# Answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

|  | **Oregon Farm to School Education Grant**  **(Food-Based, Agriculture-Based and**  **Garden-Based Educational activities**  **in the School District)**  **School Years 2021-2022 & 2022-2023** |
| --- | --- |

**Contents:**

1. **General**
2. **Eligibility**
3. **Budget**
4. **Application Process**
5. **Allowable & Unallowable expenses**
6. **Review of Application and Award**
7. **Reimbursement Process/Purchasing**
8. **Miscellaneous**

## 1. GENERAL

**Q: It says above that this is for School years 2021-2022 & 2022-2023, but the first school year is over, why is the timeline messed up?**

A: The intent was to get this grant on the street as soon as we could after the start of the biennium, which would be in the fall of 2021. However, due to unforeseen circumstances, we weren’t able to release it until the end of the first school year. Unfortunately, we won’t be able to extend this grant, and all funds will still have to be spent by June 30, 2023.

**Q: What is the legislative authority guiding this program?**

A: The Oregon Legislature created a Farm to School and School Garden grant in 2011. For this biennium, the budget carried over previous legislation in 2019 (*HB 2579*), with the total amount of $10.2 million split into separate grants: Non-competitive & Competitive grants for Reimbursement of Oregon Grown and Processed food; Technical Assistance; Evaluation and **Competitive EDUCATION grants**. The legislation directs the Oregon Department of Education to award competitive grants to assist certain entities in paying the costs they incur providing food-based, agriculture-based, or garden-based educational activities. This FAQ deals with this **education grant ONLY**. For the information about the Oregon Farm to School Grant for reimbursement of Oregon grown or processed food, please refer to the ODE Farm to School website: (*see below for link*)

**Q: What is the purpose of the Oregon Farm to School Grant?**

A: The purpose of the grant program is to increase the amount of Oregon food products purchased by Oregon school districts and educate students about Oregon foods. Initially, this portion of the grant was combined with the other (procurement) portion of the grant to support related educational activities, and is still designed to work in concert with that other portion.

**Q: When will the webinar be? If I miss it, where can I access it?**

A: There will be two webinars—on providing information about the application process and another about implementation of the grant. Please see the timeline in the RFA, or posted on our grant webpage (see link at bottom of page). The webinar slides will be available on the website as well.

**Q: Are the webinars mandatory?**

A: It’s up to you for the first webinar, it’s an informational webinar that will give you lots of information on how to apply. The second webinar is a mandatory webinar for sponsors who are awarded the grant. A grantee that is awarded a grant must attest that they have attended either a live webinar or viewed the slides of the webinar for grantees.

**Q: What counts as food-based, agriculture-based, and garden-based education?**

A: Anything that directly connects youth and their families with agriculture and food through education. Includes activities such as (but are not limited to): School gardens, classroom-based gardening or cooking projects, tasting tables, field trips to farms, ranches, docks or food processors, chef’s visit/training, educational events or materials for families etc.

## 2. ELIGIBILITY

**Q: Are private schools eligible for farm to school funds?**

A: Yes, if they are 1) a nonprofit; and 2) they participate in the National School Lunch Program.

**Q: We are a school district that is applying for the grant, and are applying now to participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) but do not currently participate. Can we still apply for the grant program since we will be participating next year?**

A: No. Part of the application process involves reporting on Free/Reduced Price Meal participation for the previous school year. Without that data, you cannot apply (*the same would apply for another organization working with a school district. The school district that the organization is partnering with needs to be in the NSLP in order to determine eligibility*).

**Q: Our school has a free reduced rate of 27%. Should we even bother applying?**

A: Not unless you partner with someone else. The Oregon Administrative Rules for this stipulate that recipients of the grant “will serve a high percentage of children who qualify for free or reduced price meals..” Therefore, schools or school districts must qualify by having a high percentage of children who qualify for free or reduced price meals. So, you can partner with another school or district that is very high free and reduced to get your numbers up.

**Q: what IS a high percentage of Free and Reduced?**

A: ODE defines “high percentage” as those schools who qualify for special programs, including Title programs and Summer Lunch. The minimum percentage a school could qualify is 40%, using local census data information. Therefore, activities in schools (or, groups of schools) under 40% can’t be included in this grant.

**Q: Why do you need data from January 2020? What if we have a higher F+R% in a different month?**

A: ODE typically uses the most recent October F+R data because that month is usually the best representation of this data. Due to COVID and collection of applications, ODE Child Nutrition Programs determined that the best indicator of statewide free and reduced percentage currently is January 2020. We want to use the same timeframe to make a level playing field for all applicants. Also, it takes three months for data submitted by the schools to become official, as they have a three-month period to make changes.

