



Peer Review Policy Manual

**Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24)
Charter Schools Program
State Entities Grant
WVPCSB Subgrant**



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FY 24

Charter Schools Program Subgrant

Peer Review Process Overview



In 2023, the West Virginia Professional Charter School Board (WVPCSB) applied for and received a Charter Schools Program (CSP) State Entities Grant from the United States Department of Education. WVPCSB will use CSP funds to award subgrants that support the startup of new charter schools and expansion of high-quality charter schools serving students in pre-kindergarten through grade 12. During the FY 2024 subgrant cycle, WVPCSB plans to award 1 new charter school subgrant and 1 high-quality expansion charter school subgrant.

WVPCSB seeks peer reviewers to assess FY 2024 subgrant applications. A call for peer reviewers will be published on the WVPCSB website, distributed via press release, and emailed to prospective applicants (compiled from existing WVPCSB contacts and individuals recommended by USDE staff and technical assistance contractors).

Peer reviewers will ideally have experience with federal grants, charter school administration, and/or related fields in education policy. WVPCSB's peer review panel is likely to be comprised of education leaders from inside and outside of West Virginia, education policy professionals in nonprofit roles, and/or academics with technical expertise in education research. Reviewers will provide assurances they can review applications impartially and without conflict of interest. Reviewers will be required to recuse themselves from the evaluation of any application for which they have a conflict of interest. Reviewers shall not participate in any actions or decisions that directly or indirectly involve their own financial interests.

WVPCSB will evaluate peer reviewer applications based on experience and qualifications and select a 3 member panel. WVPCSB may conduct interviews, if needed. Selected peer reviewers must participate in an online 1-hour training session, provided by WVPCSB, before starting their independent review of applications. This training is currently scheduled for June 13 at 11am ET.

Peer reviewers will receive an honorarium of \$250 per application reviewed.

If a selected peer reviewer is unable or unwilling to perform the assigned duties, WVPCSB will remove the reviewer from the panel, and only the remaining reviewer application evaluations will be considered for fundability. If deemed necessary by WVPCSB, a replacement peer reviewer will be solicited or selected.

The peer review process will begin shortly after the deadline for subgrant applications. WVPCSB staff will first review each application for completeness and eligibility. Applications that advance beyond this stage will be sent to the peer review panel for independent review.

WVPCSB will provide eligible applications to the peer review panel, and the peer reviewers will confirm, via email, they still have no known conflicts of interest based on the list of applicants.

Peer reviewers will rank each application and provide qualitative evaluations based on evaluation criteria established by WVPCSB. Reviewers will write open-ended answers and provide a Likert-scale summary on each criterion (ranging from Excellent, Good, Poor, and Not Addressed).

Peer reviewer evaluations will be used to determine application fundability and serve as a recommendation of the strength and quality of each subgrant application. Peer review recommendations will inform—but not necessarily determine—WVPCSB Member subgrant award decisions, which will be voted on during a public meeting. Peer review evaluations of subgrant applications will be made available to applicants and the public.

WVPCSB Members will not vote to fund an application deemed unfundable by at least two peer reviewers in favor of an application deemed fundable by at least two peer reviewers. WVPCSB board members will produce a written explanation of why they elected to fund any application, considering peer reviewer feedback and, if necessary, explaining why the funding decision deviated from peer reviewer rankings.

If the top-ranked application in a subgrant competition is deemed marginal by at least two peer reviewers, WVPCSB members have discretion to fund it or not.

FY24 WVPCSB CSP-SE Subgrant Application and Peer Review Timeline

Activity	Date
RFA Public Announcement	May 6
Call for Peer Reviewers	May 6
Pre-application webinar	May 20 at 11am ET
Application window opens	May 21
Peer Reviewer Applications Due	May 23 11:59pm ET
Select Peer Reviewers	May 30
Office Hours Q&A	Each Tuesday in June 11am ET
Peer Reviewer Training Webinar	June 13 at 11am ET
Pre-Application Check Deadline	June 21 5pm ET
Notice of Intent to Apply Deadline	June 24
Application deadline	July 5, 5pm ET
Peer Review begins	July 12
Peer Review ends	August 2
WVPCSB award decisions	August 8
Post-award webinar	August 15 at 11am ET



FY 24
Charter Schools Program Subgrant
Call for Peer Reviewers



The West Virginia Professional Charter School Board seeks peer reviewers to review subgrant applications for the FY 24 Charter School Program subgrant cycle. In 2023, WVPCSB applied for and received a Charter Schools Program (CSP) State Entities Grant from the United States Department of Education. WVPCSB will use CSP funds to award discretionary subgrants that support the startup of new charter schools and expansion of high-quality charter schools serving students in pre-kindergarten through grade 12.

