Public Schools of North Carolina
State Board of Education
Department of Public Instruction

NC DIGITAL LEARNING INITIATIVE GRANTS

Implementation Grants
Request for Proposals

Issue Date: February 1, 2018

Deadline for Proposals: April 23, 2018

Program Implementation: Fall 2018 – Spring 2020

Direct all inquiries concerning this RFP to:
Emma Braaten
Email: emma.braaten@dpi.nc.gov
Phone: 919-807-3828

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NC DIGITAL LEARNING INITIATIVE GRANTS

A. Authorizing Legislation

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI), on behalf of the North Carolina State Board of Education (NCSBE) issues this Request for Proposals (RFP) for Digital Learning Initiative Grants. In Session Law 2016-94 (House Bill 1030), Section 8.23 (see http://www.ncga.state.nc.us/Sessions/2015/Bills/House/HTML/H1030v8.html), the State Board of Education is charged with collaborating with the Friday Institute for Educational Innovation at North Carolina State University to continue the progress in implementing the Digital Learning Plan in North Carolina public schools.

> **SECTION 8.23.** The State Board of Education shall collaborate with the Friday Institute for Educational Innovation at North Carolina State University to continue the progress in implementing the Digital Learning Plan in North Carolina public schools by doing at least the following:
> (1) Coordinate the implementation of professional learning programs that support teachers and school administrators in transitioning to digital-age learning.
> (2) Manage statewide cooperative purchasing of content, including statewide shared resources for teachers to use for lesson planning and formative student assessments.
> (3) Develop infrastructure maintenance and support protocols.
> (4) Modify and update State policies to provide the support and flexibility necessary for local digital learning innovation.
> (5) Develop and maintain a continuous improvement process.
> (6) Create assessments for technological and pedagogic skills and identify best practices from those assessments.

The North Carolina Digital Learning Plan recommends the provision of grants to support the development and dissemination of local innovative digital learning models. The goal is to have effective digital learning practices spread across all North Carolina K-12 public schools. All school districts and charter schools are eligible to apply for the competitive grant program.

B. Purpose of the Program

As the landscape of education continues to change across the state, the competitive Digital Learning Initiative Grants will support districts as they address challenges, harness opportunities, and leverage resources for digital-age teaching and learning. By creating hubs of innovation across the state that model digital leadership and that support NC educators in their professional growth, students' access to highly-qualified educators and opportunities increases. *All North Carolina districts and charter schools are eligible to apply for the Implementation Grants.*

The grants shall be to do the following:
Implementation Grants.
- Support school districts and charter schools piloting a well-developed plan for implementation of digital teaching and learning during year 1 of the grant, with intent to scale practices during year 2 of the grant and beyond. Provide opportunities for peer support and feedback through district and charter school participation in May 2019 Convening and May 2020 Convening help by DPI.
- Districts and charter schools applying for this grant will have (1) completed a needs assessment through completion and analysis of the [Digital Learning Progress Rubric](#) and (2) developed a high-quality plan for implementation and operationalization.
- Priority will be given to districts and charter schools implementing a plan aligned to the NC Digital Learning Competencies and one or more of the following: micro-credentialing, personalized learning, digital literacy skills for students, or innovative partnerships with Institutes of Higher Education (IHEs).

The Implementation Grant shall be implemented during the 2018-19 and the 2019-20 school years (a 2-year grant), based upon available funding.

Implementation Grant Overview

● A school district or charter school with a well-developed plan for implementation of digital teaching and learning practices based upon completion and analysis of the NC Digital Learning Progress Rubric.
 	
● Prioritizes the NC Digital Learning Competencies and 1 or more of the following:
  ○ Micro-credentialing
  ○ Personalized Learning
  ○ Digital literacy skills for students
  ○ Innovative partnerships with IHEs
 	
● Deliverables at the end of the grant program:
  ○ Implementation of a plan for digital teaching and learning, with intent to scale practices during year 2 of the grant and beyond
  ○ Annually participate in May 2019 Convening and May 2020 Convening held by DPI
  ○ Other deliverables as identified in the grant application

C. Award Information and Submission Guidelines

Estimated Number of Awards: The State Board of Education will award, based on the quality of the applications and the number of applications received, as follows:

(1) Up to 18 Implementation Grants.

