of smaller learning communities or autonomous academies through capital investments and infrastructure improvements.

Application Due: Friday, April 11, 2014

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Application – RFP 807





Connecticut State Department of Education

**Stefan Pryor
Commissioner of Education**

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State of Connecticut Department of Education
25 Industrial Park Road
Middletown, CT 06457
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Improving Student Achievement in Low-Performing Schools

High School Redesign – Bond Funding Application

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High School Redesign – Bond Funding Application

I. Purpose

The Connecticut State Department of Education (“CSDE”) is seeking to assist local education agencies (“LEAs”) in dramatically improving student achievement in low-performing comprehensive high schools by supporting the development of smaller learning communities (“SLCs”) or autonomous academies within a larger school campus. The purpose of this grant is to award bond funding to support capital investments and infrastructure improvements toward the development and implementation of SLCs or autonomous academies at low-performing comprehensive high schools in local school districts committed to simultaneously investing public and private funds in support of the school redesign.

II. Grant Period

The anticipated grant period is May 15, 2014 – June 30, 2015. Low-performing bond funding awarded through this competitive grant process must be expended by June 30, 2015.

III. Eligible Applicants

Applications will be accepted from LEAs on behalf of their Turnaround, Focus, and/or Review comprehensive high school(s). For the purposes of this grant, the CSDE defines “comprehensive high schools” as high schools serving over 750 students (as measured by October 2013 enrollment). Please visit the CSDE’s website for a list of Turnaround, Focus, and Review schools.

An LEA must submit a separate application for each school that it would like to have considered for competitive bond funding. Specifically, this competitive grant application requires LEAs to: (a) provide a comprehensive and compelling school improvement plan for the school; (b) provide a statement describing the applicant’s commitment to SLCs or autonomous academies; and (c) describe how bond funds would support reform efforts through the development of SLCs or autonomous academies at the school level. The LEA must provide ample evidence that the district will invest public and/or private funds to support programmatic aspects of the school redesign.

Please note: Turnaround and Focus schools are also eligible for school improvement funding under section 1003(a) of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. Requirements for the 1003(a) and high school redesign bond funding applications are intentionally similar; therefore, Turnaround and Focus schools are also encouraged to apply for 1003(a) funds by completing the *1003(a) Application*, which can be found on the CSDE’s website.

IV. Funding and Use of Funds

Public Act 12-189 § 9(e)(3) and Public Act 13-239 § 32(g)(3) authorize “grants-in-aid to assist targeted local and regional school districts for alterations, repairs, improvements, technology and equipment in low-performing schools.” Accordingly, eligible applicants may submit an application and bond request for up to \$500,000 per school in bond funding to support capital improvements and/or technological investments at the school. The awarding of funding is contingent upon a proposal’s selection on the basis of the criteria described in Section VI and Appendix A of this RFP, the availability of funds, and approval by the CSDE and the State Bond Commission.



The CSDE reserves the right to correct inaccurate awards. This may include, in extreme circumstances, revoking the awarding of a grant already made to a bidder and subsequently awarding the grant to another bidder. Such action on the part of the CSDE shall not constitute a breach of contract on the part of the CSDE since the grant award to the initial bidder is deemed to be void and of no effect as if no grant award ever existed.

V. Application Requirements

A. Required Format: All applications must include the following components:

1. School Improvement Plan

Using the template found on the CSDE's website (<http://www.ct.gov/sde/AllianceDistricts>):

Please complete a school improvement plan for the school. The plan must include a thorough analysis of school strengths and growth areas used to inform the identification of several overarching school goals. The plan must then include strategies to advance school performance and student achievement in each of the following areas: (1) talent; (2) academics; (3) culture and climate; and (4) operations. Finally, applicants must create an action plan demonstrating how the school and district will successfully stagger and implement the strategies outlined in the four areas. Please ensure close alignment between the school improvement plan and budget request. School improvement plans shall not exceed 10 pages. Please note that the school improvement plan should align to the overarching model of employing SLCs or autonomous academies.

2. Commitment to SLCs or Autonomous Academies

In no more than two pages: Articulate the district's commitment to achieve SLCs or autonomous academies. Provide information about the school's anticipated governance structure, the relationship between academies, possible themes/programs of study, and/or potential partners.

