



**REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS
FY 2026**

**TEACHER QUALITY AND DIVERSITY
COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM**

**APPLICATION DEADLINE
October 30, 2025**

**Maryland Higher Education Commission
217 E. Redwood Street
Suite 2100
Baltimore, MD 21201**

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TEACHER QUALITY AND DIVERSITY GRANT PROGRAM

PROGRAM INFORMATION

The Maryland Teacher Quality and Diversity Program assists Maryland institutions of higher education in (1) taking advantage of national foundation efforts to develop highly qualified teachers and leaders from diverse backgrounds and (2) aiding students from groups historically underrepresented in the teaching profession in achieving teacher preparation and certification requirements.

The Maryland Teacher Quality and Diversity Grant Program provides competitive grants to teacher preparation programs at Maryland institutions of higher education to assist students from groups historically underrepresented in the teaching profession in achieving teacher preparation and certification requirements.

Expanding access to the teaching profession includes increasing opportunities for individuals from backgrounds historically underrepresented in education, such as African Americans, American Indians/Alaska Natives, Hispanics/Latinos, those from low-income backgrounds, first-generation college students, and individuals with disabilities.

Priority will be given to proposals that emphasize:

- Alternative accelerated pathways into teaching leverage subject-matter expertise with appropriate academic credentials and prior professional experience, including the issuance of credit for prior learning to accelerate placement of high-quality teachers.
- Consortium-based proposals that bring together several institutions of higher education and school systems to maximize impact. Proposals that seek to strengthen transfer pathways from community colleges to baccalaureate degree-awarding institutions.
- Comprehensive, standards-aligned programming that meets State requirements and provides extensive mentoring to support candidates throughout the program.
- Implement a cohesive sequence of courses for candidates seeking licensure through the transcript analysis pathway (i.e., fine arts P-12 licensure areas and general secondary content areas), including test preparation and partnerships with local education agencies to provide mentoring support throughout the coursework.
- Incorporate targeted interventions to support male-identifying students, particularly boys and young men, through recruitment, mentoring, academic support, and career-aligned pathways that address disparities in education outcomes and workforce participation.

This program is not intended to supplant institutional investment. Proposals must demonstrate a sustainable plan for continuation beyond the grant period.

AUTHORIZATION

Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article, Subtitle 4. Teacher Quality and Diversity Program, §§ 17-404

ELIGIBILITY

Accredited institutions of higher education in Maryland. Priority is given to historically black colleges and universities and Hispanic-serving institutions with a track record of preparing diverse and high-quality teachers. Consortium applications (two or more institutions, or an institution plus a local education agency) are strongly encouraged.

Consortium applications must include:

- A lead institution of higher education with fiscal and administrative responsibility.
- At least one other Maryland institution of higher education.
- At least one local education agency partner to support candidate placement and mentoring.
- Proposals should describe each partner's role, governance structure, and how decision-making will be shared

FUNDING

Annual funding for the Teacher Quality and Diversity Grant Program is \$1,000,000. There will be tracks:

1. Individual track: awards between \$50,000–\$150,000.
2. Consortium track: awards between \$250,000-\$500,000

ALLOWABLE EXPENDITURES

Teacher Quality and Diversity Grant funds may be used for expenses including, but not limited to, salaries of staff directly involved in the project, equipment, material, supplies, and the development and administration of competency-based curricula and assessments. This includes costs associated with designing curriculum frameworks, creating assessments, and covering the expenses related to administering assessments that award credit based on demonstrated proficiency.

Funds may also support student success services such as academic advising, certification exam preparation, and faculty or teacher mentor stipends. Evaluation-related costs, including data collection and analysis, are allowable and encouraged to strengthen evidence of project outcomes.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Technical assistance for the Teacher Quality and Diversity Grant Program will be provided on an as needed basis. Please contact Elena Quiroz-Livanis, Deputy Secretary at the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) at Elena.Quiroz@Maryland.gov for more information.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Applications to the Teacher Quality and Diversity Grant Program should be emailed to anthony.reiner@maryland.gov. Applications must be received by October 30, 2025 to be considered for funding under this program. Award notifications will be made no later than November 28, 2025.