**Q: How does someone find out which school districts have a high percentage of students that qualify for free or assistance with school meal programs?**

A: We used to have a site you could go on and plug in some information, and it would spit out a report that would tell you this info. Unfortunately, that site went away recently. There are plans to recreate something but it’s not ready yet. In the meantime, you can go to the following website to look up individual schools: <https://www.oregon.gov/ode/students-and-family/childnutrition/Pages/CNP-Statistics.aspx>

ask specifically which schools F+R you are looking for to [farmtoCNP@ode.oregon.gov](mailto:farmtoCNP@ode.oregon.gov) and we’ll get back with you within two business days. Click on the second bullet (*number of students eligible for free or reduced meals by district/school year*), then click on school year 2020-2021. This will give you only each individual school’s free and reduced percentage, which will give you all the information you need if you’re applying for an ED grant for one individual school. It won’t give you all the information needed if you’re combining schools, as you will need population and free and reduced numbers broken out. To get those official numbers, you’ll have to send a request to us at [farmtoCNP@ode.oregon.gov](mailto:farmtoCNP@ode.oregon.gov).

**Q: One of your requirements is % of Free/Reduced Lunches. Do you base this number off of the school district or the individual school? Also, you look up the numbers as of January 2020, but we had some students move in December bringing our % in the program up. Could this be factored in?**

A: This is clearly spelled out in the RFA and application, but ODE will run those numbers, using January 2020 data. This is the month ODE uses for a lot of other programs, we’ve found it to be a good representation of these percentages. We acknowledge that your % may have in fact gone up in subsequent months, but everyone will be on the same field if we use the same period for everyone.

**Q: From the RFA scoring criteria: “Project must benefit schools with a high percentage of students eligible for free & reduced priced meals.” (Overall average of Free and Reduced Percentage for those schools that will benefit from the grant funds)**

**We’re wondering how this percentage will be calculated?** Whether it will be a simple average of FRL for all schools benefitting from grant funds?

A: the format of the calculation is

School A 50% F+R

School B 60% F+R

School C 70% F+R

For an average of 60%

*NOTE: this is a simplified explanation, actual is based on population*

**Q: If your organization works with multiple schools and one or two have FRLs below 40%, but your overall average FRL of all schools included in the proposal is above 40%, are ALL of the schools in the proposal eligible to receive services paid for by the grant? Or just those schools above 40% on their own?**

A: The first part of your question is correct. We take the total students’ F+R% from all schools in your application

**Q: Are school districts eligible to apply every year? Would a school district be able to receive grant funding more than once?**

A: Schools and other entities that received previous Oregon Farm to School Grants are eligible to reapply and to receive funding again, there is nothing currently in rule that states sponsors are ineligible if received a prior award (like USDA awards do, for example). However, I keep hearing that the Legislature’s original intent was to make these projects sustainable. Selection committee members like to look for new parts to a project if the project was awarded before so as not to award the same thing.

**Q: Can single schools apply?**

A: Yes

**Q: Is it ok to operate/apply through a non-profit fiscal sponsor?**

A: YES. The following may apply:

School districts;

* Education service districts (ESD’s);
* Federally recognized Indian tribes *or* schools overseen by the Bureau of Indian Education;
* Nonprofit organizations;
* Providers of center-based programs for children in the Child and Adult Care Food

Program (CACFP);

* Commodity commissions or councils;
* Soil and water conservation districts;
* Producers of food produced or processed in this state, including farmers, ranchers and

seafood harvesters.

**Q: Do F2S programs partner with each other? Like two separate F2S applicants who want to stay connected as a Regional connection.**

A: There are no restrictions on organizations partnering with one another. Partnerships are encouraged. One entity may apply and include the other in their application, or two entities may apply separately and partner on the project.

**Q:** We are going into the 4th year of a nutrition education program at a farmer’s market partnering with a local grade school and fiscal sponsor. Our education has started at the grade school on their field day followed by weekly vegetable education at the farmers market weekly on Thursday evening. We close our education at back to school night at the grade school.  **Would the nutrition education program we currently provide qualify since it occurs mostly June-September but is specific to the grade school students?**

A: YES. This scenario you describe would qualify because you are teaching to the kids at an elementary school. This is assuming that the farmer’s market and/or fiscal sponsor you describe are nonprofits.

**Q: Should you apply as a school district or if you have 3 out of 8 schools interested should each school apply?**

A: there is a stipulation of ensuring that the award is based on need, i.e. free & reduced meal status. Therefore it’s up to the applicant to decide which schools to include so they can better leverage their application based on F+R numbers.

