



Mitigating Impact Trauma in Schools RFA Q&A

1. Are private schools allowed to apply?

ANSWER – No, this opportunity is for public school districts. Refer to page 6 in the RFA “Eligible applicants are New York State P-12 Public School districts.”

2. Are BOCES eligible to apply? If we are eligible to apply, are we able to train our staff as well as staff in our competent school districts?

ANSWER – No, BOCES are not eligible to apply. This opportunity is for public school districts. Refer to page 6 in the RFA “Eligible applicants are New York State P-12 Public School districts.”

3. Our district currently uses Second Step, but not to full fidelity and/or capacity. If we already have pockets of this happening, can we still use this funding for this? Also, we have other mindfulness work happening, would that be ok to embed one of those curriculums in with what we currently have?

ANSWER – No, a school district may not submit an application to implement Second Step with bullying prevention unit in a school where the curriculum has been introduced but is not fully implemented throughout the school or to fidelity.

Yes, a school district may submit an application to implement a Mindfulness program listed in the Menu of Options, to complement the mindfulness work the school is already doing, provided that the selected program has not already been implemented in the school.

4. Our district currently uses MindUP in one elementary school, but not in the other five elementary schools, can this funding be used to implement it in the other five schools?

ANSWER – Yes, a school district may submit an application to implement MindUP in a school that has not already implemented the MindUP curriculum.

5. Is a BOCES able to submit a grant application for this RFA?

ANSWER See response to Question 2.

6. It is not clear - According to the section on funding (7/Operational Funding), how any of the funds go to a mental health program. I see materials, teacher time, curriculum, equipment, and

marketing. Can a mental health program partnering with a school request funding for staff time to implement?

ANSWER – No, eligible applicants are public school districts. Refer to page 6 in the RFA “Eligible applicants are New York State P-12 Public School districts.” Awardees will be responsible for paying the selected program and associated implementation costs.

7. Our school has an active District Trauma Sensitivity team and it is believed that one of these programs would greatly augment our mission. See the following questions – 1) This Team is funded by McKinney Vento, would we still be eligible to apply for one of these programs? 2) Is there a direct link to the request for application? If not, how would I go about submitting a request after uploading our School profile, Quality Assessment and TRSIA? 3) Where are the quarterly meetings typically held? And would this attendance and mileage be included in the request for application?

ANSWER – 1) Eligible applicants are public school districts. The school district may submit an application to implement one of the six programs offered on the “Menu of Options” in the RFA that augments existing work, provided that the selected program has not already been implemented in the school. Refer to page 7, Section E.2. of the RFA

2) The RFA is posted on OMH’s website

(<https://omh.ny.gov/omhweb/rfp/2022/mitis/index.html>) and per the RFA, all submissions are to be made through the Grants Gateway.

3) The Quarterly meetings will be Virtual.

8. Is there a required participation percentage for M/WBE’s?

ANSWER – No, this RFP/awarded contracts has no goals.

9. The RFA says awards are first-come/first-served, but also that awards will be announced on 3/8/23. This is confusing, can you please clarify?

ANSWER – These awards are in fact being conducted on first come/first served, but awards will not be made/announced at the time of submission. Submissions are time/date stamped and all awards (again, on the basis of first come/first served), will be announced simultaneously on 3/8/23.

10. Do programs have to be implemented district-wide, or can it just be for certain schools?

ANSWER – Programs can be implemented in selected schools within the district, OMH does not require district wide implementation.

11. Can funds be used for personnel to deliver the programming?

ANSWER – No, funds may **not** be used to cover costs for outside personnel to deliver the programming.

12. Can funds be used for school personnel to deliver the programming?

ANSWER - Yes, the school district may offer stipends to school personnel to cover administrative costs associated with implementing the program provided the costs do not exceed 10% of the budget. Substitute time is an allowable cost. Refer to page 10, "Funding may be used for: b. Costs associated with substitute teacher/staff coverage to allow teachers to participate in training (# of staff x number of days x substitute cost)"

13. Can funds be used to reimburse a district for a program it recently purchased?

ANSWER – No. Refer to page 6, section E.2. "This funding may only be used to implement a program that is not already in place."

14. Are stipend to teachers or staff for training an allowable cost? Most schools have trouble finding substitutes and teacher training needs to be provided outside of their normal work schedule, which by most teacher union contracts, requires the district to provide them a stipend.