Estimated Size of Awards: Funds will be awarded based on the pool of applications approved and the recurring funds available. **Of the digital learning funds appropriated, the State Board of Education has designated approximately $1.25 Million for this purpose during 2018-19 and approximately $1.25 for this purpose during 2019-20.**

(1) Implementation Grants up to $150,000 for traditional school districts.
    a. In 2018-19, up to $75,000 for traditional school districts.
    b. In 2019-20, up to $75,000 for traditional school districts.
(2) Implementation Grants up to $50,000 for charter schools.
    a. In 2018-19, up to $25,000 for charter schools.
    b. In 2019-20, up to $25,000 for charter schools.

Project Period: Grant implementation beginning and ending based upon type of grant:

(1) Implementation Grants beginning in the 2018-19 school year and ending at the conclusion of the 2019-20 school year.

Use of Grant Funds:

Funds awarded to local school districts and charter schools shall be used for any of the following:

(1) Contracted services *(up to 25%)*
(2) Hardware or software purchases related to the success of the grant program. For example, the purchase of of devices and equipment, especially emerging technologies that align with the strategic planning. *(up to 40%)*
(3) Professional development expenses, including related travel costs *(up to 25%)*
(4) Reimbursement for stipends and teacher substitutes
(5) State subsistence rates and allowances
(6) Transportation costs
(7) Printing and duplicating *(up to 10%)*

Applicants must provide a detailed description of the cost estimates for each year of the grant, along with a narrative that describes how the award will further enhance the program deliverables and impact for stakeholders as identified by the Objectives and Intended Outcomes Table (Appendix C).

Each proposed budget must describe budget expenses for each year of the grant.

All funds received through this grant cannot be used to supplant current funding streams.

Application Materials Submission
All applicants must submit the proposal narrative and supporting appendices as described herein no later than 5:00 P.M. on April 23, 2018.

Applications should be formatted as a single pdf document and submitted via email to emma.braaten@dpi.nc.gov. Include as the subject line of your email:
"DLI Implementation Grant Application **Your District Name."**

D. Eligibility and Review Process

For the purposes of the Pilot Implementation Grant and the Model Innovation Grant, eligible entities include traditional Local Education Agencies (school districts and charter schools). School districts and charter schools can apply for one Pilot Implementation Grant and/or one Model Innovation Grant.

Key Dates and Review Process

NCSBE shall issue a Request for Proposals (RFP)	February 1, 2018
Implementation Grants – Webinar for Prospective Applicants (see p. 10)	February 9, 2018 *9:30 A.M.*
Deadline for applicants to submit their proposals	April 23, 2018
Selections announced by the NCSBE	*Anticipated:* June 7, 2018

Review Process

Proposals received by 5 P.M. on April 23, 2018, will be subject to review. Any proposal received after 5 P.M. on April 23, 2018, will not be reviewed. Proposals will be evaluated according to the procedures defined in NCSBE policy CNTR-001.

NCDPI reviewers may, at their discretion, consider NCSBE/NCDPI priorities, geographic area needs, socioeconomic needs, number of projects/total funding, and an applicant's prior performance when making final award determinations.

E. How to Submit

The required application materials include the proposal narrative and supporting appendices.

The narrative must follow the page-limit guidelines provided in the table below, and applicants are encouraged to use the following guidelines relative to each section of the proposal. Text on pages should be at least 11-point font size with margins at least one inch on all sides and double-spaced lines. All pages of the narrative should be numbered and include a footer identifying the school district.

Appendices B, C, D, and E are required materials.