**Q: Does our school cafeteria have to participate in the Farm to School grant for reimbursement of Oregon grown or processed food to be able to apply for this grant?**

A: No. The intent of this grant program is to get Oregon grown and processed food to Oregon school children, and to teach them about Oregon foods. The application scoresheet has a section that provides points for activities that are *“tied to Oregon food served in the school meal program and activities that support increased purchasing of Oregon grown or processed food.”*  The school district does not have to be participating in ODE’s procurement grant program. They just need to be buying and serving Oregon foods and the educational activities in the grant need to be connected, but the applicant could receive more points for their cafeteria(s) participating in the procurement grant if they demonstrate they are tying educational activities to procurement in the cafeteria.

**Q: I am with a non-profit, and we run a learning garden. The 2 entities I work with most doing garden education are an elementary, and a Boys & Girls Club in the summertime. The elementary does not have a high enough percentage of Free & Reduced Lunch to apply for my work with them, but I’m pretty sure the Boys & Girls Club is, as they are part of the summer nutrition program provided by the school district. Would my garden education work with them be eligible? They are not listed in the school district Free & Reduced funding web page, and they are not a school, but they are district students covered in the lunch program.**

A: A nonprofit may apply, which could mean your nonprofit or the B&GC, however it’s stated in the bill for this grant that it’s for educational activities in a SCHOOL DISTRICT. Also a stipulation in the rules is that the award must “serve a high percentage of children who qualify for free or reduced.” So, we must be able to identify those students’ F+R status by figuring out the population of students proposed serving. This means we have to figure out the nearby school which the B&GC is coming from.

**Q: We have some agricultural and farming activities already in place at our school that we’d like to expand, but we do not call them Farm to School, nor have we received Farm to School funding before. Are we eligible?**

A: Yes. There is no requirement that you have established programs before applying, or that you call any existing programs “Farm to School.”

**Q: As a school district, can I apply with other schools districts in my area?**

A: YES. The rules state that a “district or districts” may apply. The intention is that partner organizations (nonprofits & commodity commissions) can apply with a district or multiple school districts. Or one district could be the lead applicant on a grant with multiple districts.

## 3. BUDGET

**Q: How do we calculate grant administration $?**

A: This would be up to you. It must be reasonable and justifiable and the costs must be directly associate with this grant for educational activities

**Q: When we apply, can we give estimates as to what things will cost? I just have no idea, for example, how much it would cost to provide a tasting table for 400 students. Or do I just need to really do some thorough homework and figure it out?**

A: You are encouraged to be specific as you can, regarding your budget. If there are significant changes to your plan after you receive an award, you would need to submit a revised budget to reflect these major changes.

**Q: Is there a minimum or maximum grant amount we can apply for?**

A: Mini Grant range: $2,000-$10,000. Large Grant range: $10,001-$100,000.

**Q: Is there a page limit or character/word limit for each question? Also, is there a page limit for the overall application?**

A: There are no word or page limits associated with the application.

**Q: Do we have to submit three letters of support:**

A: No, it’s not required. Here’s some insider information on what happens on the grant scoring committee gathering: it raises some eyebrows when someone doesn’t turn in applications, it’s been suggested that we make letters of support mandatory. BUT, it also doesn’t look good when you essentially have one letter duplicated three times, with just a couple words changed here and there, which has happened before. The letters can go a long way to show support of the project in many scored categories of the application.

**Q: Can you give us more information of the amounts awarded last time?**

A: The last time- we offered $100,000 awards, the largest award last time was $100,000, and the average award was $69,908. For the Mini Grants, the average was $8,523.

**Q: Are matching funds (cash match or in-kind match) required?**

A: Formal matching funds are not required. However, staff time is often necessary to establish new vendor relationships and procure Oregon foods and funding for that staff time for procurement of Oregon foods is not provided by this education grant, so there is an implicit requirement for an in-kind match, if those activities are taking place by the district.

**Q: Will higher match give higher ranking?**

A: There is no match required for this grant. However, some applicants might already have funds in the form of a match from a previous project. They will not be given any formal preference (with points) in the selection process.

**Q: What should I include in the budget narrative?**

A: You should include a description for every line item cost in your budget, and show how it supports the project activities. The narrative should describe the types of equipment and supplies to be purchased, the destinations for field trips if known, the identities (or types) of classroom guests, and any other direct expenses for the educational components of the program. Staff time **is** an allowable expense for the educational portion of this program; if your request includes staff time you should state the percentage of their time to be spent on the activities included in your proposal.

