

Charter School Facilities Grant Cohort 2025 Application Questions

- 1. If funding is requested to pay a monthly lease, but the building is purchased within the grant period, can the remaining lease funds be reallocated toward the purchase?***

Yes, if the school purchases the building during the grant period, the budget can be revised, and the remaining funds reallocated to the purchase.

- 2. If the charter school is leasing a building from someone other than the authorizer, must a memorandum of understanding with the lessor be provided rather than one from the authorizer?***

Yes, the intent is to ensure that the person who owns the building approves of the school's making any capital improvements paid for from the grant.

- 3. If previous charter school facilities grant funds have been allocated to purchase a building, but the school has been unable to do so, will that negatively impact the school's score on the rubric?***

The utilization of previous charter school facilities grant funds is one of the scoring criteria for the new competitive grant. The intention of this section is to ensure that schools are truly in need and are utilizing the funds in a timely manner. Carrying over a large amount of funds from year to year is one factor in making this decision. The rubric has more information on the weight that this section carries.

- 4. Under the Grant Assurances section, it says, "The Applicant is either: (a) the sponsor of a new charter school that has been approved by an LEA or the Commission but is not yet open; or (b) the operator of an existing charter school that has received its authorizer's approval to expand enrollment or grade levels beyond that set forth in the original charter agreement." Does that mean a charter school that is not new and not expanding cannot apply?***

It was not the intention to limit schools that are not new and not expanding from applying. This section of the assurances has been revised to this:

"The Applicant is either: (a) the sponsor of a new charter school that has been approved by an LEA or the Commission but is not yet open; or (b) the operator of an existing charter school that has received its authorizer's approval to apply for the grant."

5. Is a separate application required for each school, even if all the schools are in the same network?

Yes, each school must complete an application.

6. The grant period begins July 1, 2024, but can items that were paid for prior to July 1, 2024, be included if they were not installed until after July 1, 2024?

No, the documentation for the purchases cannot have a date earlier than July 1, 2024.

7. If the total cost of the project goes above \$500,000, should schools apply for the total amount in case there are additional funds available?

Applying for the total amount of the project is allowable.

8. Is the student performance data, enrollment data, and utilization of funds information for the individual school, overall network, or both?

Data and information from the individual school must be provided. However, data and information from the network can be included in addition.

9. Are grant writing fees allowed to be included in the grant?

No, as indicated in the “Allowable Use of Funds” section on page 3 of the application, awarded funds may be used for the purchase or lease of property, general capital improvements to existing and available buildings, and the repayment of debt incurred for existing capital outlay projects.

10. Are consultant fees allowed to be included in the grant?

It depends. Consulting fees associated with general capital improvements may be allowable if required to complete the project. Consulting fees for the writing of the grant would not be allowable.

11. Are we able to receive reimbursement for projects that were completed in FY 2025 before the grant was announced?

The grant period is from July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2027. Once awarded, reimbursements can be requested for any expenses that occurred within the grant period.

12. Will the grant cover expense for land clearing to enhance educational operations? For example, clearing land to make room for additional classrooms or student activity space?

Adding classroom spaces could be funded through the grant as indicated on page four of the application.

13. We plan to repair the roofs of two of our school sites. Is this project eligible for funding under the grant?

Roof repair or enhancement is an example of an allowable expense as indicated on page four of the application.

14. The application says to register via ePlan to submit the application, but also states to email Crystal Carver at Crystal.McCarver@tn.gov. Can you clarify where to send our application?

The grant application must be completed and submitted via email to Crystal McCarver at Crystal.McCarver@tn.gov by 4:30 pm (CT) on October 30, 2024.

The application referred to in the “Accountability Requirements” section on page four of the application is the “funding application.” The funding application is completed in ePlan if an award has been made. More information on this will be provided to the awarded applicants in the Charter School Facilities Grant Recipient Guide, which will be released after the awards are made.

15. We have charter facilities funds from a 2023 competitive grant. Will there be any issues with submitting a new application for a new project if we still have funds available under the prior version of the grant?

Having a previous grant does not prohibit a school from applying for additional funds. The amount of funding that has not been utilized is required to be reported in the “Data Elements” section of the application. The rubric has more information on the weight that this section carries.

16. What type of access to ePlan will a Grant Writer need to submit proposals and track grant information?

There are specific roles in ePlan that will be assigned by the school to complete certain functions. The following roles are needed for the CSP grant.

ePlan Role	ePlan Function	School Position
LEA Charter Schools Grant Director	Enter and submit the Funding Application	Project or Grant Lead
LEA Fiscal Representative	Approve the Funding Application for fiscal	Highest Level of Finance
LEA Authorized Representative	Final approval of the Funding Application	Administrator
Reimbursement Requests <i>(the Fiscal Representative can also submit reimbursement requests)</i>		
LEA Fiscal Update	Enter and submit requests for reimbursement of funds	Bookkeeper