

Steve Carter Literacy Tutoring Program Request for Applications (RFA)

Louisiana Tutoring Initiative Application Guide

Dr. Cade Brumley

State Superintendent of Education

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Section 1: Overview and Objectives of Louisiana Tutoring Initiative

Steve Carter Literacy Tutoring Program Strategy for Public School Students Enrolled in K-5th

Early literacy is a critical predictor of educational and lifelong success. Louisiana is working urgently to improve early literacy outcomes and ensure all students are reading on grade level by the end of grade 3 and also recognize that there is a need to continue building foundational skills beyond second grade. All Louisiana students must be proficient in reading in order to successfully transition to higher grade levels and to become college and career ready.

The Steve Carter Literacy Tutoring Program was established through [Act 415](#) during the 2021 Spring legislative session. The Department has designated \$40 million dollars of the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds toward this tutoring program.

The purpose of this RFA is to identify organizations that will provide tutoring services to Kindergarten through fifth grade public school students who are below reading proficiency to address unfinished learning. All tutoring services must be provided by certified teachers in early elementary or reading or those with a degree in education, English or other subject indicative of expertise in reading and literacy. Tutoring providers must also agree to complete the [Act 108 training](#) by December 31, 2023.

The primary objectives of the Louisiana Tutoring Initiative are to:

- **Support literacy for Louisiana’s K through 5th grade learners.** In grades K-2, foundational skills are necessary and central components of an effective, comprehensive reading program designed to develop proficient readers with the capacity to comprehend texts across a range of types and disciplines. To address unfinished learning tutors should support students in concepts of print, phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, syntax, and fluency in a logical and transparent progression. To accelerate students in grades 3-5, tutoring should focus on supporting students in accessing the features of complex, current grade-level texts by building knowledge, vocabulary, or foundational skills.
- **Develop strong relationships with families to support learning.** Student learning is supported by parents and reinforced outside of school hours increases student outcomes. Service providers must be prepared to support all parents, including parents with low levels of literacy attainment and parents who speak a language other than English. Parents should have the opportunity to provide feedback and receive support throughout the tutoring process.
- **Implement tutoring best practices.** Effective tutoring programs provide initial training and ongoing support for tutors, define formal time commitments for tutors, design structured tutoring sessions, carefully monitor tutoring services, and ensure close alignment to classroom instruction and curriculum. All literacy instruction should align to the science of reading.

Section 2: RFA Application / Selection Processes

The table below outlines the RFA process for the Louisiana Tutoring Initiative.

Louisiana Tutoring Provider RFA Process	
Step 1	Tutoring applicants submit an application via https://louisianabelieves.smapply.io/ . New users will need to create an account and select the Louisiana Tutoring Initiative Provider RFA.
Step 2	The LDOE schedules and convenes review panels to review applications. Rejected applicants receive feedback and will have one opportunity to resubmit applications.
Step 3	Approved tutoring providers will be added as options in the Louisiana Tutoring Vendor Guide.

Section 3: Required Application Components and Format

Tutoring applicants submit an application via <https://louisianabelieves.smapply.io/>.

No cover letters, executive summaries, or organizational marketing materials will be accepted.

Tutoring Provider Application Template: Required Components Description		
Section	Application Section	Template Section Components
1	Provider Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contact information ● Company or organization overview <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ structure ○ mission statement ○ prior work ○ third party evaluations
2	Provider Goals and Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Interest in Steve Carter Literacy Tutoring Program ● Approach to literacy instruction ● Summary of experiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ tutoring programs ○ tutor training ○ other relevant programs ● Administrative structure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ operations ○ supervision ○ assessment of tutoring services ● Quality measurement of services
3	Program Description and Scope of Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strategy to support tutoring goals ● Alignment to high quality curriculum and assessments ● Supporting students with English as a second language ● Supporting students with disabilities ● Qualifications of tutors, including background checks to align with school system expectations. ● Format/technologies used to deliver tutoring ● Scope of services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ availability ○ number of tutors ○ daily/weekly schedules ○ zip codes (for potential in-person services)
4	Engagement and Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Plan that includes how provider will engage and collaborate with families and schools about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ each child’s progress and needs ○ increasing literacy, capacity and involvement ○ addressing questions/concerns for all families, including those with low levels of literacy/English proficiency ○ alignment between classroom instruction and tutoring services
5	Proposed Pricing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Overall hourly charge per hour per session

6	References	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1-3 Letters of Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Required - head of organization ○ Optional - current or previous partner ○ Optional - choice
7	Signature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Required for consideration
8	Appendix	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sample scope and sequence for a select grade level ● Sample lesson for 8 tutoring sessions with facilitation notes ● Job description for job posting for tutors

Section 4: Application Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation Criteria

LDOE provides rigorous evaluation criteria for RFA applications. Applications are evaluated based on:

- 1) Ability of provider to help Louisiana achieve key education goals
- 2) Commitment of provider to serve young learners, including English language learners and students with disabilities
- 3) Quality of tutoring, connection to school-based learning, and proposed instructors
- 4) Commitment of provider to engage stakeholders
- 5) Cost effectiveness

All determinations of whether or not an application meets these evaluation criteria will be indicated on a “Pass / Fail” basis. The LDOE will interpret these evaluation criteria as indicated in the table below.