**Q: Is it beneficial to have a total project budget for which these payments are just a portion?**

A: No. Strong farm to school programs are well-rounded programs with funding from multiple sources. However your total project budget should not be larger than your grant request, for this application. Please include in your budget only the project costs which you are requesting.

## 4. APPLICATION PROCESS

**Q: Who *(which person specifically)* can apply for the grant?**

A: there are no restrictions on who can fill out the application in nonprofit organizations and commodity commissions/councils. In School Districts, anyone can apply and fill out the application, including Nutrition Services Directors, teachers, or even groups of High School Students (*real example from a previous farm to school application*). However, the application must be approved by the person at the organization applying who has the authority to enter into agreements and contracts, or by their authorized representative.

**Q: Why is there a “last day to ask questions”?**

A: In order to ensure that everyone’s questions get a timely response, we need to set a date to respond to everyone before the selection process begins. We will have to hold to this date in order to have a *fair process to everyone*, SO MAKE SURE you start the process early enough in case you have any questions.

**Q: Where can I get more help if I still have questions about the Farm to School program or application?**

A: We request that you read the Request for Applications and all appendices before placing a call. If you still have questions after reading the Request for Applications and all appendices, you can forward your question to the following before April 3, 2020:

[farmtoCNP@ode.oregon.gov](mailto:farmtoCNP@ode.oregon.gov) (*Goes to Rick, AJ & Emily*)

Rick Sherman

Farm to School / School Garden Coordinator

Oregon Department of Education

Phone: (503) 385.6998 cell

Email: [rick.sherman@ode.oregon.gov](mailto:rick.sherman@ode.oregon.gov)

For more information on ODE’s Farm to School activities, or to access resources associated with Farm to School, please visit the website at the bottom of the page.

**Q: Where is that score sheet available?**

A: It’s located at the end of the RFA, the “Appendix A.”

**Q: We’re just working with select schools in our district. Do we submit the district average or the average for the schools we’re working with?**

A: The application asks for your district average **and** the rates for the schools in your proposed project. A total percentage of free and reduced students **for all participating schools** will be used, based on a weighted average of those schools.

**Q: Can you throw out there a few quick examples of past grants? Give me some ideas of the types of things people/groups apply for**.

A: YES. We have the awards from the first round available on the grant website (see below for link).

**Q: Can you select just a few schools in a larger district and provide education just for those schools?**

A: Yes. You could propose to have activities in select buildings in your district. The application has a place to list how many schools / how many students will benefit from this Grant.

**Q: Can someone help us fill out the forms and guide us about what we can and can’t do?**

A: We cannot help you fill out the forms. However, if you have any questions that are not answered in these materials, contact [farmtoCNP@state.or.us](mailto:farmtoCNP@state.or.us) before the last day to ask questions (refer to TIMELINE grant website).

**Q: Will the Oregon Departments of Education (ODE) or Agriculture (ODA) Farm to School programs review or edit my application/project narrative before I submit my (official) application?**

A: No. Neither ODE nor ODA will review any portion of the grant application prior to the due date, or provide comments about the application during the review and selection processes.

**Q: Can I mail in my application?**

A: No, only applications submitted by email attachment will be accepted.   
Email to [farmtoCNP@state.or.us](mailto:farmtoCNP@state.or.us)

**Q: What do I need to include in my grant application?**

A: The grant application, the budget, and the budget narrative. All items are on our website, (*see below for link*).

**Q: If I have problems with submitting, will ODE staff help me submit or accept my application package after the deadline?**

A: No. ODE can answer general questions, but will not submit the application for the school district or accept anything after the deadline. Please make sure to work on your application well in advance of the deadline, so there will be time to identify and solve any technical problems before the deadline. *We will send you a confirmation that we received your application!* It should be noted that it is only a receipt that we received something. It’s up to you to ensure that the application materials are complete.

**Q: I submitted an application before the deadline, but need to change something on it.**

**A:** We will accept corrected applications until the grant deadline. Please submit a complete revised application package to the address above and state clearly that it should replace an earlier application. Specify the date and email address from which the earlier submission was sent.

**Q: in the application, it says to list three separate people (Project Manager, Fiscal Manager, and Agency Head). We only have one person (or two people) that fit in these categories. Can we list one person more than once?**

A: NO. If you list one person in more than one of these categories, the application will be rejected. This is a requirement of the grant and our Electronic grant management system. For accountability reasons, automated emails get generated from these fields, and we need to insure that these three positions get notified when this occurs.

**Q: How will I know ODE received my application?**

A: The first question in the application process asks for contact information of the person who is submitting the application. An email confirmation will be sent to that person after it is received, it should be noted that it is only a receipt that we received something. It’s up to you to ensure that the application materials are complete. ODE recommends that you print this confirmation email for your records as proof of timely receipt.

