Funding Opportunity

Applications Due: **Friday, December 1, 2023, by 6 pm**

Applications Open: **Wednesday, November 1, 2023, by 11:59 pm**

Ninth Grade Success Grant Program

Pursuant to S.B. 1720

Program Questions:
TitleIV-A@azed.gov

Grants Management Questions:
(602) 542-3901 | https://helpdesk.azed.gov

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Note: The following version of the application is intended as a reference document for instructions and grant application planning purposes.

Applications for the Ninth Grade Success Grant must be submitted through Grants Management in ADE Connect.

Introduction

The Ninth Grade Success Grant is designed to provide funding to local education agencies to improve the ninth-grade student experience to ensure that students enrolled in ninth grade develop the skills they need to successfully persist to tenth grade on time and ultimately graduating from high school and launching successful careers. Applicants commit to implementing the key components of the Ninth Grade Success model and should use funds to support implementation in four broad categories:

- **Ninth Grade Success Team**
- **Data Systems**
- **Instructional Supports**
- **Transition Programs**

Title IV-A in School Support and Improvement will provide focus, coordination, research, and leadership to assist local education agencies in implementing efforts to reduce the dropout rate and increase graduation and completion rates and levels of student engagement and re-engagement related to the goals of the Ninth Grade Success Grant Program.

Eligible Applicants

Local Education Agencies (LEAs) are eligible to apply for this opportunity and will identify the school(s) that will participate.

Available grant funding will be distributed first to LEAs with school(s) demonstrating high need based on Priority Criteria. Priority will be given to applicants that demonstrate:

- In the last year, the school was within the lowest 25% of schools in four-year graduation rate.

Eligibility: A graduation rate of less than 90%

Available Funds and Duration of Grant

Approximately $1 million is available for the 2023-2024 school year. Note that future funding levels are not guaranteed. Current statute indicates that the grant will expire June 30, 2024. Future funding levels are contingent on annual appropriations by the State Legislature and a change for continuation of the grant.

Grants will be awarded for a one-year planning term in the 2023-2024 fiscal year. Grantees should also indicate how they would use funding to prepare for the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

- Grants will focus on school and district training, coaching, and capacity building to support the implementation of Ninth Grade Success components.
  - Approximately $1,000,000 is available.
  - Grants will be awarded to 20 schools.
  - Applicants may request up to $50,000 per school for 2023-2024, maximum of 3 schools per LEA.
  - Carryover is not available for this grant.
  - This is a reverting state grant and funds are expected to be expended by June 30, 2024

Allowable Use of Funds

LEAs that receive a grant under the program commit to implementing the Ninth Grade Success Grant program components and must use the monies to support this implementation. These components fall under four general categories and are listed below:

Ninth Grade Success Team
- Creating and implementing a cross-disciplinary Success Team of ninth-grade teachers and support staff, which must include at least one school counselor, school mental health professional, or school social worker. To the extent practicable, a Success Team must include all ninth-grade teachers, including electives teachers. The LEA designate a member of the Success Team to serve as the Success Team Leader and reduce the team leader's workload to a level that allows the team leader sufficient time to complete the leadership duties, which include team logistics, preparing team meeting agendas, and facilitating team meetings;
- The Success Team must meet at least every two weeks, to the extent practicable, throughout the school year to collaborate on identifying and implementing strategies to improve outcomes for ninth-grade students who are found to be at risk of dropping out of school before graduation and to address systems-level barriers to success for all ninth-grade students. The strategies must be informed by data concerning, at a minimum, ninth-grade students' behavior, attendance, and grades across demographic categories and student groups. The LEA shall allow Success Team members time during the workday for planning and collaboration or provide incentives to meet outside of the workday;
- Organizing the school staff to ensure that, to the extent practicable, the ninth-grade classes are taught by a single group of teachers who teach only or mostly ninth-grade classes;

