High Cost Services Webinar

2026-2027 School Year

Hillary Hall Robinson, Esq.

Presenter Information

Hillary Hall Robinson, Esq.

Director of Data, Policy, and Reporting

Hillary.Robinson2@la.gov

225-219-4536 (office)

225-571-7106 (cell)(preferred)



Agenda

- High Cost Services Overview
- Allowable and Unallowable Costs
- Eligible Amount Requested
- Allocation Methodology
- Application Process
- Timelines
- Questions

If you are experiencing audio difficulties, please make sure that your speakers are on and that your volume is at a suitable level. Please type questions into the Q&A or chat box as we go along.

Meeting ID: 988 7927 1458

High Cost Services Overview

Overview of High Cost Services

The High Cost Services (HCS) fund was established to support school systems who serve Louisiana students with disabilities who have the most difficult needs by providing additional funding for high-cost special education and related services.

Approximately $16.4 million dollars are available for the 2025-2026 school year.

- In Round 1, this includes $2.76 million from IDEA state set aside funds and $12 million from MFP funds.*
- In Round 2, this includes an additional $1.64 million from IDEA state set aside funds.

**Note: The availability of MFP funding is subject to change as the result of the Legislative session.*

Overview of High Cost Services

A school system is eligible to apply for the HCS fund on behalf of any student who meets the student eligibility criteria:

- The student is age 3-21 with an active Individualized Education Plan (IEP).
- The total cost to educate the student in the prior school year exceeded three times the average per pupil expenditure ($17,769).

3 x $17,769 = **$53,307***

- All costs for which the school system requests reimbursement are explicitly stated in the student's IEP.

**The school system must keep accurate internal records of all prior year expenses used for justification that the student meets the eligibility criteria of the grant, as all expenses are subject to further audit.*

Overview of High Cost Services(HCS)

The HCS fund includes two rounds:

Round 1: Includes students who were enrolled in both the previous school year ***and*** this school year.

Round 2: Includes new students who joined your school system from July 1, 2026 to September 30, 2026.

HCS Cycle	Enrollment Period	Threshold Eligibility
Round 1	7/1/25 - 6/30/26 (SY 25-26)	$53,307 spent in SY 25-26
Round 2	7/1/26 - 9/30/26 (SY 26-27)	$53,307 projected in SY 25-26

Overview of High Cost Services

HCS funds are **student specific** and cannot be used to support other students.

- If the student approved for funds no longer needs the services designated in the application, or if the student withdraws or transfers to another Local Education Agency (LEA), the school system that was allocated funds must notify the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) in writing no later than 10 days after the student's status changes.
- The LEA that received funds will not be eligible to retain any remaining unobligated or unexpended funds.

Overview of High Cost Services

Any remaining unobligated or unexpended funds will follow the student who transfers to any LEA within the state if the system or school requests or confirms the need for funds.

Any specialized equipment purchased with HCS funds will follow the student to any LEA within the state and shall become part of the receiving LEA's inventory list.

The LDOE staff will monitor High Cost Services and student jurisdiction through the Special Education Reporting (SER) system and other auditing systems.

Allowable and Unallowable Costs

Allowable Costs

Details about allowable and unallowable costs can be found in the 2026-2027 High Cost Services State Plan.

Even if an allowable cost, the materials, services, supports, and personnel **must be documented and clearly described** in the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) in order to be eligible for reimbursement.

Allowable Costs

- Certified teachers or interpreters in specific low incidence disability areas, e.g., Deaf/Hard of Hearing and Visual Impairment, where students are receiving the majority of their services from a generically certified special education teacher. Both specialty teachers, interpreters, and any 1:1 teachers must be described on the IEP.
- One-on-one or two-on-one paraprofessional support to address the student's high cost services. The terms "child specific aide" or "**1:1 or 2:1 paraprofessional**" must be indicated on the IEP.

Allowable Costs

- Special transportation costs are limited to personnel, equipment, or services required for the specific high need cost as identified on the IEP. Any transportation costs not specific to the high need student or prorated for this student are unallowable. Services must be provided directly to the student and must be clearly described on the IEP under "**Special Transportation.**"
- Specialized equipment or supplies. The specialized equipment and supplies must be described in the student's IEP.
- Specialized training for staff, described in the student's IEP, needed to implement the student's high cost services.

