

Blended Pre-K Classroom Program, Cohort 5

Pre-Proposal Conference

February 23, 2026

Candice Taylor, ECSE Supervisor



Vision, Mission & Strategic Plan Goals

Vision

To create a world-class educational system that gives students the knowledge and skills to be successful in college and the workforce, and to flourish as parents and citizens

Mission

To provide leadership through the development of policy and accountability systems so that all students are prepared to compete in the global community

Strategic Plan Goals

1. All Students Proficient and Showing Growth in All Assessed Areas
2. Every Student Graduates from High School and is Ready for College and Career
3. Every Child Has Access to a High-Quality Early Childhood Program
4. Every School Has Effective Teachers and Leaders
5. Every Community Effectively Uses a World-Class Data System to Improve Student Outcomes
6. Every School and District is Rated "C" or Higher

Program Purpose and Goals

- High-quality early childhood education programs, with an emphasis on providing inclusive opportunities for students with disabilities.
- Grant agreement will be signed for multi-year grant not to exceed five years. Funding is planned to be provided for three years, pending available funds.
- The RFP, Q&A document, and any other amendments will be posted to the MDE website under "Public Notice" in the RFP/RFQ/RFA/Invitation to Bid section.

Eligibility Criteria

- Public school districts may apply for one or more classrooms.
- Applicants must be in good standing with MDE.
- Districts who are participating in an Early Learning Collaborative (ELC) or State Invested PreK (SIP) are not precluded from participation, but must apply for an additional classroom, not one that is currently being funded through ELC or SIP.
- A Unique Entity ID (UEI) is required, as that is how Federal funds to subgrantees are tracked.

Acknowledgements

- Questions must be submitted to the email address specified in the RFP and must be received no later than Tuesday, February 24, 2026, by 5:00 pm CT.
- Responses to questions will be posted on the same web page as the RFP by Friday, February 27, 2026.
- Applicants may not contact any MDE staff regarding the RFP, or their proposal may be disqualified.
- Applicants rewarded must maintain a written conflict of interest policy.

Program Implementation

Scope of Work

Districts that participate in this program will be expected to:

- Provide an inclusive program for pre-K children that reside in their district;
- Utilize a co-teaching model for instruction;
- Follow the information provided in the *Mississippi Early Learning Guidelines*; and
- Improve outcomes for pre-K children, including those with disabilities.

Program Implementation

Program Activities

Applicants receiving an award are responsible for utilizing these funds to carry out activities that advance student achievement and support student success, including but not limited to:

- Using the MS Beginnings curriculum, which is evidence-based and aligned with the MDE's *Early Learning Standards for Classrooms Serving Infants Through Four-Year-Old Children*;
- Implementing an integrated, effective system of early childhood curriculum, instruction, assessment, and program evaluation;
- Implementing consistent and appropriate learning targets for children and demonstrating progress towards achieving these targets; and
- Utilizing developmentally appropriate methods and strategies as recommended by the Early Learning Coaches and other MDE Early Childhood Education Staff.

Program Implementation

Program Reports and Evaluation

MDE Office of Early Childhood will monitor Blended programs yearly.

- The ELC Monitoring Tool will be used to provide consistency between programs.
- Compliance with IDEA will be monitored using the same monitoring protocols that MDE Office of Special Education (OSE) uses for all IDEA programs, including the Child Outcomes Summary (COS) process used for measuring early childhood outcomes.

Program Implementation

Proposal Review and Selection Process

Phase 1 – Compliance

- Proposals are reviewed by MDE procurement staff to determine if all formatting and submission requirements are met. If any proposal fails to meet the established deadline or *Required Elements*, the proposal will be disqualified.

Phase 2 – Review and Scoring

- An evaluation committee with a minimum of five members, who are knowledgeable in the area of early childhood special education, will review eligible proposals.
- Proposals can receive up to 100 total points, with a minimum of 70 points required to be considered for funding.
- MDE will allocate funding based upon the average scores of all committee members and will fund Applicants, based on the highest to lowest scores, until funding is exhausted or all eligible Applicants receive funding.

Program Implementation

Proposal Scoring Criteria

Applicants must include these components in their plan of action:

- Program Plan and Implementation, worth 65 points, which includes:
 - Activities,
 - Action Steps, and
 - Timelines.

- Regarding capacity, the district must address:
 - Inclusive practices
 - Collaborations
 - Student Data
 - Professional Development
 - Personnel

Program Implementation

Proposal Scoring Criteria continued

- Regarding program requirements, the district must address:
 - Commitment to program,
 - Children served, class size, teacher-child ratio,
 - Staff qualifications,
 - Professional development,
 - Learning standards and guidelines,
 - Curriculum,
 - Supports for students with disabilities,
 - Assessments,
 - Parent engagement, and
 - Coaching.

