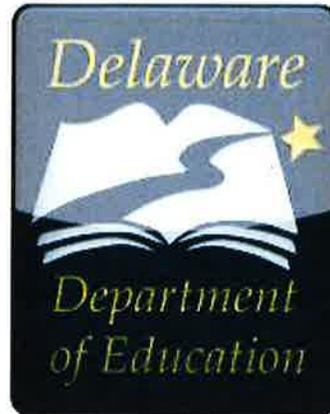


Delaware



*Department of
Education*

Opportunity Funding

For more information contact:
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Funding Period: Fiscal Year 2020

Delaware Department of Education
Opportunity Funding Form
2019-2020 School Year

Opportunity Funding
Directed Funds for English Learners and Low-Income Students

Application deadline: June 30, 2019

Purpose: The Opportunity Funding initiative creates a three-year weighted funding program across the state. Delaware is currently one of only a handful of states without additional funding for English learners (ELs) and/or low-income students (low-income).

Allocation Method: Local education agencies (LEAs) will receive \$500 per EL and \$300 per low-income student. Funding shall be made available to LEAs upon the passage of the FY20 budget in early July so they may begin to hire staff, procure instructional materials, execute contracts for services, and plan for the upcoming school year. LEAs may use this funding for 100 percent of staff costs, including, but not limited to, reading specialists, math specialists, school counselors, school social workers, school psychologists, and other personnel dedicated to initiatives such as trauma-informed practices.

Accountability: LEAs will be held accountable to ensure funds are used to improve outcomes for low-income and EL students. Districts and charters will work with Secretary Bunting to set goals at the beginning of the school year, participate in a mid-year progress review, and then evaluate summative performance data during their end of school year conference. Community accountability will be provided in a summit to highlight best practices, in an annual report, and in spotlights showing program successes and challenges across the state.

Metrics: Districts and charters will set goals to annually increase overall DSSF (Delaware School Success Framework) scores for EL and low-income students as well as reduce the gap between English learners', low-income students', and the all students' subgroup baseline performance rates and 100 percent by half, thus reducing students' non-proficiency by 50 percent.

In addition to the accountability measure data, the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) will provide support by offering

- Toolkits on evidence-based best practices for improving outcomes for EL and low-income students.
- Guidance for selecting high quality instructional materials.
- Technical support enabling LEAs to take a comprehensive look at their funding streams in order to maximize and coordinate them.
- Professional learning provided by content experts.
- Sharing best practices in a variety of ways including regular meetings with curriculum directors, chiefs/principals, social media and presentations.

DDOE will use a third party to also evaluate

- The effectiveness of funds in improving outcomes for EL and low-income students.
- The successes and challenges/shortcomings of the program, including recommendations for future enhancements.

**Delaware Department of Education
Opportunity Funding Form
2019-2020 School Year**

Results from the first year of funding will be finalized in August 2020. Subsequently, DDOE will host a summit in early fall to share the report and best practices. In late fall 2020, the third-party evaluation will be complete and results will be posted after districts and charters verify them.

Application deadline: June 30, 2019

School Information

DISTRICT/CHARTER NAME: Smyrna School District		
DISTRICT/CHARTER STREET ADDRESS: 82 Monrovia Ave.	CITY: Smyrna	ZIP CODE: 19977

Contact Information

CONTACT NAME: Ryan K. Buchanan	CONTACT PHONE NUMBER: 302-659-4311
CONTACT EMAIL ADDRESS: ryan.buchanan@smyrna.k12.de.us	

Overall Summary

Provide an overall summary of how the Opportunity Funding will be used to improve outcomes for English learners and low-income students in your district or charter school.

Include an explanation of how the work will impact each target population as well as the rationale for selecting the plan.

In Joseph Murphy's article "Closing Achievement Gaps: Lessons from the Last 15 Years" the research confirms that "an integrated, cohesive design that thoughtfully combines multiple efforts is more advantageous than scattered, ad hoc efforts." Smyrna School District recognizes that our English learners and low-income students can benefit from comprehensive and immersive programs and initiatives that cover a wide spectrum of needs. The best course of action for the students in our district is a concentrated and interconnected plan that centers on a few high-leverage initiatives that address the most pressing needs for the English learners and low-income students in the Smyrna School District. In particular, the Smyrna School District will focus on (1) Early Literacy & Intervention, (2) Community Outreach, and (3) Trauma-Informed and Restorative Teaching Practices.

Through many cycles of inquiry as well as building and district-level needs assessments, we have uncovered our students' literacy skills, and more specifically early-literacy, as a root cause of many of our students' struggles. This is particularly true for our students of low-income and English learners. This spring, Smyrna Elementary School piloted a new intervention program by American Reading Company that engaged all readers. In combination with a revamped "Push-in" MTSS model that included our EL, STEP, and Reading specialists, students at Smyrna Elementary showed tremendous growth. The program requires extensive training and coaching, but, if executed well, our teachers, specialists, and administrators believe that it will radically improve the literacy of our struggling K-3 students. Bringing this program to scale, throughout our district will have a significant impact on our EL and low-income students. In addition to this in-school intervention, the Smyrna School District is committed to offering after-school tutoring to our low-income and EL students. Hanover Research claim "one-to-one tutoring is an effective method for improving at-risk students' (including those who are struggling, minority, ELL, or special education students) proficiency in core subject areas including reading and math."