Qualifications and Skills. WVPCSB seeks peer reviewer applicants who:

- have experience with federal grants, charter school administration, and/or related fields in education policy;
- provide assurances they can review applications impartially and without conflict of interest;
- possess high analysis standards, strong evaluative writing skills, and the ability to assess grant applications with objectivity; and
- are well informed regarding education, education policy, and charter school operations.

Duties and Requirements. Selected Peer Reviewers will be expected to:

- use professional experience, content knowledge, expertise, and judgment to evaluate submitted applications against the selection criteria provided by WVPCSB;
- provide detailed, objective, timely, well-written comments on evaluated subgrant applications;
- dedicate approximately 8-15 hours to the peer review process (depending on # of applications);
- review and provide written evaluation of subgrant applications during the review window from July 12 to August 2, 2024;
- participate in a 1-hour online training session on June 13, 2024 at 11am ET;
- communicate with WVPCSB via email, online virtual meetings, and phone calls as needed; and
- work remotely, using their own computer, phone, office equipment, and internet connection to conduct all reviews and participate in any required training and meetings.

Compensation. Selected peer reviewers will receive an honorarium for their service of \$250 per assigned application reviewed.

Transparency. WVPCSB will share peer reviewer scores and comments with each applicant and the public.

Application Deadline and Components

Interested applicants should apply via email to dusty.hurley@wvpcsb.org AND james.paul@wvpcsb.org by May 23, 2024 11:59pm EST. Applicants will be notified of selection status by May 30, 2024.

To be considered, applications must include:

- Name
- Email
- Institutional/business affiliation (if applicable)
- Resume (2 page maximum)
- Cover letter stating:
 - relevant qualification and experience
 - availability for 8-15 hours for application review from July 12 to August 2, 2024
 - availability for 1 hour peer reviewer training on June 13, 2024 at 11am ET
- Signed and completed conflict of interest form.

WVPCSB solicits peer reviewers without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. WVPCSB will provide reasonable accommodations for a qualified individual with a disability so that the individual might participate in the peer reviewer application process. If you require a reasonable accommodation to apply to participate in this review, please contact WVPCSB via email at dusty.hurley@wvpcsb.org



FY 24

Charter Schools Program Subgrant

Peer Reviewer Conflict of Interest Form



Assurances: Please place a check mark beside the following assurances, as applicable, to indicate you are free of conflicts of interest that would limit your ability to objectively review applications during the FY 24 subgrant competition cycle.

- I have no known conflicts of interest that would prevent me from serving as a peer reviewer for this subgrant competition, either directly or indirectly through myself, a family member, or a business associate.
- I have no previous or current affiliation with any organization that is likely to apply for this subgrant cycle.
- I have not and will not help prepare any application for this subgrant cycle.
- My direct or indirect financial interests will not be affected by the outcome of this subgrant competition.
- I do not serve, plan to serve, and have not been offered a position as an employee, advisor, contractor, or consultant for any potential applicants for this subgrant competition.
- To my knowledge, none of the following persons have a financial interest in the outcome of this subgrant competition:

My child; a member of my household; any relative; a business partner; a former employer; an organization from who I am seeking employment or have sought employment; an organization for which I serve as a director, officer, or trustee; an organization for which I serve as a volunteer or participant; an organization with which I have any kind of professional relationship past or present; an organization in which my personal relationship with someone may cause a reasonable person with knowledge of facts to question my impartiality (for instance a romantic partner, a personal friend, or a known ally or antagonist).

These and other potential conflicts of interest will be addressed on a case-by-case basis once identified or disclosed. Reviewers will be required to recuse themselves from the evaluation of any application for which they have a conflict of interest. Reviewers shall not participate in any actions or decisions that directly or indirectly involve their own financial interests. If you did not check one of the boxes above, please attach a detailed written explanation for further consideration.

Name: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____