

RFA #ODE-1146-20

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS 1

INTERIM LATINO/A/X STUDENT SUCCESS PLAN

For all interested Applicants the webinar is available to viewed via the following link:

<https://www.oregon.gov/ode/students-and-family/equity/Latinx/Pages/default.aspx>

Q = Question

A = Answer

Q. - We are developing a grant for Jefferson County School District 509-J for the Interim Latino/a/x Student Success Plan. While writing the draft narrative, I am struggling with how much space should be dedicated to which goals and strategies are being addressed. I have developed the detailed project description that describes the specific activities.

Do we need to list each specific strategy and goal or can we use the following statement and demonstrate it through the project description?

JCSD's plan meets the goals and strategies of the Interim Latino/a/x Student Success Plan and Student Success Act.

A. - We ask applicants to indicate which of the Interim Latino/a/x Student Success Plan strategies they are addressing. How that can look like is to simply list the strategies in your narrative then work on the project description as a whole piece rather than strategy by strategy.

Because the Student Success Act lists these strategies in the statute, it's helpful later down the road when we report our progress with the legislature.

Q. - You will probably address this but I am wondering if percentage of Latino/a/x will play a part in the determination of getting a grant? I ask this because sometimes in districts with lower percentages the access to services is less.

A. - The 35% requirement only applies to Student Investment Account funds that go directly to districts. The Latino/a/x Student Success Plan falls under Statewide Education Initiatives Account and those have different requirements:

<https://www.oregon.gov/ode/studentssuccess/Pages/default.aspx>

However, the project you're seeking these funds for should be only for Latino/a/x student as defined in the Interim Latino/a/x Student Success Plan and the RFA.

Hope that clarifies any confusion.

Q. - Thank you for the webinar last week. It helped to answer some of my basic questions. I have some wonderings about the grant's definition of "community based organization". My work is unique in that I work with aspiring AND working Bilingual Teachers who are enrolled or graduated from the Bilingual Teacher Pathway program and who are connected to our 14 partnering school districts. We embarked on a Research Project called Finding Hope in 2018-19 and gathered together (prior to Covid-19) to collect focus group data, but surprisingly the gatherings became more important to the teachers. It became a safe place to dialogue with other bilingual teachers, a place of healing, and of support/encouragement. In other words, they didn't feel so alone or isolated in their various schools and school districts. When I saw the call

for proposal applications, I immediately thought of the two groups of bilingual individuals I work with and wondered how I could support them in their efforts to **become bilingual teachers** or to actually **work with their English language learner students** - most of whom are Hispanic/Latinx students and communities.

At the center core of the partnership is a relationship with a school district, which then narrows to bilingual schools within the district, and then focuses even more on the bilingual teachers and students in those schools. My understanding of the Student Success grant funding is that the aim is to reach Hispanic/Latinx students K-post secondary students. While not a traditional hierarchical organization, I'd like to propose the following:

I'd like to present a case of a "community based organization": being composed of 14 school districts (BTP Consortium) that wish to collaborate on this proposed project.

Underneath this umbrella, I'd like to provide support to two groups:

1. **aspiring bilingual teachers** who are starting their teacher preparation program this fall term. 21 out of the 23 are Spanish/English bilingual individuals, most who are from Hispanic/Latinx heritage background.
2. **BTP alumni - bilingual teachers** working in our partnering school districts. Specifically bilingual teachers who have graduated from the BTP program over the past 10 years and have experienced a culturally responsive teacher preparation program with an equity and social justice lens in curriculum, pedagogy, and professional practices as educators.

Could you please let me know if this interpretation of "community based organization" would be acceptable within the ODE parameters of the grant guidelines?

A. - Thank you for attending the webinar.

For your first question, a community based organization is a non-profit organization, usually with a 501(c)(3) tax status. Your effort sounds more like a partnership between school districts and one district would need to submit an application as the lead and fiscal agent.

However, while your project ideas are great and I understand how supporting bilingual teachers is crucial for Latino/a/x student success, these funds are more focused on efforts directly affecting students and their families. I don't believe it would be a good fit for this RFA.

