



Mini-Grant Application 2024-25 School Year

The mission of MAASE is *to provide leadership for the development and implementation of quality programs and services for students with disabilities within the total education community*. MAASE is committed to aligning and organizing the strategic priorities and our work to focus on the following elements: supporting our partners, supporting our staff, supporting systems, and enhancing specially designed instruction.

To this end, MAASE is again implementing a Mini-Grant program to encourage creativity and innovation in providing services to students with disabilities in the four focus areas. Ten grants of \$500 each will be awarded. The application deadline is Friday, **October 25, 2024 at 5:00 PM**. Notification award letters will be mailed by Friday, **December 6, 2024**.

[Access Electronic Application Here](#)

Guidelines

Mini-grants are intended for **new and innovative programs/services**.

- MAASE aims to support projects that are innovative and original in nature. This grant should be used to support those innovative programs rather than those typically mandated by your district or covered by other funding sources (ie, literacy, transition, etc.).
- Mini-grants should address one or more of the following MAASE focus areas:
 - High Quality Student Evaluations
 - Specially Designed Instruction
 - Skilled Staff
 - Program Evaluation
- If you have any questions, contact the 2024-25 Mini Grant Co-Chairs: Matt Koekkoek (mkoekkoek@brandon.k12.mi.us) or James Nuse (jnuse@ioniaschools.org)

Scoring

The percentages noted below indicate the relative values that raters (MAASE members) will use to score the applications. Prior to MAASE readers receiving the applications, the Committee Co-Chairs will remove all identifying information, such as district, school, and staff name(s).

- Project Goals (40%) include:
 - How the project aligns with one or more of the [MAASE Guiding Principles](#) / Four Focus Areas Revised.
 - Pertinent background information about the programs.
 - What you wish to accomplish by receiving the grant.
 - The benefits that are expected for students.
 - The numbers, categories and ages of students who will benefit.
- Project Activities (50%) include:
 - The specific activities that will lead to achievement of the goals.
 - The timeline.
 - Budget covered by the grant, other resources, and the resources needed to complete the project.
- Project Creativity or Innovation (10%)

Directions: Complete the [2024-25 Mini Grant application](#) by Friday, October 25, 2024



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Focus Area #1: Partners

Administrators of Special Education effectively communicate, engage with and seek input from all partners by...

- **Developing and implementing strategic plans** for programs and services for students with disabilities **in collaboration with** general and special education leaders and educators, parents, students, and other key partners, including partner agencies representing disability and cultural diversity.
- **Engaging diverse groups of partners** to improve educational outcomes for ALL students with disabilities.
- **Communicating** fairly and equitably, utilizing conflict management strategies to resolve differences.
- **Advocating** for local, state, and federal policies that ensure effective delivery of programs and services for students with disabilities.
- Recognizing and leveraging the power of authentic partnerships by fostering relationships that **actively engage families as partners**, establishing the school as a collaborative partner within the community, and ensuring opportunities for coordination and seamless delivery of services for students with involvement in multiple agencies.

Focus Area #2: Staff

Administrators of Special Education attract, prepare, and retain highly skilled staff that can effectively implement ambitious individualized instruction utilizing high leverage practices and based on high quality student evaluations by...

- **Forging creative partnerships** with high schools, Career Tech Ed, and institutes of higher education to **attract** students to the field of special education.
- Implementing policies, processes, and procedures for establishing staffing needs, **recruiting, hiring, and onboarding diverse professionals**.
- Effectively **preparing** staff for their role by designing and implementing a **robust system of professional learning** for all instructional and support staff which includes **authentic mentoring and structured learning opportunities** that are culturally responsive and embed adult learning principles.
- **Retaining** highly skilled staff by:
 - Defining, creating and operationalizing a **positive, productive, caring and humanizing work environment**.
 - Supervising and evaluating all instructional and support staff using **ongoing timely and meaningful feedback** and ensuring that staff have a clear and consistent understanding of how the district selected evaluation tool will be applied to their specific role.

Focus Area #3: Systems

Administrators of Special Education design, offer, and evaluate a full continuum of highly effective services in a fiscally responsible manner by...

- Utilizing **collaborative leadership informed by research and inquiry** to implement systemic change that is focused on **continual improvement** and considers the **diversity** of students and families.
- Implementing a process of **program evaluation**, establishing a focus on analysis of outcomes and intentional action planning to ensure **equity** in identification as well as an equitable and **flexible**

continuum of specialized instruction and related services that honor free and appropriate public education (**FAPE**) in the least restrictive environment (**LRE**).

- Understanding federal, state, local laws, policies and funding rules and **asking the right questions to ensure resources are maximized** to ensure student outcomes.

Focus Area #4: Specially Designed Instruction

Administrators of Special Education implement ambitious individualized instruction utilizing high leverage practices and based on high quality student evaluations by...

- Demonstrating **knowledge of curriculum & delivery of Specially Designed Instruction** and functioning as **critical consumers** as they engage in research and inquiry to:
 - Prioritize practices and programs that are **empirically validated yet designed flexibly** to match various contexts and student populations.
 - Ensure staff are using evidence based practices that result in continual improvement of instruction, learning, and educational outcomes.
- Ensuring a **well-informed, ongoing instructional problem solving process** through the use of valid, reliable, and culturally responsive assessment practices, which will:
 - Establish present levels and impact of the disability.
 - Inform the design, development, revision, & fidelity of Specially Designed Instruction.
 - Monitor student progress.
- Within a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS), **ensure Specially Designed Instruction exists at all tiers** and is not an isolated component of the school environment.