



COLORADO LEAGUE *of*
CHARTER SCHOOLS

Great Schools Colorado-CSP Grant

Request for Application (RFA) Budget Webinar | February 12, 2026

Without the support and valued contributions of the leadership, staff, and consultants of the League, this grant opportunity truly would not be possible!

We especially want to thank our partners, including:



Alpine Bank
Member FDIC

**New Great Schools Colorado
Partner to support CSP subgrantees**

Plan for Today

Objectives

- Understand how to build a value-add budget aligned to your school's priorities
- Learn how allowable use of funds is determined under CSP cost principles
- Clarify common allowable and unallowable expenditure categories
- Complete the required budget template and narrative for submission

Agenda

1. Welcome & Introductions
2. Building a Value-Add Budget
3. Allowable Expenditures
4. Budget Template & Narrative
5. Closing

Meet the Grant Team



DAWNA TAYLOR

Grant Executive Lead
(VP of School Services)



MARK HEFFNER

Senior Grant Fiscal Lead
(VP of Finance Operations)



TANESHA BELL

Director of Monitoring and
Compliance



DAVE MOHR

Grant Fiscal Lead
(Director of Accounting)



BRIGHT HOMAWOO

Grant Manager
(Associate Director of
Federal Programs)

Contracted Partners



LAUREN OUTLAW

JD, Managing Partner
Grant Strategy & Policy



STEPHANIE VANDYK

Partner



ANGI BELAND

Lead Financial Consultant



LAUREN TYLER

Grants Management
Specialist

Building a Value-Add Budget

Defining Value-Add: Fund What Moves the Mission

Every CSP budget line should clearly connect to your goals and student outcomes.

Use this quick check for each investment:

- Why does this matter right now?
- What does it prioritize? (instruction, equity, access, systems, time)
- How will we know it worked? (a concrete measure of success)

*If you **can't** answer all three, it's likely not a strong value-add CSP investment.*

Accelerate Student Success

CSP is your chance to invest in what:



REMOVES PREDICTABLE BARRIERS

(staffing, scheduling, materials, access)



STRENGTHENS YOUR ACADEMIC MODEL

(training, coaching, data cycles)



SCALES WHAT WORKS

(replicable practices + tools)

Beyond the status quo = earlier impact, stronger execution, fewer surprises

Build for Sustainability (3–5 Year Lens)

Think ahead: what could break your model?

- People: hiring, onboarding, retention
- Practice: fidelity, coaching, curriculum routines
- Systems: data, compliance, procurement

What capacity can we use CSP funds to build **now** so the model can run well later?

“High Value-Add” vs. “Low Value-Add”

High value-add

- onboarding + coaching plan for new grade staff
- curriculum-aligned materials + training
- assessment/data tools tied to intervention cycles
- family engagement supports that remove access barriers

Lower value-add (usually)

- generic supplies without a strategy
- one-off events not tied to outcomes
- purchases that don't support the academic model or expansion plan

Allowable Expenditures

Allowable Use of Funds for Schools, ESSA § 4303(h)