I would like to connect you to my colleagues at ODE whose work is focused on ELL efforts as I believe your project would be a better fit for their areas of work. I will forward this email to them and someone from that team should get back to you.

Q.-Do we submit our applications through the ORPIN system, or through ODE's secure file transfer?

A. - The RFA provides the following information in section 3.3.4.1. ODE is not set-up in ORPIN to receive documents through it.

3.3.4.1 Submission via ODE District Secure File Transfer Process

An electronic version of the complete Application must be submitted to the SPC using the secure file transfer system available on Agency's district website: <https://district.ode.state.or.us/apps/xfers/> Follow the

instructions provided on the secure file transfer website. Multiple files must be compressed (zipped) into a single folder for submission.

Only complete Applications submitted by Closing will be evaluated and scored. If you need assistance with the secure file transfer process, contact Agency's helpdesk at 503-947-5715 or email at ode.helpdesk@ode.state.or.us

Q. - We are a group that has been working on educational equity issues in Beaverton for a couple of years. I read with interest the RFA for Latinx success grants and unfortunately we missed the webinar due to some scheduling issues. I wonder if you have some time for a phone chat about this opportunity soon? We'd love to learn more to understand how this could potentially serve Spanish speaking families and students in Beaverton.

A. - Unfortunately, all communications are to be written as outlined in the RFA.

Q. - I wanted to get a little clarification on the grant process – I created an account with ORPIN and downloaded the grant forms, but several of the forms are still in “Draft” form – when will that change?

A. - Yes, you submit to me, the SPC through the district secure site.

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Q. - Is the grant submitted to you (secure file) or through ORPIN – there was some confusion on that and maybe an earlier draft of the RFP?

A. - The Attachment C – “Disclosure” should not have “Draft” on it – I will remove and replace. Most Applicants have nothing to disclose and no doubt will not be returning, an assumption on my part? The RFA provides in 3.2.1:

- In addition, if Applicant believes any of its Application is exempt from disclosure under Oregon Public Records Law (ORS 192.311 through 192.478). ***Only if applicable*** to Applicant's submission, Applicant shall complete and submit the Disclosure Exemption (Attachment C) and a fully redacted version of its application, clearly identified as the redacted version.

Q. - Here are our questions about the SSI grant if you might have a moment to respond.

1) In the framework in section 2.4.2, the third heading references safety and wellness, food, clothing and shelter. However, the objectives underneath this don't specifically address basic needs. Is it permissible to go outside these objectives? Specifically, we are looking at the possibility of using part of the funding for a basic needs fund to cover areas families have reported as high needs including rental assistance and payment/co-payment for mental health services. Would this be considered an eligible expense category?

A. - This is part of the challenge of essentially fitting the requirements of the Latinx SSA outcomes with ODE's efforts to support students and schools in this pandemic. The outcomes of the SSA weren't designed with a pandemic in mind so we took somewhat of a “close enough” approach when categorizing the strategies into those outcomes. We know that for students to be successful in the class, their safety, health, and well-being needs must be met outside the class. If you can justify how those expenses contribute to the SSA strategies (and indicate which strategies), then your proposal might be a good fit for funding.

2) On page 13, section 3.5.2, one criterion is noted as "Whether the Grant Application demonstrates equitable distribution of grant funds and resources" Please can you provide more clarification on what is meant by equitable distribution?

A - When it comes to equitable use of grant funds, we want to ensure that grantees are thinking about several elements: using grant funds to have the greatest impact on communities served, ensuring that the community have a say in determining use the grant funds (also part of the community voice element of the RFA), and ensuring that staff involved in the project reflect the community they serve. In the case of the Latino/a/x Student Success Grant, are the staff positions serving the project Latino/a/x themselves? Finally, when it comes to partnerships, say between a school district and a CBO, are the partners getting the appropriate share of the grant relative to the work?