Evaluation Criteria	How the Evaluation Criteria will be Assessed: Evaluation Sub-Components
<p>Section 1: Provider’s mission and work aligns with program goals.</p>	<p>1a) Provider’s organizational mission aligns with the goals of Louisiana Tutoring Initiative.</p> <p>1b) Provider has relevant experience to conduct the work.</p> <p>1c) Provider has a history of effective completion of work and/or favorable reviews.</p>
<p>Section 2: Provider communicates goals and background.</p>	<p>2a) Provider’s methodology and approach to reading instruction are aligned to Accelerate. Literacy instruction aligns to the science of reading.</p> <p>2b) Provider is qualified to conduct high-quality tutoring in a remote and/or face-to-face environment. (Steve Carter Literacy Tutoring Program requires tutoring is provided by a person who is trained in the state standards for English language arts and who holds a valid teaching certificate in either elementary education or reading or holds a baccalaureate or graduate degree in education, English, or another subject area indicative of expertise in reading and literacy. Tutors must also agree to complete Act 108 training by one of the approved vendors and provide documentation of completion by December 31, 2023.)</p> <p>2c) Provider’s organizational structure for operation, supervision, and assessment of tutoring services will promote high quality of services.</p> <p>2d) Provider presents a clear plan for using data to drive student achievement and communicate results to stakeholders.</p>
<p>Section 3: Provider demonstrates the ability to achieve key program goals.</p>	<p>3a) Provider communicates a sound strategy to support reading achievement.</p> <p>3b) Provider will align services to the high quality curriculum used in Louisiana schools.</p> <p>3c) Provider is committed to serving all learners, including students with disabilities and English Learners.</p> <p>3d) Provider lists reasonable qualifications, hiring process and background checks for tutors and describes a plan to assess tutor effectiveness.</p>

	<p>3e) Provider presents a clear plan for the use of technology to deliver services.</p> <p>3f) Provider offers flexible options for in-person delivery and/or summer services.</p>
<p>Section 4: Provider engages and collaborates with all stakeholders.</p>	<p>4a) Provider describes a clear plan for engaging with families and schools.</p> <p>4b) Provider is committed to assisting families who may lack high-level literacy skills or English proficiency.</p> <p>4c) Provider offers support to families who have questions or concerns about their child’s tutoring experience.</p> <p>4d) Provider includes a plan for collaborating with teachers about individual students’ goals.</p> <p>4e) Provider will communicate student progress to parents and teachers at least monthly.</p>
<p>Section 5: Provider rate is cost effective.</p>	<p>5a) Provider will not charge over \$40/hr for tutoring services. \$40 per hour 1:1, \$30 per hour 2:1 or \$27 per hour 3:1. (Please note that the LDOE will publish hourly rates, which may impact a family’s service selection.)</p> <p>5b) Proposed rate(s) is/are at fair market value considering materials, activities and qualifications.</p>

Evaluation Process Notes

LDOE evaluation teams will evaluate each application based on the Evaluation Criteria.

- Applications must “pass” all five eligibility standards to be accepted. In order to “pass” a standard the provider must meet each sub-component of that standard.
- A provider’s application package will be accepted and listed on the La Tutoring Initiative Provider Page if:
 - the application achieves a “pass” on all five evaluation criteria; and
 - the application conforms with all of the RFA’s administrative and legal requirements.
- No appeals will be considered at any stage.
- Unsuccessful applicants are encouraged to submit new proposals during future RFA application processes.
- LDOE may observe approved programs and review resources periodically to ensure alignment to program quality.

Section 5: List of Appendices

The following appendices will provide applicants with useful information

Appendix 1: Miscellaneous Resources

Resource	URL Link	Information Included
INACOL National Standards for Quality Online Teaching	http://www.inacol.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/national-standards-for-quality-online-teaching-v2.pdf	National standards that provide teachers a set of criteria for effective online learning to guarantee that the teachers are better able to understand the technology, new teaching methods and digital course content to foster a personalized online learning environment for every student.
Instructional Materials Review	https://louisianabelieves.com/academics/ONLINE-INSTRUCTIONAL-MATERIALS-REVIEWS/curricular-resources-annotated-reviews	Curriculum vetted and annotated by the instructional materials review process.