3. Budget Narrative and Budget Proposal

Using the templates provided in Appendix B:

- a. Part I – Bond Funding Request:** Please provide a brief narrative explaining how the proposed use of bond funding will support the development of SLCs or autonomous academies. Complete the ED 114 budget template detailing the bond funding request of up to \$500,000. Include a detailed description of the costs associated with alterations, repairs, improvements, technology, and/or equipment. Describe the cost structure (e.g., per pupil, per classroom, fixed costs).
- b. Part II – Redesign Budget:** Please provide a brief narrative outlining the major programmatic costs associated with the transition to and development of SLCs or autonomous academies (e.g., staffing, partnerships, curricula/instructional materials, etc.). Provide evidence that the district has identified funding source(s) to cover these programmatic costs. Provide cost information in the second budget chart, outlining major programmatic costs anticipated in the implementation of SLCs or autonomous academies. Please note that bond funds cannot be used to support programmatic costs; however, districts are encouraged and expected to use other public and



private funds to support the school redesign process (e.g., Alliance District funding, Priority School District grant, 1003(a) grant).

4. Appendix C: Statement of Assurances

Complete and submit Appendix C: Statement of Assurances.

B. Minimum Submission Requirements:

Any application that does not meet the following requirements will be deemed unacceptable and ineligible for further review and consideration:

1. Being an eligible applicant, as defined in Section III.
2. Submitting a complete application by following the required format, as described in Section V.A.
3. Meeting the submission deadline of Friday, April 11, 2014, at 4:00 PM EST.

Application	
1. School Improvement Plan	http://www.ct.gov/sde/AllianceDistricts)
2. Commitment to SLCs or Autonomous Academies	(Up to 2 pages)
3. Budget Narrative and Budget Proposal	(Appendix B)
4. Statement of Assurances	(Appendix C)

Applications that do not comply with these requirements may be considered non-responsive and excluded from review. Omission of any required document or form, failure to use required formats for response, or failure to respond to any requirements may lead to rejection of the proposal prior to any formal review. The CSDE reserves the right to make grant awards under this program without discussion with the applicants. Therefore, proposals should represent the applicant’s best effort from both a technical and cost stand point.

C. Questions:

Any and all questions regarding this application should be directed to: Morgan Barth, CSDE Turnaround Office Director, Morgan.Barth@ct.gov.

D. Submissions:

All applications must be submitted by e-mail to Lisa Corriveau, CSDE Turnaround Office, at the following address: Lisa.Corriveau@ct.gov. **All applications, irrespective of postmark date, must be received by 4:00 PM on Friday, April 11, 2014.**



E. Award Process:

This application serves as the instrument through which grant proposals are solicited. The CSDE may decide, at any time, to start the application process again if in the best interests of the State.

F. Amendment or Cancellation of the Application:

The CSDE reserves the right to cancel, amend, modify or otherwise change this application at any time if it deems it to be in the best interest of the State to do so. The CSDE, at its option, may seek applicant retraction and/or clarification of any discrepancy or contradiction found during its review of applications.

G. Application Expenses:

Applicants are responsible for all costs and expenses incurred in the preparation of applications and for any subsequent work on the application that is required by the CSDE.

H. Oral Agreement or Arrangements:

Any alleged oral agreements or arrangements made by applicants with any State agency or employee will be disregarded in any State application evaluation or associated grant award.

I. Applicant Presentation of Supporting Evidence:

Applicants may be invited to present to the CSDE, at the CSDE's full discretion, additional evidence of experience, performance, ability and/or financial surety that the CSDE deems to be necessary or appropriate to fully establish the performance capabilities represented in their grant proposals.

J. Deadline:

No additions or changes to any application will be allowed after the application due date, unless such modification is specifically requested by the CSDE.

K. Monitoring:

The State may conduct site visits to grantees and sub-grantees funded under this grant program to monitor a school's and district's progress and compliance with the intent of the legislative act.

L. Freedom of Information:

All complete applications shall become the sole property of the State and will not be returned. All of the information contained in an application is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), Section 1-200 *et seq.* of the Connecticut General Statutes. FOIA declares that, except as provided by federal law or state statute, records maintained or kept on file by any public agency (as defined in statute) are public records and every person has a right to inspect such records and receive a copy of such records in accordance with the terms of FOIA.



VI. Selection Criteria

Using the rubric presented in Appendix A, a selection committee will review and score all applications that meet the minimum submission requirements, as described in Section V.B. All awards are subject to the availability of funds and approval by the CSDE and the State Bond Commission. Grants are not final until the award letter is executed. Given the number of eligible applicants, the CSDE anticipates a highly competitive process resulting in funding being awarded to only those applicants submitting well-developed applications and transformative plans.