ANSWER – Yes. Substitute time is an allowable cost. Refer to page 10, "Funding may be used for: b. Costs associated with substitute teacher/staff coverage to allow teachers to participate in training (# of staff x number of days x substitute cost)" "d. Other costs associated with implementing the program".

Schools may offer stipends to staff attending training outside of their normal work schedule and cover administrative costs associated with implementing the program provided the costs do not exceed 10% of the budget.

15. What are the parameters for "other costs" under the "Funding may be used for: on page 10 of the RFA?

ANSWER – There may be other costs that support implementation outside of the listed areas. An example is administrative costs for program implementation or stipends for training staff outside of their normal schedule. The school district may include other implementation costs that do not exceed 10% of the total budget.

16. It appears consortiums and BOCES are not eligible, is this correct, or are consortiums and BOCES eligible?

ANSWER – See response to Question 2.

17. In some areas of the literature, this grant is listed as a 5-year contract and in some other sections, it is listed as a one-year contract. Can you please clarify if the funding is \$100,000 a year for 5 years or \$100,000 for one year?

ANSWER – The reference to a 5-year contract was an error. The funding is up to \$100,000 for one year.

18. Would it be possible for a school to use an evidence-based program that successfully addresses student trauma but is not on the list? For example, “Mind Matters: Overcoming Adversity and Building Resilience”. The outcomes of “Mind Matters...” meets this RFA’s goals of mitigating the impact of trauma on students.

ANSWER – No. This funding is limited to the programs listed in the RFA, Menu of Options starting on page 7.

19. Our district is interested in expanding our work with “Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBP) Steps A” as a Tier 1 program for supporting students’ ability to regulate their emotions and build positive peer relationships. Given that there is a mindfulness component, we are wondering if we could expand our work with DBT Steps A instead of taking on a new program for the list provided?

ANSWER – No. This funding is limited to the programs listed in the RFA, Menu of Options starting on page 7.

20. Are charter schools eligible to apply?

ANSWER –No, this opportunity is for public school districts. Refer to page 6 in the RFA “Eligible applicants are New York State P-12 Public School districts. (Charter schools are not eligible).”

21. Is staffing/staff salaries an allowable use of funding? Wondering if it would fall into “Other costs associated with implementing the program.

ANSWER – No. The funding may not be used for staff salaries. School Districts may offer stipends to staff attending training outside of their normal work schedule and may cover administrative costs associated with implementing the program provided the costs do not exceed 10% of the budget.

22. Does the full amount of the grant funding have to be expended each year, or will any unused funding roll over into subsequent years (if a contract is more than one year)?

ANSWER – The funding is up to \$100,000 for one year and will all be dispersed in the first year.

23. Our school is considering applying for the grant and choosing the *MindUP For Educators* program. The program lists the cost as \$2,500 per school for up to 30 teachers. If we only

anticipate approximately ten educator participants per school (ten schools in total), can we budget for and purchase fewer licenses for the program or is the one license per school a definitive answer? In other words, instead of paying \$25,000 for ten schools and approximately 100 educator participants, can we purchase 4 licenses to cover the anticipated number of educator participants?

ANSWER – No. OMH worked with each program to present their pricing specific to this RFA. The pricing for a program cannot be altered or tailored outside of the details provided in the [“Program Snapshots”](#) document.

24. I have had several BOCES contact me about BOCES eligibility. They are considered a Local Education Agency and Independent School District by U.S. Department of Education. Does OMH consider a BOCES as a Public School District and is collaboration amongst school districts allowed?

ANSWER – See response to Question 2.

25. The RFA states, “For this funding opportunity, applicants may not select a program they have already started to implement.” 1) If a supplier offers more than one program and the applicant already has one of the programs but would like to purchase different ones, is that allowed? 2)The supplier offers what is essentially the same program, but the older version is physical and the newer version is digital. If the applicant has the physical version, can they upgrade to the digital version? 3) If a school district uses one of the supplier’s programs in one school, would they be allowed to expand the same program in other schools?

ANSWER –

- 1) A school district may submit an application to implement the Bullying Prevention Unit (BPU) in a school that has implemented the Second Step SEL curriculum but is not yet implementing the BPU. A school district may not submit an application to implement other components of any of the other programs list in the “Program Snapshots”.
- 2)No. Funds may not be used to upgrade materials in an existing program from a physical version to a digital version.
- 3) Yes. A school district may submit an application to implement a program that is not already in place in a specific school within the district even though the program may be in place in other schools within the district.

