

PART III – REQUIRED PROGRAM INFORMATION

Budget Narrative Instructions

Within the appropriate column in *Part II – Budget Detail Pages*, provide a budget narrative that describes specifically how grant funds will be used for the planning and implementation of the school's charter as granted by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. When writing the budget narrative, recall the specific restrictions and address the requirements for the use of grant funds described in the Request for Proposals (RFP) under *Fund Use* and as detailed below. Attach additional pages if necessary.

For All Eligible Charter Schools

1. Indirect Costs (line 9) may **not** be charged to this grant.
2. Capital construction and facilities lease costs may **not** be charged to this grant, with the exception of minor renovations required to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, and for **Option A – Planning Period only**, funds may be used for up to three months of facilities lease costs.

For Option A – Planning Period

1. The budget narrative should describe at least \$5,000 for *fiscal policies and procedures development* and \$10,000 for *curriculum and assessment system development*.

Fiscal Policies and Procedures Development (\$5,000). The development and documentation of sound business policies and procedures during the start-up period is a critical element of establishing a strong basis for charter school operation. This requirement of the grant is intended to help school leaders and Board members proactively set systems in place for prudent fiscal management. Describe how the school will use these funds to develop and document fiscal policies and procedures.

Curriculum and Assessment System Development (\$10,000). Comprehensive development of the school's proposed curriculum and its supporting assessment system prior to opening helps to ensure that students are well served and that the school has critical tools in place. Describe how the school will use these funds to develop curriculum and assessment systems during the planning year.

Option B – 1st Year Implementation

1. The budget narrative should describe at least \$10,000 for *data management systems*.

Data Management Systems (\$10,000). Investment in appropriate data management systems from the outset was highlighted by previous grant recipients as crucial in the early stages of running a school. Describe how the school will use these funds to purchase/develop a data management system.

Option C – 2nd Year Implementation

1. The budget narrative should describe at least \$5,000 for *governance development* and \$5,000 for an *external review of school operations*.

Governance Development (\$5,000). This requirement of the grant is intended to help school leaders and Board members meet proactively their legal responsibilities for governing a public charter school. Activities might include funding the evaluation of current Board governance, policies, and practices. Other possible uses include holding a Board retreat, training for administrators and Board members, or funding the development of written management and governance policy manuals. *A school may request to waive this spending requirement if it can demonstrate that it has secured and committed funds from other sources for this purpose.*

External Review of School Operations (\$5,000). This requirement of the grant is intended to provide schools with a report on the implementation status of the goals outlined in the school's charter, providing direction for further development and improvement. The school is free to select the vendor/consultant who will conduct the review and the results do not have to be submitted to the Charter School Office.

Name of Grant Program: Charter School Start-Up Assistance Program

Fund Code: 535

Waivers of Spending Requirements. If a charter school wishes to request a *waiver* of any of these spending requirements, provide documentation that demonstrates that the school has either already completed the requirement or has secured and committed funds from other sources for this purpose.

Verification of Expenditures. Please note that as part of the final reporting process, the school may be required to submit invoices verifying that expenditures were made for the particular spending requirements detailed above and in accordance with the approved grant budget.

Additional Information. There are no other explicit restrictions; however, keep in mind that this grant is intended to support *start-up activities* and is not intended to support general operating expenses. **Note:** If an employee is part of the Massachusetts Teachers Retirement System (MTRS) and is funded by a federal grant (such as this one), Massachusetts general laws require that an amount equal to 9 percent of employee salaries must be budgeted for MTRS. (See <http://finance1.doe.mass.edu/Grants/procedure/forms/j.doc>.) This 9 percent is separate from the employees' mandatory payroll contribution.

Other suggested start-up activities that can be paid for out of grant funds include:

1. development of the school's Accountability Plan and support of an infrastructure to track progress toward the measurable school performance objectives;
2. front-loading the development of systems and policies that normally would not be supportable by per-pupil tuition in the school's early years (e.g., funding full-time business and special education staff to set up appropriate systems or consultants to monitor closely the initial implementation of various programs);
3. teacher training programs (e.g., through stipends); and
4. material start-up costs, such as classroom supplies, materials, technology, furniture, and equipment.