Appendix A: Application Rubric

Overview

High school redesign applications for bond funding will be evaluated using the criteria outlined below. Each section of the application will be rated as: 1 – Below Standard; 2 – Developing; 3 – Proficient; or 4 – Exemplary. Sections of the application are weighted differently. This is a competitive grant, and awards and award amounts will be based on the quality and transformative potential of the application.

Rating Key

1 – Below Standard: The response lacks meaningful detail, demonstrates a lack of preparation, or otherwise raises substantial concerns about the applicant’s understanding of the issues in concept and/or ability to meet the requirement in practice. Proposed strategies are not transformative in nature.

2 – Developing: The response lacks critical details in certain areas. The response requires additional information in order to be considered reasonably comprehensive and transformative, and to demonstrate a clear vision for the school.

3 – Proficient: The response indicates solid preparation and a grasp of the key issues, as demonstrated by a comprehensive and sufficiently transformative response. It provides a clear, realistic picture of how the school will operate. The response somewhat demonstrates the applicant’s ability to execute the vision described in the response.

4 – Exemplary: The response reflects a thorough understanding of key issues and alignment to school needs. The response indicates careful preparation for successful implementation, and a clear and compelling picture of how the school will operate. The response demonstrates the readiness of the applicant to successfully execute the vision described in the response.

Section	Weighting	Points Available
Section 1: School Improvement Plan		
1. Needs Analysis	x 2	8
2. SMART Goals	x 1	4
3. Talent	x 3	12
4. Academics	x 3	12
5. Culture and Climate	x 2	8
6. Operations	x 3	12
7. Stakeholder Engagement	x 1	4
8. Implementation Timeline	x 1	4
Section 2: Commitment to SLCs or Autonomous Academies	x 5	20
Section 3: Budget Narrative and Budget Proposal		
1. Budget Narrative	x 2	8
2. Budget Proposal	x 2	8
Total Points Available:		100

Appendix B: Budget Narrative and Budget Proposal

Part I – Bond Funding Request: Please provide a budget narrative for proposed bond funding, as described in Section V.A.2, in the space below.

Please complete the template below providing cost information to summarize proposed bond investments and demonstrate how they would contribute to the successful implementation of SLCs or autonomous academies. List costs by their ED 114 cost category using the Uniform Chart of Accounts (shown below). If you need additional rows for a given cost category, please add rows to the template; unused rows can be left blank or deleted.

ED 114 Cost Category	Cost Description	Budget Justification and Cost Basis	Bond Funding Request
300	Services of architects		
300	Services of architects		
300	Services of architects		
300 Cost Category Total:			\$
700			
700			
700			
700 Cost Category Total:			\$
800			
800			
800			
800 Cost Category Total:			\$
Total:			\$

ED114 Cost Categories – Uniform Charts of Accounts

Please code all expenditures in accordance with the state’s Uniform Charts of Accounts as summarized below.

CODE:	OBJECT:
300	PURCHASED PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL SERVICES. Services, which by their nature can be performed only by persons or firms with specialized skills and knowledge. While a product may or may not result from the transaction, the primary reason for the purchase is the service provided. For purposes of this RFP, only services of architects may be included.
700	PROPERTY. Expenditures for acquiring fixed assets, including land or existing buildings, improvements of grounds, initial equipment, additional equipment, and replacement of equipment.
800	OTHER OBJECTS. (Miscellaneous Expenditures) Expenditures for goods or services not properly classified in one of the above objects. Included in the category could be expenditures for dues and fees, judgments against a grantee that are not covered by liability insurance, and interest payments on bonds and notes.

Part II – Redesign Budget: Please provide a budget narrative describing programmatic costs to support the adoption and implementation of SLCs or autonomous academies, as described in Section V.A.2, in the space below.

Provide cost information outlining major programmatic costs anticipated in the adoption and implementation of SLCs or autonomous academies (e.g., staffing, partnerships, curricula/instructional materials, etc.). Identify the funding source(s) to cover these programmatic costs.

