

**Michigan Department of Education
Public School Academies Program
ANNOUNCEMENT OF
2012-2013 CHARTER SCHOOL COMPETITIVE DISSEMINATION GRANTS**

**No Child Left Behind Act
Title V, Part B, Public Charter Schools Program
In Cooperation with the U.S. Department of Education**

INTRODUCTION

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) is pleased to announce the 2012-2013 Charter School Competitive Dissemination Grant Program. This program is supported under Title V, Part B, Public Charter Schools Program, No Child Left Behind Act. The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) was successful in receiving a grant under this program for **\$43,903,325** over a five-year period, including \$9,351,356 for 2012-13. The MDE may award up to \$935,136 in dissemination grant funds during 2012-13 to public school academies, on a competitive basis.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Current schools within existing Michigan PSAs that have **not already received a dissemination grant** may apply if they

- have been in operation for at least three consecutive academic years, and
- are a School of Excellence, or are eligible for SOE status but have not converted, or have been listed in the top quartile of the Top to Bottom List in the last two years, or
- operate as a Strict Discipline Academy or serve Alternative Education populations and have alternative evidence of their academic success, and
- are financially viable and operationally successful.

DEADLINE TO APPLY

The application for Round 1 must be received at MDE by **Wednesday, August 22, 2012**. Applications must be submitted using the Michigan Education Grants System, Plus (MEGS+).

GRANT PURPOSE

The purpose of this grant is to fund proposals that will support activities that strengthen the pool of applicants for Michigan charters. **Priority points are awarded to applicants who propose projects in the evaluation and high school design categories.** The state is currently making dissemination grant funds available for projects in any of the following three categories:

Evaluation subgrants: Dissemination-eligible schools are being invited to:

- identify a teaching and learning practice to which they attribute their success,
- partner with an external, academic-quality evaluator,
- propose a two-year research design (up to \$100,000/year) to gather data that tests the hypothesis that under particular conditions identified in the research, this practice contributed to the success, and
- Propose (optional) mentorship activities as in partnership subgrants below.

The resulting research briefs are given to all Michigan LEAs as part of the Office of Education Improvement & Innovation (OEII)'s best practices publications and featured at the Best Practice conference to be held as part of OEII's semi-annual School Improvement Conference. **Priority points are given to applicants whose success has been achieved**

with more than 50% free-and-reduced-lunch-eligible students, to applicants that have met the criteria for success consistently, and for those serving secondary grade levels.

Mentorship subgrants: Successful public school academies (PSAs) are alternatively invited to identify a charter-development team with a new public school academy application in process (not being prepared by an ESP related to the PSA) and propose a series of mentorship activities designed to lend experience to the team's work. Eligible activities include planning team visits and internships at the mentor school, mentor-review of the team's draft plans, back-office and business plan consultations, policy and practice sharing, board-to-board orientation sessions, mutual visits to third party sites to investigate promising teaching and learning practices.

Priority points are added for any mentorship applicant that has been requested as a mentor by a Stage 1 "academic vision" planning subgrantee, for applicants that have met the criteria for success consistently, and for those serving secondary grade levels.

High School Design subgrants: Successful PSAs are also invited to propose a partnership between an operating K-5 or K-8 PSA preparing to expand to open secondary grade levels and a successful secondary-level PSA. Eligible activities include investigating a specified teaching and learning practice, adapting it to the needs of both partners, piloting its use in the existing secondary-level PSA, mentorship activities of the kind included in Mentorship subgrants and peer review exchanges between the schools.

REQUIRED ACTIVITIES & PRODUCTS

Each dissemination project will make one or more presentations at a national, state or regional conference as part of the plan for dissemination of the information regarding the project. Grant funds to support the dissemination activities and the exportable package of materials describing "best practices" must be described in the proposed budget with sufficient detail that includes costs for travel, printing, product development, production, and other projected costs.