**Q: What happens if I forget to include one of the documents in my application?**

A: See above for submitting a corrected application before the grant deadline. Corrections will not be accepted after the grant deadline and only complete applications will be considered.

## 5. ALLOWABLE & UNALLOWABLE EXPENSES

**Q: What can I include in my budget?**

A: The funds for food-, agriculture-, and garden-based-educational opportunities may include personnel, contractors, equipment and supplies, meeting expenses, travel, and trainings. See section V in the RFA regarding allowable and unallowable expenses.

**Q: Are costs incurred by the school district for creating promotional materials allowable in the agriculture, food and garden-based education budget?**

A: Yes. However, ODE provides many promotional materials (for fruits and vegetables) for free with the Oregon Harvest for Schools. They are located at the Oregon farm to school webpage (*link at the bottom of the page- click on “Oregon harvest for Schools” link*). If you propose to develop new materials, please ensure that they do not duplicate existing resources.

**Q: Can funds also be used for farm tours for food services staff?**

A: Yes, as long as everything is included in the budget and well justified in the budget narrative and the tours are done with the primary purpose of educating students and their families about Oregon foods.

**Q: Can we hire a school garden position (or any position) for this grant?**

A: The rules state that you can “use the grant for cost directly associated with educational activities.” So, you can build in your budget those costs, **which should include hours, benefits, etc**. for labor clearly broken out. You shouldn’t simply submit, for example, FTE for a position. You need to specify exactly what the work is for in relationship to the educational activity.

**Q: Can we fund a greenhouse?**

A: you cannot use these grant funds for capital equipment. ODE Child Nutrition Programs would define any capital equipment as permanent structures. So, as long as the item can be moved relatively easy, it would be allowable. For example, a greenhouse that could be disassembled and moved would be allowable. A greenhouse that is stick-built with cement footings would not be allowable. We get the same questions regarding equipment:

**Q: Can we purchase equipment?**

A: Small equipment necessary for “food” lessons would be allowable. The same goes for this, if the equipment can be moved or disassembled easily, then it would be allowable.

**Q: Can the educational component of the grant be used for start-up costs to build a school garden?**

A: Yes, provided that the garden will then be used with students as part of specific educational activities in the grant.

**Q: Can this grant be used for Educational opportunities in the Summer?**

A: These funds can be used at any time until June 30, 2023.

**Q: Can the education piece be directed towards adults/staff such as the cafeteria staff?**

A: The bill language states that the funds be used for educational opportunities in a SCHOOL DISTRICT. The intention of this grant is to focus on the students and their families, not education of the school staff.

**Q: May we purchase items such as sinks and dishwashers needed for food prep? Food prep for education purposes? I thought I read something about a not being able to buy permanent fixtures. May we buy items such sinks and dishwasher so that take produce from our garden to cafeteria and classrooms? Sink in a classroom? May we purchase portable dishwashers? If tied to educational use? Dishwasher in a classroom?**

A: It could be. For the equipment – “education purposes” are key as getting equipment just for prepping veggies alone for your cafeteria would not be allowable, but using it for educational purposes would be. Any such equipment must not be considered a “capital expense.” We would define that as “portable.” So, a sink that is permanently attached to a wall would NOT be allowed. However a good example I’ve seen is a group purchasing a stainless steel kitchen-grade sink, but it’s put outside and attached to a hose for teaching kids the process of pre-cleaning school garden produce to make it available for cafeteria use.

**Q: Can reimbursement be for labor alone, or does there need to be a mix of labor and purchases?**

A: There are no restrictions on this; you can do any of the above scenarios.

**Q: Is mileage (i.e. travel to schools) an allowable cost?**

A: Yes, as long as it is essential to and associated with the educational opportunity.

**Q: Can F2S grant funds be used to buy salad bars?**

A: As long as the salad bars are specifically stipulated as necessary for being used as part of an educational activity. You couldn’t purchase one just for the sake of serving food to students as part of your meal program.

**Q: Do you consider building raised beds as a permanent structure?**

A: No. My experience is that they can be moved, or disassembled and moved

**Q: Does this include any time that new project applicants might spend meeting with school districts and partners during the first few months of the grant? Or does it include costs like supplies for meeting to plan and developing activities? Or both?**

A: Yes. Reasonable costs for planning are allowed up to 25% of the total funds available. This is up to the applicant to justify. I can see scenarios where an applicant can justify these items for planning or implementation.