Applicants must attach a copy of their plan for implementation and a completed Digital Learning Progress Rubric with their application. Applicants may also include additional supporting information as appendices such as data elements, news stories, etc. There is no page limit for the appendices.

1. Introduction Materials *(does not count toward total page count)*
● Cover Page from Appendix B   ● Table of Contents
2. Objectives and Intended Outcomes Table *(up to 3 pages)*
● Use the provided table template from Appendix C to identify the project goal and statement of need; activities, timeline, and impact to achieve the goal; brief explanation of deliverables based upon completion of the grant.   ● The project goal and statement of need should reflect data and analysis specific to the district or charter school and from the needs assessment completed using the NC Digital Learning Progress Rubric.   ● The Timeline section should identify activities to be completed during Year 1 and Year 2 of the grant.   ● Deliverables identified in this section must include (1) implementation of a plan for digital teaching and learning, with intent to scale practices during year 2 of the grant and beyond and (2) annual participation in May 2019 Convening and May 2020 Convening held by DPI.

3. **Narrative Description** *(up to 5 pages)*	

Applicants are encouraged to provide tables, charts, graphics, etc. in this description.

- Provide an overview of the proposed project including background research information used to formulate the proposal. Cite research to support your plan.

- Describe or illustrate any preliminary steps the school district or charter school has taken to prepare for the proposed project. Identify any special training; designation of personnel and purchases; digital literacy instruction for elementary, middle, and high students; etc.

- Define the proposed project's
    - Primary deliverables (see pages 4 and 5).
    - Alignment with the NC Digital Learning Competencies.
    - Strategies to address priorities such as micro-credentialing, personalized learning, digital literacy skills for students, or innovative partnerships with IHEs.
    - Key personnel.
    - Potential impacts.

- Elaborate on ways the proposal is linked to the school district's or charter school's improvement plan.

- Address sustainability efforts.

4. Local Evaluation and Procedures Description *(up to 1 page)*	

Applicants are encouraged to provide tables, charts, graphics, etc. in this description.

- Describe the local evaluation procedures for determining success of the project. Fully explain the metrics for success that will be utilized and how changes or modifications will be made in response to data and analysis of the program for each year.

- Explain how the project will involve community stakeholders beyond the local school system, including any anticipated participation of parents, citizens, or businesses.

- Describe how the project information will be shared with other school systems throughout the state. Include the methods that will be used to share best practices among school personnel.

5. Proposed Budget *(does not count toward total page count)*

- Use the provided budget template from Appendix D to identify the Fund Categories (with bulleted list details), Expenditure Amounts, and Rationale.

- Use the rationale to clearly identify the uses of grant award funds aligned with the goals and strategies identified in the application sections "Objectives and Intended Outcomes" and "Narrative Description."

- Each proposed budget must describe budget expenses for each year of the grant.

- All locally-prepared budgets must conform to the DPI chart of accounts. For this two-year grant, the maximum amount of award is $75,000 per grant application for traditional LEAs during each year, and the maximum amount of award is $25,000 for charter schools during each year (based upon available funding).

6. Page of Assurances *(does not count toward total page count)*
- See Appendix E

7. Attachments *(does not count toward total page count)*
- Attachment A: Detailed Plan for Implementation

- Attachment B: Completed NC Digital Learning Progress Rubric

Webinar Registration Information

A webinar detailing the application process for Pilot Implementation Grants and for Model Innovation Grants have been scheduled for February 2018. Interested parties may register using the following information. The webinar will be recorded and available for review at the Digital Teaching and Learning website. In addition to sharing information, members from the Digital Learning Initiative team will facilitate a brief question and answer session following the presentation.

Implementation Grant Webinar:
Friday, February 9, 2018 9:30 – 10:30 A.M.
Webinar Registration: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1002374561480107778 *Call-in Option:* United States: +1 (562) 247-8321

Applicants may also submit questions via Google Form https://goo.gl/FRLDyy Questions must be submitted by April 9, 2018. Responses to all questions received will be posted with other grant resources on the Digital Teaching and Learning website.