Activities necessary to deliver these end-products must be described in the applicant's management plan. Funds sufficient to carry each activity out should be identified in the proposed budget. Examples of other allowable expenses under the grant include:

- Costs of hiring contractors to develop materials, conduct trainings, etc.
- Costs of producing materials
- School staff time for "above and beyond" the call of duty work. Schools may not supplant salary funds from the regular school day and duties.
- Travel and lodging costs for mentor schools, contractors, and mentees
- Costs for dissemination activities
- Costs for necessary tools for presentations and workshops
- Conference costs (along the lines of dissemination costs above)
- Grant or reporting costs
- Costs associated with demonstration of activities to larger developer groups (5-10 schools)

GRANT RANGE & BUDGET INFORMATION

Grantees may receive a single year of funding through this grant. Funds totaling approximately \$400,000 are available at this time. Proposals may be submitted for funding up to \$100,000 per year (or \$200,000 total for two years). The total number of grants funded will depend upon the quality of proposals submitted and the amount of funding requested. Upon successful completion of the first year funding, grantees will become eligible to propose follow-up activities for an additional year of funding.

The applicant must provide two kinds of budget information.

- 1) A Budget Summary page totals to the full amount of the grant request, and divides the proposed expenditures into the Michigan school accounting categories displayed on the MEGS+ form.
- 2) Budget Detail pages split each line from the summary into more detailed lines, each one of which addresses a single activity or use from the management plan. The "Description" column is used to provide cost assumptions that explain how the amount for that line was calculated. (For instance, "coordinator at \$50/hour for 4 hours") This column should also include a numbered reference to the line in the project management plan which describes the activity being supported.

LENGTH OF AWARD AND PROJECT PERIOD

Applicants may apply for a one-year grant, beginning July 1, 2012 and ending June 30, 2013.

Person(s) responsible for direction or management of the project must be employees or contractors of the public school academy that is the recipient of the grant award, or employees or contractors of the educational service provider (ESP) operating the school and staff working on-site in the school. Federal grant funds may not supplant state or local funds allocated to the school. Additionally, the grant recipient charter school may retain up to five (5) percent of the total grant award for grant management.

All funding will be subject to approval by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, based on reviewer ranking, comments, and Department recommendations.

REJECTION OF PROPOSALS

The Michigan Department of Education reserves the right to reject any and all proposals received as a result of this announcement. Second year funding is contingent on the availability of continued federal funding.

CLOSING & AWARD DATES

Applications for the 2012-2013 Charter School Dissemination Grant must be completed and submitted using the Michigan Electronic Grants System, Plus (MEGS+). This system is available at <http://meis.mde.state.mi.us/megs> and requires a MEIS Login and Password, as well as the appropriate level of access to MEGS+. The application for MEIS accounts criteria can be found on the Michigan Department of Education Grants website under the section "What's New": <http://michigan.gov/mde-grants>. Round I applications must be received at the Michigan Department of Education by **Wednesday, August 22, 2012** in order to be eligible for an award date of October 4, 2012. Round II applications received after August 22, 2012 and before November 14, 2012 may be reviewed and if approved, will be eligible for an award date of December 21, 2012. Round III applications received after November 14, 2012 and before February 5, 2013 may be reviewed and if approved, will be eligible for an award date of March 21, 2013.

APPLICATION PREPARATION, PAGE LIMIT AND FONT SIZE

Applications should be prepared simply and economically, with the narrative portion of the proposal being **no more than 15 pages in length, double-spaced and with a font no smaller than 11-point font.** The application template is included at the end of this announcement, and an electronic template can be downloaded inside the MEGS+ grant application.

REVIEW PROCESS

Applications will be reviewed by a broad-based committee of individuals supportive of the systemic reform of public education and the charter school concept, and who are knowledgeable of educational and organizational concepts embodied in school reform. Award selections will be based on merit, quality and thoroughness, as determined by points awarded on the rubric furnished at the end of this announcement. All applications will be thoroughly reviewed and evaluated to assure guidelines of the federal regulations are met. Only proposals that meet the federal guidelines for allowable activities will be considered. An eligible application under this program must focus the grant award on project specifics listed in this grant announcement.