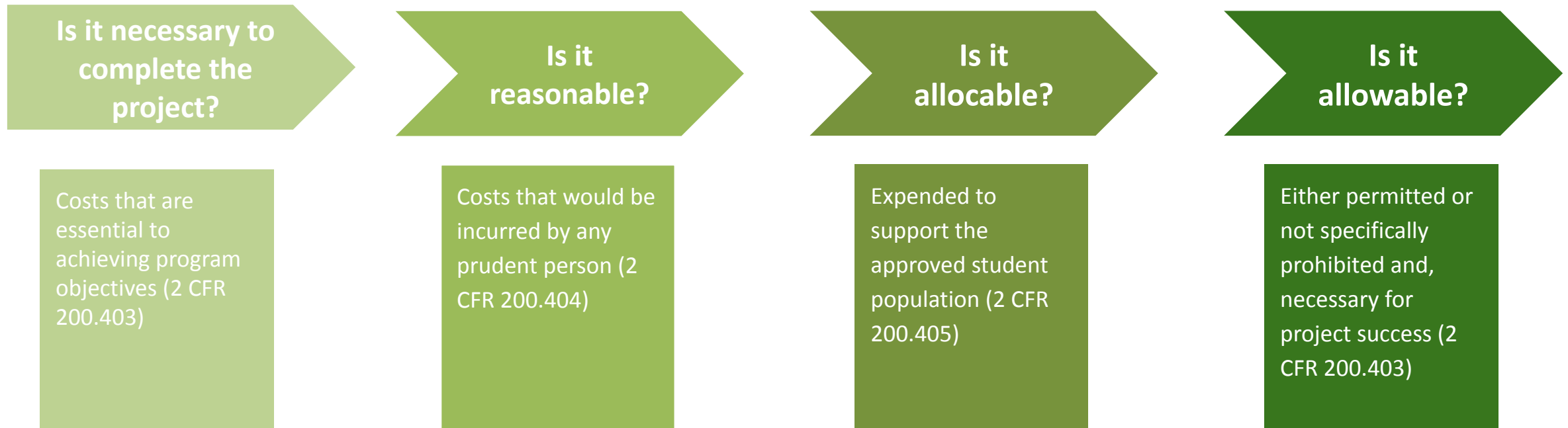
1. Preparing teachers, school leaders, and specialized instructional support personnel, including through paying the costs associated with—
 - a. providing **professional development**; and
 - b. **hiring and compensating, during the eligible applicant's planning period** specified in the application for subgrant funds, that is required under this section one or more of the following:
 - i. Teachers.
 - ii. School leaders.
 - iii. Specialized instructional support personnel.
2. Acquiring **supplies, training, equipment** (including technology), and **educational materials** (including developing and acquiring instructional materials).
3. Carrying out **necessary renovations** to ensure that a new school building complies with applicable statutes and regulations, and **minor facilities repairs** (excluding construction).
4. Providing one-time, startup costs associated with providing **transportation** to students to and from the charter school.
5. Carrying out **community engagement activities**, which may include paying the cost of student and staff recruitment.
6. Providing for **other appropriate, non-sustained costs** related to the activities described in this RFA when such costs cannot be met from other sources. 20 U.S. Code § 7221b(h) Local Use of Funds

Cost Principles

All costs must follow federal cost principles (2 C.F.R. Part 200, Subpart E):

- **Allowable** — Costs permitted under federal rules and the CSP grant; **necessary** and **reasonable**, consistent with your organization's policies, not paid by another federal award, and documented within the grant period.
- **Reasonable** — Costs necessary to achieve grant goals, follow sound business practices, and reflect market prices.
- **Allocable** — Costs that directly support the approved grant project (i.e., seats being added and expenses dated within the correct grant period) and can be assigned to its objectives.
- **Supplement, Not Supplant** — Federal funds are meant to supplement state and local funding. Cannot be used to purchase things typically covered by those sources.

Allowable Cost Framework



Rule of thumb: If you **can't** clearly justify a cost as reasonable, project-related, and allowable, it's not allowable.

Allowability is determined case by case and depends on each school's unique circumstances.

Necessary

Is it necessary to
complete the project?

Costs that are
essential to achieving
program objectives (2
CFR 200.403)

Guiding Questions

- Does this cost directly support a CSP-approved activity or deliverable?
- Would the project fail or be significantly weakened without this expense?
- Is this cost described in the approved budget, work plan, or narrative?
- Is the timing of the cost aligned with the project period?

Red Flags

- Purchased for convenience rather than program delivery
- Primarily benefits staff comfort, aesthetics, or general operations

Example

✓ Necessary:

Professional development for teachers.

✗ Not Necessary:

Upgraded office décor for staff working on the project.

Reasonable

Is it
reasonable?

Costs that would be incurred by any prudent person (2 CFR 200.404)

Guiding Questions

- Would a reasonable person agree this cost is appropriate?
- Is the price consistent with market rates or past purchases?
- Were alternatives considered (e.g., lower-cost options)?
- Does the cost align with organizational procurement policies?

Red Flags

- Luxury or premium items with no functional justification
- Costs significantly higher than comparable goods/services

Example



Reasonable:

Standard-rate consultant hired through a competitive process.



Not Reasonable:

First-class airfare when economy airfare is available and sufficient.

Allocable

Is it
allocable?

Expended to support
the approved
student population
(2 CFR 200.405)

Guiding Questions

- Does this cost directly benefit the CSP project?
- If shared, is the cost split using a logical and documented method?
- Can the allocation method be explained and justified?
- Is the cost charged only once and not duplicated across grants?

Red Flags

- Charging 100% of a shared cost to one grant
- Arbitrary or undocumented cost splits
- Costs benefiting general operations with no allocation method

Example

✓ Allocable:

Purchase of 1:1 devices for the approved student population (allocable) vs. whole school (only allocable for newly opened schools)

✗ Not Allocable:

Full cost of general building rent charged to CSP without justification.

