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Responses to Questions from PACSP Meet and Greet

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1. Please define "High Quality School."

PACSP follows Section 4310(2) of the ESSA as outlined below:

High-quality (federal definition). The term "high-quality charter school" means a charter school that:

- a) Shows evidence of strong academic results, which may include strong student academic growth, as determined by a State;
- b) Has no significant issues in the areas of student safety, financial and operational management, or statutory or regulatory compliance;
- c) Has demonstrated success in significantly increasing student academic achievement, including graduation rates where applicable, for all students served by the charter school; and
- d) Has demonstrated success in increasing student academic achievement, including graduation rates where applicable, for each of the subgroups of students, as defined in section 1111(c)(2), except that such demonstration is not required in a case in which the number of students in a group is insufficient to yield statistically reliable information or the results would reveal personally identifiable information about an individual student.

The RFA has developed a rubric which outlines an additional section for expansion and replication applicants. These applicants will need to provide information for the "Track Record" to establish high-quality.

2. If we are considering expansion, does that expansion need to already be approved by the authorizer?

Yes, expansion applicants (just like new charter school and replication) need to have an approved charter by the authorizer in order to be eligible to apply for PACSP.

3. So is the grant a multi-year grant in that the funding is given to a grantee over three years? Or, are there going to be several rounds of grants applied for and given over several years?

Yes, the subgrantee grant is given over 3 years. PACSP will be awarding 5 cohorts each year over the next five years, with each subgrantee having a grant term of 3 years.

4. The introduction of the PACSP program states that it will support the development, expansion, or replication of 18 schools. Why 18 and will this be 18 over the 5 year span of the grant?

Yes, it will be 18 over the five years. 18 is the pipeline we requested in our application because we felt it was ambitious but possible.



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- As I understand it, "expansion" means solely adding more students. Adding new classrooms and unique space to better serve an existing underserved population is not eligible as a part of this grant?

To be eligible to apply as an expansion the school must meet the federal ESSA definition of expansion. The school can either “significantly increase enrollment,” or add one or more grades to the existing high-quality charter school. PACSP defines “significantly increase enrollment” as the school must verify an increase in overall total enrollment by 20% (round to the nearest whole number and not limited to the year in which the prospective applicant intends to apply). Hence, adding new classrooms or space does not meet the definition of expansion.

- If you are working with 18 schools total, how are they dispersed across cohorts and years of the grant?

Our tentative pipeline is as follows:

Award Type	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
	10/1/20 - 9/30/21	10/1/21 - 9/30/22	10/1/22 - 9/30/23	10/1/23 - 9/30/24	10/1/24 - 9/30/25	
New CS	1	1	1	2	2	7
Replication	1	1	1	1	1	5
Expansion	1	1	1	1	2	6
Totals	3	3	3	4	5	18

- Also, of the 18, will there be an effort to spread them across the state?

Our application process does ask applicants to provide information to specific competitive preference priorities, one of which being schools location in a qualified opportunity zone. More information regarding qualified opportunity zones and a map tool can be found at [U.S. Dept of Treasury Opportunity Zones Resources](#). We hope this will help to spread subgrantees throughout PA.

- If you replicate...does it have to be the entire Charter school or could it be one building? so just one grade span?

Following the federal ESSA definition of replication, replication is defined: “to open a new charter school, or a new campus of a high-quality charter school, based on the educational model of an existing high-quality charter school, under an existing charter or an additional charter.” Hence a replication applicant would be eligible if they are looking to open a new campus of the existing high-quality charter school.