Data System
- Implementing a data system that provides real-time access to integrated data concerning a student's behavior, attendance, and grades, and provides the ability to compare the data across demographic categories and student groups;
- Identifying and prioritizing services for ninth-grade students who are at risk of academic failure in ninth grade;
- Ensuring that school leadership, school counselors, and key members of the Success Team receive and review data on all incoming ninth-grade students and plan course work and supports for the students based on the data received;
- Planning evaluation with rigor the impact of the interventions provided through the Ninth Grade Success Grant Program on student attendance, behavior, course completion, academic results, discipline rates, teacher surveys, student surveys, dropout rates, and graduation rates as the information becomes available for ninth-grade students who receive interventions through the Ninth Grade Success Grant Program. Such evaluations must focus on data disaggregated by school and by student groups.

Instructional Supports
- Planning instructional support for ninth-grade students including attendance support, content-specific academic interventions, tutoring, course-completion programs, social-emotional learning, and trauma-informed instruction;

Ninth-Grade Transition
- Ensuring that all ninth-grade teachers receive data concerning the incoming ninth-grade students before the start of the school year and receive professional development concerning how to use the data to inform instruction for the students. To the extent possible, the LEA shall ensure that middle school teachers provide information to ninth-grade teachers concerning the incoming ninth-grade students;
- Providing expanded learning opportunities such as summer orientation for incoming ninth-grade students and their parents to introduce students to the behavioral and academic expectations of high school.

Examples of Allowable Expenses:
- A grant program coordinator or ninth-grade success leader who leads and organizes the work of the grant and supports ninth-grade staff and students.
- Intervention curriculum, training, or coaching for ninth-grade instructional staff.
- Time for staff to plan and meet to review student data, plan interventions, and instructional support.
- Professional development, conferences, or training for ninth-grade staff that supports implementation of ninth-grade success components.

Examples of Unallowable expenses:
- Capital equipment or capital improvements such as upgrades or improvements to buildings, utilities or IT infrastructure, or construction.
- Maintenance.
- Gift cards, gift certificates, cash awards, gas for students' personal vehicles, personal gifts, door prizes, etc.

Evaluation and Reporting

Each LEA awarded a grant is required to provide information to ADE concerning the implementation of the Ninth Grade Success Program and the evaluation of impact. Applicants must have, or acquire, the capacity to complete the evaluation and reports.

All applicants receiving grant funding are required to submit to ADE annually:
- Fiscal reports during full year implementation and an annual completion report (CR).
- At least one performance report (e.g., numbers of students served, student outcomes such as on-track rate and course passage rate, progress on performance measures, implementation progress, etc.) in the 2024-2025 school year (EMAC).

Applicants receiving grant funding are required to participate in state evaluations as needed.

Data Privacy

ADE takes seriously its obligation to protect the privacy of student and educator Personally Identifiable Information (PII) collected, used, shared, and stored.

Documents submitted as part of the application must not contain any personally identifiable student or educator information including names, identification numbers, or anything that could identify an individual. All data should be referenced/included in the aggregate and the aggregate counts should be redacted to remove small numbers under n=16 for students or n=5 for educators.

Information reported to ADE in relation to grant activities is not confidential and is subject to public request. Awarded grantees should ensure reported information does not contain Personally Identifiable Information (PII) or confidential information.

Application Assistance and Intent to Apply

If interested in applying for this funding opportunity, submit the Grants Management application in GME starting on **Wednesday, November 1, 2023, by 11:59 pm.**

Review Process and Notification

Applications will be reviewed by ADE staff to ensure they contain all the required components.

Note: This is a competitive process – underlined: applicants must score at least 18 points out of the 27 possible narrative points to be approved for funding. There is no guarantee that applying will result in funding or funding at the requested level. All award decisions are final. Applicants that do not meet the qualifications may reapply for future grant opportunities.

Submission Process and Deadline

Completed applications (including all required elements outlined below) must be **submitted by Friday, December 1, 2023.**

Incomplete or late applications will not be considered.
Application materials and budget are available for download on ADE's Ninth Grade Success Grant website.