Allowable Costs

- Related services, such as nursing services, occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech/language pathology, educational interpreters, mental health professional counselor that are above and beyond what the majority of students in the school are receiving. A typical service delivery model is considered to be **30 minutes twice a week**, therefore the related service has to be above and beyond this.

Unallowable Costs

- Basic classroom costs, such as teachers, curriculum, materials and supplies, transportation (other than student specific special transportation as described in the IEP) and other routine costs associated with the provision of special education and related services to students with disabilities.
- The salary and benefits of a bus driver are not reimbursable if the student qualifying as high cost and other students (not qualifying as high cost) are on the bus at the same time. Any transportation costs not specific to the high need student or prorated for this student are unallowable.

Unallowable Costs

- Related services costs that are provided at the same level as all other students with disabilities. For example, **a typical service delivery model is 30 minutes twice a week.**
- Construction costs such as buildings and sidewalks.
- Legal fees, court costs or other costs associated with a cause of action brought on behalf of a student with a disability to ensure a FAPE for the child.
- LEAs may not use Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) funds to pay for medical services eligible under the State Medicaid Program per guidance from the United States Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP).

Eligible Amount Requested for Reimbursement

Eligible Amount Requested for Reimbursement

eGMS will indicate the amount of eligible reimbursement for each student based on the total cost amount entered to educate the student in the prior year (2025-2026) compared to the eligibility criteria of the grant.

The average per pupil amount **($17,769)** is subtracted from the eligibility criteria a student must meet to be eligible to participate in the grant **($53,307)**.

The remaining balance is subtracted from the total cost to educate the student in the previous year to populate the amount that can be requested for reimbursement.

Eligible Amount Requested for Reimbursement

Example: If the total cost to educate the student in the prior year was $70,000, the LEA may apply for reimbursement of up to $34,462.

The average per pupil amount ($17,769) is subtracted from the eligibility criteria a student must meet to be eligible to participate in the grant ($53,307).

$53,307 - 17,769 = $35,538 **$70,000 - $35,538 = $34,462**

The remaining balance ($35,538) is subtracted from the total cost to educate the student in the previous year ($70,000) to populate the amount that can be requested for reimbursement: $34,462.

Allocation Methodology

Allocation Methodology

The LDOE assembles a team to review all applications to determine allowable and eligible costs for each student.

For each LEA, the eligible costs are totaled and used to calculate the Percent Impact on the budget of the LEA.

The Percent Impact will be ranked from highest to lowest within the two separate categories: school systems and other public schools.

HCS Procedural Safeguards

HCS funds are not intended to replace any existing federal, state, or local special education funds.

HCS funds are student specific and *cannot* be used to support other students.

Specialized equipment purchased with HCS funds will follow the student to any school system or school.

If the student approved for funds no longer needs the services, or if the student withdraws or transfers to another LEA, the LEA that was allocated funds must notify the LDOE.

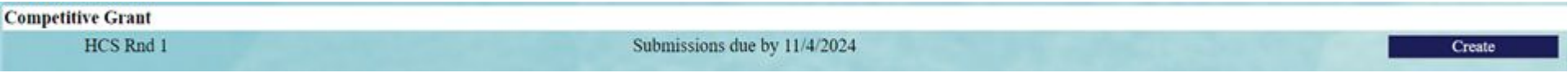
Remaining funds will follow the student who transfers to any LEA if the new LEA requests or confirms the need for the funds.

Application Process

Application Process

The HCS application is included as a competitive application in eGMS.

HCS Contact Information and Assurances must be completed to access the application. Once completed, the HCS Round 1 tab will show up in the Competitive section on your eGMS Access Select page.



Application Process

School systems will enter information for students for whom they will submit applications in the Student Data tabs.