Research clearly indicates that family involvement is positively associated with improving multiple achievement gap outcomes. The Smyrna School District has always prided itself on being a strong community-based district that works cooperatively with families. As the Smyrna community evolves and changes, however, the district must make new connections and continually reaffirm its dedication to our residents. In the spirit of establishing positive relationships with parents, Smyrna schools will host multiple Family-School events. Each school will be given the task of creating events that encourage families to attend. Because English learners and low-income families are typically poorly represented at after-school events, the events will cater to these populations. With a healthy budget and willing attitude, our schools will help to make our families understand that they are an important part of our school communities.

In The Handbook of Early Literacy Research, Dickinson and Neuman claim, "In middle-income neighborhoods the ratio of books per child is 13 to 1, in low-income neighborhoods, the ratio is 1 age-appropriate book for every 300 children." This startling figure prompted the Smyrna School District's commitment to getting books into the hands of our community at all cost. The Bookmobile and Lending Library initiatives is a combination of our focus on early-literacy and commitment to community outreach. The Bookmobile will drive into low-income neighborhoods/locations and handout free books to all members of our community. This will largely be a summer-time project, but the Bookmobile will also make visits throughout the year at special events. Each school in our district, along with some of our targeted neighborhoods will receive a lending library, a mounted box filled with books that are free for the taking. We will continually fill, update, and rotate books through these receptacles to encourage reading in our communities. We believe that these initiatives will effectively place books into the hands of many low-income families and with proper planning can help bring literacy into the homes of English Learners.

The Smyrna School District believes that when we embed our classrooms and our schools in a culturally sensitive, trauma-informed and restorative atmosphere, we support our students and teachers in ways that produce immeasurable dividends down the line. This has dramatic impact on our EL and students of low-income. According to Hanover Research, "When minority, ELL, and Special education students perceive their teachers as supportive, caring, sensitive, and responsive to their needs, and respectful of their cultural or linguistic differences, they are more likely to have high academic achievement... Thus, professional development and continuing professional learning communities can help teachers develop cultural competence and strategies for teaching culturally diverse students." Teachers need to be exposed to extensive training, coaching, and follow-up to ensure that these practices become habits. With this mind, Smyrna School District has taken an aggressive approach to training our teachers to be more mindful of our students' needs and the district is at the forefront of trauma-informed education. With the money provided by the Opportunity Funding, we plan to bring in Kristen Souers and Pete Hall, experts in the field of trauma, to conduct two full-day sessions on trauma-invested education. The message from these district-wide seminars will correlate with additional school-based trainings on cultural competency and equity.

Teachers will also be required to maintain their learning on Restorative Practices through an online-learning module that they will complete in their PLCs. We believe that these trainings will have a great impact on the experiences and successes of our English Learners and low-income students. When students feel supported, they gain confidence, they begin to excel. That is our goal for this funding.

The Opportunity Funding provided by the State of Delaware offers the Smyrna School District a chance to improve upon the contact and interventions provided for English Learners and low-income students. These projects reflect services and opportunities that we would not be able to provide without the help of the Opportunity Funding. In spite of this, Smyrna School District's plan for our English learners and low-income students is by no means a stand-alone project. The ideas outlined above are part of the fabric of our district, intertwined with our curriculum, special services, technology, discipline, and whole-child approach to learning. The Smyrna School District plan is comprehensive, sustainable and the effects will be enduring, which is the ultimate goal for any infusion of outside funding.

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**Delaware Department of Education
Opportunity Funding Form
2019-2020 School Year**

Investment and Goals

Provide additional detail about the plan in the chart below by listing each Opportunity Funding investment with its associated cost and proposed impact. *For each investment, include baseline data and numeric targets to measure impact. A state budget sheet will be completed by the district after the plan has been approved.*

Investment <i>(What is your priority?)</i>	Cost	Proposed Impact <i>(How will you know it worked?)</i>
K-3 Intervention Program	\$280,000	● Increase In early literacy proficiency for EL and low-income students, Increase MTSS effectiveness.
Literacy Training / Coaching	\$115,000	● Increased teacher capacity in literacy instruction and intervention for EL and low-income students.
After-School Tutoring	\$30,000	● Consistent participation by EL and low-income students resulting in an increase on assessments
		●
Trauma Informed Training	\$22,000	● Improved climate and increased comfort for EL and low-income students
Family-School Events	\$12,000	● Build Home-school relationship with EL and low-income families, sizable participation
Bookmobile & Lending Library	\$6,000	● Participation by EL and low-income students; number of books distributed into community
Cultural Competency / Equity Training	\$5,000	● Increase teacher capacity; Improved student-teacher relationships with EL and low-income students
Online Restorative Practice Training	\$900	Maintain & sustain efforts, participation, improved proficiency in RP for EL and low-income students.

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Assurances and Signatures

The applicant assures that:

As the chief school officer of the district or charter school; including the indicated school, I am authorized to submit for the funds identified in this form. I am also authorized to obligate the district or charter school to conduct any activity approved under this form in accordance with all applicable state requirements, including statutory and regulatory requirements, and program specific requirements. The information contained in it is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. By submitting this form, I acknowledge that I understand and agree to abide by all applicable requirements.

Chief School Officer: Patrik Williams

Signature:  Date: 6/27/19

As the business manager of the district or charter school; including the indicated school, I am authorized to submit the budget and financial information contained in this form. I have read this form and reviewed the financial information contained in this form. The information contained in this form is true