3) In section 3.1, the RFA notes that priority will be given to applicants who are culturally specific organizations. Please can you provide clarity about how this will happen, e.g. will it be a weighting factor after applications are scored? Also, if our district does an application in partnership with a culturally-specific organization with the district as the lead agency, would that be prioritized, or does the application need to come directly from the culturally-specific organization?

A. - Yes, culturally-specific organizations are prioritized and we recently tweaked our scoring criteria to reflect how we evaluate that ([updated addendum to RFA is here](#)). Unless there is a strong case for why a school district should serve as the lead instead of the CBO, a project led by a CBO will be more competitive.

Q - I am using our application for SSA as a crosswalk as I know this new request needs to support our needs assessment and project goals for our SIA. Our project goals were all written to support our underserved population, so they are very connected.

I have one more question related to the funding for the SIA. We have not been given much cause to think we would receive any of that money this year. Is it acceptable to write a request into the grant for something that we had been hoping SIA \$\$ would cover. For example, our Family Liaison who works specifically with our families and students who fall into this specific category-She was providing weekly food boxes during the pandemic, brings in dental care, drives them to appointments, connects them with resource, etc. She also provides family educational classes in both English and Spanish. She covers every area of need, supports attendance, mental/physical health, and so on.

I really hate to lose her, especially during this time with the pandemic, but I'm very concerned we will not have the resources to sustain her position. She has been totally grant funded so far.

A. - The RFA document and addendum are what you will use to submit your application materials. Those are posted on ORPIN already. I have CC'ed Karen Hull to assist you with how to submit your application documents.

Regarding SIA funds, that is a different fund under the Student Success Act. I recommend you reach out to Rachel Moser, Rachael.Moser@ode.state.or.us

Q - I attended your webinar last week and would like to apply for the grant. I tried to log into ORPIN last week and was having some difficulties, and I'm still waiting for someone to respond to my email and phone call for assistance. However, our business manager did log in and was able to download the Application Cover sheet, and the Disclosure Exemption. However, the Disclosure Exemption was just a draft. There was not an RFA, I'm assuming they will load more at a later date? I have downloaded the sample from the ODE website and I'm working from that right now. We also were not able to figure out how to notify our intent to apply.

So to sum it up, I'm waiting for a reply from ORPIN, and I'm hopeful I can apply for this grant.

A. - Please know that all documents were posted in ORPIN including the RFA at the same time and the draft removed from the Attachment C – Disclosure Exemption.

The Documents located in the folder labeled Attachments Exist – see the open folder on the notice below the state seal.

Concerning how to express an interest. This link provides additional help with ORPIN.

<https://www.oregon.gov/das/Procurement/Pages/ORPINoppor.aspx>

Pertaining to expressing an interest the above link provides the following information:

From ORPIN - There are a few things that might cause this. Please check the following:

- You must be logged into a registered supplier account. If you are just browsing as an Anonymous User you won't be able to access attachments. Did you enter your username and password before pulling up the opportunity? If not, you haven't logged in yet.
- After you log into the system and pull up an opportunity, you must add your company to the Interested list before you can open the attachments. To do this, click on Express/View Interest in the menu bar. Select whether your company is interested as a Primary Contractor or a Subcontractor, and then click the Submit button. This will place you back on the face of the document and you will be able to open the Attachments Exist folder.
- If you try to express interest and get an error message indicating you are not affiliated with a company, it means that you created a user account but your account isn't officially tied to a company yet. See the [Suppliers FAQ](#) page for more details on how to correct this.

Q - About how many grants are expected to be awarded?

A. - We have \$1 million total available to grant and applicants can request up to \$150K so I expect we'll award between 6-8 grants.

Q. - Our major culturally specific partner is Latino Network. We currently contract with them for parent engagement programs for early learning and high school students. We will likely work with them to build on these services. The question is, if Latino Network submits a proposal directly, and could also be a partner in a proposal with TTSD at the lead agency, would that adversely affect the chances of either proposal being awarded?

A. - We recognize some organizations like Latino Network have multiple partnerships across the region. All the grant proposals will be scored individually so if an organization submits multiple applications, it is not counted against them but they could be competing against themselves.