Enrollment Template

Grade	SY 2025-26 Capacity	SY 2025-26 Actual	SY 2026-27 Capacity	SY 2027-28 Capacity	SY 2028-29 Capacity	SY 2029-30 Capacity
PK						
K						
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
Totals	0	0	0	0	0	0
Capacity			0	0	0	0
Requested	0					



Key Definitions



New seats: Brand-new seats added to your school's approved capacity



Enrollment: Students who enroll into that new capacity



Important: CSP growth is measured by seats added, not simply new students

How to Complete the Enrollment Table



SY 2025-26 Capacity: Current seats available per grade



SY 2025-26 Actual: Current enrollment per grade



Future Years (SY 2026-27 through SY 2029-30): Planned total capacity, including new CSP-funded seats



Total Seats Requested: Total number of new seats created with CSP support



Annual Seat Increase: New seats added compared to the prior year

Example: New School

Grade	SY 2025-26 Capacity	SY 2025-26 Actual	SY 2026-27 Capacity	SY 2027-28 Capacity	SY 2028-29 Capacity	SY 2029-30 Capacity
PK						
K			50	50	50	50
1			50	50	50	50
2			50	50	50	50
3				50	50	50
4					50	50
5						50
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
Totals	0	0	150	200	250	300
Seat Capacity Increase Each Year			150	50	50	50
Total Seats Requested for this Subgrant:	300					

Example: Expansion School - Opening New Grades

Grade	SY 2025-26 Capacity	SY 2025-26 Actual	SY 2026-27 Capacity	SY 2027-28 Capacity	SY 2028-29 Capacity	SY 2029-30 Capacity
PK						
K	40	32	40	40	40	40
1	40	40	40	40	40	40
2	40	42	40	40	40	40
3	40	36	40	40	40	40
4	40	28	40	40	40	40
5	0	0	25	50	75	75
6	0	0	0	25	50	75
7	0	0	0	0	25	50
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
Totals	200	178	225	275	350	400
Seat Capacity Increase Each Year			47	50	75	50
Total Seats Requested for this Subgrant:	222					

Example: Expansion School - Opening Seats in All Grades

Grade	SY 2025-26 Capacity	SY 2025-26 Actual	SY 2026-27 Capacity	SY 2027-28 Capacity	SY 2028-29 Capacity	SY 2029-30 Capacity
PK						
K	50	48	55	65	75	80
1	50	40	53	60	75	80
2	50	42	50	50	75	80
3	50	45	52	55	75	80
4	75	67	87	90	100	120
5	75	77	84	100	100	120
6	75	71	77	100	100	120
7	75	68	80	100	100	120
8	75	66	92	100	100	120
9	100	100	120	150	150	150
10	100	99	120	150	150	150
11	100	87	130	150	150	150
12	100	92	150	150	150	150
Totals	975	902	1150	1320	1400	1520
Seat Capacity Increase Each Year			248	170	80	120
Total Seats Requested for this Subgrant:	618					

Allowable

**Is it
allowable?**

Either permitted or not specifically prohibited and, necessary for project success (2 CFR 200.403)

Guiding Questions

- Is this type of cost explicitly allowed or not prohibited?
- Does the cost comply with CSP-specific rules and restrictions?
- Is the cost consistent with organizational policies?
- Is the cost adequately documented and supported?

Common Unallowable Costs (Examples)

- Alcohol
- Entertainment
- Lobbying or political activities
- Fines and penalties
- Personal expenses

Example

✓ Allowable:

Travel costs that follow federal per diem and organizational policy and are related to CSP activities.

✗ Unallowable:

Meals provided solely for staff morale or social events.

