

## Questions and Answers from Low-cost Laptop RFP Webinar

Q: Must we meet all three criteria under the General Information for Eligible Applicants??

A: Yes, schools must meet all three eligibility requirements.

Q: Is private school participation a requirement or option?

A: No. This project is funded through state Build Illinois bond funds.

Q: What meets the definition of a laptop? Will there be a loan option?

A: The law specifically lists a portable personal computing device suitable for use among school-aged children, under \$400 in initial cost or with financed cost of under \$250 per year.

Q: Is each student in each participating classroom required to have a laptop, meaning, is the design required to be one-to-one, or could participating classrooms receive a lesser number, say 10-15 laptops to use in the class? Are teachers/administrators included in the final count of devices?

A: According to the law, the State Board of Education shall establish a pilot project designed to provide a low-cost laptop computer to each student, teacher, and relevant administrator. Each student must have a laptop under this law.

Q: Must the device be purchased new, or can used/refurbished equipment be used?

A: The law does not prohibit the purchase of used or refurbished equipment.

Q: Is an iPad an option for this grant?

A: iPads are defined as tablet computers and qualify under this grant, if the price meets the under \$400 initial cost or financed cost of under \$250 per year.

Q: Must a district provide sustainability information to continue to purchase new laptops as the ones funded through this grant become unusable in future years?

A: Successful applicants will define sustainability through the detailed Instructional Change Plan. Since technology is changing at a rapid pace, the demonstration of sustainability is not simply the inclusion of a multi-year purchasing plan, but rather should focus on the change in teacher instructional behaviors supported by the integration of technology into daily classroom practices.

Q: Should meetings be held for planning the grant proposal?

A: Applicants must survey stakeholders, including teachers, parents, students and administrative staff to determine the level of support and need for the proposed project. Survey results and conclusions must be included in the Instructional Change Plan as outlined in the Proposal Narrative Requirements section.

Q: Does the material from the Data Portal need to be presented in the grant? What if schools haven't gotten all their student data in but have all of their teacher data? Do students need to take the proficiency assessment prior to submitting?

A: Attachment 7 *Student and Personnel Readiness Rubric* will assist you with completing your proposal. It is not necessary to have all students complete the Illinois Data Portal assessment prior to submission of the proposal.

Q: Can we tie this in with the new core standards assessment in 2014 which will need technology to take?

A: Yes. The Instructional Change Plan can include information regarding the movement to online assessments. Online assessments do not have to be limited to the 2014 Common Core assessment system.

Q: How many members should be on the committee?

A: Committee members should include the education community that supports the pedagogical shift. Included in this shift are teachers, curriculum specialists, media specialists, administrators and technology

staff. If existing school improvement or district improvement teams include parent, student or community stakeholders, their participation in the committee is strongly encouraged also.

Q: Our Building Leadership Teams held technology need focus meeting for the past two years. Are we able to submit the minutes as documentation to validate the committee meetings pertaining to the need for computers in our buildings?

A: Yes. The proposal may include minutes of ongoing improvement efforts in the area of technology. Please review these minutes carefully to be certain they align with the Instructional Change Plan included in your proposal.

Q: Are School Improvement Grants, 1003g, among the grants we must report on if we've had them?

A: Yes, the new School Improvement Grants 1003(g) must be included in your list of received grants.

Q: Is there a preference for whole school participation or does the grant better support individual classrooms within a school?

A: The Instructional Change Plan indicates the school(s) and grade level(s) that have been chosen to participate in the project and the rationale for the selection. There is no preference in the scoring criteria for whole school versus targeted classroom(s) projects.

Q: What is ISBE approved professional development?

A: ISBE-approved professional development will be outlined with successful applicants. ISBE-approved professional development activities will include a heavy emphasis on full integration of technology as part of the classroom teacher's instructional strategies. Final determination of the professional development offerings will be made as a result of the needs revealed by successful applicants in the Instructional Change Plan. For budget purposes, applicants should include costs for teacher stipends or substitutes based upon the anticipated number of and duration of professional development activities. Separate state funds will be used to support costs of travel, materials and trainers for ISBE-approved activities.

Q: If the district has already done the infrastructure for wireless systems, can that be considered in-kind money?

A: Districts are NOT required to make in-kind resources available as a condition of receiving a grant award. The in-kind language is included on the Infrastructure Readiness attachment is to alert districts to the types and amount of costs involved in supporting the activities of technology grants. Oftentimes, districts are not aware of the costs involved in supporting a technology grant program and are then, after award, unable to meet the funding conditions.

Q: Are things like cases, software, and applications included in the funded money or does that need to be a school budget item?

A: Yes, allowable expenditures include replacement low-cost laptop components for the *program* low-cost laptops, (i.e. batteries, power cords, or other software and hardware).

Q: Does the wireless infrastructure need to be in place, or can this be part of the grant?

A: Yes, network infrastructure for wireless access points, cables, and routers for the program low-cost laptop computers is an allowable expense. However, total expenditure, per student, is \$750 over the entire life of the grant. Professional development costs and the cost of an individual personal computing device for each student must be included in the \$750 amount.

Q: What would be the best way to decide how much we should include in the budget for PD and the evaluation piece?

A: Professional development expenses will depend on the Instructional Change Plan for the proposed pedagogical shift. A good plan will identify the professional development needs through the infrastructure readiness, the student and teacher readiness rubric and the vision of the pedagogical shift. For budget purposes, applicants should include costs for teacher stipends or substitutes based upon the anticipated number of and duration of professional development activities. Separate state funds, retained by ISBE, will be used to support costs of travel, materials and trainers.

Q: If the grant is awarded, will the district or the state purchase the computers?

A: The district will make the equipment purchases. All purchases must be aligned to the district's State-approved Technology Integration Plan and require prior approval from ISBE as part of an executed grant agreement.

Q: Is there any allowance to provide for extra support staff to maintain these devices? Are project managers an acceptable expense in the grant?

A: Districts should apply with a maximum budget of \$750 per participating student over the span of the grant. There should be no reliance upon additional grant funds in FY12 to support ongoing technology personnel or project management costs in the proposal budget.

Q: Can proposals be hand delivered to Chicago office?

A: No. All proposals must be mailed to the Springfield address outlined in the Request for Proposal (RFP).

Q: Do we need union sign off?

A: No. This grant program does not require union approval.