**Q: FoodCorps questions: Can we use funds for the match required to host a FoodCorps member? What is a FoodCorps member? Labor $ tied to FoodCorps Supervisor?**

A: FoodCorps service members are a division of Americorps, and they have hundreds of folks scattered throughout the USA. In Oregon, there are ten service members serving at various school districts, the Oregon Department of Agriculture hosts them. ODA has plans to continue to expand this program when feasible. Funds for labor in this scenario would have to be justified by associating directly with educational activities, as opposed to a general flat fee such as a match requirement. Labor for the FC supervisor would have to be directly tied to those lessons as well. However, 20% of funds can be used for planning and development, and 10% can be used for administration. So those costs might be able to fit in those categories as well. Sponsors would need to specifically break out hours/benefits, etc. in any of those categories.

**Q: Could these funds be used to hire high school students to tend a school garden over the summer?**

A: As long as the students’ time is being used in educational opportunities (i.e. you are teaching the students to plant, grow, and cultivate in this case). You can’t hire someone to tend just for the sake of tending the garden without the education.

## 6. REVIEW OF APPLICATION AND AWARD

**Q: How will my application be reviewed?**

A: After initial screening, ODE will convene an evaluation panel to consider the merit of each grant application. Each application that passes initial screening will be given to the panel to be evaluated. The panel will assign each application a score using the evaluation criteria and points for each criteria..

**Q: When will the funding decisions be made, and when can expect to get the grant money?**

A: The award date is May 8, 2020; all applicants will be notified about the status of their application via email when the application is received. Successful grant recipients will sign contracts with ODE shortly afterward, and will be able to start making purchases for reimbursement once the people listed in the application have been confirmed in EGMS, our grant management system.

**Q: Are grant sizes (award amounts) related to district sizes?**

A: No. The committee will want to make these awards to a variety of geographic locations, large schools, small schools, etc. as described elsewhere in the FAQ and RFA documents. It is up to the applicant to propose how big or small their budget is.

**Q: Will my application be funded at the amount requested?**

A: That will depend on the number, quality, and budgets of the proposals received, and on whether all costs in your proposed budget are reasonable, allowable and applicable. ODE reserves the right to fund applications out of rank order to achieve priorities identified earlier, at lesser amounts if ODE determines that the project can be partially implemented with less funding, or at lesser amounts if funding is not sufficient to fully fund all applications that merit awards. This is subject to availability of funds.

**Q: Who is on the scoring committee?**

A: The committee and the results of the scoring process are kept confidential.

## 7. REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS/ PURCHASING

**Q: By what date do we have to spend the grant money?**

A: Funds must be spent by June 30, 2023. All funds need to be finalized in EGMS by July 30, 2023. Any funds not finalized in EGMS by this date will be liquidated.

**Q: How many years do we need to keep invoices?**

A: ODE requires that you keep all records associated with their programs the current year plus three additional years. For the purposes of this program, it’s highly recommended that you make a separate copy of any invoices pertaining to this grant, and store them in a separate place from your other invoices. If/when ODE reviews your operation and this grant; you will want to be able to access everything in one place, without doing an exhaustive search for records.

**Q: Can we get a cash advance?**

A: YES. An awardee can request up to 25% of their total award in the form of a cash advance. In order to do this, a written request (can be in the form of an email) must be directed to rick.sherman@ode.oregon.gov. More details are available in the recorded training webinar available on the grant website (*see below for link*).

**Q: We are an operation that has extremely limited cash. Can we get more than the 25% of the cash advance up front?**

A: NO. *Please consider this before you apply*.

Q: I understand that an awardee can request up to 25% of their total award in the form of a cash advance. But for the remainder of funds, which are by reimbursement only, **how often can we request reimbursement during the grant period? Is there a limitation of monthly or quarterly or can we draw down funds as needed as long as we have already spent that money and we have good documentation?**

A: there is not a limitation or a set schedule for claiming. It says in the RFA that *adequate progress must be made*. The Grant Manager will monitor the claiming, and if a long period elapses with no activity, the Grant Manager will reach out to the Project Director of the grant to get a sense of what’s going on with the grant. If no activity (no claiming of funds) still continues to be an issue, a warning will be issued by the Grant Manager to the Project Director with a deadline to get a claim in. If the deadline passes without a claim being submitted, funds will be removed from the sponsor and reallocated.

**Q: What documentation will be required to prove the reimbursement?**

A: If the school district is selected for an administrative review, ODE will need a documentation of purchases that were purchased during the award period if the school district is selected for an administrative review. Grantees need to retain good records and be able to show receipts of purchases of reimbursed items.