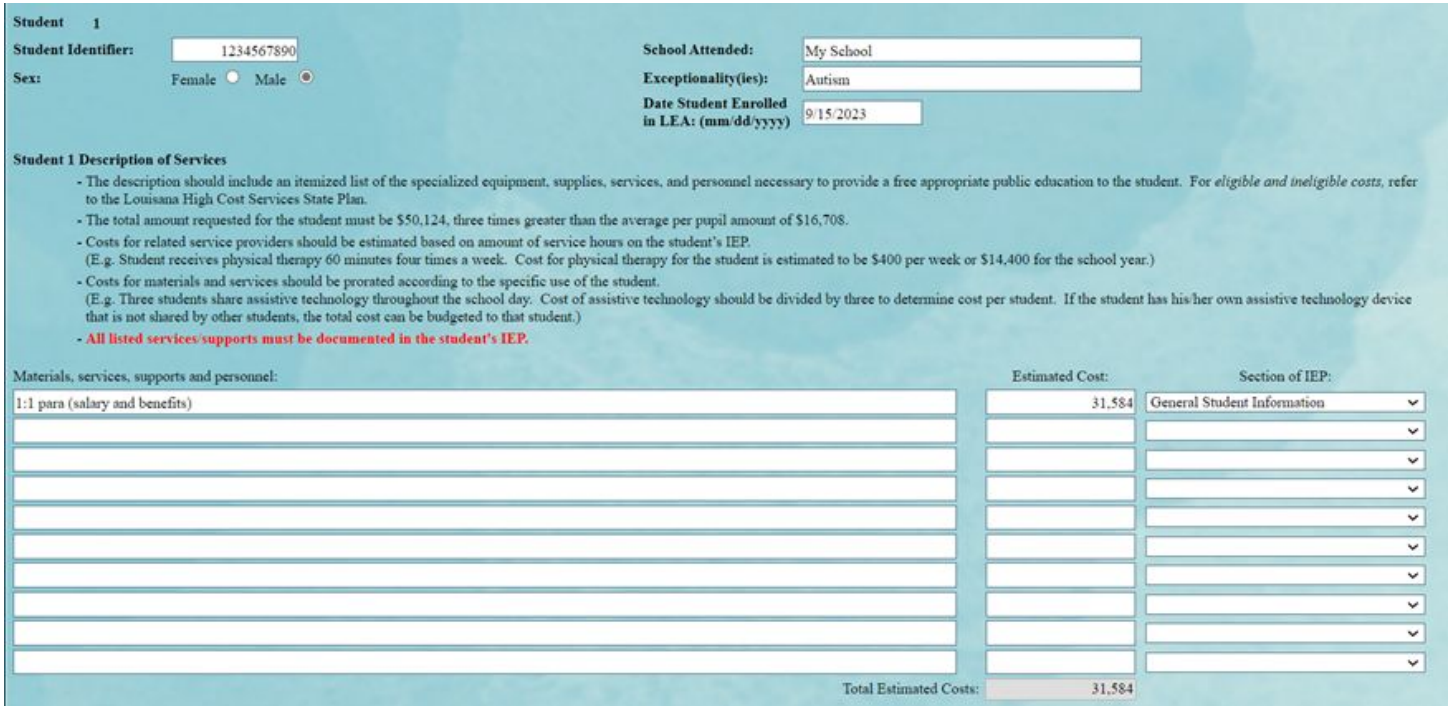
School systems can submit applications for up to 60 students in Round 1 and up to 36 students in Round 2.

Student names and other personally identifiable information (PII) are not allowed. LEAs must use the student's state ID (LASID). The student identifier field is where you will enter the student's state ID.

Materials, services, supports, and personnel requested in the application must match the information in the student's current IEP.

Student Data Pages

Step 1: Complete the basic information for the student.