26. Will OMH provide any sort of training on SHAPE?

ANSWER – OMH encourages school districts to take advantage of the videos that are available on the [NYS SHAPE website](#). OMH will also provide awardees information about potential SHAPE learning collaborative opportunities.

27. Can the District use grant funds to cover training costs for SHAPE?

ANSWER – SHAPE is a school mental health assessment tool and is a free resource.

28. Approximately how much time should we allocate for school district staff to participate in the NYS Trauma Informed Network meetings?

ANSWER – OMH requires that applicants commit to joining the NYS Trauma Informed Network but does not prescribe the level of participation. Attendance at quarterly meetings is not required. For school districts planning to attend networking meetings, allocating 3-4 hours per meeting is sufficient.

29. Are the quarterly meetings virtual or in-person? Approximately how much time should we allocate for school district staff to participate in quarterly meetings? If they are in-person meetings, where will they take place? Do we need to incorporate a budget for this purpose?

ANSWER – OMH Quarterly meetings will be virtual. Each meeting will be scheduled for approximately 90-120 minutes. School Districts may include funding in their budget for substitutes for staff attending the meetings.

30. Can OMH clarify what percentage of funds need to be spent on M/WBE vendors? Can they provide examples of how M/WBE vendors would be utilized? If most of the expenses are staff/teachers, and there is a fee for the program (offered by a non-M/WBE provider), how can the District best fulfill the M/WBE obligation?

ANSWER – There are no M/WBE goals placed on this procurement/awarded contract.

31. Is there an evaluation component?

ANSWER – Yes. Refer to page 10, Section E.6, Data and Reporting “Each awardee will be required to provide information showing their progress on implementation of the selected program. This reporting will include quarterly reports and a final report.”

32. What happens after 1 year since the grant is for one year? Is the District expected to pick up the cost of the programs we would be working with during the grant year?

ANSWER – This funding opportunity is for one-year and is intended to support school district’s implementation of the selected program/s. Any costs beyond the \$100,000 in the first year and sustainability after year one, would be the responsibility of the school district.

33. When should the School Health Assessment and Performance Evaluation be completed?

ANSWER – Within 6 months of the award. Refer to page 6, Section E.1, School Mental Health Assessment “Applicants must have already completed or commit to completing the School Health Assessment and Performance Evaluation (SHAPE) System assessment tool within 6

months of the award OR attest that they have already completed this tool OR commit to completing an assessment using another tool* within 6 months of the award. If this assessment is not completed within 6 months, the award may be rescinded.”

34. Is there an opportunity to utilize the funds to offer staff per session for the trainings or other program related items?

ANSWER – Refer to page 10, Section 7, Funding may be used for “Costs associated with substitute teacher/staff coverage to allow teachers to participate in training (# of staff x number of days x substitute cost)”. Funds may be used to cover "Other costs associated with implementing the program". Schools may offer stipends to staff attending training outside of their normal work schedule and to cover administrative costs associated with implementing the program provided the costs do not exceed 10% of the budget.

35. If we accept becoming a SHAPE district, do all individual schools targeted for the program have to utilize or will be mandated to use this screening tool versus what they already have in place? Or is the data screening only done by the district?

ANSWER – SHAPE is a mental health assessment tool for use at the school or district level. All school districts participating in the project must complete the assessment tool OR attest that they have already completed this tool OR commit to completing an assessment using another tool* within 6 months of the award.

Refer to page 6, Section E.1 "SHAPE Assessment Tool is a free web-based platform developed by the National Center for School Mental Health (NCSMH) that offers schools, districts, and states/territories targeted resources to support school mental health quality improvement to increase the quality and sustainability of comprehensive school mental health systems." Refer to [What is SHAPE? - NYS SOC](#) for more information on SHAPE.

36. Does the funding also include supplies for trainings and refreshments?

ANSWER –Yes. Refer to page 11, Section 7.e, funding may be used for “d. Other costs associated with implementing the program e. Food to support activities such as workshops, trainings or supportive groups for parents and students. (This does not include food that a school district is required to provide i.e., breakfast and lunch.) f. Printing/copying materials”. The total funding for supplies for training and refreshments must not exceed 5% of the budget.

37. Can we only use the vendors identified or can we also use another trauma informed, evidence-based vendor approved by the DOE?

ANSWER – This funding is only for the 6 programs identified in the Menu of Program Options, starting on page 7, of the RFA.