APPLICATION PROCESS

For MHEC to consider a request for a Teacher Quality and Diversity Grant Program, institutions are required to submit the following:

1. Cover Page
2. Application
3. Budget
4. Funding Opportunity Award Letter
5. Assurances
6. Letters of Support

TIMETABLE

Request for Proposals Issued	September 25, 2025
Technical Assistance	For technical assistance, contact Elena Quiroz-Livanis at elena.quiroz@maryland.gov
Applications Due to MHEC by 4:00 p.m.	October 30, 2025
Award Notifications (via email prior to midnight)	November 28, 2025
Grant Start Date	December 1, 2025
Interim Report Due	March 31, 2026
Grant End Date	June 30, 2026
Final Report Due	August 31, 2026

PROGRAM CONTACT

Elena Quiroz-Livanis
Deputy Secretary
elena.quiroz@maryland.gov

TEACHER QUALITY AND DIVERSITY GRANT PROGRAM PROPOSAL FORMAT & REQUIREMENTS

GENERAL FORMAT REQUIREMENTS

- Proposal narrative is limited to a maximum of ten (10) single-spaced pages. The page limit excludes the cover sheet, abstract, budget, assurances, résumés, or appendices.
- Proposal narrative pages must be numbered.
- Pages must have one-inch margins and be in 12-point Times New Roman or Arial font.
- Pages must be 8 ½ x 11 inches in size.
- All proposal components must be submitted together using appropriate forms.
- An electronic copy of the grant proposal in PDF format must be submitted to Elena Quiroz-Livanis at elena.quiroz@maryland.gov. A copy of the abstract must be submitted as a Microsoft Word document.

PROPOSAL CONTENT

- COVER SHEET: (Required) (Appendix A): Must use form provided in Appendix A. Please note that the COVER SHEET must be signed by the President and not a designee.
- ABSTRACT: (Required) (Appendix A): Must use format provided in Appendix A.
- PROPOSAL NARRATIVE: (Required) Detailed proposal narrative instructions provided in section titled “Proposal Narrative.”
- BUDGET SUMMARY: (Required) (Appendix B): Must use format provided in Appendix B.
- BUDGET NARRATIVE: (Required) Detailed budget narrative instructions provided in section titled “Budget Narrative.”
- STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES: (Required) (Appendix C): Must use form provided in Appendix C.
- LETTERS OF SUPPORT: (Required): A letter for each partner LEA must be included with each grant proposal. If submitting a consortium grant, letters of support signed by the President of each participating institution must be included.

PROPOSAL NARRATIVE (100 Points)

The following outline should guide proposal writing and will also be used to guide proposal review. Individual sections do not have point divisions other than what is indicated below.

Label the narrative sections with the headings as indicated below:

A. NEEDS STATEMENT (10 Points)

Develop a needs statement to support the proposed project's implementation. Justify creating or expanding alternative teacher preparation programs to help federal workers transition into teaching careers and provide pathways for conditionally licensed teachers and career changers. Address specific issues such as Maryland's teacher shortage, the need for streamlined credentialing, and the potential of career-changing professionals with content expertise.

Reference relevant research or data, including regional teacher vacancy data, workforce transition trends, and best practices from alternative certification models. Summarize local, state, and national data that support the project. Applicants should demonstrate alignment with regional teacher workforce needs, such as shortage areas (STEM, special education, bilingual education) and vacancy data, to ensure the proposed project addresses critical gaps.

B. PROJECT GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND OUTCOMES (15 Points)

Detail the goals, objectives, and measurable outcomes for the proposed project. Project outcomes should be quantifiable and measurable. The project should focus on creating or expanding programs that support accelerated teacher preparation, including on the job training for career changers, mentorship for conditional and resident licensed teachers, and competency-based training and assessment for subject matter experts. Include data on anticipated enrollment, certification completion rates, and job placements in local districts. Provide baseline data for comparison to convey that your goals are both reasonable and ambitious.