Applicants may wish to refer to the Michigan Department of Education's "*Proposal Development Guide*" for additional assistance in developing their proposal. This guide may be found under http://www.michigan.gov/documents/propdevguide_13484_7.pdf

All funding will be subject to approval by the Superintendent of Public Instruction. All applicants will be notified of the Superintendent's action.

FUNDABLE ACTIVITIES

Michigan invites proposals of the three kinds listed above within the following fundable activities permitted by federal statute establishing the Charter School Grant program:

- Assisting other individuals with the planning and start-up of one or more new public schools, including charter schools, that are independent of the assisting charter school and the assisting charter school's developers, and that agree to be held to at least as high a level of accountability as the assisting charter school;
- Developing partnerships with other public schools, including charter schools, designed to improve student academic achievement in each of the schools participating in the partnership;
- Developing curriculum materials, assessments, and other materials that promote increased student achievement and are based on current successful practices within the assisting charter school; and
- Conducting evaluations and developing materials that document the successful practices of the assisting charter school and that are designed to improve student performance in other schools.

A charter school may not use dissemination grant funds, either directly or through a contractor, for marketing or recruitment activities designed to promote itself or the programs offered by it or by a contractor to parents or the community.

NOTE: Applicants must target one or more of the fundable activities listed in the "Grant Purpose" section above.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Request for payment will occur via the Cash Management System (CMS). A webinar entitled "*Public School Academies Technical Assistance Webinar April 11, 2012*" can be found the Michigan Department of Education's Charter Public School's website (<http://www.mistreamnet.com/vidflv.php?who=mde.psa.041812>). The grantee is permitted to request advance payments not exceeding actual immediate cash needs and reimbursement up to the total amount of the award. "Immediate cash needs" means that the recipient has incurred or will incur expenses that must be paid within the next **3 days**.

PERFORMANCE REPORTING

As a condition of receiving Charter School Grant Program funding, all recipients will provide the Department with at least a mid-year and end-of-the-year Progress Report of their performance in meeting program Tasks and Deliverables set forth in the application for grant, and documentation of expenditures in accordance with the approved budget and Management Plan. The Progress Report should address the outcomes of the Tasks and Deliverable that were outlined in your final approved Narrative and Management Plan, and must clearly describe how the activities of the grant period met or failed to meet proposed Tasks and Deliverables.

Progress Reports include a Financial Report that must be prepared to document the grant expenditures by Budget Detail line item. Along with the Progress Reports, grantees must submit substantiating documentation for the reported expenditures, including copies of the following:

- signed vendor contracts and agreements (which must provide the scope of work to be provided and the rate of compensation)
- all purchase orders, detailed invoices, receipts, and cancelled checks for goods and services purchased with grant funds
- documentation of time and attendance, and time sheets documenting the work provided by school or contracted staff in implementation of the project.
- documentation of a detailed inventory of all durable supplies, materials and equipment purchased with grant funds.

NOTE: Grant funds may only be spent according to the approved Narrative, Management Plan and Budget Detail in MEGS. Deviation from the approved budget, without prior approval, may result in **loss of funding** so that funds would need to be returned to MDE.

Documentation and purchasing procedures must be maintained in accordance with the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) and Michigan law and regulations. EDGAR may be found at the link:

<http://www.ed.gov/programs/charter/legislation.html>

The Progress Reports are due on the following dates:

Round I	-April 15, 2012 (Midyear Progress Report) -December 15, 2012 (Final Progress Report)
Round II	-June 15, 2012 (Midyear Progress Report) -February 15, 2013 (Final Progress Report)
Round III	-October 15, 2012 (Midyear Progress Report) -May15, 2013 (Final Progress Report)

A form for the Progress Reports will be available to successful applicants.

FINANCIAL REPORTING

The Department's "**Final Expenditure Report Form**" is used for final financial reporting and is completed online **45 days** after completion of each grant. Failure to complete the Final Expenditure Report could result in **loss of funding** so that funds would need to be returned to MDE.