38. Can funds secured be used for per session for staff?

ANSWER – Refer to page 10, Section 7, Funding may be used for “Costs associated with substitute teacher/staff coverage to allow teachers to participate in training (# of staff x number of days x substitute cost)”. Funds may be used to cover "Other costs associated with implementing the program". Schools may offer stipends to staff attending training outside of their normal work schedule and to cover administrative costs associated with implementing the program provided the costs do not exceed 10% of the budget.

39. The RFP indicates that allowances will be made for other costs associated with implementing the program. Are administrative costs allowable, including the cost of an administrative stipend for the oversight of the grant and an evaluator stipend for the evaluation pieces that are required for the grant?

ANSWER – Funds may be used to cover "Other costs associated with implementing the program". Schools may offer stipends to staff attending training outside of their normal work schedule and to cover administrative costs associated with implementing the program, such as completing and submitting the quarterly and final report, provided the costs do not exceed 10% of the budget.

40. Our district uses Second Step’s “Social Emotional Learning” programming currently. Can we use grant funds to purchase Second Step’s “Bullying Prevention Unit”?

ANSWER – Yes. A school district may submit an application to implement the Bullying Prevention Unit (BPU) in a school that has implemented the Second Step SEL curriculum but is not yet implementing the BPU.

41. Our district uses Second Step programming in our Elementary School. Can we use grant funds to purchase Second Step programming for our Middle School?

ANSWER – Yes. If the program is not already implemented in the Middle School, grant funds may be used to expand to that school.

42. Page 14 of the RFA states “Work Plan Period should reflect the anticipated contract period. Contract will be approved for a five-year term.” Is this information correct for a 1 year grant?

ANSWER – No, this is language from our general RFP template that was not changed to meet/match the 1-year contract period for this RFA.

43. Will the quarterly meetings be in-person or online?

ANSWER – OMH quarterly meetings will be virtual.

44. If the quarterly meetings are in-person will travel costs be an allowable expense?

ANSWER – OMH quarterly meetings will be virtual.

45. Are stipends for teachers an allowable expense if online training occurs out of contract hours?

ANSWER – Yes. Funds may be used to cover "Other costs associated with implementing the program". Schools may offer stipends to staff attending training outside of their normal work schedule and to cover administrative costs associated with implementing the program provided the costs do not exceed 10% of the budget.

46. Can grant funds be used for a Mitigating the Impact of Trauma in Schools Coordinator stipend?

ANSWER – Yes. Funds may be used to cover "Other costs associated with implementing the program". Schools may offer stipends to staff attending training outside of their normal work schedule and to cover administrative costs associated with implementing the program provided the costs do not exceed 10% of the budget.

47. How will the grant be scored?

ANSWER – Applications that meet the criteria set forth in the RFA are awarded on a first-come/first served basis. This is tracked through time-stamped submissions in the Grants Gateway. Section G and I of the RFA provide the specifics on the review/evaluation process.

48. Please explain what a high level overview of the project means.

ANSWER – In referring to the "high level overview" for the for the project summary section of the workplan, on page 14 of the RFA, the Project Summary section, applicants should include the program they will implement and the school(s), where the program will be implemented. School Districts may also include information about existing work that will be augmented by the new program.

49. Please explain whether the application should include the district's needs assessment. If so, in which part of the application would this explanation be located?

ANSWER – The application only requires the name of the School Mental Health Assessment Tool that is or will be used and the contact information.

50. Please give an example of an appropriate objective, tasks, and performance measure for this grant.

ANSWER – These are all grantee defined and would comport to the Workplan that would be submitted with the resulting contract if an award is made. It would be indicative of the deliverables, activities, etc. of the program to be operated/run.

51. How many objectives should we have for this grant?

ANSWER – An applicant can provide up to 30 objectives.

52. Please explain the specific information that a strong application should include.

ANSWER – This is not an applicable question. Applicants should review the RFA and understand and follow the required response format.

53. Are BOCES eligible applicants?

ANSWER – See response to Question 2.

54. Please explain the first come, first serve provision for receiving funds?

ANSWER – See response to Question 45.

55. Regarding the first come, first serve provision; are applicants who submit their application before the deadline prioritized?

ANSWER – No applications submitted after the deadline will be considered.

56. If a district does not get an application in before the deadline, it is too late to apply?

ANSWER – Yes

57. Can a BOCES apply on behalf of its component school districts?

ANSWER – No, Applications must be submitted by School Districts. BOCES are not eligible to apply. This opportunity is for public school districts. Refer to page 6 in the RFA "Eligible applicants are New York State P-12 Public School districts."

