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Issue Date: Apr. 12, 2023

## **AOE FY25 Nicotine and Substance Use Prevention Grant FAQ**

### **Purpose**

This document is a collection of frequently asked questions from the question-and-answer period provided over March and April, relating to the 2025 Nicotine and Substance Use Prevention Grant from the Vermont Agency of Education. The wording of the questions is paraphrased and intended to provide the best general context.

All questions can be directed to Beth Kiester at [Beth.Kiester@vermont.gov](mailto:Beth.Kiester@vermont.gov).

### **Questions and Answers**

#### **1. Is there a word count limit?**

There is a 10,000 character limit in each text box in the GMS application.

#### **2. Is there a font size preferred?**

If you begin typing, it should default to the GMS font and size. If you paste or adjust those settings at all, just choose something that seems easy to read.

#### **3. Can you insert tables/charts?**

You are welcome to try to do this if you feel that the information is best communicated in that format. If the formatting does not translate in some way or if there is confusion about the information therein, the grant coordinator can reach out with questions.

#### **4. Is it expected that the applicant will do all seven components of the School Health Index (SHI) or just tobacco (if the applicant is opting to complete Strategy two)?**

*(Please note: upon review, it seems this question actually refers to the Health Education and Curriculum Assessment tool (HECAT), which supports implementation of Strategy One (curricular); HECAT has a module specific to tobacco/nicotine curriculum. The SHI does not have a tobacco-specific module):* Completing, or intending to complete, all eleven modules of the SHI as part of Strategy Two is ideal, and if the grantee encounters challenges with this process, this plan can be revisited during planned check-ins during FY25. As for the HECAT, for Strategy One: The applicant should plan to do, at a minimum, the tobacco module for HECAT. Attempting to complete all of the other modules of the HECAT may be less realistic as compared to completing the full SHI but would certainly be an acceptable



goal (but not required; this depends on whether the applicant completed modules in previous years).

**5. Can the grant be used to expand on current tobacco curriculum in addition to any curricular work identified through the HECAT process?**

Yes, if choosing the curricular strategy as part of the plan, expanding upon, improving upon or replenishing existing curricular plans/materials is acceptable, especially if the HECAT was recently completed.

**6. Can funds be used to support the cost of youth attending CADCA (Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America) conferences?**

Yes, attending the CADCA conference, or similar types of conferences would be a very appropriate youth engagement activity and this grant could be used to support the costs associated with that.

**7. Can the Youth Engagement/Empowerment plans expand beyond just nicotine prevention?**

Yes, the youth engagement activities proposed can encompass nicotine or substance prevention or any topic that can be seen as related to those efforts (for example, mental health promotion, health equity, etc.) The applicant should briefly identify in their proposal what those connections are and how the efforts relate either directly or indirectly to nicotine and substance use prevention.

**8. How should the applicant refer to their youth engagement/empowerment groups in the application, assuming that those groups are not referring to themselves solely as, for example, OVX/VKAT groups (in order for the grant reader to understand)?**

If the pre-existing or forthcoming youth engagement/empowerment group has any kind of name or label, feel free to use this and explain what the group does, how often they meet, what they focus on, etc. If it does not have any kind of name or label, this is fine too, there is no need to come up with one. Simply explain the basic functions of the group and what kinds of activities they plan to take on with the grant funds.

**9. Can the grant funds be used to support younger youth who would not be participating in Not-On-Tobacco?**

Yes, if there is a cessation or educational/curricular need for any age level, the applicant can propose using funds to meet that need. AOE may request more information about the particular program or materials.

**10. Can the grant funds be used to address challenges in engaging youth in cessation services if the actual implementation of the Not-on-Tobacco curriculum is already in effect and funded by another source?**

Yes, if there is staff time or resources contributing toward awareness, engagement, recruitment or other efforts to help youth access cessation services, this would be an appropriate use of the funds.

**11. And are there examples of ways schools have been creative with this?**

Many past grantees have reported the following being helpful in getting youth to engage in cessation services: developing strong rapport and trust between students and the facilitator/point of contact for cessation; remaining available to discuss cessation at different stages of interest; not presenting or viewing cessation services as an all-or-nothing endeavor. Other suggestions include being flexible with the time and location of the offering to accommodate schedules and social time.

**12. Are there required activities such as attending statewide events (for youth engagement/empowerment strategy)?**

There are no pre-identified required events for youth as part of this grant. If an applicant elects to participate in some kind of program or activity as part of the grant, the expectation would be that they will attend any events associated with that program or activity. For example, if they elect to participate in OVX and/or VKAT, the expectation is that they will make every effort to attend the events for those groups. Similarly, if they elect to participate in Getting to Y, the assumption is that they would commit to attending any trainings, etc. associated with that program.

**13. Can these funds be used to provide stipends to staff facilitating youth engagement activities (as opposed to just salaries)?**

Yes. Staff time associated with any strategy can be paid in the form of salaries, stipends, contracts, etc.

**14. Do funded activities all need to be outside the purview of/distinct from what the Student Assistance Professional (SAP) already does?**

Not necessarily. Supplement-not-supplant does not apply to state funds. If a staff member is already doing work which aligns with implementation of one/some of these five strategies, this funding could support them in continuing to do that and/or to expand the scope and reach of that work. However, the funding can only support the portion of time they are spending on activities related to the chosen grant strategies.

**15. If an LEA does not contain a high school, can they still apply for the grant?**

Yes; they would just focus their plan on the K-8 grades. It is also possible that the LEA could use some of their funding, if desired, to support these strategies for area high-

school aged youth, but this will need to be discussed with the AOE Tobacco and Substance Use Prevention Coordinator to confirm.