

Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

November 15, 2018

The Honorable Larry Hogan
State House
100 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable Michael E. Busch
H-101 State House
100 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller
H-107 State House
100 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Learning in Extended Academic Programs (LEAP) Grant Programs Report (MSAR #11693)

Dear Governor Hogan, President Miller and Speaker Busch:

During the 2018 legislative session, the Maryland General Assembly enacted the Learning in Extended Academic Programs (LEAP). Sections 7-2001 through 7-2006 require the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to:

(1) provide grants to eligible schools to provide extended academic programming that has a positive measurable impact on or enriches the overall well-being of students who are at risk of falling behind academic requirements, and

(2) report on the implementation of the LEAP program including an annual evaluation of the effectiveness of the programs and services on or before December 1 of each year.

The attached implementation report provides the criteria for selection of awardees, list of counties with eligible schools, and the technical assistance and evaluation methods that will be implemented. The first LEAP programs are scheduled to begin in December 2018. A comprehensive report will be submitted at the end of the first year of implementation.

Should you have questions or need additional information, please contact Mary L. Gable, Assistant State Superintendent, Division of Student Support, Academic Enrichment, and Educational Policy at mary.gable@maryland.gov or by phone at (410) 767-0472. Thank you for your continued support and interest in maintaining the highest quality of education for all students in Maryland public schools.

Best Regards,

Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

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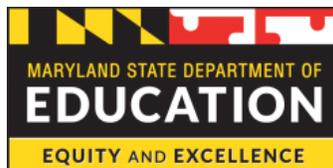
**Report to the Maryland General Assembly
Learning in Extended Academic Programs (LEAP)**

**Presented by the
Maryland State Department of Education**

December 1, 2018

**Larry Hogan
Governor**

**Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Schools**



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State Superintendent of Schools

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President, Maryland State Board of Education

Larry Hogan
Governor

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Introduction

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is implementing the Maryland Learning in Extended Academic Programs (LEAP). This legislation was introduced as House Bill 1415 during the 2018 legislative session of the Maryland General Assembly and enacted under Title 7, Subtitle 20 of the Education Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland. Title 7, Subtitle 20 of the Education Article require the MSDE to establish a competitive grant program to provide extended academic enrichment programming that has a positive measurable impact on or enriches the academic performance and overall well-being of students who are at risk of falling behind academic requirements.

The initial award for the 2018-2019 school year is \$4,500,000. The MSDE will make awards on a competitive basis to eligible entities that propose to serve the following:

- Public schools in which at least 80% of the students qualify for the free and reduced price meals program.

Eligible schools that apply may:

- Coordinate and partner with other eligible county schools to jointly apply.
- Partner with a non-profit organization to provide extended academic programming.

County boards may apply on behalf of one or more eligible schools in the county. An eligible school may apply for a grant only if the county superintendent endorses the school's grant application. The following local school systems have eligible schools that qualify for LEAP funding:

- Allegany
- Anne Arundel
- Baltimore City
- Baltimore County
- Cecil
- Dorchester
- Frederick
- Harford
- Montgomery
- Prince George's
- Somerset
- Wicomico

On October 15, 2018, the MSDE conducted a pre-proposal technical assistance webinar to provide:

- An overview of Maryland's LEAP grant;
- Answers to questions for those interested in submitting a proposal; and
- A timeline of activities relative to the grant competition.

The MSDE has received 12 submissions for the LEAP grant funding. The MSDE shall select applications that demonstrate the ability to successfully implement programs that extend or expand academic enrichment programming and meet the established criteria:

- Extend academic enrichment programming before and after the school day for a minimum of eight hours each full week that school is in session; and/or;
- Expand academic enrichment programming on weekends for a minimum of four hours per weekend; and/or;
- Expand academic enrichment programming during the summer break for a minimum of four hours per day for a minimum of 30 days.

The criterion used to evaluate individual applications will consist of 12 components:

- Extent of Need for Project;
- Program Design;
- Performance Measures and Indicators;
- Alignment with Maryland's College and Career Readiness Standards;
- Implementation and Governance Plan;
- Evaluation and Dissemination;
- Coordination with other Programs,
- Sustainability; and
- Budget and Adequacy of Resources.

The MSDE will publicly solicit, screen, and select impartial, qualified reviewers to review and score applications. Reviewers will individually comment on each proposal assigned to that team and assign each a numerical score using a scoring rubric developed by the MSDE. Reviewers will then meet in teams to arrive at consensus scores. After the conclusion of the review process, proposals will be ranked in order from the highest to the lowest score.