58. Can a BOCES apply to provide programming directly to BOCES students/sites?

ANSWER – See response to Question 2.

59. Can teacher/staff stipends be part of the funded training costs in the budget? For example, if the training does not fall within a school day for substitute coverage, can the funding cover teachers/staff to be paid for the additional time outside of their contract to be trained?

ANSWER – Yes, Funds may be used to cover "Other costs associated with implementing the program". Schools may offer stipends to staff attending training outside of their normal work schedule and cover administrative costs associated with implementing the program provided the costs do not exceed 10% of the budget.

60. Is there a cost involved with becoming part of the New York State Trauma Informed Network? If so, what is the cost?

ANSWER – No, there is no cost associated with becoming a member of the New York State Trauma Informed Network.

61. Is it acceptable for a district to use the grant funding for activities at certain grade levels (for example, grades K-3)? Or does the project need to be a pre-K-grade 12 initiative?

ANSWER – See “[Program Snapshots](#)” document which details the appropriate grade levels for each program. Programs can be implemented in select grade levels within the district, OMH does not require PreK- grade 12 implementation. The programs should only be implemented as they are designed.

62. Can grant funds be used to cover the salaries and benefits of staff members who are involved with implementing the project?

ANSWER – No, grant funds may not be used for salaries and benefits of staff members. School districts may offer stipends to staff attending training outside of their normal work schedule and to cover administrative costs associated with implementing the program provided the costs do not exceed 10% of the budget.

63. Can grant funds be used to cover the cost of administrative oversight of the project?

ANSWER –

Yes. Funds may be used to cover "Other costs associated with implementing the program". School districts may offer stipends to staff to cover administrative costs associated with implementing the program provided the costs do not exceed 10% of the budget.

64. Page 14 of the RFA indicates that contracts will be approved for a five-year period. Does this mean that the maximum grant award would be \$100,000 per year for each of the five years (for a total of \$500,000)?

ANSWER – The reference to five-years on Page 14 was in error. Awarded contracts for this initiative will be one year for no more than \$100,000.

65. What is the MWBE goal for this grant program?

ANSWER – There are no MWBE goals associated with this initiative/program.

66. What MWBE paperwork must be uploaded with the grant materials on Grants Gateway?

ANSWER – None

67. On the Applicant Information and Attestation form in the School District Profile section, should we be filling in the information related only to the schools that will be part of this grant project? Or should the information be about the school district as a whole?

ANSWER – The School District Profile section should include information for the entire district. The schools included in the project should be listed under the program section.

68. Is there a scoring rubric available for this grant opportunity? If so, where is it located?

ANSWER – No. Please refer to Sections G and I for the evaluation process.

69. Is the information provided applicable to NYC public schools? When looking through what is necessary to apply, the information appears to be geared towards a business. For example – “Include your SFS Vendor ID on the form; if you are a new vendor and do not have an SFS Vendor ID, include a Substitute W-9 (with your signed, notarized registration (also available from website). I am wondering if as a public school, we are considered vendors or if this means getting the vendor ID for the organization we choose to partner with?

ANSWER – School Districts are the applicants to this RFA. In order to apply for this RFA, School Districts must be registered with the NYS Grants Gateway (as application is made through that platform). The instructions are specific to that process. While there are alternate options to getting an SFS Vendor ID number in order to register with Grants Gateway, if awarded a contract, all entities doing business with NYS must have an SFS (Statewide Financial System) Vendor ID, so this ID number would eventually have to be obtained.

70. Can a school district work with a program to offer different pricing other than what is outlined on the “Program Snapshots”?

ANSWER: No. OMH worked with each program to present their pricing specific to this RFA. The pricing for a program cannot be altered or tailored outside of the details provided in the [“Program Snapshots”](#) document.

71. Is there a direct link to the request for application? If not, how would I go about submitting a request after uploading our School profile, Quality Assessment and TRSIA?

ANSWER: Please refer to the RFA itself for what is required and the process to apply.

72. We are grant funded by McKinney Vento to have our District Trauma Sensitivity Team in place, would we still be eligible to apply for one of these programs?

ANSWER: See the response to question 7

73. Where are the quarterly meetings typically held? And would this attendance and mileage be included in the request for application?

ANSWER: OMH Quarterly meetings will be virtual. School Districts may include funding in their budget for substitutes for staff attending the meetings.