## 8. MISCELLANEOUS

**Q: We already have a school garden, so why would we need to have money for the educational piece of this Grant?**

A: In this case, you could do what you want, but you could do a different program with your award, such as tasting tables, or a hydroponics lab, for example. Also, it would be a good opportunity to expand your current school garden situation, like build a greenhouse, install an irrigation drip system or fund hours for an educator. Just make sure the opportunity to include these items are justified to food-; agriculture-; or garden-based education – not just purchasing items for the sake of purchasing them.

**Q: Can districts contract with partner organizations in order to administer educational activities? (For example, a community non-profit that leads garden lessons)**

A: Yes. If you are requesting funds to contract with a partner organization, that expense should be included in the “activities” portion of the budget.

**Q: Would Posters and signage at some sites and more intense education at other schools be ok? Does it have to be the same educational program at all schools?**

A: Yes. You may provide promotional activities at different levels at different schools. It does not need to be equal at all schools. The only requirement is to be clear in your application about which schools will benefit in what ways.

**Q: We would like to start a school garden plot in the community garden near a school. Is this ok or does the garden have to be on school property?**

A: Yes, that is ok. There are no restrictions about having the garden on school property. We encourage creative partnerships with other governmental or non-governmental agencies, including but not limited to parks departments, churches, and non-profit organizations.

**Q: Is it expected that the educational lessons start this spring, or can the spring months be used for hiring/planning/coordination/curriculum development for lessons the full school year?**

A: As stated before in the RFA, we are looking for well-designed applications. We also need to ensure that the money is spent. Therefore, if you aren’t planning on spending any funds at first, it’s recommended that you have a solid and well-planned application that details your plan to spend all the funds.

**Q: Do we need to reach a single school district? How about resources available for multiple school districts such as curriculum and resources?**

A: this is up to the applicant. A single school district or multiple school districts can be associated with an application. There are the same resources available for all on our website. Specifically, check our curricula and resources tabs on the farm to school website.

**Q:** **Is our nonprofit able to participate in more than one grant application? They would be entirely different projects with different partners.**

A: YES. There are no restrictions on the number of projects applied for.

**Q: Can one of the required signers by employed by the grant?**

A: YES.

**Q: Can we get results of our scoring?**

A: YES. I can provide feedback of YOUR application. This can help tell you where your application was weaker in areas.

**Q: May part of the request include time spent on planning?**

A: YES. You can spend up to 25% of your award on planning and implementation.

**Q: Would a garden educator's weekly time spent planning curriculum/prepping materials be considered in the 80% of direct educational activities or in the 20% "other' expenses?**

A: YES. Unless their time is directly spent doing educational activities, it would have to go in the “other” category. **SEE FOLLOW-UP E-MAIL BELOW REGARDING THIS SUBJECT**

**Q: On the ODE website for pulling data for FRL data for schools, we work with one that is listed with asterisks across the page and the data isn't available...Are they still eligible to be included in the grant?**

A: You can call me to double check about the specific school, but I believe those situations are asterisked because they are 100% F+R or the sample size is too small to configure. I can confirm the school’s data.

**Q: Can educational activities for Teachers (PD) be paid for through this grant?**

A: POSSIBLY. I would caution you here. There ARE points available in scoring for “parents in the community,” but teachers really aren’t necessarily parents/community folks per se. the main focus is to get activities to students. It might be necessary to train teachers with the “other” category.

**Q: Is the insurance criteria for the mini grants as well?**

A: Yes, regardless of the amount, it is a requirement by ODE for you to provide the coverage.

**Q: Will the insurance be required before application or once approved?**

A: All insurance must be obtained by the Sponsor before work can start. You can start the process before you apply by asking questions to your insurance agent. See the “insurance requirements” document in the grant materials on the grant website.

**Q: I don't know if we have all these types of insurance. What if not all of these types are applicable to our organization? For example the abuse and molestation insurance.**

A: all of these grants have to do with direct contact with Oregon students (food-; ag-; and garden based educational activities) and therefore the above insurance is required.

**Q: (I don’t see anything) in either RFA re: insurance?**

A: It’s in the exhibit B at the end. But see also the insurance requirements document in the grant materials on the grant website.

**Q: Do Early Childhood programs qualify?**

A: Official language from the bill: “*A provider of center-based programs for children in the Child and Adult Care Food Program* (qualifies).

**Q: We are an ECE Head Start with 100% CACFP. It looks like that qualifies.**

A: Correct.

