

## **Request for Proposals**

### **Accelerating Outcomes for Multilingual Learners in Secondary Schools**

Proposals are due no later than August 30, 2024 5:00 p.m. Mountain Time

#### **Background**

There are over 22,000 multilingual learners (MLLs) in our secondary schools in the Denver metro area. They hold many assets including proficiency in other languages and experience in different cultures. Further, strong research shows that once MLLs acquire English, they can outperform their peers who were never English learners. However, older multilingual learners - either students who started their formal English instruction later in their schooling careers ("newcomers") or students who have remained static in MLL programming for many years ("long-term MLLs") - see some of the worst outcomes in our metro area. Further, we know that high school is a pivotal time for accessing concurrent enrollment credit and credentials of value that can propel students after their formal K-12 education. However, in many school designs, MLLs have less access to this programming. We know this does not need to be the case - and that there are many factors that make it too often true. We can and must do better.

At Gary, we are interested in bending this trend to ensure that there are dramatically fewer long-term MLLs and that services to newcomers in secondary grades are dramatically improved. We are looking to identify and accelerate proven and highly promising solutions for MLLs in grades 6-12.

#### **Goals & Objectives**

We are looking for proposals that can be executed over an 18 month time period and will achieve the following objectives:

- Significantly expand their proven practice to more MLLs in secondary grades
- Plan for sustaining that proven practice expansion beyond the grant term
- Amplify that practice for greater adoption across the metro area

#### **Grant Award**

Gary is seeking to fund 4-5 proven and/or highly promising solutions that:

- Show disproportionate positive impact on MLLs in secondary grades; and/or
- Can ensure MLLs in secondary grades have equitable access to high-value programming (such as concurrent enrollment and credentials of value); and/or
- Have a track record of moving long-term MLLs to English proficiency in secondary grades.

We hope to add catalytic funding to support the expansion of these solutions and amplify them for further adoption across the Denver metro area (which we define to include Denver, Adams, Arapahoe, and Jefferson counties).

These solutions can come from schools or school districts (including charter schools), technical assistance providers, curricular and/or instructional tool providers, professional learning providers, or others who can have or currently have impact in the Denver metro area. While we welcome partnerships new to the Denver metro area, we will not fund work outside of the Denver metro area.

We anticipate awarding grants of up to \$100,000 for successful proposals. Application budgets should be commensurate with the scope of work proposed and should not exceed the amount noted above. We anticipate awarding between 4-5 grants through this specific RFP.

Please note that these are one time grants, which we anticipate to be executed over the approximately 18 months between Jan 1, 2025 - July 1, 2026.

### **Known Barriers and Promising Approaches**

We know from research that newcomers and long-term MLLs face different barriers. For newcomers, barriers can include: lack of ownership of language development support across teachers, lack of age-appropriate language development content, time and scheduling constraints, and challenges outside of school. Long-term MLLs can face a range of challenges: they may have experienced ineffective programming in prior years, might possess enough English to get by and miss out on targeted support, may move from school to school resulting in lack of continuity of support, may not have teachers who help them access the academic language needed for content area study, may be in systems that fail to redesignate them, may be mislabeled, and/or may experience a narrowed curriculum. And, unfortunately, given the competing demands of secondary schools, the needs of MLLs can get deprioritized.

Fortunately, the evidence base points to promising examples of learning systems that are designed to address these barriers and meet the needs of MLLs in secondary schools. They include some of the following elements:

- Strong ELD blocks that are scheduled strategically and do not crowd out other programming for MLLs
- Differentiated programming between newcomers and long-term MLLs
- Instruction that leverages home language and sees cultural differences as an asset
- Explicit language instruction across content areas
- Strong systems for monitoring language acquisition
- Intentional access to the full experience of student life and culturally diverse texts, staff, and experiences
- Whole-school approaches where language acquisition is prioritized and all teachers see themselves in the work

As detailed further below, we are interested in solutions that address the known barriers for MLLs and leverage evidence-based approaches.

### **Proposal Requirements:**

We are specifically looking for proposals that:

- Present a high leverage and scalability opportunity specific to MLLs
- Can show and continue to collect clear outcome metrics
- Can easily be adapted or modified to support future spread
- Demonstrate the applicant has a firm understanding and prior exemplar experience in service to MLLs
- Provide a clearly defined project with detailed activities and milestones
- Articulate how the project will lead to impact in the near-term and how those benefits will be sustained past the lifetime of the project
- Show strong command of research base of support for MLLs, and specifically secondary MLLs
- Proposals from organizations outside of the Denver metro area must have potential Denver metro area implementation partners identified

**Priority will be given to proposals that:**

- Are led by or led in partnership with BIPOC communities
- Serve majority BIPOC students and their families
- Catalyze systems for long-term racial equity and racial justice

**We will not consider funding proposals that:**

- Are for services outside of the four county Denver metro area (Denver, Jefferson, Adams and Arapahoe)
- Do not serve our target populations of MLLs
- Are not at the secondary (middle and high school) level
- Serve private schools
- Do not provide any thought towards scale up and sustainability
- Do not intersect with schools (e.g., after school programs, online resources not partnered with schools)
- Have weak or unclear project details, timelines, methodology, impact plans
- Request funds for capital expenses (buildings, vehicles, etc.)
- Do not address the objectives of this RFP

**Expectations of Grant Recipients**

Applicants that receive this grant will be expected to:

- Execute their plan to expand their proven practice to more MLLs in secondary grades
- Participate in potential learning gatherings with other grantees, as applicable
- Participate in efforts to amplify their practice

**Services/Support from Gary to Grant Recipients**

Gary Community Ventures will provide the following services and support to grantees:

- 1-time grant with funding up to \$100,000
- Support with storytelling regarding your solution in order to advance service to secondary MLLs
- Connections, as applicable, to Gary's partners in the field

- Gary will consider, based on the grantees, convening learning opportunities with other grantees to share promising practices, learn more about proven service to MLLs in secondary schools, and network

### **RFP Application & Timeline**

To complete the online application and or obtain a copy of the application questions to share with your team, see it [here](#) or view the Application Process section of the RFP landing page.

Applications are due at 5:00 pm MT on August 31, 2024. Applications will be reviewed during the month of September. Applicants may be asked for additional information during the review process, which could include interviews and/or site visits. All applicants will be notified of final decisions by 5:00 pm MT October 18, 2024.

### **Questions**

For questions regarding this RFP, please contact Angie McPhaul, Director of Youth Success at Gary Community Ventures at [amcphaul@garycommunity.org](mailto:amcphaul@garycommunity.org).

### **Informational Webinar**

There will be an optional information webinar where you can learn more about the RFP and ask questions on July 30, 2024 at 2PM MT. The Zoom link is:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81785459226>

### **Office Hours**

Office hours are an optional opportunity to seek assistance and ask questions about the RFP. It will be held on August 12 at 1PM MT. The Zoom link is: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84035723177>