Appendix 2: Definitions

1. Application Timeframe

- 1.1. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. It is solely the responsibility of all applicants to make sure their application is completed.

2. Applicant Code of Conduct

- 2.1. Applicants are responsible for determining that there will be no conflict or violation of the Ethics Code once they begin working with students, schools, and families. Ethics issues are interpreted by the Louisiana Board of Ethics.

3. Public Disclosure

- 3.1. All materials submitted in response to this request become the property of the State. Selection or rejection of an application does not affect this right.
- 3.2. Only information that is in the nature of legitimate trade secrets or non-published financial data may be deemed proprietary or confidential. Any material within an application identified as such must be clearly marked in the applications and will be handled in accordance with the Louisiana Public Record Act, R.S. 44: 1-44 and applicable rules and regulations. Any application marked as confidential or proprietary in its entirety may be rejected without further consideration or recourse.
- 3.3. By submitting, the applicant grants the State of Louisiana Department of Education the right and license to republish its application, if the Department so chooses, as an example or sample application for the edification of other applicants.

4. Determination of Responsibility

- 4.1. Determination of the applicant's responsibility relating to this RFA shall be made according to the standards set forth in LAC 34: 136. The State must find that the applicant:
 - 4.1.1. Has adequate financial resources for performance, or has the ability to obtain such resources as required during performance.
 - 4.1.2. Has the necessary experience, organization, technical qualifications, skills, and facilities, or has the ability to obtain them.
 - 4.1.3. Is able to comply with the proposed or required time of delivery or performance schedule.
 - 4.1.4. Has a satisfactory record of integrity, judgment, and performance.
 - 4.1.5. Is otherwise qualified and eligible to receive an award under applicable laws and regulations.
 - 4.1.6. Applicants should ensure that their application contains sufficient information for the State to make its determination by presenting acceptable evidence of the ability to perform the services called for by this RFA.

5. Right to Prohibit Award

- 5.1. Any public entity is authorized to reject an application from, or not award the contract to, a business in which any individual with an ownership interest of five percent or more has been convicted of or has entered a plea of guilty or nolo contendere to any state felony or equivalent federal felony crime committed in the solicitation or execution of a contract or bid awarded under the laws governing public contracts under the provisions of Chapter 10 of Title 38 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, professional, personal, consulting, and social services procurement under the provisions of Chapter 16 of this Title, or the Louisiana Procurement Code under the provisions of Chapter 17 of this Title.

6. RFA Addenda

- 6.1. The State reserves the right to change the calendar of events or revise any part of the RFA by issuing an addendum to the RFA at any time.

7. Waiver of Administrative Informalities

- 7.1. The State reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to waive administrative informalities contained in any applications.

8. Application Rejection

- 8.1. Issuance of this RFA in no way constitutes a commitment by the State to award a contract. The State reserves the right to accept or reject, in whole or part, all applications submitted and/or cancel this announcement if it is determined to be in the State's best interest.

9. Withdrawal and Re-submission of Applications

- 9.1. An applicant may withdraw an application that has been submitted at any time. To accomplish this, a written request signed by the authorized representative of the applicant must be submitted to louisianaliteracy@la.gov.

10. Subcontracting Information

- 10.1. Unless provided for in the contract with the State, the prime contractor shall not contract with any other party for furnishing any of the work and professional services herein contracted for without the express written approval of the State.

11. Cost of Preparing Applications

- 11.1. The State is not liable for any costs incurred by prospective applicants prior to issuance of or entering into a contract. Costs associated with developing an application, preparing for oral presentations and interviews, and any other expenses incurred by the applicants in responding to this RFA are entirely the responsibility of the applicants, and shall not be reimbursed in any manner by the State of Louisiana.

12. Errors and Omissions in Applications

- 12.1. The State will not be liable for any errors in applications. The State reserves the right to make corrections or amendments due to errors identified in applications by the State or the applicant. The State, at its option, has the right to request clarification or additional information from the applicants.

13. Corporation Requirements

- 13.1. If the applicant is a corporation not incorporated under the laws of the State of Louisiana, the applicant shall have obtained a certificate of authority pursuant to R. S. 12:301-302 from the Secretary of State of Louisiana.
- 13.2. If the applicant is a for-profit corporation whose stock is not publicly traded, the applicant shall ensure that a disclosure of ownership form has been properly filed with the Secretary of State of Louisiana.