**Q: Will this slide show be sent to everyone?**

A: No, a link to the recorded webinar or the slides are available upon request to [farmtoCNP@ode.oregon.gov](mailto:farmtoCNP@ode.oregon.gov)

**Q: As a Head Start, do we have to tie to school district's farm to school procurement activities?**

A: We say “School District” a lot, but what we mean is for you to tie in with your meals, so if you are at a CACFP organization, you can tie into the meals you serve there.

**Q: could you expand a little more on what a producer/ESD would be please?**

A: a producer would be a company that produces (processes) Oregon grown or processed food. An ESD is an Education Service District.

**Q: what is the website URL where the application materials are?**

A: pretty sure you know this as this is where this document is housed, but the link is [www.bit.ly/f2sor](http://www.bit.ly/f2sor), then click on the “farm to school grant” link

**Q: Can the same org apply for both the mini grant and the larger grant?**

A: Yes. There’s no rule against doing this, and some applicants want to try to figure out two separate projects and apply for both. If you were awarded a grant, you would receive only one of the awards however.

**Q: what are examples of allowable purchases?**

A: Check out the allowable & unallowable expenses section #5 above.

**Q: Do you award partial funds, or are applications only funded in whole?**

A: we have awarded partial project funding in the past, for a couple instances: 1) when our budget runs out, we sometimes fund the end applicant(s) at the lower end of the scoring to utilize the funds that are left, and notify the applicant to resubmit their budget based on the lesser amount; or 2) sometimes the scoring committee finds one of the projects that the applicant proposes isn’t in the scope of what the grant is about and they deduct that portion.

**Q: Will you talk more about the mini grants specifically?**

A: the bill that gives authority to this grant makes no distinction between full and mini grants. But, we had requests from stakeholders that wanted us to try to have smaller grants available for starter or small projects. We still have to score on the same criteria, but for the mini grants we have a simpler version of the same scoresheet we use for the larger grants. So- same general criteria, but not as intense.

**Q: Do applicants need to serve a high level of free + reduced lunch students to be eligible to apply at all, or just to be eligible for those points in the scoring rubric?**

A: you have to have an average of 40% for all the schools where your project takes place in order to be eligible. The points go up from there (see scoresheet).

**Q: we are an education center that works with youth from all over Lane County, registered with their home schools but attending ours. Does my program qualify to apply?**

A: No, only students who receive meals under Child Nutrition Programs are eligible.

**Q: Several of our schools are community eligibility provisions schools. What percentage is this for free and reduced meals?**

A: community eligibility schools typically are super-high free and reduced status. If you’re curious about your overall F+R%, please make a request to [farmtoCNP@ode.oregon.gov](mailto:farmtoCNP@ode.oregon.gov)

**Q: are salary costs part of implementation? Or administration?**

A: Could be either, it depends what the person is doing. If they are teaching, it would be implementation. If they are administering, it would be administration.

**Q: Can you talk more about what a partnership would look like - if a farm wanted to partner with a local school district. Would the school apply and list the farm?**

A: It could be either that could apply, as long as the entity is a nonprofit in the case of the farm.. or a producer that is listed with the Oregon Business Registry. If the farm isn’t a nonprofit or the other example, it would be easier for the school district to apply, and list the farm as a partner.

**Q: If we are working with a tribe, but the leading organization is not a tribe, are we eligible for the 15 bonus points?**

A: If they are exclusively working with a tribe, then yes. If that is just a small part of a bigger picture, the scorer may award partial points in that section.

**Q: (We applied and were unsuccessful in getting an award during the first round) Could we use letters of support from the last application for funding for this biennium?**

A: Yes

**Q: Can you provide examples of what you mean by implementation activities under the budget?**

A: Teaching students, farm field trips, tasting tables, etc.

**Q: Could you give us examples of how educational activities could be tied Oregon food served in the school meal program cafeteria?**

A: The cafeteria is serving an Oregon grown or processed food. You teach the kids about that food, market it to the parents, etc.

**Q: What do you mean by Oregon Food served in the school meal program ORF2S Procurement grant?**

A: The Child Nutrition Programs of Oregon have access to approximately $11 million dollars to the other portion to this grant (procurement grant), enabling them to get reimbursed for Oregon grown and processed food. As above, we would like these two grants to work together to teach Oregon schoolchildren about the Oregon grown and processed food.

**Q: is there a word limit for application answers?**

A: There is not. I would encourage you be succinct as possible, as the scorers have MANY applications to score. It gets frustrating if they have to go through pages and pages to find the answer.

**Q: How do you ensure your (*grant selection committee*) reviewers are reflective (e.g. students/families of color, homelessness), of the communities you are trying to target?**

A: We reach out to different organizations who serve minority/people of color/underserved communities groups to invite them to be members of our committee.