C. OPERATION PLAN (20 Points)

Describe the activities that will achieve the project goals, objectives and outcomes. Describe each activity/strategy and the personnel responsible for each. Programs should include flexible scheduling options, mentorship models for conditionally licensed teachers, competency-based assessments for subject matter experts, creation or expansion of alternative preparation programs, and strategies to support candidates through the credentialing process. Further, proposals should include efforts to support conditionally certified teachers earn an initial license. Provide a project timeline with tentative dates. This section can be presented as a narrative or a table.

D. PROJECT MANAGEMENT (15 Points)

Identify key personnel with general roles and responsibilities, including activities such as program redesign, faculty training, development of coursework or competency-based modules, and collaboration with local education agencies (LEAs) for teacher placement. This section should be linked to the operations plan and the budget. Demonstrate that key personnel and other staff have sufficient time to conduct project activities efficiently by the established timeline. Demonstrate the adequacy of the project team to achieve the outcomes of the proposed project on time and within budget. Ensure alignment with state credentialing requirements while maintaining flexibility for nontraditional candidates. This section can be presented as a narrative or a table.

E. PROJECT EVALUATION (15 Points)

The project evaluation is an integral part of the project's design and implementation. The evaluation plan should link to the project goals, objectives, and outcomes. The evaluation plan is a systematic means for monitoring and evaluating the program throughout the grant period, as well as a measure of the projects results. The project evaluation should describe how success will be measured, including enrollment in modified or new preparation programs, certification completion rates, and placement of graduates into teaching positions. Describe how data will be collected and analyzed to determine if projected outcomes are achieved.

F. PARTNERSHIPS (10 Points)

Detail partnerships that will assist in the implementation of the project. Provide rationale for any proposed partnerships. Highlight collaborations between MHEC, Maryland State Department of Education, institutions of higher education, local education agencies, and others to ensure seamless entry into the teaching profession. Include a management and communication plan for the coordination of partnership efforts, as well as a letter of support from participating LEAs.

A letter for each partner LEA must be included with each grant proposal. If submitting a consortium grant, proposals must include 1) letters of support signed by the President of each participating institution must be included, 2) identify a lead applicant and fiscal agent; 3) describe how partners will share responsibility for program design, implementation, and evaluation; 4) explain how the consortium structure increases the project's reach, efficiency, and sustainability compared to an individual application; and 5) outline strategies for sustaining the consortium beyond the grant period, including how ongoing costs will be distributed.

BUDGET, COST-EFFECTIVENES, AND SUSTAINABILITY (20 Points)

The project budget should be justifiable in terms of the scope of the proposed project. Costs should be reasonable and clearly linked to project goals, objectives, activities, and strategies. Funds should support program development, faculty training, mentorship support, curriculum creation, and other activities essential for establishing or modifying alternative preparation programs to meet the needs of career changers and conditionally licensed teachers. Funds cannot be for student financial aid grants, scholarships, or stipends.

Sustainability should be explicitly addressed as part of the evaluation. Applicants must describe institutional commitments, long-term funding strategies, and plans for maintaining partnerships beyond the grant period.

A. BUDGET SUMMARY

Provide a budget summary outlining all project costs by line item. Institutions must use the form provided in Appendix B.

Describe short and long-term plans for continuing project efforts once grant funding has concluded. Provide specific strategies and personnel for the sustainability of the project's activities. Detail how project partnerships will be sustained after funding ends, including institutionalized alternative preparation programs, ongoing mentorship support for conditionally licensed teachers, and continuous recruitment of subject matter experts into the teaching profession.

B. BUDGET NARRATIVE

Provide a budget narrative to justify all costs listed in the budget summary. Detail the reasoning for each line item, covering both for grant expenditures and institutional and other contributions. The narrative should be organized according to the line items in the budget summary and must show how the costs were determined. Below is an explanation of budget categories and proposal expectations follows.