Ninth Grade Success Grant
Applications Due: Friday, December 1, 2023, by 6 pm

Applicant Information

Submit all application materials through ADE Connect Grants Management

Lead Local Education Provider (LEA) Information			
LEA Name:		CTDS #	
School Name			

Requested Funding		
Ensure that these amounts match the submitted Budget Workbook.		
Planning Period [1/01/24 - 6/30/24]	$	

Previous Grant Information		
The following information will be verified by ADE and considered in the funding decision.		
Is the LEA considered High Risk in GME (Grants Management Enterprise)?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Is the LEA currently "On Hold" Status in GME?	☐ Yes	☐ No
Does the LEA have unspent funds in other grants after the end of the performance period?	☐ Yes	☐ No
If unspent funds were reverted, enter the year(s) and amount(s) of those reversions:		
Year(s):	Amount(s):	

Application Narrative Criteria and Evaluation Rubric

Narrative [27 Points]
The following criteria will be used by reviewers to evaluate the application. Applications must receive at least 18 points out of 27 possible narrative points and all required elements must be addressed to be recommended for funding.

Scoring Definitions
<u>Minimally Addressed or Does Not Meet Criteria</u> - information not provided.
<u>Met Some but Not All Identified Criteria</u> - requires additional clarification.
<u>Met All Criterial</u> - adequate response, but not thoroughly developed or high-quality response.
<u>Met All Criteria with High Quality</u> - clear, concise, and well thought out response.

Priority Criteria	Did Not Meet Criteria	Met Criteria
Priority points will be used to determine order of funding. The priority area is intended to provide funding towards the highest need schools based on the criteria below. ***Note:*** Eligible applicants that do not have a large enough student population for data to be published may share data in the application in the Needs Assessment section to demonstrate how they met criteria. This may include: • Summary of data when fewer than 16 students participated. • Information from a previous school of majority of students if a school is new or merging with another school.		
Criteria 1: Recipient school is identified as within the lowest twenty-five percent among Arizona public schools on the graduation rates in the preceding school year (2022-2023).	0	3
Priority Points Total:		/3

Section A: Needs Assessment	Does Not Meet Criteria	Met Some but Not All Identified Criteria	Met All Criteria	Met All Criteria with High Quality	TOTAL
1) Describe the need for the proposed program, based on analysis of relevant student, staff, and family indicators. This should include: • Academic performance of ninth-grade students, including math performance if this is a focus of the application. • Trends in course completion and on-track rate for ninth-grade students. • Analysis of student engagement indicators, which may include but not limited to attendance, student discipline and other engagement measures. • Trends in four-year, five-year, and six-year graduation rates within the past three school years.	0	1	2	3	

2) Identify current needs related to implementation of components of ninth-grade success and gaps the proposal is intended to address that may include: • Transition services for eighth- to ninth- grade students; • Data systems for identification of ninth-grade students at-risk of dropping out due to attendance, academic performance, and/or behavior; • Instructional supports (e.g., common instructional practices, content-specific academic interventions, tutoring, course-completion programs); • Structures for teacher and staff coordination and collaboration; and/or • Supports to meet student needs (social-emotional, behavioral, service connections, and student skill building support).	0	1	2	3	
			Section A Total:		/6

