



Expanding Opportunity Through
Quality Charter Schools
Program – Grants to State
Entities (CSP SE) Pre-Application
Webinar: *Using Technical
Assistance Set Aside Funds on
'High-Impact' Activities*

MAY 2024



Characteristics of High-Impact Technical Assistance

In the context of the CSP SE grant program, we characterize *High-Impact technical assistance* (TA) as the following:

Purposeful, targeted, ongoing, and robust support to “eligible applicants” and authorized public chartering agencies to assist them in carrying out CSP SE program activities and improving authorizing quality.

This type of TA typically results in an observable impact and measurable changes in the State’s charter school sector across various metrics.



Purpose of today's webinar

Prospective CSP SE grant applicants will gain insight into the 7% technical assistance (TA) set-aside funding in the CSP SE grant program and how to incorporate a “high-impact” proposal for use of those TA funds into their grant applications.



Agenda

1. Purposes of the CSP SE Grant Program
2. Importance of High-Impact Technical Assistance (TA)
3. Examples of High-Impact TA Activities
4. Incorporating High-Impact TA into a CSP SE Grant Application



Purposes of the CSP SE Grant Program



Purposes of the CSP

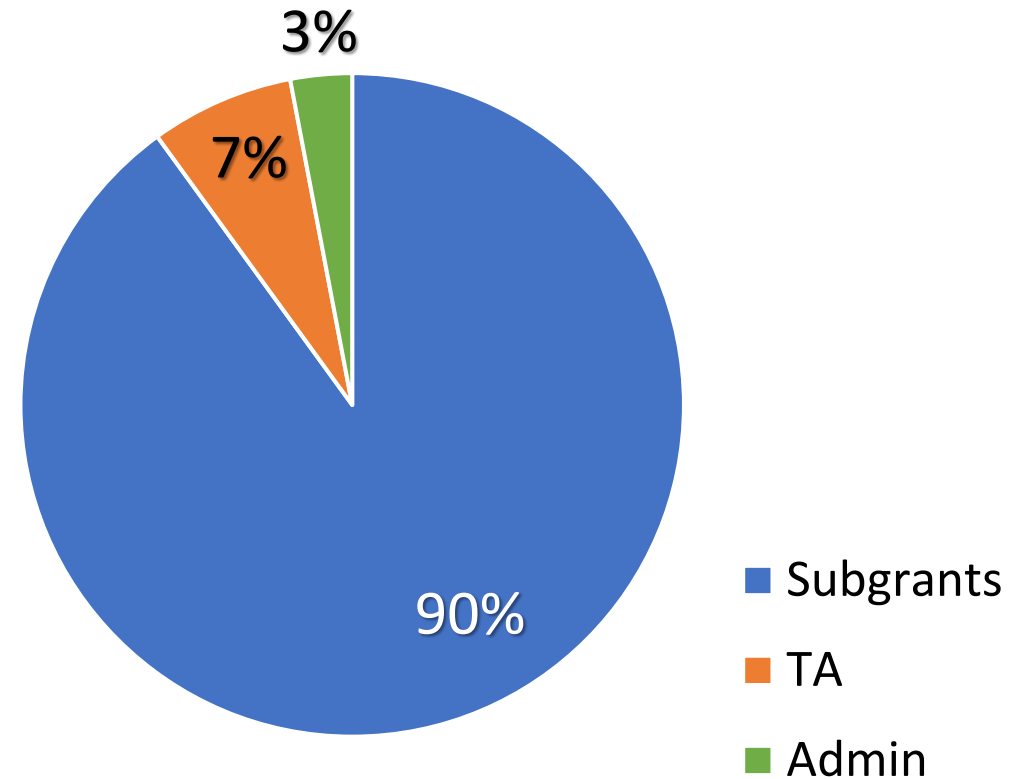
From section 4301 of the ESEA

- Expand opportunities for all students, particularly traditionally underserved students, to attend charter schools and meet challenging state academic standards;
- Provide financial assistance for the planning, program design, and initial implementation of public charter schools;
- Increase the number of high-quality charter schools available to students across the United States;
- Evaluate the impact of charter schools on student achievement, families, and communities;
- Share best practices between charter schools and other public schools;
- Encourage states to provide facilities support to charter schools; and,
- Support efforts to strengthen the charter school authorizing process.



