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MEMORANDUM

TO: Superintendents, Special Education Administrators, Curriculum Coordinators, and Principals
FROM: Meg Porcella, Assistant Division Director, Student Support Services Division
SUBJECT: FY2020 BEST-Act 230 Grant Applications
DATE: July 23, 2019

The Agency of Education is now accepting applications for FY2020 BEST-Act 230 grants. The application is available on the Formula Grants section of the [Grants Management System](#) (GMS). Applications will be reviewed and approved on a rolling basis through October 31, 2019.

What are BEST and Act 230 Grant Funds?

Act 230 Funds are intended for training of teachers, administrators, and other personnel in the provision of education services to children who require educational supports for academics and/or behavior in each tier of the multi-tiered system of supports. BEST funds are intended for training and professional learning to support teachers, administrators, and other personnel in creating equitable, rigorous learning environments for students with emotional and behavioral needs.

Supervisory Unions and School Districts may apply to use BEST and Act 230 grant funds to invest in professional learning designed to support the implementation of effective multi-tiered systems of support while enhancing the effectiveness, availability, and equity of services provided to all students who require additional support. A comprehensive list of possible professional learning options will be posted in the Overview section of the BEST-Act 230 application in the GMS.

What has changed from last year's application process?

For the 2020 grant period, the total amount is available to every SU/SD. This change from previous years ensures that every SU/SD has the opportunity to utilize these funds. If there are unencumbered funds after the initial application deadline of October 31, 2019, current grantees will have the opportunity to amend applications to use the additional funds.

What is the total budget?

For the grant period from July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020, each SU/SD may apply for up to \$2,550.00 of BEST funds as well as up to \$8,300.00 in Act 230 funds for a total budget of \$10,850.00. SU/SD will assure that at least 50% of the cost of the training will come from local funds.

How will the applications be reviewed?

Applications in the GMS will be reviewed by AOE staff with the following criteria in mind:

1. **Satisfies requirements:** The application complies and aligns with all grant-specific restrictions and requirements.
 - *The proposed use of funds is allowable within grant restrictions.*
 - *The proposed strategies align with stated purpose(s) of grant.*
 - *All required components of the submitted application are complete.*
2. **Matched to needs:** The proposed strategies are well matched to the identified needs of the applicant.
 - *The proposed strategies are likely to lead to the intended results.*
 - *The proposed strategies are evidence-based.*
 - *The stated needs were identified through a thorough review of multiple sources of data.*
3. **Achievable:** The applicant has the necessary capacity and a viable plan to implement the proposed strategies.
 - *Appropriate organizational capacity - including infrastructure, personnel, professional support, and timeline - to support implementation of proposed strategies has been identified.*
 - *The proposed strategies can be sustained long enough to reach intended results.*
 - *The applicant has a plan to leverage enough resources to implement with fidelity.*
4. **Responsible:** The desired funds will be highly leveraged in a fiscally efficient and responsible manner.
 - *The desired funds will be used as a complement to other locally available resources.*
 - *Use of funds is economical and reasonable.*
 - *Desired funds are necessary to carry out identified strategies.*
5. **Thoughtful:** The proposed strategies are part of a coherent and comprehensive plan to achieve results.
 - *The proposed strategies complement other local strategies and priorities.*
 - *The intended objectives and results of the proposed strategies are clearly stated, measurable, and related to overall improvement goals.*
 - *The applicant has a plan to monitor the implementation and results of the proposed strategies.*