Section B: Program Description	Minimally Addressed or Does Not Meet Criteria	Met Some but Not All Identified Criteria	Addressed Criteria but Not with Thorough Detail	Met All Criteria with High Quality	TOTAL
This section is intended to evaluate the applicant's readiness to implement the Ninth Grade Success Grant.					
Program Management and Data Systems Please describe the approach to provide training, support, and other activities to support implementation of the ninth-grade success components.					
Student Success Team: 1) Describe the process to manage and support the planning and implementation of the grant. 2) Describe how and when results will be shared with key stakeholders, such as the Ninth Grade Success Team, members of the School Board, other school staff, parents, and community members, etc. 3) Describe the time frame and frequency of meetings for planning & implementation. 4) Team members identified include either the Principal or Assistant Principal AND at least 3 other team members from: ninth-grade teachers, teachers in electives, ELL, and special education teachers that teach ninth graders, ninth-grade guidance counselors, a designated data specialist and other members of the student Success Team that work directly with ninth graders.	0	1	2	3	
Data Systems: 1) Describe the school and district-based systems that will be used to help collect data, track, and monitor program goals. 2) How the school will implement a data system that provides real-time access to data concerning a student's behavior, attendance, and grades and can be disaggregated. 3) How data will be evaluated with rigor that shall include, but is not limited to, student attendance, behavior, course completion, dropout rates, and academic results. 4) Describe the process for evaluation results used to inform program and school improvement.	0	1	2	3	
Instructional Supports 1) Describe the approach to provide training, support, and other activities to support implementation of the ninth-grade success components. 2) Planned support will include providing instructional support for ninth-grade students to increase engagement and rigor in learning that may include content-specific academic interventions, tutoring, course-completion programs, behavior management, and trauma-informed instruction. 3) Include how the team will identify and prioritize services for ninth-grade students at risk of academic failure in ninth grade.	0	1	2	3	

Ninth- Grade Transition					
1) Describe the approach to provide training, support, and other activities support implementation of the grant: 2) Based on data for incoming students, implement transition programs and class schedules for students. 3) Provide support and time for school staff to better support ninth grade students. Consider expanded learning opportunities including summer orientation for incoming ninth-grade students to introduce students to the behavior and academic expectations of high school. 4) Ensure that all ninth-grade teachers receive data concerning incoming ninth-grade students before the start of the school year and receive professional development concerning how to use the data to inform instruction for the students.	0	1	2	3	
			Section B Total:		**/12**

Section C: Performance Objectives and Evaluation	Minimally Addressed or Does Not Meet Criteria	Met Some but Not All Identified Criteria	Addressed Criteria but Not with Thorough Detail	Met All Criteria with High Quality	TOTAL
1) Indicate your current data and your goals for 2023-2024. At least one goal selected. **Program Goal 1:** Increase the percentage of ninth-grade courses passed. 　2022/23 Courses Attempted/Passed:　　　　2023-2024 Goal: **Program Goal 2:** Increase the percentage of ninth-grade students that move to tenth grade with no more than one course failure. 　2022/23 On Track Rate:　　　　2023-2024 Goal: **Program Goal 3**: Increase the mathematics performance of ninth-grade students. 　2022/23 On Track Rate (Math):　　　　2023-2024 Goal:	0	1	2	3	
			Section D Total:		**/3**

Section D: Budget Narrative and Electronic Budget	Minimally Addressed or Does Not Meet Criteria	Met Some but Not All Identified Criteria	Addressed Criteria but Not with Thorough Detail	Met All Criteria with High Quality	TOTAL
Budget Narrative 1) Provide a narrative explanation that summarizes the proposed uses of grant funds by budget category or proposed program strategies. Refer to all uses of funds described in Budget Workbook to ensure they are all justified expenses for components of the proposed program. 2) To receive maximum points, the budget and budget narrative should provide justification for activities, strategies and/or staffing referenced in Section B: Program Description.	0	1	2	3	
Budget Workbook 3) Provide the budget for each recipient school. Include a brief description of the item to be funded and the funding calculation to show how amounts were derived. 4) Costs are reasonable and sufficient in relation to the measurable objectives, design, scope, sustainability, and duration of project activities. Use of funds are connected to grant goals and activities. **Item Description Example:** x.xx FTE for [role or title] at $xxxxx per [hour, month, or year] times [x per hours, months, or year]	0	1	2	3	
			Section E Total:		**/6**

Ninth Grade Success Grant

Application Scoring

ADE Use Only

Narrative

Section A:	Needs Assessment	/6
Section B:	Program Description	/12
Section C:	Performance Objectives and Evaluation	/3
Section D:	Budget Narrative and Electronic Budget	/6
	Subtotal:	/27
	Priority Points:	/3
	Total:	**/30**

GENERAL COMMENTS:

RECOMMENDATION: Funded _____   Not Funded _____