SALARIES & WAGES

Professional Personnel: List individually, all key personnel and the requested salary amounts by indicating what percent of the individual's annual time will be committed to the project.

Other Personnel: List individually, all support personnel by support category and the requested rate of pay. Support personnel must be clearly justified.

FRINGE BENEFITS

Fringe benefits are calculated at the costs normally paid by the institution for the salaried members of its staff who will be involved in the project. The amount of fringe requested in the proposal should represent the percentage of effort on the project.

TRAVEL

Enter travel costs, if necessary, for essential personnel to conduct off-campus activities. Mileage allowances may not exceed the state's approved rate for mileage reimbursement at the time of travel. All travel funding must be specifically designated by place, for whom, approximate date, distance, and method of travel.

EQUIPMENT

Equipment means an article of non-expendable tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost per unit that is consistent with institutional policy. Equipment expenses must be documented with written estimates, invoices, etc. and be purchased in compliance with institutional procurement procedures. Discuss the "life expectancy" of any grant purchased equipment, role of the equipment in the project, any maintenance plans if applicable, and how equipment will be used after grant period has ended.

SUPPLIES

Supplies refers to expendable and non-expendable supplies, including but not limited to books, computer software, operating supplies, and other items necessary for the effective implementation of the project.

CONSULTANT AND CONTRACTUAL SERVICES

Program consultants or other contractual services must be justified and reasonable. Consultant pay should reflect the time spent delivering direct services. Travel and per diem expenses for consultants should not exceed the institutional or state rate, or that allowed by federal OMB circulars, whichever is least. Preparation time for consultants will not be covered by the grant. Documented agreements for consultant fees, travel, and supplies must comply with institutional policy; and payments cannot exceed institutional salary levels for similar work. All contractual services must follow institutional procurement procedures.

OTHER (SPECIFY)

All expenditures that do not fall into any of the above budget categories should be detailed in the OTHER category. List each expenditure separately. "Other" expenditures might include insurance, costs associated with space rental not covered by a long term lease, miscellaneous expenditures related to permits, etc. Explain why these costs are necessary for the implementation of the project. Provide specific information that shows how amounts were computed.

TOTAL DIRECT COSTS

Enter the sum of Items A, B, C, D, E, F, and G.

TOTAL INDIRECT COSTS

Up to 8% of the grant funds awarded for total direct costs may be used to support indirect cost recovery. The rate requested must be the percentage permitted by its restricted indirect cost rate agreement, or 8%, whichever is less.

TOTAL

Enter the sum of Item H and I. Be sure to reconcile the total in each line and each column.

TEACHER QUALITY AND DIVERSITY GRANT PROGRAM EVALUATION AND SELECTION CRITERIA

Each proposal will be evaluated and scored based on the following categories:

Category	Maximum Points
Needs Statement	10
Project Goals, Objectives, and Outcomes	15
Operation Plan	20
Program Management	15
Project Evaluation	15
Partnerships	10
<u>Budget and Cost Effectiveness</u>	<u>20</u>
Total	105

PROPOSAL REVIEW PROCESS

- Proposals must include all requisite forms. Applicants may copy the forms to include in proposal packets or reproduce them in their own word processing files.
- A panel of qualified reviewers will read and score each proposal according to the criteria summarized in “Proposal Format & Requirements”.
- The full review panel convenes after reviewing the proposals individually. Panel members discuss each proposal and discuss funding recommendations.
- The review panel funding recommendations are submitted to the Secretary of Higher Education, or their designee, for final funding decisions.