Student 1

Student Identifier: 1234567890

Sex: Female ○ Male ◉

School Attended: My School

Exceptionality(ies): Autism

Date Student Enrolled in LEA: (mm/dd/yyyy) 9/15/2023

Student 1 Description of Services

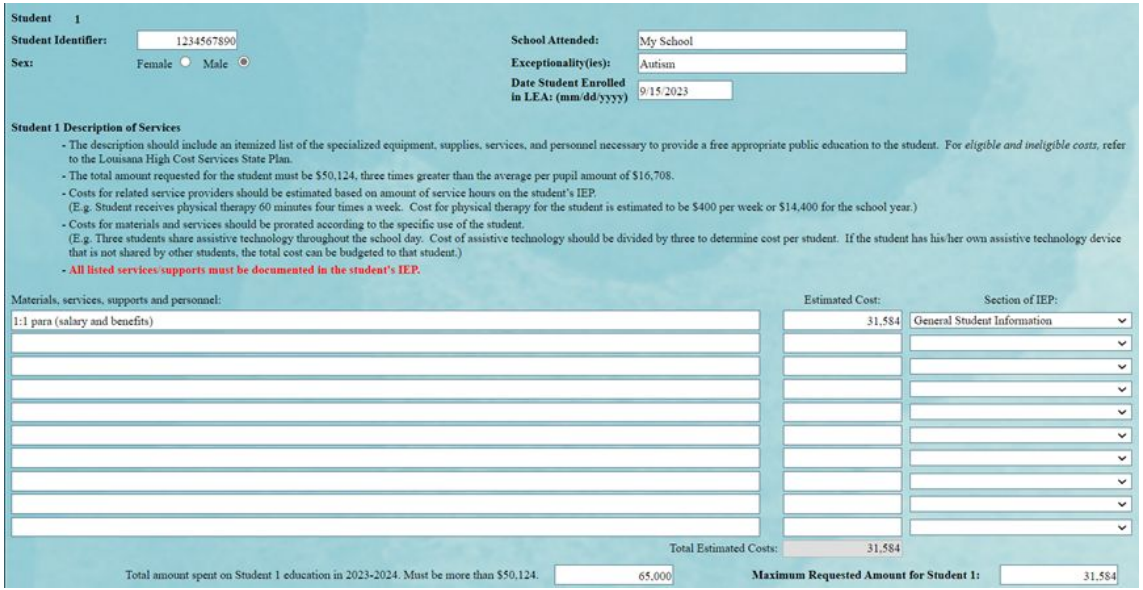
- The description should include an itemized list of the specialized equipment, supplies, services, and personnel necessary to provide a free appropriate public education to the student. For *eligible and ineligible costs*, refer to the Louisana High Cost Services State Plan.
- The total amount requested for the student must be $50,124, three times greater than the average per pupil amount of $16,708.
- Costs for related service providers should be estimated based on amount of service hours on the student's IEP.
  (E.g. Student receives physical therapy 60 minutes four times a week. Cost for physical therapy for the student is estimated to be $400 per week or $14,400 for the school year.)
- Costs for materials and services should be prorated according to the specific use of the student.
  (E.g. Three students share assistive technology throughout the school day. Cost of assistive technology should be divided by three to determine cost per student. If the student has his/her own assistive technology device that is not shared by other students, the total cost can be budgeted to that student.)
- **All listed services/supports must be documented in the student's IEP.**

Materials, services, supports and personnel:	Estimated Cost:	Section of IEP:
1:1 para (salary and benefits)	31,584	General Student Information
Total Estimated Costs:	31,584	

Student Data Pages

Step 2: Enter the total amount spent on the student in the 2025-2026 school year. In order for the student to be eligible, this amount must exceed **$53,307**.

Step 3: The application will automatically calculate the maximum request amount.



Student 1

Student Identifier: 1234567890

Sex: Female ○ Male ◉

School Attended: My School

Exceptionality(ies): Autism

Date Student Enrolled in LEA: (mm/dd/yyyy) 9/15/2023

Student 1 Description of Services

- The description should include an itemized list of the specialized equipment, supplies, services, and personnel necessary to provide a free appropriate public education to the student. For *eligible and ineligible costs*, refer to the Louisiana High Cost Services State Plan.
- The total amount requested for the student must be $50,124, three times greater than the average per pupil amount of $16,708.
- Costs for related service providers should be estimated based on amount of service hours on the student's IEP.
  (E.g. Student receives physical therapy 60 minutes four times a week. Cost for physical therapy for the student is estimated to be $400 per week or $14,400 for the school year.)
- Costs for materials and services should be prorated according to the specific use of the student.
  (E.g. Three students share assistive technology throughout the school day. Cost of assistive technology should be divided by three to determine cost per student. If the student has his/her own assistive technology device that is not shared by other students, the total cost can be budgeted to that student.)
- **All listed services/supports must be documented in the student's IEP.**

Materials, services, supports and personnel:	Estimated Cost:	Section of IEP:
1:1 para (salary and benefits)	31,584	General Student Information