Q. - Narrative page limit is 5 pages. Is this single or double spaced?

A. - It can be single spaced.

Q. - I missed the first slide, can you send the powerpoint?

A. - The powerpoint and recording of the presentation will be posted to the ODE website early next week. There will also be a recorded version of this presentation in Spanish.

Q. -: Can Latinx parent groups apply?

A. - Yes - as long as they are supported by a lead organization as indicated in the RFA.

Q.- With only \$1 million, do you have an intentional plan to assure that it is spread between several organizations and areas, or are you keeping open to one organization getting the whole thing? I'm hoping you intend to assure that maybe 5-10 organizations/entities will receive some funding.

A. - Individual grants are up to \$150,000 per group - the number of applications that are received determines the number of groups that will receive grants up to the \$1 million limit that the LatinX Success Plan has been allocated.

Q - Where is the budget template located?

A. - Materials are available through ORPIN - you will need to sign up/create an account to access them all

Q. - Is there a cover sheet?

A. - Yes, there is a cover sheet in ORPIN.

Q. - Are there any margin requirements or other formatting rules for the 5-page narrative?

A: - There are no margin requirements for the narrative.

Q. - Since this is only a one-year grant, what are your requirements regarding how we show sustainability?

A. - We are not requiring applicants to demonstrate sustainability for the project after the grant period ends.

Q. - Where can we find the RFA? I have been searching for it and cannot find it. I just tried to create an ORPIN log-in account, but it seems like that's only for previously approved entities.

A. - Contact the ORPIN Helpdesk for assistance with your ORPIN account and login.

Q. - Can multiple staff from one organization register an account?

A. - Yes, they can - it is most likely to be one account with multiple profiles. The ORPIN Helpdesk can better answer/guide this.

Q - How do we get on ODE's grant announcement list?

A. - If you're registered in ORPIN you can pick areas of interest and would be notified by email about new opportunities. It's not ODE specific so there will be other notifications from government organizations.

Q. - Can one organization submit multiple proposals? (I have multiple organizations working with Western Oregon University interested and am wondering if Western Oregon can submit multiple proposals for different organizations)

A. - There is nothing in the RFA that prohibits this. Those will just end up being competing applications.

Q. - Which areas of the state demonstrate the greatest need for students served by the plan? The RFA references this, but where do we go to learn more?

A. - It has been noticed that there is a greater need in more rural areas, but it is open ended for the applicants to list/demonstrate their needs.

Q. - If we do not submit an application will that impact future options?

A. - This is not a prerequisite for future funding opportunities. It is not necessary to apply for this one if you would like to apply for funding in the future.

Q. - Along with one of the previous questions, if multiple applications are submitted from one organization, could multiple grants be awarded to the same organization?

A. - Technically it is possible but is highly unlikely that one organization will get more than one award.

Q. - Can an ESD be the fiscal agent if multiple districts apply?

A. - In the RFA, it says that the lead applicant needs to be an eligible entity. This would exclude ESD's from applying as a lead, but rather can work in partnership with an eligible lead organization.

Q. - If we registered for this webinar, will we automatically receive information about next week's webinar being provided in Spanish?

A. - For all the people registered for this webinar, we can send an announcement via email once the Spanish version is available.

Q. - In looking at the ORPIN information it looks complicated to sign-up. We will need to go to ORCPP website? Could detailed instructions be provided?

A. - Please contact the ORPIN Helpdesk for more information/direction.

Q. - How many students should we propose to reach in our application? What do you consider to be a critical mass?

A. - The number of students depends on the size and scale of the community. It is recommended that applicants scale the request for funding based on the scale of students in the community.

Q. - Should the Latinx interim plans align with the previously submitted Student Success Plans by the school districts?

A. - We're not requiring a partnership, but it is recommended to be expanded upon in the application if it applies to the applicant.