Understanding Funding Limitations

GENERAL CATEGORY	UNALLOWABLE COSTS WITHIN THE GSC GRANT AND OTHER CONDITIONS IMPACTING ALLOWABILITY
Promotional items	Promotional materials (often imprinted), such as pencils, pens, balloons, and notepads (This includes any items used for outreach and recruitment)
Professional Fees	Accounting, auditing, and legal fees not related to organizational start-up and planning
Recruitment	Placement fees (employment advertising okay)
Recurring Expenses	- Rent/leases on or after first day of school - Operating expenses and utilities, equipment leases, monthly and annual contracts - Recurrent/repeated professional development and training - Software license renewals - Fees such as monthly insurance and payroll services, management company fees, service contracts, trash disposal, gas/electric/phone/water/utilities, cell phones, etc.
Renovations	- Structural (roofing, wall repair, electrical wiring/rewiring) - Room additions - Fixed partitions - Security (fences, alarms, cameras) - Painting - Carpeting - Landscaping
Salaries	No salaries or related fringe benefits after the school opens with students
Student	- Student membership fees - Student conferences
Supplies	- Cleaning supplies (consumables). Non-capital equipment for cleaning is okay. - Cafeteria/food service supplies
Technology	- No electrical installation or modification to room dividers or existing walls, floors, ceilings, or structural elements. - Installation of computer network cabling is only allowable when not already present and may not comprise capital improvement to the property
Travel	Travel costs must comply with the U.S. Department of Education travel regulations, as well as school's internal travel policies.

Budget Template & Narrative

Budget Template and Narrative

Applicants **must** download and complete the GSC Budget Template and submit it along with a Budget Narrative in Foundant. If awarded, final CSP budgets are confirmed through a detailed review with the GSC team; approval of the application does not guarantee approval of all proposed costs.



Link Costs to Goals

Connect every cost to project goals and activities.



Define Phase

Indicate if costs fall into planning or implementation.



Justify Line Items

Provide a clear rationale for each proposed cost.



Explain Calculations

Show how costs were derived (e.g., units x rate).

This information allows GSC to verify that proposed budgets are aligned, reasonable, and allowable.

Budget A

Select Budget Expense (Object) Code	Select Grant Project Goal Title	Original Estimated Cost	During which Academic School Year	Description/Budget Narrative (Purpose, Quantity, Target User)
Instr- Supplies (0600)	Eliminate Opportunity Gaps and Raise Academic Achievement	\$2,520	SY25-26	Math materials for classrooms.
Instr- Other Purchased Services (0500)	Eliminate Opportunity Gaps and Raise Academic Achievement	\$9,792	SY25-26	Online instructional platform for students.
Support- Purchased Professional & Technical Services (0300)	Eliminate Opportunity Gaps and Raise Academic Achievement	\$7,200	SY25-26	Teacher training in math assessment.
Instr- Other Purchased Services (0500)	Eliminate Opportunity Gaps and Raise Academic Achievement	\$1,018	SY25-26	Kindergarten assessment materials.
Support- Purchased Professional & Technical Services (0300)	Eliminate Opportunity Gaps and Raise Academic Achievement	\$550	SY25-26	Assessment training.
Instr- Supplies (0600)	Eliminate Opportunity Gaps and Raise Academic Achievement	\$2,520	SY25-26	Math materials for classrooms.

Budget B

Select Budget Expense (Object) Code	Select Grant Project Goal Title	Original Estimated Cost	During which Academic School Year	Description/Budget Narrative (Purpose, Quantity, Target User)
Instr- Supplies (0600)	Eliminate Opportunity Gaps and Raise Academic Achievement	\$2,520	SY25-26	Purchase of Bridges Number Corner materials (or similar) for 2nd grade serving approximately 80 students across 4 classrooms. Includes 4 classroom materials kits (\$550 each) and 16 packs of student books (\$20 per pack). Materials support daily, standards-aligned math instruction and formative assessment.
Instr- Other Purchased Services (0500)	Eliminate Opportunity Gaps and Raise Academic Achievement	\$9,792	SY25-26	i-Ready (or similar) adaptive diagnostic and instructional platform for math and literacy for approximately 72 students at \$68 per student per subject. Provides individualized instruction pathways and progress monitoring to support data-driven instruction.
Support- Purchased Professional & Technical Services (0300)	Eliminate Opportunity Gaps and Raise Academic Achievement	\$7,200	SY25-26	OGAP (or similar) professional development for 6 teachers, including 4 days of initial training and 3 days of PLC follow-up. Cost is \$1,200 per teacher and supports improved formative assessment practices in math.
Instr- Other Purchased Services (0500)	Eliminate Opportunity Gaps and Raise Academic Achievement	\$1,018	SY25-26	DIBELS (or similar) paper-based Kindergarten benchmark assessment materials including teacher kit, scoring guide, student booklets for three annual administrations, and data system access for approximately 72 students.
Support- Purchased Professional & Technical Services (0300)	Eliminate Opportunity Gaps and Raise Academic Achievement	\$550	SY25-26	Training for teachers and administrators on DIBELS assessment administration and data interpretation to ensure fidelity and appropriate instructional use.