Program Implementation

Proposal Scoring Criteria

Applicants must include these components in their plan of action:

- Budget, worth 35 points, which includes:
 - Budget Overview
 - Budget Summary
 - Budget Narrative

- Budget must address these allowable expenses:
 - Furniture and Materials– 50% of total budget
 - Curriculum – 10% of total budget
 - Technology (including Assistive Technology) – 15% of total budget
 - Assessments for Students (diagnostic and progress monitoring) – 5% of total budget
 - Professional Development – 10% of total budget
 - In-State Travel – 5% of total budget
 - Other (must be described and justified) – 5% of total budget

Proposal Requirements

Proposal Formatting and Submission Information/Submission Requirements

- Proposal must include all required components and must be in the exact order to be considered eligible and be reviewed.
- Proposal must not exceed 50 pages.
- Proposal must include the following items:
 - Signed Cover Page (Form 1) - *Required Signature(s)*
 - Signed Assurances (Form 2) - *Required Signature(s)*
 - Signed Standard Terms and Conditions (Form 3) - *Required Signature(s)*
 - Signed Conflict of Interest (Form 4) - *Required Signature(s)*
 - Signed Acknowledgement of Amendments (Form 5) - *Required Signature*
 - Verification of the registration of the active Unique Entity ID (UEI) must be submitted with the proposal (e.g., www.sam.gov correspondence indicating the status and expiration date, UEI letter, etc.)
 - Program Plan and Implementation
 - Budget Forms A, B, & C – Complete
 - Copy of Charter to serve pre-K – (only if a charter school)

Proposal Requirements

Formatting and Submission Directions

- Applicants should use the parameters set out in the RFP for proposals.
- Adhere to the guidelines of the RFP and do not include additional information.

Proposal Requirements

Proposal Submission and Due Date

- A signed proposal packet shall be submitted electronically in a PDF format via [RFXS](#) no later than Friday, March 13, 2026, by 2:00 p.m. CT.
- The email subject line of the electronic document shall identify the name of the solicitation and the name of the entity/individual submitting the response. Any deviation from these instructions may result in disqualification of the response proposal and shall not be considered for an award.

OR

- Proposal packet can be shipped/mailed and must be received by the same date and time as above.
- The return address label must be visible on the outside of the sealed shipping envelope and shall include the name of the entity/individual submitting the response. Any deviation from these instructions may result in disqualification of the response proposal and shall not be considered for an award.

Tentative Timeline

Important Dates	Activity
February 10, 2026 February 17, 2026	RFP Issued – Email and Post to MDE Website/Newspaper
February 23, 2026	Workshops
February 24, 2026	Deadline for submitting questions
February 27, 2026	Questions will be posted to the MDE website
March 13, 2026	Proposals deadline by 2:00 PM CST
March 17 & 18, 2026	Evaluation of proposals
April 16, 2026	State Board of Education approval
April 17, 2026	Notification of awards and non-awards
April 24, 2026	Budget Revisions due (if needed)
April 30, 2026	Authorization to expend, <u>pending</u> approved revisions

Grant Award and Responsibilities

- Funds are contingent upon availability, with the following amounts being tentatively awarded:
 - Year 1 - \$50,000
 - Year 2 - \$10,000
 - Year 3 - \$10,000
- Funds must only be used as outlined in the RFP.
- Districts must meet the responsibilities of a fiscal agent as outlined in the RFP.
- Requirements for audits must be followed as outlined in the RFP.

Proposal Forms and Attachments

- Each required form must be included in the proposal.
 - Cover Page (Form 1) - *Required Signatures*
 - Assurances (Form 2) - *Required Signature(s)*
 - Standard Terms and Conditions (Form 3) - *Required Signature(s)*
 - Authorized Signature Page (Form 4) - *Required Signature(s)*
 - Sign Acknowledge of Amendments (Form 5)- *Required Signature(s)*
 - Verification of the registration of the active Unique Entity ID (UEI) must be submitted with the proposal (e.g., www.sam.gov correspondence indicating the status and expiration date, UEI letter, etc.)
 - Program Plan and Implementation
 - Budget Forms A, B, & C – Complete
 - Copy of Charter to serve pre-K – (only if a charter school)

Blended PreK Classroom Program, Cohort 5 Pre-Proposal Conference

Candice Taylor, Early Childhood Special Education Supervisor
cataylor@mdek12.org