Q. - HB 3427 requires that eligible grant applicants have at least a 35% population of focus of the "Racial or ethnic groups that have historically experienced academic disparities," as described in the Student Success Act. Do applicants for this grant need to meet that 35% threshold for the students they are serving?

A. - This is not required by this RFA. The project does have to serve 100% Latino, but the school district does not. The 35% requirement only applies to Student Investment Account funds.

Q. - We have several small to mid-size districts in our county, if they apply individually, can then an ESD be their fiscal agent?

A. - No, an ESD cannot be the fiscal agent. The school districts will need to apply individually or with another qualifying organization as their fiscal agent.

Q. - But we are leading the African American Student Success program, when did that change?

A. - The African American/Black Student Success Plan is under different laws/legislations.

Q. - Can you point to where in the SIA document I can find the information that ESD's cannot apply?

A. - Oregon revised statutes for the Student Success Act prohibit ESDs from receiving funds for Statewide Education Initiatives Account. This is an issue we will need to explore with the legislature in the future.

Q. - Can a migrant education program apply? We are housed within an ESD and provide culturally specific services to the LatinX community.

A. - An ESD will need to identify a qualifying organization to serve as the lead applicant.

Q. - Is my understanding correct in that this grant is to specifically address challenges associated with COVID-19?

A. - COVID-19 highlighted challenges that the LatinX communities are facing, and this grant is a chance to address these.

Q. - Why do we have to go through ORPIN rather than posting the RFA on the ODE site?

A. - ORPIN is the standard tool used by the state for funding, contracts, and grants. It is easier than trying to manage individual requests and better for broadcasting to a large audience.

Q. - If our organization has the ability and capacity to provide a project throughout the state (for example, via webinar and/or in-person training when possible again), will that receive greater priority than projects specific to one or a few communities?

A. - It may have greater priority, but ultimately this will be determined by the scope of work, and how communities are involved in the design/implication of work.

Q. - Could a potential project include strategies to enhance community voice and develop further understanding of the community in how organizations can provide greater service? I know a part of the grant requirement is demonstrating how the community will be involved in the project.

A. - The community piece could come back to parent-student engagement and how this aligns with the Student Success Act.

Q. - Can two districts apply jointly for one grant?

A. - Don't see why not. It has been done so districts should review the RFA and eligibility requirements. One district will need to submit as the lead applicant.

Q. - Isn't ORPIN also required for invoicing the state?

A. - No, those are sent directly to the grant manager.

Q. - How flexible can we be with applying funds to programs that fall within the interim plan goals? Because we work in multiple districts that are drafting different reopening plans, we do not know what will be the area of greatest need. Can we write a grant that will give our organization options to meet the needs of students?

A. - Yes, you can write a grant with flexibility to meet the needs of students. It would help to design work based on what you think the needs will be as long as you are working toward the outcomes in the Student Success Plan.

Q. - Is there a way to submit letters of support to demonstrate partnerships or should this all be addressed in the narrative?

A. - We can amend some of the documents to allow for submittal. It should be talked in the narrative, but documents can also be submitted. Letters of support can be submitted and contribute to potential bonus points received.

Q. - Can you email the RFA to all who registered for this webinar, rather than each of us to register for ORPIN?

A. - There is a sample on the website - it can be emailed out with a link to the website.

Q. - Please clarify what the 35% refers to. Does the district need to have 35% LatinX students?

A. - There is nothing in RFA that specifies this (page 3 of RFA first paragraph, HB 3427 referred to). The 35% requirement only applies to Student Investment Account funds.

Q. - Also, for small organizations not familiar with state funding, you should explain that groups must do the work first and then invoice the state. And tell them how frequently they can invoice the state. And tell them that they must have some other money to get the work done while they are waiting for the payment from the state. This factor has destroyed some organizations who were not prepared.

A. - Organizations awarded will receive up to 25% of total grant award up front. Reports and updated throughout the grant period will be required to release additional funding for grantees.

Q. - Can an organization that is a school district group, for example a LatinX Parent Advisory Committee, apply for the grant?

A. - Yes, as long as one of the qualifying organizations submits as the lead applicant.