Proposals scoring at 85% and above will be eligible for a validation visit. All applicants deemed eligible for funding must participate in a validation visit. The MSDE, in collaboration with the potential grantee, will arrange the date and time for the validation visit to take place within seven business days. The peer review team will be invited to attend; however, their attendance is not mandatory. The proposed program leadership team and program partners must attend the validation visit. Attendees should be limited to active participants in the proposed program. Prior to the validation interview, applicants will, in writing, respond to a standard set of questions to clarify any questions or concerns raised by the reviewers. The MSDE will forward the questions at least one week before the interviews. Responses must be provided to the MSDE

two business days prior to the validation interview. The validation visits will afford the applicant the opportunity to answer questions and expand on their proposal to assist reviewers with final funding and programmatic decisions. Grants will be awarded to the highest ranked eligible applicants to the degree that funding is available.

Implementation

The MSDE will establish the LEAP competitive grant program to provide extended academic enrichment programming that has a positive measureable impact on or enriches the academic performance and overall well-being of students who are at risk of falling behind academic requirements. The LEAP programs may take place before and after the school day, on weekends and holidays; and during vacations and summer breaks. Award notifications will be no later than November 9, 2018, and programming will begin upon receipt of the Notice of Grant Award from the MSDE.

Grantees – to be determined

Technical Assistance

The MSDE will provide ongoing technical assistance to grantees to ensure that programs:

- Assist every student to realize his or her potential;
- Develop and support a strong accountability system to increase academic success for all students;
- Promote a safe, healthy, and orderly environment for teaching and learning;
- Ensure educator and administrative effectiveness;
- Promote students' physical, mental, social, and emotional well-being;
- Expand high-quality educational opportunities for students and parents;
- Work with districts to strengthen infrastructure; and
- Increase communication and partnerships with stakeholders statewide.

Technical assistance will also include providing support and training to grantees through webinars and in-person trainings that meet quality standards and content-specific topic areas such as: incorporating best practices around STEM, health and wellness, literacy and math, inclusion of youth with disabilities, and classroom management techniques. The MSDE will also conduct start-up and mid-point check-in calls to identify technical assistance needs.

Evaluation and Effectiveness

All LEAP grantees will undergo a quarterly evaluation to assess progress toward achieving its goal of providing high-quality opportunities for academic enrichment. Grantees must identify the individual and/or organization that have agreed to serve as the external evaluator for the program and describe his/her qualifications. In choosing an external evaluator, grantees must consider the candidate's:

- experience evaluating educational initiatives;
- capacity to collect, manage, analyze, and interpret program and individual student data;
- time availability (evaluation and reporting for this program may take a considerable amount of time); and
- knowledge of and compliance with data confidentiality requirements.

The MSDE will contract with an external evaluator to provide support to grantees and local evaluators in developing evaluation questions and methodology, as well as data collection and analysis. The State evaluator will conduct meetings and webinars with local grantees to provide assistance in implementing local evaluation plans. A comprehensive report will be prepared by

the state evaluator that will entail the methodology, results, recommendations, and the conclusions of programs and activities.

Summary

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is implementing the Maryland Learning in Extended Academic Programs (LEAP). This legislation was introduced as House Bill 1415 during the 2018 legislative session of the Maryland General Assembly and enacted under Title 7, Subtitle 20 of the Education Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland. Section 7-2006 of the Education Article requires the MSDE to submit an annual report on the effectiveness of the LEAP program as well as and an evaluation of LEAP programs. The MSDE is submitting this report in order to provide the Governor and the Maryland General Assembly the required information in § 7-2006 of the Education Article.

The LEAP grant establishes a competitive grant program to provide extended academic enrichment programming that has a positive measureable impact on or enriches the academic performance and overall well-being of students who are at risk of falling behind academic requirements. The grant award for the 2018-2019 school year is \$4,500,000 and the MSDE will make awards on a competitive basis to eligible schools in which 80% of the students qualify for the free and reduced meals program.

The MSDE will continue to assist grantees during implementation of extended day and summer enhancement programs for Maryland students. The MSDE understands the importance of offering quality extended day and summer programs to assist students with academic and social skills year round to avoid regression in learning.



Division of Student Support, Academic Enrichment, and Educational Policy

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