CSP SE Grant Program Set-Aside Funds

- At least 90% of grant funds must be used to provide subgrants
- At least 7% of grant funds must be reserved for technical assistance to eligible applicants and charter school authorizers
- Up to 3% of grant funds may be reserved for administrative costs, which may include technical assistance



Importance of High-Impact Technical Assistance (TA)



Importance of Quality Authorizing

- Excellent charter school authorizing is the cornerstone of a healthy charter school sector, providing access to high-quality public-school options for students and families
- A key function of the CSP SE grant is to “provide technical assistance to ... authorized public chartering agencies ... and work with authorized public chartering agencies in the State to improve authorizing quality, including developing capacity for, and conducting, fiscal oversight and auditing of charter schools.” (*section 4303(b)(2) of the ESEA*)



Authorized Public Chartering Agencies

Under section 4310(1), the term “authorized public chartering agency” means a “State educational agency, local educational agency, or other public entity that has the authority pursuant to State law and approved by the Secretary [of Education] to authorize or approve a charter school.” Under the Department’s regulations at 34 C.F.R. § 77.1, the term “public”, as applied to an agency, organization, or institution, means that “the agency, organization, or institution is under the administrative supervision or control of a government other than the Federal Government.”



FY 2024 CSP SE Competition Absolute Priority

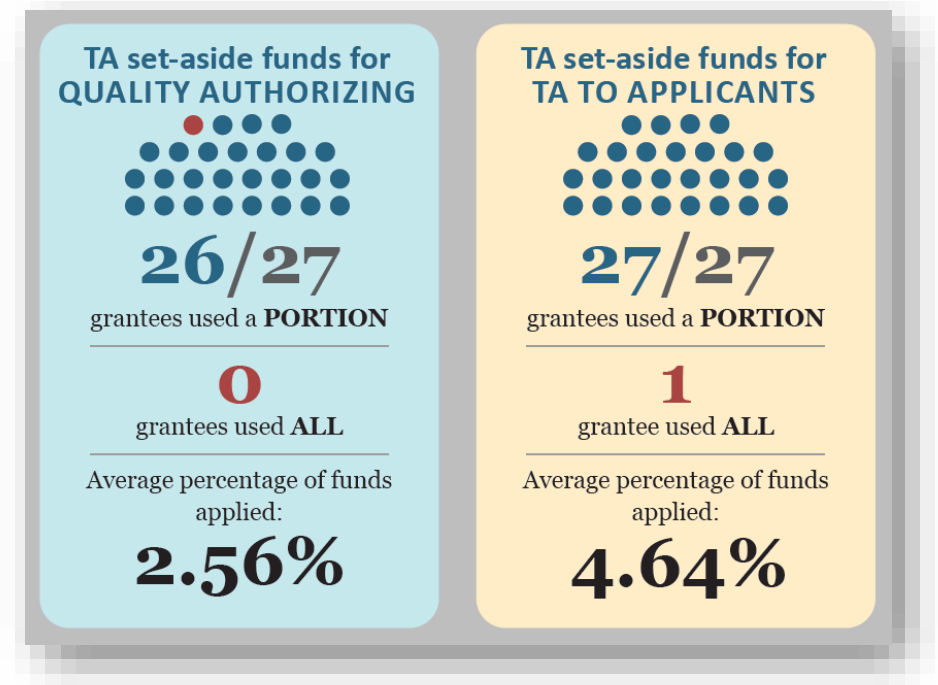
Best Practices for Charter School Authorizers.

To meet this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that the State entity has taken steps to ensure that all authorized public chartering agencies implement best practices for charter school authorizing.