TEACHER QUALITY AND DIVERSITY GRANT PROGRAM COVER SHEET

Higher Education Institution:

DUNS or UEI Number:

Program Contact Name and Title:

Campus Telephone:

FAX Number:

Email Address:

Campus Mailing Address:

Grants Office Post-Award Officer Name and Title:

Email Address:

Phone Number:

Campus Mailing Address:

Finance or Business Office Contact Name and Title:

Email Address:

Phone Number:

Campus Mailing Address:

Certification by President:

Signature: _____

TEACHER QUALITY AND DIVERSITY GRANT PROGRAM ABSTRACT

Institution: _____

Project Title: _____

Provide a summary (MAX: 300 words) of the proposed project's needs, purpose, and projected outcomes. (Note that this may be reproduced as is or edited by MHEC staff for inclusion in press releases and other publications describing the grant program.)

TEACHER QUALITY AND DIVERSITY GRANT PROGRAM BUDGET SUMMARY

Institution: _____

SOURCE OF FUNDS				
	COLUMN 1 Grant Funds Requested	COLUMN 2 Institution Contributions	COLUMN 3 Other Contributions	COLUMN 4 Totals
A. Salaries & Wages				
Professional Personnel [List each by name followed by title in brackets]				
1				
2				
3				
4				
Other Personnel (list categories & # of each in brackets)				
5. []				
6. []				
7. []				
8. []				
Total Salaries and Wages	0		0	
B. Fringe Benefits				
C. Travel				
D. Equipment				
1				
2				
E. Materials and Supplies				
F. Consultant and Contractual Services				
G. Other (specify)				
1				
2				
H. Total Direct Costs (A through G)	0		0	
I. Total Indirect Costs (max. 8% of H)	0		0	
J. Total (H and I)	0		0	

TEACHER QUALITY AND DIVERSITY GRANT PROGRAM STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES

The Applicant hereby affirms and certifies that it will comply with all applicable regulations, policies, guidelines, and requirements of the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) and the State of Maryland as they relate to the application, acceptance, and use of Teacher Quality and Diversity Grant Program funds. Also, the Applicant affirms and certifies that:

1. It possesses legal authority to apply for the grant; e.g., an official act of the applicant's governing body has been duly adopted or passed, authorizing filing of the application, including all understandings and assurances contained therein and directing and authorizing the person identified as the official representative of the application and to provide such additional information as may be required.
2. It will comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d) prohibiting employment discrimination where discriminatory employment practices will result in unequal treatment of persons who are or should be benefiting from the grant-aided activity.
3. It will comply with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act and any and all amendments to the ADA.
4. It will expend funds to supplement new and/or existing programs and not use these funds to supplant non-grant funds or for any purpose other than those specified in this grant.
5. It will participate in any statewide assessment program or other evaluation program as required by the MHEC.
6. It will give the MHEC and/or a representative from the Office of Legislative Audits, through any authorized representative, the right of access to, and the right to examine all records, books, papers, or documents related to the grant. It will maintain all records pertaining to this grant for a period of five years.
7. It will comply with all requirements imposed by the MHEC concerning special requirements of law and other administrative requirements.

Organization: _____

Signature of Authorized Official (President, VP level, or above) Date

Name and Title, Printed

TEACHER QUALITY AND DIVERSITY GRANT PROGRAM GRANT MANAGEMENT

FISCAL PROCEDURES

All state funds under this program must be assigned to a specific account. For this grant cycle, 100% of the total grant award will be disbursed at the beginning of the project period

POST-AWARD CHANGES

The grant recipient shall obtain prior written approval for any change to the scope of the approved project. The request must include an explanation of the specific programmatic changes and a revised budget, if applicable. If project activity dates have changed significantly since the proposal submission, you must submit a revised calendar of activity dates.

The grant recipient shall also obtain prior written approval from the Office of the Deputy Secretary:

1. Continue the project during any continuous period of more than three (3) months without the active direction of an approved project director.
2. Replace the project director (or any other persons named and expressly identified as a key project person in the proposal) or to permit any such person to devote substantially less effort to the project than was anticipated when the grant was awarded.
3. Make changes resulting in additions or deletions of staff and consultants related to or resulting in a need for budget reallocation; and
4. Make budget changes exceeding \$1,000 or 10% in any category, whichever is greater.