FINANCIAL AUDIT

The Michigan Department of Education reserves the right to conduct a financial audit of the grantee's program expenditures at any time during the grant period.

WHERE TO OBTAIN ASSISTANCE

These materials are issued by the Michigan Department of Education, Public School Academy unit which is the sole point of contact in the state for this program. Questions should be directed to the Public School Academies unit at 517/373-4631.

2012-13 Dissemination Grant Application
Due August 22, 2012 (Round I), November 14, 2012 (Round II)
& February 5, 2013 (Round III)

Please answer the following questions and upload your response document to MEGS+. **Applications should be prepared simply and economically, with the narrative portion of the proposal being no more than 15 pages in length, double-spaced and with a font no smaller than 11-point font.**

Please address the following questions:

1. Describe here what indicators your school considers evidence of outstanding success at goals established in your charter and/or related to your mission.
2. Identify which kind of dissemination grant you are applying for, and describe the proposed project you would carry out with the grant funds.
 - Evaluation grants: We are proposing a one- or two-year research design to gather data that tests the hypothesis that under particular conditions identified in the research, a particular practice has contributed to our success and may be replicable in other charter schools.
 - Mentorship grants: We have identified a charter-development team with a new charter application in process (not being prepared by an ESP related to the PSA) and propose a series of mentorship activities designed to lend experience to the team's work.
 - High School Design grants: We are proposing a partnership with an operating K-5 or K-8 PSA preparing to expand to open secondary grade levels.
3. Describe the expected benefits/learning opportunities that will accrue to the project partners. How will this help teachers teach, learners learn or governance boards govern?

Title: *Preparing to [Do Your Chosen Practice – Begin with a verb]*

Why go this route? *[Bullet points laying out a rationale for investing in this checklist/practice]*

You'll know you've arrived when ... *[Bullet points listing the deliverables a user will have once they complete this checklist/practice]*

It's about TIME: *[Estimated investment of time required for a mentee/reader to undertake this checklist/practice].*

Potential COSTS: *[Estimated dollar investment required for a user to undertake this checklist/practice].*

Sample steps for the Checklist: *[Illustrate a few steps that might be part of the checklist you will develop during the grant period for use by mentees/readers.]*

4. Describe the audience for whom you are designing the products above. What evidence do you have that they feel a need for a product such as yours? How big is the audience? What other avenues do you propose to use to offer the information to your intended audience?

- Use the format downloadable from MEGS+ to lay out your project management plan. Each row in the table should list Tasks or steps that lead to a single milestone or deliverable. Assign costs to each row, and identify the function codes from your budget detail sheet that will be spent to accomplish the deliverable.

Management Plan

Use this form to summarize the activities you plan to undertake with grant funds, specify their deliverables and schedule them over the project period by placing a check or X in the month they will be completed. Tie each activity to its expected costs and indicate which Budget Detail line item you will charge the expenses to. (It may help to number the budget detail lines so you can refer to them here.) Describe here only the activities you will undertake with grant funds, not everything you'll do to develop your school.

Task (What will you do with your grant funds?)	Deliverables (When the task is finished, what will you have?)	Budgeted Cost (by Budget Detail Line)	Target Date (When will this task be completed?)											
			Nov 12	Dec 12	Jan 13	Feb 13	Mar 13	Apr 13	May 13	Jun 13	Jul 13	Aug 13	Sep 13	Oct 13

2012-13 Dissemination Grant Rubric

Reviewers will use the following rubric to evaluate and score your application. Use it as part of your application preparation process to anticipate the kinds of things they will be expecting and ensure that you make the strongest case possible for each item.