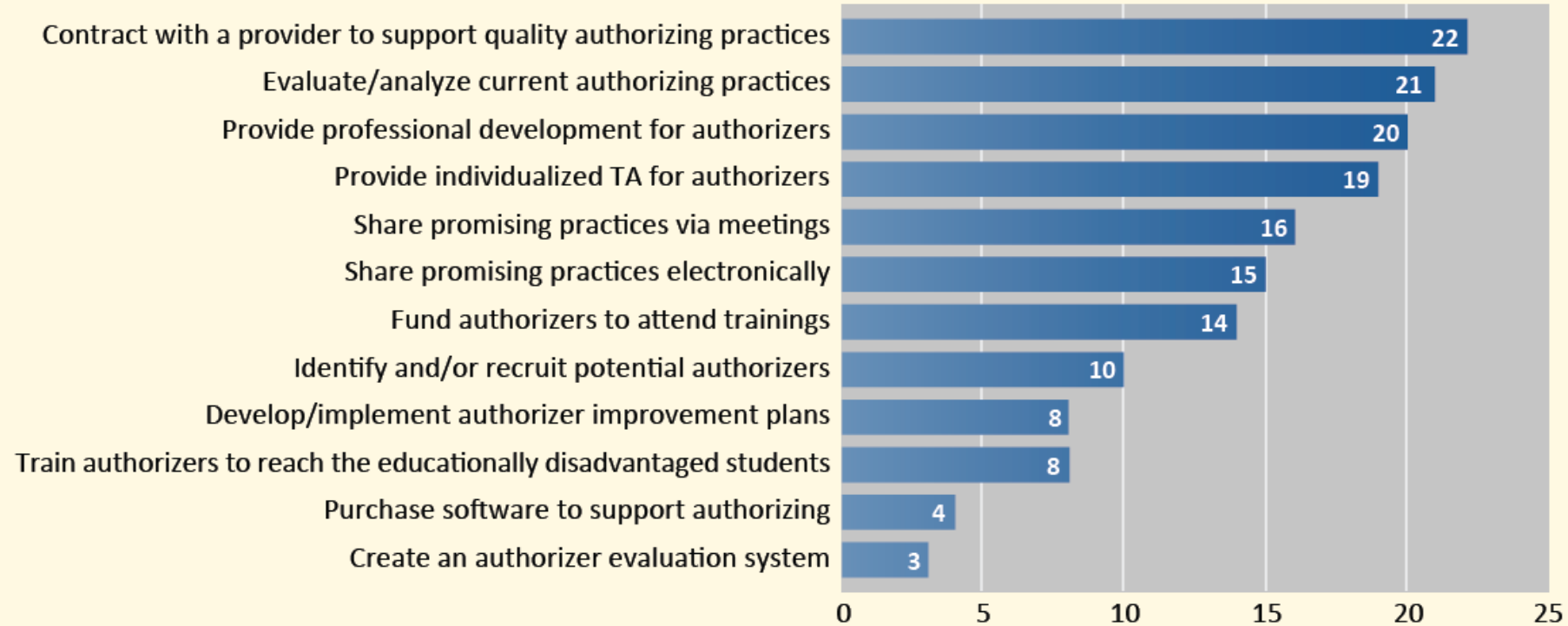
CSP Report on TA Set-Aside Spending

- In May 2023, the CSP Office published a report entitled *How 2017-2020 State Entity Grantees Are Using Technical Assistance Set-Aside Funds*
- The report found that all 27 of the grantees included in the report were using TA set-aside funds for TA to eligible applicants, and all but one grantee were using TA set-aside funds to support quality authorizing in the State
- However, less than 3% of the 7% (or more) set-aside was used for quality authorizing



CSP Report on TA Set-Aside Spending (cont.)