Total Estimated Costs: 31,584

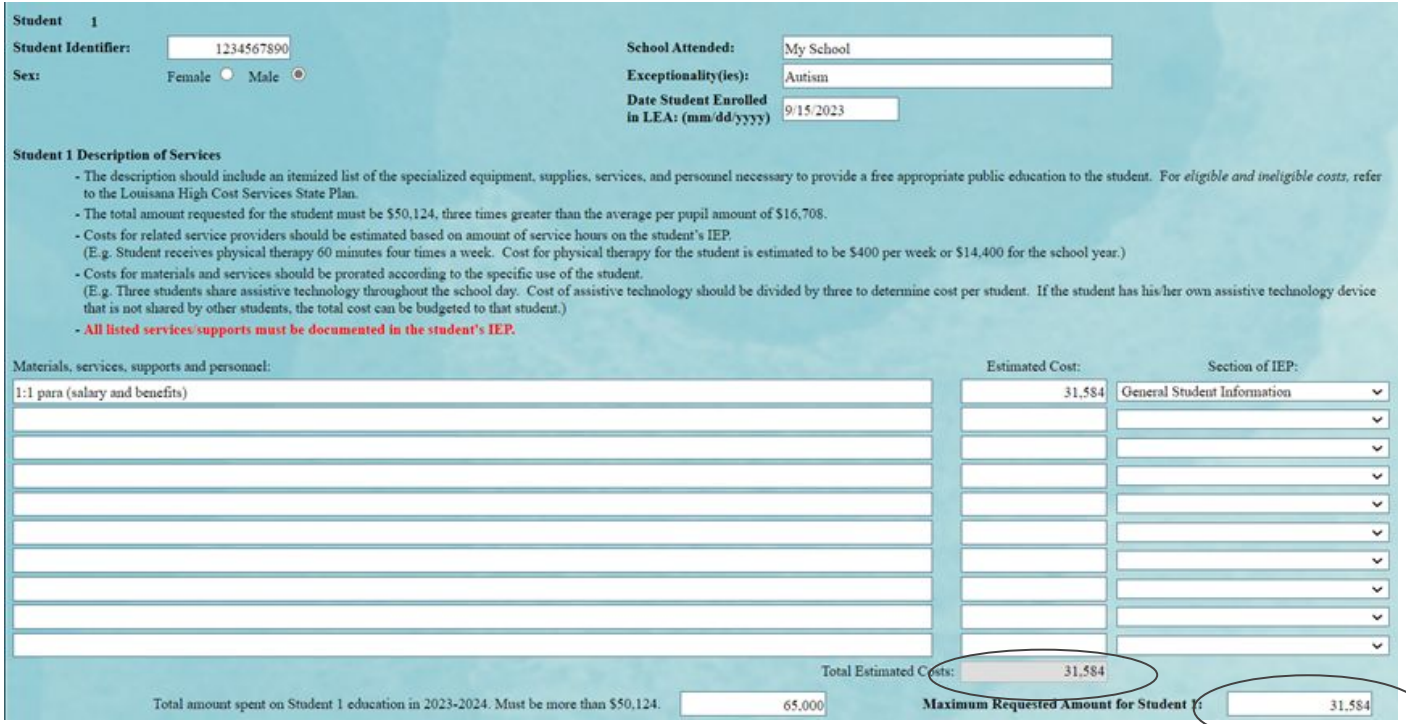
Total amount spent on Student 1 education in 2023-2024. Must be more than $50,124. 65,000

Maximum Requested Amount for Student 1: 31,584

Student Data Pages

Step 4: Based on that maximum request amount, school systems will then list the services, personnel, materials, and support for which reimbursement is requested. This includes indicating the section of the IEP in which the LDOE reviewers can find the activities described. The sum total of these activities must match the maximum request amount.

Student Data Pages



Student 1

Student Identifier: 1234567890

Sex: Female ○ Male ◉

School Attended: My School

Exceptionality(ies): Autism

Date Student Enrolled in LEA: (mm/dd/yyyy) 9/15/2023

Student 1 Description of Services

- The description should include an itemized list of the specialized equipment, supplies, services, and personnel necessary to provide a free appropriate public education to the student. For *eligible and ineligible costs*, refer to the Louisana High Cost Services State Plan.
- The total amount requested for the student must be $50,124, three times greater than the average per pupil amount of $16,708.
- Costs for related service providers should be estimated based on amount of service hours on the student's IEP.
  (E.g. Student receives physical therapy 60 minutes four times a week. Cost for physical therapy for the student is estimated to be $400 per week or $14,400 for the school year.)
- Costs for materials and services should be prorated according to the specific use of the student.
  (E.g. Three students share assistive technology throughout the school day. Cost of assistive technology should be divided by three to determine cost per student. If the student has his/her own assistive technology device that is not shared by other students, the total cost can be budgeted to that student.)
- **All listed services/supports must be documented in the student's IEP.**