Grantees must also request written approval to extend the expiration date of the grant if additional time beyond the established grant end date is required to ensure adequate completion of the approved activity with the funds already made available. A single extension may be made for this purpose and must be requested no less than 1 month prior to the originally established expiration date. The request must explain the need for the extension and include an estimate of the un-obligated funds remaining and a plan for their use. The fact that un-obligated funds may remain at the expiration of the grant is not in itself sufficient justification for an extension. The plan must adhere to the previously approved objectives of the project. Furthermore, it is not permissible to roll funds over from one Teacher Quality and Diversity grant into another Teacher Quality and Diversity grant.

PROJECT CLOSEOUT, SUSPENSION, TERMINATION

CLOSEOUT: Each grant shall be closed out as promptly as feasible after expiration or termination. In closing out the grant, the following shall be observed:

- The grant recipient shall immediately refund, in accordance with instructions from MHEC, any un-obligated balance of cash advanced to the grant recipient.
- The grant recipient shall submit all financial, performance, evaluation, and other reports required by the terms of the grant within 90 days of the date of expiration or termination.
- The closeout of a grant does not affect the retention period for state and/or federal rights of access to grant records.

SUSPENSION: When a grant recipient has materially failed to comply with the terms of a grant, MHEC may, upon reasonable notice to the grant recipient, suspend the grant in whole or in part. The notice of suspension will state the reasons for the suspension, any corrective action required of the grant recipient, and the effective date. Suspensions shall remain in effect until the grant recipient has taken action satisfactory to MHEC or given evidence satisfactory to MHEC that such corrective action will be taken or until MHEC terminates the grant.

TERMINATION: MHEC may terminate any grant in whole or in part at any time before the date of expiration, whenever MHEC determines that the grant recipient has materially failed to comply with the terms of the grant. MHEC shall promptly notify the grant recipient in writing of the termination and the reasons for the termination, together with the effective date. The grant recipient may terminate the grant in whole or in part upon written notification to the Commission setting forth the reasons for such termination, the effective date, and in the case of partial terminations, the portion to be terminated. However, if in the case of a partial termination, MHEC determines that the remaining portion of the grant will not accomplish the purposes for which the grant was made; MHEC may terminate the grant.

Closeout of a grant does not affect the right of MHEC to disallow costs and recover funds on the basis of a later audit or review, nor does closeout affect the grantee's obligation to return any funds due as a result of later refunds, corrections, or other transactions.

RECORDS

A grant recipient shall retain the following records for a period of five (5) years after completion of the grant project:

- Programmatic records of project impact and evaluation results.
- Fiscal records that fully show amount of funds under the grant, how the funds were expended, total cost of project, all costs and contributions provided from other sources, and other records to facilitate an effective audit.

REPORTING

To ensure accountability and sound fiscal management, the Office of the Deputy Secretary serves as the state monitor of grant activities funded under this program. In addition to requiring interim and final reports, MHEC staff may conduct site visits or request written materials for this purpose. Contact MHEC immediately if you anticipate any difficulties completing all activities on schedule and according to the proposed budget.

Interim and final reports are required from all grantees. The interim report should provide evidence that the project is progressing with sufficient effectiveness to continue. At the end of the grant, both a financial and a narrative report will be due to the Office of the Deputy Secretary. The project evaluation should be an integral part of the narrative report.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF SUPPORT AND DISCLAIMER

An acknowledgment of the Maryland Higher Education Commission must appear in any publication of materials based on or developed under this program.

Materials must also contain the following disclaimer:

“Opinions, findings, and conclusions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Maryland Higher Education Commission, and no official endorsement should be inferred.”

All media announcements and public information pertaining to activities funded by this grant program should acknowledge support of the Maryland Higher Education Commission and institutions should work with the Commission to publicize the grant, including coordination with the Director of Communications.

At such time as any article resulting from work under this grant is published in a professional journal or publication, two reprints of the publication should be sent to the Maryland Higher Education Commission Office of the Deputy Secretary, and clearly labeled with appropriate identifying information.