Eligibility for Dissemination grant	Benchmarks	Competitive Points				
		Excellent	Very Good	Average	Weak	Not Addressed
		4	3	2	1	0
Eligibility for Dissemination grant	The project proposed is sufficiently important					
	Applicant demonstrates overall success					
	Other indicators of success at goals established in the school and/or related to the school's mission are included					
	Research within the school has shown that the practice is effective in the school and has contributed to the school's success.					
	Applicant provides proof of high levels of parent satisfaction					
	Applicant provides documentation of management and leadership skills, inc. financial skill					
	Applicant provides evidence or direct proposals for raising student achievement as a result of the proposed activity.					
	The plan identifies the kind of dissemination grant applied for					
	The plan describes the project clearly and specifically.					
	Proposal provides evidence that there is a need for the practice described					
	Proposal estimates how large the audience would be for the practice described.					
	The applicant has extensive experience with the practice described					
	Applicant has defined benefits or lessons clearly and distinctly to mentees/readers will be able to avoid pitfalls					
	The practice to be evaluated/replicated/ has a formal research design.					

For Evaluation Grants Only						
		Excellent	Very Good	Average	Weak	Not Addressed
		4	3	2	1	0
For Evaluation Grants Only	Proof of research base is documented					
	Research proposal is clear and comprehensive					
	Evidence is provided that the practice being evaluated will lead to higher academic achievement					
	The practice to be evaluated has a formal research design that shows how data gathered will prove that the practice is responsible for the success of the school.					
	The proposal explains how the practice can be replicated elsewhere.					
	The practice will be of sufficient value to other schools so that it should be replicated.					
	Proposal identifies an external academic-quality evaluator					
	Proposal addresses how this practice can be replicated					
	Proposal describes the benefits of replicating this model, i.e., How will this help teachers teach, learners learn or governance boards govern?					

For Mentorship Grants Only						
		Excellent	Very Good	Average	Weak	Not Addressed
		4	3	2	1	0
For Mentorship Grants Only	Proposal identifies a nonprofit organization that has assembled charter-development team with a charter application in process (not being prepared by an ESP related to the PSA)					
	The applicant has identified personnel whose experience, credentials, and/or relationship with the school make it likely that they would provide credible guidance to the development teams.					
	The applicant envisions sufficient interaction to ensure the mentees will have a good sense of the mentor's working system					
	Proposal shows that existing practices within the school will likely lead to success in a new school.					
	Applicant sufficiently explains how the mentoring relationship will be implemented.					
	There is evidence of the Development Team's strengths relevant to the project. The nonprofit governance board membership has been identified and oriented to governance responsibilities for oversight and management of the grant project and funds. Roles and responsibilities of all parties are clearly defined.					
	PSA governance board membership has been identified and oriented to governance responsibilities.					
	Plans for managing both the subgrant project and the proposed PSA appear reasonable and demonstrate a good understanding of legal and practical issues. All persons and entities that will be responsible for implementation of the grant project and the start-up have been identified. The nonprofit governance board understands its responsibilities for implementation of the project and expenditure of the grant funds according to federal and state requirements.					
	The Development Team has a clear understanding of its role relative to a future authorizer, and is proactive in its efforts to obtain a charter.					
	The people who will be involved in the Mentorship project are identified. If they are existing teachers, how they will be involved is detailed and realistic.					

High School Design Only		Excellent	Very Good	Average	Weak	Not Addressed
		4	3	2	1	0
High School Design Only	Proposal identifies partnership between an operating K-8 PSA preparing to expand to high school					
	The applicant has identified specific teaching and learning practices which have made the high school program successful					
	The applicant envisions sufficient interaction to ensure the partnership school will have a good sense of the school's teaching and learning practices					
	Applicant sufficiently explains how the partnership relationship will be implemented.					
	Applicant identifies mentorship activities that will be provided					
	The people who will be involved in the Mentorship project are identified. If they are existing teachers, how they will be involved is detailed and realistic.					

Final Report and Budgeting		Excellent	Very Good	Average	Weak	Not Addressed
		4	3	2	1	0
Final Report and Budgeting	Proposed report follows recommended format					
	Information is included about where and when presentations will be made at least 2 conferences					
	Timeline of tasks is included and realistic					
	Budget is detailed and sufficient to cover tasks proposed					