Materials, services, supports and personnel:	Estimated Cost:	Section of IEP:
1:1 para (salary and benefits)	31,584	General Student Information

Total Estimated Costs: 31,584

Total amount spent on Student 1 education in 2023-2024. Must be more than $50,124. 65,000

Maximum Requested Amount for Student 1: 31,584

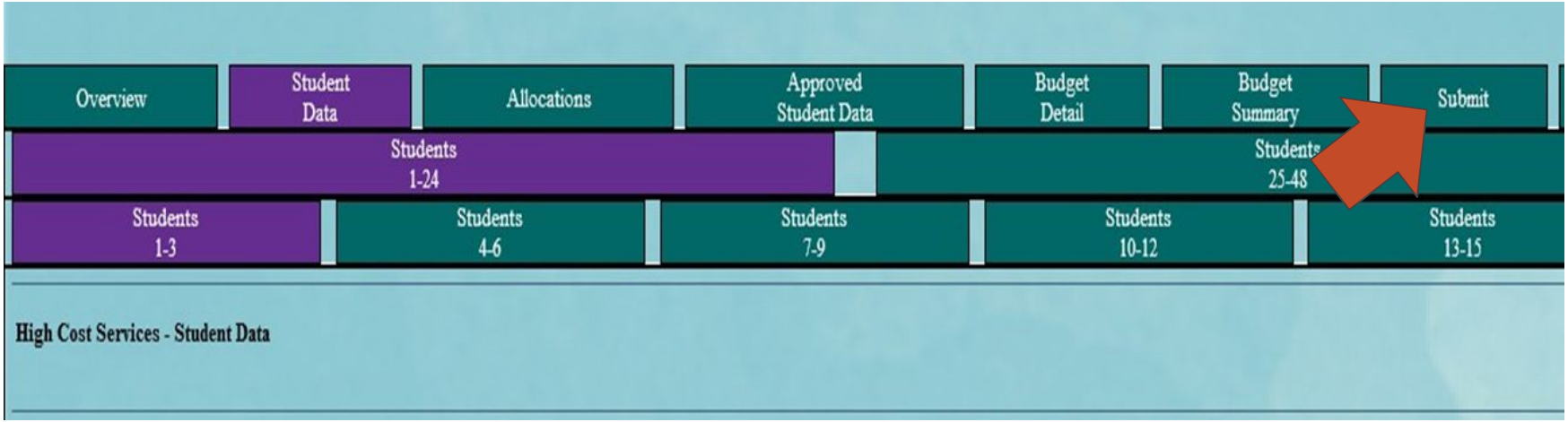
Process Before Submission

School systems should verify the following information before submitting the application:

- **Enrollment in EdLink 360 aligns with HCS enrollment requirements.**
  - Round 1: Enrollment from previous school year with the LEA and current enrollment in the LEA.
  - Round 2: Students should have an enrollment date between 7/1/26-9/30/26.
- **Budget items in the application are clearly documented in the students' IEPs.**
- **Student IDs are accurate.**

Submission

Step 5: Once the application is complete, click the “Submit” button.



Process After Submission

There are several layers to the review process for the original application:

- **Preliminary Review**
- **Allocation Development**
- **Assigned Allocations**
- **Final Review**

Upon approval of final review, an amendment can be created to submit the budget.

Amendments

Creating an amendment:

- On the Access/Select page, select the “Amend” button.
- Once the amendment opens, use the “Page Lock Control” tab to unlock the pages needed.
- On the Page Lock Control tab, select “Expand All”. Select the pages that need to be unlocked to complete the budget.
- Complete the Budget Detail tab.
- Run a Consistency Check (located on the “Submit” tab).
- Once the application passes the consistency check, “Submit to LDE” for review.

Timelines

Round 1 Timeline

Tentative Schedule	Action Item
September 17, 2026	Application Opens
October 16, 2026	Application Closes
November 9, 2026	LDOE Reviews Completed
November 10 - December 15	Allocation Development
December 18	Allocations Assigned in eGMS
December 19 - January 8	Final Review
January 9 - February 2, 2027	Amendments Submitted

Round 2 Timeline

Tentative Schedule	Action Item
Late October	Application Opens
Late November	Application Closes

Questions?

Programmatic Questions
Hillary.Robinson2@la.gov
Office: (225)219-4536
Cell: (225)571-7106 (preferred)

Application Questions
ldoe.grantshelpdesk@la.gov