Cost Description	Budget Justification and Cost Basis	Funding Source(s)	Cost



Appendix C: Statement of Assurances

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
STANDARD STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES
GRANT PROGRAMS

PROJECT TITLE: High School Redesign – Bond Funding Application

THE APPLICANT: _____ **HEREBY ASSURES THAT:**

(insert Agency/School/CBO Name)

- A. The applicant has the necessary legal authority to apply for and receive the proposed grant;
- B. The activities and services for which assistance is sought under this grant will be administered by or under the supervision and control of the applicant;
- C. The project will be operated in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and in compliance with regulations and other policies and administrative directives of the State Board of Education and the CSDE;
- D. Grant funds shall not be used to supplant funds normally budgeted by the agency;
- E. Fiscal control and accounting procedures will be used to ensure proper disbursement of all funds awarded;
- F. The applicant will submit a final project report (within 60 days of the project completion) and such other reports, as specified, to the CSDE, including information relating to the project records and access thereto as the CSDE may find necessary;
- G. The CSDE reserves the exclusive right to use and grant the right to use and/or publish any part or parts of any summary, abstract, reports, publications, records and materials resulting from this project and this grant;
- H. If the project achieves the specified objectives, every reasonable effort will be made to continue the project and/or implement the results after the termination of state/federal funding;
- I. The applicant will protect and save harmless the State Board of Education from financial loss and expense, including legal fees and costs, if any, arising out of any breach of the duties, in whole or part, described in the application for the grant;

J. At the conclusion of each grant period, the applicant will provide for an independent audit report acceptable to the grantor in accordance with Sections 7-394a and 7-396a of the Connecticut General Statutes, and the applicant shall return to the CSDE any moneys not expended in accordance with the approved program/operation budget as determined by the audit;

K. REQUIRED LANGUAGE (NON-DISCRIMINATION)

1) References in this section to "contract" shall mean this grant agreement and references to "contractor" shall mean the Grantee.

(a) For purposes of this Section, the following terms are defined as follows:

- i. "Commission" means the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities;
- ii. "Contract" and "contract" include any extension or modification of the Contract or contract;
- iii. "Contractor" and "contractor" include any successors or assigns of the Contractor or contractor;
- iv. "Gender identity or expression" means a person's gender-related identity, appearance or behavior, whether or not that gender-related identity, appearance or behavior is different from that traditionally associated with the person's physiology or assigned sex at birth, which gender-related identity can be shown by providing evidence including, but not limited to, medical history, care or treatment of the gender-related identity, consistent and uniform assertion of the gender-related identity or any other evidence that the gender-related identity is sincerely held, part of a person's core identity or not being asserted for an improper purpose;
- v. "good faith" means that degree of diligence which a reasonable person would exercise in the performance of legal duties and obligations;
- vi. "good faith efforts" shall include, but not be limited to, those reasonable initial efforts necessary to comply with statutory or regulatory requirements and additional or substituted efforts when it is determined that such initial efforts will not be sufficient to comply with such requirements;
- vii. "marital status" means being single, married as recognized by the state of Connecticut, widowed, separated or divorced;
- viii. "mental disability" means one or more mental disorders, as defined in the most recent edition of the American Psychiatric Association's "Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders", or a record of or regarding a person as having one or more such disorders;
- ix. "minority business enterprise" means any small contractor or supplier of materials fifty-one percent or more of the capital stock, if any, or assets of which is owned by a person or persons: (1) who are active in the daily affairs of the enterprise, (2) who have the power to direct the management and policies of the enterprise, and (3) who are members of a minority, as such term is defined in subsection (a) of Connecticut General Statutes § 32-9n; and
- x. "public works contract" means any agreement between any individual, firm or corporation and the State or any political subdivision of the State other than a municipality for construction, rehabilitation, conversion, extension, demolition or repair of a public building, highway or other changes or improvements in real property, or



which is financed in whole or in part by the State, including, but not limited to, matching expenditures, grants, loans, insurance or guarantees.