Figure 1. Grantee Activities in Support of Quality Authorizing



Reflections on the Report

- CSP SE grantees are doing great work providing TA to eligible applicants
- Collaboration between charter school authorizers and SE grantees is crucial to achieving the goals of the grant program
- There is room to improve on how CSP SE grantees use the TA set-aside funds to strengthen charter authorizing in their States
- The Department is excited about CSP SE grant proposals that seek to implement high impact TA activities – particularly, around charter school authorizing



Examples of High-Impact TA Activities



Charter School Performance Frameworks

- CSP SE grantees have used their TA set-aside funds to assist authorizers in developing new or updating existing charter school performance frameworks, including engaging national charter school support organizations and charter school authorizing organizations to develop performance frameworks aligned to national best practices.
- Program funds also have been used to conduct focus groups and needs assessments within the charter school community to gain a better understanding of where to focus performance framework efforts.



Charter School Authorizer Incubator Programs

- One example of a TA activity implemented by a CSP SE grantee is the development of a charter school authorizer leadership academy to strengthen charter school authorizing in the State.
- The leadership academy is “a comprehensive program for district leaders who are currently or aspiring to use authorizing practices to improve the number of high quality, best fit school options in their district.”
- It uses a cohort model to engage participant authorizers in leading change in their districts and implementing effective authorizing practices.



Incorporating High-Impact TA Activities into a CSP SE Grant Application



Planning a High-Impact TA Proposal

Engage stakeholders and assess needs

- What do current and prospective charter school authorizers need?
- What do current and prospective charter school operators and staff need?
- What do charter school students, parents, and community members need?

Create a grant objective

- How can we achieve our CSP project goals and objectives by strengthening charter school authorizing in the State?

Budget for charter authorizer TA

- At least 7% of CSP SE grant funds must be reserved for TA activities?
- How much do we plan to spend for TA to eligible applicants?
- How much do we plan to spend for TA to charter school authorizers?

Develop specific high-impact TA activities

- What needs were identified by stakeholders?
- How can we support high-quality charter school authorizing using CSP funds?
- What are the performance measurements and timeline for achieving results?



Engage Stakeholders & Assess Needs

- Before developing a specific grant proposal to assist eligible applicants and charter school authorizers in carrying out CSP SE grant activities and strengthening charter school authorizing in your State, it is important to engage with the key stakeholders in your State.
- Developing relationships with charter school developers, charter school authorizers, and the State agency (e.g., State educational agency (SEA)) that oversees charter school authorizers is necessary for successful implementation.
- Once you have assessed the needs, then you can develop a proposal that will be most impactful in your State context.



Create One or More Grant Objectives

- Applicants should consider including a grant objective aligned to assisting eligible applicants and charter school authorizers in carrying out grant activities and strengthening charter school authorizing in the State.
- Additionally, applicants may consider specific performance measures aligned to proposed TA activities for eligible applicants and charter school authorizers in the State.



Budget for Eligible Applicant and Charter Authorizer TA

- As you consider the budget in your CSP SE grant application, you must reserve not less than 7% of grants funds for TA to eligible applicants and charter school authorizers.
- As noted earlier, CSP SE applicants should carefully assess the needs of eligible applicants as well as charter school authorizers in their States.
- Based upon the level of need identified, CSP SE applicants should determine the portion of the 7% TA set-aside funds that will be used for TA to eligible applicants and charter school authorizers.



Develop Specific TA Activities for Eligible Applicants and Charter School Authorizers

- In developing the activities, you should refer to what you learned about the needs of eligible applicants and charter school authorizers from engaging with stakeholders.
- Consider where you may want to build upon the steps described in your response to the Absolute Priority.
- Incorporate the proposed high-impact TA activities into your responses to the selection criteria and application requirements described in the grant application.



Questions

Please use the Q&A feature to submit your questions



Applicant Reminders



- You must register at SAM.gov to obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI).
- The deadline to submit an application to Grants.gov is 11:59:59pm on June 13, 2024.



Thank you!

REACH OUT TO THE CSP STATE ENTITY TEAM WITH ANY FOLLOW-UP
QUESTIONS AT:

SE_Compensation@ed.gov