Completing the CSP Budget-Attachment 16

INSTRUCTIONS & TEMPLATE



Instructions in APPENDIX B of RFA.

Template (linked in RFA, Foundant, GSC website) is the **only format** for Attachment 16.

EARLIEST ALLOWABLE DATE



July 1, 2026

Contingent upon approved budget, executed charter contract, and executed GAN.

AVAILABLE SUPPORT: OFFICE HOURS



- 🕒 February 17: 12-2 MT
- 🕒 February 19: 11-2 MT
- 🕒 February 23: 11-2 MT
- 🕒 March 2: 9-12 MT
- 🕒 March 4: 1:30-3:30 MT
- 🕒 March 6: 8-10am MT

GREAT SCHOOLS COLORADO (GSC) CHARTER SCHOOLS PROGRAM GRANT (2026 Cycle 2)

School Name:	YOUR SCHOOL NAME
School District/ Fiscal Agent:	
Report Type:	ORIGINAL BUDGET
Date:	

Project No.	Grant Project Goal Title
1	Insert Name of Project Goal #1 here
2	Insert Name of Project Goal #2 here
3	Insert Name of Project Goal #3 here
4	Insert Name of Project Goal #4 here (if applicable)
5	Insert Name of Project Goal #5 here (if applicable)

Input the names of your grant project goals here BEFORE populating budget data on Tabs 3, 4, and 5. If you change project names AFTER budget data is entered into Tabs 3, 4 and 5, you will then need to recategorize those expenses based on your new Project names in order for the calculations to be correct.

Name of primary person completing this budget document

Name:	
Phone No.:	
E-mail:	

Name of person to be contacted regarding budget questions or clarifications if needed

Name:	
Phone No.:	
E-mail:	

School District/Fiscal Agent Grant Manager

Name:	
Phone No.:	
E-mail:	

Program Staff Contact: greatschools@coloradoleague.org

Budget
Template—
Cover Page
Tab

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	GREAT SCHOOLS COLORADO (GSC) CHARTER SCHOOLS PROGRAM GRANT (FFY27 <> 10/1/26 - 9/30/27)					
2						
3	Applicant School Name:		Budget Year:			
4	YOURSCHOOLNAME					
5	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Select Budget Expense (Object) Code	Select Grant Project Goal Title	Original Estimated Cost	During which Academic School Year	Description/Budget Narrative (Purpose, Quantity, Target User)	GSC Comment/Note
6						
7						
8						
9	Instr- Salaries (0100)			10/1/26-6/30/27		
10	Instr- Employee Benefits (0200)			7/1/27-9/30/27		
11	Instr- Purchased Professional & Technical Services (0300)					
12	Instr- Other Purchased Services (0500)					
13	Instr- Travel, Registration, and Entrance (0580)					
14	Instr- Supplies (0600)					
15	Instr- Capitalized Equipment (0730)					
16	Instr- Non-Capitalized Equipment (0735)					
17	Support- Salaries (0100)					
18	Support- Employee Benefits (0200)					
19	Support- Purchased Professional & Technical Services (0300)					
20	Support - Repairs and Maintenance Service (0430)					
21						
22						
23						
24						
25						
26						
27						
28						
29						
30						
31						
32						

1 - Instructions

2 - Cover Page

3 - Budget Detail FFY26

4 - Budget Detail FFY27

5 - Budget Detail FFY28

6 - Budget Detail FFY29

7 - Budget Summary FFY26

8 - Budget Summary

+

Budget
Template—
Budget
Detail Tab

Applicant Support & Technical Assistance (TA)

The GSC Grant Team will host technical assistance workshops and office hours to support applicants throughout the application and award process.

Opportunities, resources, and contact information are all provided within the RFA for New, Replication, and Expansion applicants, as well as online, via the Great Schools Colorado website.



Website & FAQs



Topic-based Briefings / Office Hours



By Appointment Office Hours



Email & Phone Support



Other Written Guidance

Questions?

How did we do?

Please take a moment to help us improve:



Resources & Support

- **GSC Main:**
www.greatschoolscolorado.org
 - **FAQs:** *Check page regularly for answers/updates to the frequently asked questions throughout the application period*
- **Grant Program Email:**
greatschools@coloradoleague.org
- **Foundant and Administrative Support:**
GSCsupport@coloradoleague.org



Thank You!

Attendees will receive an email following today's call with information about where to access application materials and key dates, and link to the evaluation form to share your feedback.