Summary of Required Application Materials
Completed applications must include the below listed materials in this order and be submitted by 5:00 P.M. on April 23, 2018, via email to emma.braaten@dpi.nc.gov.

Applications should be formatted as a single pdf document. Include as the subject line of your email: "DLI Implementation Grant Application **Your District Name"**

Application Materials
- Cover Page (signed in blue ink)   - Appendix B   - Table of Contents   - Objectives and Intended Outcomes Table – *up to 3 pages*   - Appendix C   - Narrative Description – *up to 5 pages*   - Local Evaluation and Procedures Description – *up to 1 page*   - Proposed Budget   - Appendix D   - Page of Assurances (signed in blue ink)   - Appendix E   - Attachment A: Detailed Plan for Implementation   - Attachment B: Completed NC Digital Learning Progress Rubric

Appendix A – Digital Learning Initiative Implementation Grant Rubric

	FOR IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS				
Descriptors	**Unacceptable - 0**	**Weak - 1**	**Average - 2**	**Strong - 3**	**Excellent - 4**
Project Objectives & Statement of Need	☐ Does not establish a specific, measurable, or achievable goal, or the statement of need does not support the goal. ☐ Does not identify impact for educators and/or students or does not related to digital-age teaching and learning.	☐ Establishes a specific, measurable, or achievable goal, but may not be clearly supported by a statement of need. ☐ May identify some impact for educators and/or students related to some aspect of digital-age teaching and learning.	☐ Establishes a specific, measurable, and achievable goal and may identify a statement of need. ☐ May identify some general impact for educators and/or students related to digital-age teaching and learning.	☐ Establishes a specific, measurable, and achievable goal that is supported by a statement of need. ☐ Identifies meaningful impact for educators and/or students related to digital-age teaching and learning.	☐ Establishes a specific, measurable, and achievable goal that is supported by a clear statement of need. ☐ Identifies meaningful impact for educators and/or students directly related to quality digital-age teaching and learning.
Activities & Intended Outcomes	☐ Does not explain viable activities or have a viable timeline. ☐ Does not connect deliverables or outcomes to project goals or activities	☐ Explains activities or timeline but may not be viable. ☐ Inadequately connects deliverables or outcomes to project goals or activities.	☐ Explains activities aligned with a timeline. ☐ Loosely connects deliverables or outcomes to project goals or activities.	☐ Explains viable activities aligned with an appropriate timeline. ☐ Connects deliverables and outcomes to the project goals and activities.	☐ Clearly explains viable activities aligned with a comprehensive timeline. ☐ Strongly connects deliverables and outcomes to the project goal and activities.
Narrative Description – Background	☐ Does not formulate a proposal utilizing research, or the research is not suitable to the proposal. ☐ Does not demonstrate preparedness or does not offer evidence for success or sustainability beyond the grant.	☐ Formulates a proposal but supporting research may not be applicable. ☐ Demonstrates limited preparedness or offers little evidence for success or sustainability in educator and/or student practices beyond the grant.	☐ Formulates a proposal that is generally supported through current and appropriate research. ☐ Demonstrates some level of preparedness to offer program success or sustainability in educator and/or student practices beyond the grant.	☐ Effectively formulates the proposal supported by current and appropriate research. ☐ Demonstrates preparedness to offer program success and sustainability in educator and/or student practices beyond the grant.	☐ Effectively formulates the proposal strongly supported by current and appropriate research. ☐ Demonstrates a high level of preparedness to offer program success and sustainability in educator and/or or student practices beyond the grant.
Narrative Description – Alignment	☐ Does not align deliverables to supporting the DLCs or other digital-age priorities. ☐ Does not link to school district's strategic plan or state priorities.	☐ Has little alignment of deliverables to supporting the DLCs or other digital-age priorities. ☐ Has little connection to school district's strategic plan or state priorities.	☐ Has some alignment of deliverables to supporting the DLCs or other digital-age priorities. ☐ Loosely links to the school district's strategic plan and state priorities.	☐ Aligns deliverables to supporting the DLCs and other digital-age priorities. ☐ Links to school district's strategic plan and state priorities.	☐ Strongly aligns deliverables to supporting the DLCs and other digital-age priorities. ☐ Firmly links to school district's strategic plan and state priorities.

Appendix A – Digital Learning Initiative Implementation Grant Rubric, cont'd

	FOR IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS, cont'd				
Descriptors	**Unacceptable – 0**	**Weak – 1**	**Average – 2**	**Strong – 3**	**Excellent – 4**
Local Evaluation & Metrics for Success	☐ Does not describe methods or metrics for evaluating the project. ☐ Does not identify a system or approach for analyzing or adapting implementation plan based on evaluation evidence.	☐ Describes some methods or metrics for evaluating the project, but they may not be appropriate or effective. ☐ Identifies some approach for analyzing or adapting implementation plan that may consider using some evaluation evidence.	☐ Describes some effective or appropriate methods or metrics for evaluating the project. ☐ In general terms, identifies a system or approach for analyzing and/or adapting implementation plan using some evaluation evidence.	☐ Clearly describes effective and appropriate methods and metrics for evaluating the project. ☐ Outlines a system for analyzing and adapting implementation plan to address evaluation evidence.	☐ Extensively describes effective and appropriate methods and metrics for evaluating the project. ☐ Outlines a precise and thorough system for analyzing and adapting implementation plan based on grounded evaluation evidence.
Community & Stakeholders	☐ Does not integrate strategies for involving community stakeholders. ☐ Does not identify opportunities for dissemination of best practices for digital-age teaching and learning.	☐ Has limited strategies for involving community stakeholders. ☐ Identifies limited opportunities for some dissemination of best practices for digital-age teaching and learning.	☐ Identifies some strategies for involving community stakeholders. ☐ Identifies some opportunities for potential dissemination of best practices for digital-age teaching and learning.	☐ Integrates strategies for involving community stakeholders. ☐ Identifies opportunities for ongoing and further dissemination of successful best practices for digital-age teaching and learning.	☐ Integrates robust strategies for involving community stakeholders. ☐ Identifies innovative opportunities for ongoing and intentional dissemination of successful best practices for digital-age teaching and learning.
Proposed Budget	☐ Does not outline a clear, reasonable, timely, or cost-effective budget. ☐ Does not itemize expenses in detail as appropriate. ☐ Does not align the budget and project goals through the rationale.	☐ Outlines a budget that is not clear, reasonable, timely, or cost-effective. ☐ Itemizes some expenses and may be lacking detail. ☐ Has limited alignment of the budget and project goals, or the rationale is not clear or meaningful.	☐ Outlines a budget that is mostly clear, reasonable, timely, or cost-effective. ☐ Itemizes expenses with some detail as appropriate. ☐ Aligns the budget and project goals with a rationale.	☐ Outlines a clear, reasonable, timely, and cost-effective budget. ☐ Itemizes expenses in detail as appropriate. ☐ Aligns the budget and project goals through a clear and meaningful rationale.	☐ Comprehensively outlines a clear, reasonable, timely and cost-effective budget. ☐ Thoroughly itemizes expenses in detail as appropriate. ☐ Fully aligns the budget and project goals through a clear and meaningful rationale.

Appendix B - Cover Page Template

NC DIGITAL LEARNING INITIATIVE GRANTS 2018

Type of Grant: Implementation Grant

School District:	**Date of Application:**
District Address:	**State Board Region:**
Name and Title of Primary Contact Person:	**Primary Contact Person's Email Address and Phone Number:**
Total Project Budget:	**Estimated Number of Schools Served:**
Requested Grant Amount:	**Estimated Number of Students Served:**

Name of Superintendent	*Signature of Superintendent (in blue ink)*

Appendix C - Objectives & Intended Outcomes Table

This table will be rated by the DLI Grant Application Reviewers. Up to 3 pages.

Goal: *Identify a single goal for your project and provide that statement goal here. Goal should be specific, measurable, achievable in the 2018-19 and 2019-20 school years, and results-focused.*

Statement of Need: *Summarize how this goal was identified and any relevant data and analysis for your district, including analysis of the NC Digital Learning Progress Rubric.*

Year 1 - 2018-19		
Activities: *Describe proposed activities.*	**Time Frame:** *Identify dates/date range.*	**Impact:** *Explain impact for educators and/or students.*

Year 2 - 2019-20		
Activities: *Describe proposed activities.*	**Time Frame:** *Identify dates/date range.*	**Impact:** *Explain impact for educators and/or students.*

Deliverable/s: *Briefly describe the intended outcome/s. This may be a bulleted and prioritized list.*

Appendix D - Proposed Budget Template

This table will be rated by the DLI Grant Application Reviewers. Align proposed budget based on the section "Use of Grant Funds" (see page 6); do not exceed allowable expenditures as defined.

Fund Category *Provide a bulleted list in each section as appropriate.*	Expenditure Amounts	Rationale for Proposed Expenditure *Identify the uses of grant award funds aligned with the goals and strategies identified in the application sections "Objectives and Intended Outcomes" and "Narrative Description."*
Year 1 - 2018-19		
Contracted Services *(up to 25% of proposed budget)*		
Hardware or Software Purchases *(up to 40% of proposed budget)*		
Professional Development Expenses *(up to 25% of proposed budget)*		
Stipend Reimbursement or Teacher Substitutes		
State Subsistence Rates and Allowances		
Transportation Costs		
Printing and Duplicating *(up to 10% of proposed budget)*		
YEAR 1 TOTAL		

Fund Category *Provide a bulleted list in each section as appropriate.*	**Expenditure Amounts**	**Rationale for Proposed Expenditure** *Identify the uses of grant award funds aligned with the goals and strategies identified in the application sections "Objectives and Intended Outcomes" and "Narrative Description."*
Year 2 - 2019-20		
Contracted Services *(up to 25% of proposed budget)*		
Hardware or Software Purchases *(up to 40% of proposed budget)*		
Professional Development Expenses *(up to 25% of proposed budget)*		
Stipend Reimbursement or Teacher Substitutes		
State Subsistence Rates and Allowances		
Transportation Costs		
Printing and Duplicating *(up to 10% of proposed budget)*		
YEAR 2 TOTAL		
TOTAL PROPOSED BUDGET FOR YEAR 1 & YEAR 2		

Appendix E - Page of Assurances

By signing below, I assure NCDPI that I am an official of the organization and authorized to bind the organization. I certify the following (check each box to indicate your review and certification):

- ☐ The information provided in this proposal is correct and complete.

- ☐ The applicant understands that this proposal and all attachments submitted are public records.

The applicant agrees to the below listed activities.

- ☐ Provide administrative supervision and support to foster success of the program.
- ☐ Provide personnel, time, and other resources to develop and implement program.
- ☐ Comply with the North Carolina General Statutes, the North Carolina Administrative Code, and any other rules or regulations that may govern the performance and oversight of this program, including all CIPA requirements.
- ☐ Ascertain that applicable federal and state laws are followed to promote equal opportunity for all participants without regard to race, color, religion, gender, age, disability, political affiliation, or national origin.
- ☐ Establish fiscal control and accounting procedures for proper disbursement of and accounting program funds.
- ☐ Submit required financial and performance reports to NCDPI.
- ☐ Participate in all evaluation activities, including collection, recording, and reporting of data, as required by NCDPI, NCSBE, or third-party evaluators, in compliance with relevant privacy laws.

_____

Name and Signature of Primary Contact (in blue ink)   *Date*

_____

Name and Signature of Superintendent (in blue ink)   *Date*