- For purposes of this Section, the terms "Contract" and "contract" do not include a contract where each contractor is (1) a political subdivision of the state, including, but not limited to, a municipality, (2) a quasi-public agency, as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. Section 1-120, (3) any other state, including but not limited to any federally recognized Indian tribal governments, as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. Section 1-267, (4) the federal government, (5) a foreign government, or (6) an agency of a subdivision, agency, state or government described in the immediately preceding enumerated items (1), (2), (3), (4) or (5).
- (b) (1) The Contractor agrees and warrants that in the performance of the Contract such Contractor will not discriminate or permit discrimination against any person or group of persons on the grounds of race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender identity or expression, mental retardation, mental disability or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness, unless it is shown by such Contractor that such disability prevents performance of the work involved, in any manner prohibited by the laws of the United States or of the State of Connecticut; and the Contractor further agrees to take affirmative action to insure that applicants with job-related qualifications are employed and that employees are treated when employed without regard to their race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender identity or expression, mental retardation, mental disability or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness, unless it is shown by the Contractor that such disability prevents performance of the work involved; (2) the Contractor agrees, in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the Contractor, to state that it is an "affirmative action-equal opportunity employer" in accordance with regulations adopted by the Commission; (3) the Contractor agrees to provide each labor union or representative of workers with which the Contractor has a collective bargaining Agreement or other contract or understanding and each vendor with which the Contractor has a contract or understanding, a notice to be provided by the Commission, advising the labor union or workers' representative of the Contractor's commitments under this section and to post copies of the notice in conspicuous places available to employees and applicants for employment; (4) the Contractor agrees to comply with each provision of this Section and Connecticut General Statutes §§ 46a-68e and 46a-68f and with each regulation or relevant order issued by said Commission pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §§ 46a-56, 46a-68e and 46a-68f; and (5) the Contractor agrees to provide the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities with such information requested by the Commission, and permit access to pertinent books, records and accounts, concerning the employment practices and procedures of the Contractor as relate to the provisions of this Section and Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-56. If the contract is a public works contract, the Contractor agrees and warrants that he will make good faith efforts to employ minority business enterprises as subcontractors and suppliers of materials on such public works projects.
- (c) Determination of the Contractor's good faith efforts shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following factors: The Contractor's employment and subcontracting policies, patterns and practices; affirmative advertising, recruitment and training; technical assistance activities and such other reasonable activities or efforts as the Commission may prescribe that are designed to ensure the participation of minority business enterprises in public works projects.

- (d) The Contractor shall develop and maintain adequate documentation, in a manner prescribed by the Commission, of its good faith efforts.
 - (e) The Contractor shall include the provisions of subsection (b) of this Section in every subcontract or purchase order entered into in order to fulfill any obligation of a contract with the State and such provisions shall be binding on a subcontractor, vendor or manufacturer unless exempted by regulations or orders of the Commission. The Contractor shall take such action with respect to any such subcontract or purchase order as the Commission may direct as a means of enforcing such provisions including sanctions for noncompliance in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes §46a-56; provided if such Contractor becomes involved in, or is threatened with, litigation with a subcontractor or vendor as a result of such direction by the Commission, the Contractor may request the State of Connecticut to enter into any such litigation or negotiation prior thereto to protect the interests of the State and the State may so enter.
 - (f) The Contractor agrees to comply with the regulations referred to in this Section as they exist on the date of this Contract and as they may be adopted or amended from time to time during the term of this Contract and any amendments thereto.
 - (g) (1) The Contractor agrees and warrants that in the performance of the Contract such Contractor will not discriminate or permit discrimination against any person or group of persons on the grounds of sexual orientation, in any manner prohibited by the laws of the United States or the State of Connecticut, and that employees are treated when employed without regard to their sexual orientation; (2) the Contractor agrees to provide each labor union or representative of workers with which such Contractor has a collective bargaining Agreement or other contract or understanding and each vendor with which such Contractor has a contract or understanding, a notice to be provided by the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities advising the labor union or workers' representative of the Contractor's commitments under this section, and to post copies of the notice in conspicuous places available to employees and applicants for employment; (3) the Contractor agrees to comply with each provision of this section and with each regulation or relevant order issued by said Commission pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-56; and (4) the Contractor agrees to provide the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities with such information requested by the Commission, and permit access to pertinent books, records and accounts, concerning the employment practices and procedures of the Contractor which relate to the provisions of this Section and Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-56.
 - (h) The Contractor shall include the provisions of the foregoing paragraph in every subcontract or purchase order entered into in order to fulfill any obligation of a contract with the State and such provisions shall be binding on a subcontractor, vendor or manufacturer unless exempted by regulations or orders of the Commission. The Contractor shall take such action with respect to any such subcontract or purchase order as the Commission may direct as a means of enforcing such provisions including sanctions for noncompliance in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-56; provided, if such Contractor becomes involved in, or is threatened with, litigation with a subcontractor or vendor as a result of such direction by the Commission, the Contractor may request the State of Connecticut to enter into any such litigation or negotiation prior thereto to protect the interests of the State and the State may so enter.
- L. The grant award is subject to approval of the CSDE and availability of state or federal funds.



M. The applicant agrees and warrants that Sections 4-190 to 4-197, inclusive, of the Connecticut General Statutes concerning the Personal Data Act and Sections 10-4-8 to 10-4-10, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies promulgated there under are hereby incorporated by reference.

I, the undersigned authorized official, hereby certify that these assurances shall be fully implemented.

Signature:

Name: *(typed)*

Title: *(typed)*

Date:
