

## **Questions and Answers Summary**

My Brother's Keeper Exemplary School Models and Practices (ESMP)  
A New York State My Brother's Keeper Initiative  
2017-2020

### **PLEASE NOTE: UPDATES**

**The following changes have been made to the Announcement of Funding Opportunity - My Brother's Keeper Exemplary School Models and Practices (ESMP):**

- **Applicant eligibility has been expanded to include NYS public schools listed as “SPECIAL ACT.” Please see question 22 for additional information for Special Act schools.**
- **The Purpose/Goal section on page 1 has been modified to remove the phrase “in urban schools.” This grant opportunity is not limited to urban schools.**
- **The application deadline has been extended by one week. Applications must now be postmarked no later than June 16, 2017.**

### **Questions and Answers**

1. I am working with some school districts that have expressed interest in applying for the MBK ESMP grant funding. They understand the eligibility guidelines related to being designated as large city, New York City, rural high-needs, etc. However, the general overview also mentions that eligible applicants “must have at least one school designated to serve as the demonstration site.” Is there a list of these schools that are designated as such sites? If so, can you provide a link to the list? If no such list exists, how do district officials know if they have a school that is “designated?”
  - Designations such as large city, New York City, rural high-needs, etc. can be found in SEDREF. If you are unsure of your school’s designation, you can look it up in the [SEDREF online portal](#).
  - There is no list of schools that are eligible to serve as demonstration sites. A district will determine that for themselves based on whether or not a school improves outcomes for boys and young men of color for at least two consecutive years with regard to:
    - Statistically significant improved academic performance for students from low-socioeconomic status (SES) families based on NYS assessments
    - A statistically significant reduction in the academic performance gap between boys and young men of color and all other students
    - Statistically significant improved graduation rates for boys and young men of color, students eligible for free or reduced lunch, English Language Learners (ELL), and students in special education
2. Can the eligible/applicant district use any of the funding to expand its existing ‘exemplary’ program? Or must all funding be used to replicate the program in the partner school?
  - The applicant district may use funds to document the processes and procedures that made them exemplary. Most of the funding will be used to replicate the processes and procedures that made them exemplary in the partner school. This grant is not designed to expanding existing programs in the demonstration schools.
3. Since the exemplary program needs to be one that helps students in urban districts, how are rural districts eligible?

- The exemplary program is not limited to urban districts. The Purpose/Goal section on page 1 of the grant announcement has been modified.
  - The goal is to result in:
    - Statistically significant improved academic performance for students from low-socioeconomic status (SES) families based on NYS assessments
    - A statistically significant reduction in the academic performance gap between boys and young men of color and all other students
    - Statistically significant improved graduation rates for boys and young men of color, students eligible for free or reduced lunch, English Language Learners (ELL), and students in special education
4. Page 10 of the RFP notes that “if no struggling or persistently struggling partner school is available in this category, the partner may be a priority or focus school.” Is that referring to applicants who are contracted American Indian Education Services districts only? Or to all the categories of eligible applicants?
- “If no struggling or persistently struggling partner school is available in this category, the partner may be a priority or focus school” refers only to applicants who are contracted American Indian Education Services districts. There are eligible struggling or persistently struggling partner schools in the other two regions: NYC and rest of state.
5. Are the project goals (listed on the bottom of page 11 of the RFP and top of page 12) pertaining to the partner school, not the demonstration school? Or are the goals for both schools?
- These are goals for both schools. Improved outcomes with regard to these goals is what will qualify an applicant for a grant award and improved outcomes with regards to these goals is the desired outcome for the replication site. During the grant period, the grantee will report on these goals for both schools. It is imperative that the demonstration school continues to demonstrate the goals throughout the grant period, and the goal of the grant is to show similar improvement in the partner school.
6. On page 14 of the RFP, the description of administrative and instructional supplies, materials and durable goods, it states that “if a program closes” durable goods must be released to another MBK ESMP program. Does that refer only to programs that end before the grant period ends? Or must all equipment be returned to SED at the end of the grant period?
- This refers only to programs that end before the end of the grant period. Please see the [Grants Finance website](#) for general guidelines and requirements for maintaining an inventory and disposing of durable goods.
7. Can any of the funds be used to directly benefit the demonstration school? How does NYSED see this grant benefitting the demonstration school?
- The applicant district may use funds to document the processes and procedures that made them exemplary. This documentation of the successful processes and procedures could be used to benefit other schools within the applicant district. Most of the funding will be used to replicate the processes and procedures that made them exemplary in the partner school.

8. I am interested in submitting an RFP for the "My Brother's Keeper" grant, however, the application states only two schools per district can apply. Our school is located in district 6--- are we still eligible? Please advise.

- A district applies on behalf of their eligible school(s). It is up to the district to determine which of their schools they will select. Selected schools must demonstrate at least two consecutive years of improved outcomes for boys and young men of color with regard to:
  - Statistically significant improved academic performance for students from low-socioeconomic status (SES) families based on NYS assessments
  - A statistically significant reduction in the academic performance gap between boys and young men of color and all other students
  - Statistically significant improved graduation rates for boys and young men of color, students eligible for free or reduced lunch, English Language Learners (ELL), and students in special education

9. Can applicant districts use an award to begin a new program?

- The expectation is that the new program will be the replication of the grantee's successful practices at the replication site in another district.
- Awards are based on the applicant district's history of successfully improving outcomes for boys and young men of color for at least two consecutive years with regard to:
  - Statistically significant improved academic performance for students from low-socioeconomic status (SES) families based on NYS assessments
  - A statistically significant reduction in the academic performance gap between boys and young men of color and all other students
  - Statistically significant improved graduation rates for boys and young men of color, students eligible for free or reduced lunch, English Language Learners (ELL), and students in special education

10. Can applicant districts only use funds to expand an existing exemplary program in its school(s)? Or, does all the funding have to be related to expanding the application district's exemplary program to its partner school?

- The applicant district may use funds to document the processes and procedures that made them exemplary. Most of the funding will be used to replicate the processes and procedures that made them exemplary in the partner school. This grant is not designed to expanding existing programs in the demonstration schools.

11. How much of the funding must directly benefit the partner school, versus the applicant school? I.e., can we use most of the funds to benefit our (applicant) school, and if we invite the partner school to visit to view and learn from the program, is that enough?

- Most of the funding must directly benefit the partner school, versus the applicant school. Spending most of the funds to benefit the applicant school and invite the partner school to visit would not be sufficient.
- The applicant district may use funds to document the processes and procedures that made them exemplary. Most of the funding will be used to replicate the processes and procedures that made them exemplary in the partner school.

12. How is SUBURBAN/URBAN HIGH NEED defined? Is there a list of such schools?

- Designations such as large city, New York City, rural high-needs, etc. can be found in SEDREF. If you are unsure of your school's designation, you can look it up in the [SEDREF online portal](#).
13. Are New York City nonprofits eligible applicants for the Exemplary School and Practices Grant? Please advise.
- No, eligible applicants are **NYS public school districts**.
14. Can you tell me whether BOCES are eligible to apply for this grant opportunity?
- No, eligible applicants are **NYS public school districts**.
15. Please clarify -- can the district interested in implementing an evidence-based model to increase academic achievement among youth of color, be the applicant? Or must the applicant only be a district that has successfully demonstrated improved academic achievement in the target population for two years?
- The applicant must be a district that has successfully demonstrated improved academic achievement in the target population for at least two consecutive years.
  - The partner will be **demographically similar** struggling or persistently struggling school in **another district** within their region (i.e. NYC or rest of state). The partner school cannot be a school in the same district as the demonstration site.
16. If only high achieving districts can apply, and administrative costs cannot be included in the budget, what incentive is there for the higher achieving district to operate the program?
- Administrative costs are permissible. (Please refer to p.14, B.1. and p.14, C.7.)
  - Allowable costs include the following: **Program administration:** including as allowable: professional and non-professional salaries, fringe benefits, staff travel, purchased services/consultant services, regional and statewide professional development; reimbursement for “release time” for school personnel engaged in program planning and implementation reported as a purchased service. Out of state travel requires prior approval by SED.
  - MBK funds cannot be used to pay for the salary or stipend of the MBK ESMP Program Director’s Supervisor or someone designated as a Principal Investigator for the grant.
17. On page 2 it says that the applicant district must have at least one school designated to serve as the demonstration site, but that the demonstration site cannot be a struggling, persistently struggling, or priority school. Wouldn't these schools be the most likely to need to implement new strategies to close the achievement gap?
- The **demonstration site** is a school within the applicant district that can demonstrate at least two consecutive years of improved outcomes for boys and young men of color with regard to:
    - Statistically significant improved academic performance for students from low-socioeconomic status (SES) families based on NYS assessments
    - A statistically significant reduction in the academic performance gap between boys and young men of color and all other students
    - Statistically significant improved graduation rates for boys and young men of color, students eligible for free or reduced lunch, English Language Learners (ELL), and students in special education

- The **partner school/replication site** is a struggling, persistently struggling school in **another** district within the demonstration site's region. i.e. NYC, rest of state, or NYS public school districts contracted to provide educational services to American Indian reservation populations.
  - The partner school cannot be a school in the same district as the demonstration site.
18. If a district is interested in implementing strategies to increase achievement among youth of color, how does it identify a possible partner district that has demonstrated achievement in this area?
- The district interested in implementing strategies to increase achievement among youth of color would actually be the partner, not the applicant. Perhaps this district could make it known regionally, possibly through their BOCES, NYCOSS, or emailing a listserv of districts or administrators, that they are interested in partnering with a district that has demonstrated achievement in this area.
19. The rubric indicates that the high achieving and lower achieving district must be in the same region. What if there are no districts nearby with the same target populations? E.g. a district that is interested in improving academic achievement for its Native American male population may not have a district in its region that has implemented a successful strategy for at least two years. Would they be ineligible to participate?
- Applicants are the districts who have improved outcomes for boys and young men of color for at least two consecutive years with regard to:
    - Statistically significant improved academic performance for students from low-socioeconomic status (SES) families based on NYS assessments
    - A statistically significant reduction in the academic performance gap between boys and young men of color and all other students
    - Statistically significant improved graduation rates for boys and young men of color, students eligible for free or reduced lunch, English Language Learners (ELL), and students in special education
  - For the purposes of this grant, there are only three “regions”: NYC, rest of state, and NYS public school districts contracted to provide educational services to American Indian reservation populations (this region is statewide).
20. Are public charter schools ineligible to apply directly for the ESMP grant?
- Eligible applicants are **NYS public school districts** that meet the requirements specified in the Applicant Eligibility section of the RFP. A charter school is not eligible to apply for this grant. The public school district in which the charter school is located may select the charter school as a demonstration site, but the district is the applicant and retains responsibility for administering the grant.
21. Can a public charter school in New York City apply for the ESMP through NYCDOE (as a subgrant)?
- Eligible applicants are **NYS public school districts** that meet the requirements specified in the Applicant Eligibility section of the RFP. A charter school is not eligible to apply for this grant. The public school district in which the charter school is located may select the charter school as a demonstration site, but the district is the applicant and retains responsibility for administering the grant.

22. We are a Special Act Public School serving a high needs population. We do not qualify under the eligibility criteria listed in the RFP, but wondered if we could apply as a Special Act school. And if so, would we be required to partner with another Special Act school?

- Eligibility criteria is being expanded to include Special Act schools.
- Depending upon location, the partner for a Special Act school would be a struggling or persistently struggling school either in NYC or rest of state. The partner could be a Special Act school, but would not necessarily have to be one.

23. If the proposed model targets either of the following MBK milestones: 1) enter school ready to learn or 2) read by grade level by third grade; how would an applicant be able to demonstrate a statistically significant improved graduation rate, decrease in academic performance gap, or improved academic performance on NYS assessments during grant period?

- It is the responsibility of the applicant to make the research-based connections between the MBK Milestone they select and the grant goals: a statistically significant improved graduation rate, decrease in academic performance gap, or improved academic performance on NYS assessments.

24. The rubric evaluates whether or not the applicant provides evidence of working with an IHE to identify school models. Is this a requirement?

- The rubric identifies items that will be scored in determining successful applications. As indicated, 2 points will be given based on whether the applicant's background includes working with IHEs and/or CBPs to identify and develop exemplary school models and practices.

25. The posted PowerPoint Slide 19 Bullet 3--Please clarify--Is a District able to use grant funds to pay current employees to work on this proposed project?

- Grant funds may be used to pay the portion of current employees commensurate with the percentage of their time dedicated specifically to this MBK project. Note that funds cannot be used to pay for activities which previously had been assumed by the institution. The purpose of a MBK award is to supplement rather than supplant monies previously or presently allocated to MBK related activities.

26. The posted PowerPoint Slide 19 Bullet 4-This indicates that the names and titles of all PT and FT professional staff for proposed project should be included as well as resumes. How is this possible before the projects are awarded and positions advertised?

- Job titles and job descriptions must be included for positions proposed in relation to the project.
- Include resumes for all current employees who are expected to transition all or a portion of their time to the project.

27. Are proprietary degree granting colleges eligible to partner with school districts and to receive funding under this grant?

- Eligible applicants are **NYS public school districts** that meet the requirements specified in the Applicant Eligibility section of the RFP.
- Eligible partners to serve as the replication site are schools that have been identified as struggling or persistently struggling in **another district** within their region (i.e. NYC or rest of state). The partner school cannot be a school in the same district as the demonstration site.

- Proprietary degree granting colleges are eligible to subcontract with the applicant to provide services such as professional development to the partner school.
28. If we were to propose an early childhood program that addresses the MBK pillar of "Entering school ready to learn" how could we report outcomes if students do not yet take NYS assessments? Could we use local measures instead?
- Local measures that are documented as being research-based are acceptable means of reporting outcomes for the MBK pillar of "Entering school ready to learn."
29. For the purpose of this grant, when you refer to "regions" are you referring to the Board of Regents regions?
- No, for the purpose of this grant there are only three "regions": NYC; rest of state; and NYS public school districts contracted to provide educational services to American Indian reservation populations (statewide).
30. We are a Big Five District with no other demographically similar struggling, persistently struggling, focus or priority schools within our region. Since that is the case, can we use one of the schools within our district as a demonstration site and a second school (also within our district) as the partner site? Alternatively, could we partner with another Big 5 District outside of our region?
- For the purpose of this grant there are only three "regions": NYC; rest of state; and NYS public school districts contracted to provide educational services to American Indian reservation populations (statewide).
  - Only school districts contracted to provide educational services to American Indian reservation populations may partner with a priority or focus school for lack of a struggling or persistently struggling partner.
  - The partner school must be a **demographically similar** struggling or persistently struggling school in **another district** within their region (i.e. NYC or rest of state). The partner school cannot be a school in the same district as the demonstration site.
31. As the RFP makes clear that the measures are improvements to the academic success of young men and boys of color, we want to know whether college access services, like our college tours, college access advisement, early awareness, assistance with college applications and FAFSA forms, etc., would be eligible for funding under this program.
- If an exemplary school demonstration site is currently employing these elements as part of their processes and procedures for improving outcomes for boys and young men of color then it would be appropriate to replicate these elements in the partner school. This grant is only seeking to replicate practices proven successful with the target population, not to pilot new procedures.
32. If a school is a focus school in the district, are they eligible to apply for the MBK(ESMP) grant.
- The eligible applicant is the school district. The applicant district must have at least one school designated to serve as the demonstration site. **The demonstration site school(s) must not be classified as a struggling, persistently struggling, or priority school.** A focus school is not prohibited from serving as a demonstration site, but any school selected to serve as a demonstration site must have demonstrated improved outcomes for boys and young men of color for at least two consecutive years with regard to:

- Statistically significant improved academic performance for students from low-socioeconomic status (SES) families based on NYS assessments
- A statistically significant reduction in the academic performance gap between boys and young men of color and all other students
- Statistically significant improved graduation rates for boys and young men of color, students eligible for free or reduced lunch, English Language Learners (ELL), and students in special education

33. If the has already been awarded the MBKCG, can they apply for the MBK(ESMP)grant?

- All eligible districts may apply for the MBK ESMP grant regardless of any previous MBK grant awards.

34. The FOA reads: “Applicants must partner with a demographically similar struggling or persistently struggling school in another district within their region.” Does that mean we have to partner with a persistently struggling in another district in order to qualify for this funding? If so, what percentage of our time and budget needs to be allocated for this collaboration?

- Yes, an applicant must partner with a persistently struggling in **another** district in their region.
- Grant funds are to be used specifically for this collaboration. Most of the funding must directly benefit the partner school, versus the applicant school.
- The applicant district may use funds to document the processes and procedures that made them exemplary. Most of the funding will be used to replicate the processes and procedures that made them exemplary in the partner school.

35. Does our high school qualify as a demonstration site? What about our middle schools?

- **The demonstration sites** are schools within the applicant district which have improved outcomes for boys and young men of color for at least two consecutive years with regard to:
  - Statistically significant improved academic performance for students from low-socioeconomic status (SES) families based on NYS assessments
  - A statistically significant reduction in the academic performance gap between boys and young men of color and all other students
  - Statistically significant improved graduation rates for boys and young men of color, students eligible for free or reduced lunch, English Language Learners (ELL), and students in special education
- The applicant district must have at least one school designated to serve as the demonstration site. **The demonstration site school(s) must not be classified as a struggling, persistently struggling, or priority school.**
- The applicant district decides which, if any, of their schools are eligible to serve as a demonstration site.

36. When will the winners of the award be announced?

- Award announcements are anticipated to take place in the fall.

37. When will the awards be allocated?

- Final awards are anticipated to be allocated in the fall.

38. What percentage of the budget can we designate for new programs?

- The applicant district may use funds to document the processes and procedures that made them exemplary.
- Most of the funding will be used to replicate the processes and procedures that made them exemplary in the partner school.
- The expectation is that the new program will be the replication of the grantee's successful practices at the replication site in another district.
- This grant is only seeking to replicate practices proven successful with the target population, not to pilot new procedures. It is also not designed to expand programs in the demonstration school or other schools in the applicant district.

39. How is the MWBE 30% Requirement Calculated?

- Page 35 of the RFP includes an M/WBE Goal Calculation worksheet which is to be used to calculate the 30% Goal. Please see the M/WBE Goal Calculation Worksheet for further information.

40. Is it 30% of Other Than Personnel Services (OTPS)?

- The M/WBE participation goal for this grant is 30% of each grantee's total discretionary non-personal service budget for each year of the grant. Discretionary non-personal service budget is defined as the total annual budget, excluding the sum of funds budgeted for direct personal services (i.e., professional and support staff salaries) and fringe benefits, as well as rent, lease, utilities, and indirect costs, if these are allowable expenditures. Please see the M/WBE Goal Calculation Worksheet on page 35 of the RFP for further information.

41. Will our grant submission be penalized if we do not meet the MWBE criteria stated?

- M/WBE is a mandatory requirement of the grant – however, it is not part of the scoring process. M/WBE approval must be secured before contracts are prepared and formal grant award notices are issued.

42. How is the 15% Matching Requirement Calculated? Is it 15% of Other Than Personnel Services (OTPS)? Will our grant submission be penalized if we do not meet the 15% Matching Requirement?

- The 15% Matching Requirement is calculated based on the total budget request. The RFP provides: A minimum 15 percent match of the approved MBK ESMP grant is required. The matching requirement may be met through the District's own resources, private sources, other governmental sources, and/or in-kind services. Other State funds may be used in this match with the exception of state grant funds from educational opportunity programs, but may not duplicate services provided. All matching contributions must be used for activities related exclusively to the MBK ESMP project, and institutional accounts must be structured to reflect this contribution by the appropriate line item. (RFP, p. 15, F.1.) Failure to indicate a 15% match may result in a reduced score for the budget component. If awarded, a grantee must comply with the 15% matching requirement in order to receive grant funds.

43. Can we hire and compensate an Evaluator to collect data and provide evaluative services for our program to ensure we continue to provide high quality services?

- Yes, the Narrative Format of the RFP, p.18, C.5. & D, that provides the framework for internal program relationships would permit this.

44. Please explain the difference between a Demonstration site and a partner school?

- The **demonstration site** is a school within the applicant district that can demonstrate at least two consecutive years of improved outcomes for boys and young men of color with regard to:
  - Statistically significant improved academic performance for students from low-socioeconomic status (SES) families based on NYS assessments
  - A statistically significant reduction in the academic performance gap between boys and young men of color and all other students
  - Statistically significant improved graduation rates for boys and young men of color, students eligible for free or reduced lunch, English Language Learners (ELL), and students in special education
- The **partner school/replication site** is a struggling, persistently struggling school in **another** district within the demonstration site's region. i.e. NYC, rest of state, or NYS public school districts contracted to provide educational services to American Indian reservation populations.
- The partner school cannot be a school in the same district as the demonstration site.

45. Please explain the difference between Demonstration Site and Replication or Expansion Sites. Can we designate school(s) in our district to serve as a Demonstration Site (that is not a struggling or persistently struggling or priority school) and designate school(s) in our district as Replication or Expansion Site (that is a struggling or persistently struggling or priority school)?

- The **demonstration site** is a school within the applicant district that can demonstrate at least two consecutive years of improved outcomes for boys and young men of color with regard to:
  - Statistically significant improved academic performance for students from low-socioeconomic status (SES) families based on NYS assessments
  - A statistically significant reduction in the academic performance gap between boys and young men of color and all other students
  - Statistically significant improved graduation rates for boys and young men of color, students eligible for free or reduced lunch, English Language Learners (ELL), and students in special education
- The **partner school/replication site** is a struggling, persistently struggling school in **another** district within the demonstration site's region. i.e. NYC, rest of state, or NYS public school districts contracted to provide educational services to American Indian reservation populations.
- The partner school cannot be a school in the same district as the demonstration site.