

## Maryland School-Based Conflict Resolution Program FY 2011-2012 Grant Announcement

A Collaborative Partnership Project of the Maryland State Department of Education, the Maryland Judiciary's Mediation and Conflict Resolution Office, and the University of Maryland School of Law's Center for Dispute Resolution

### **BACKGROUND**

The Maryland Judiciary's Mediation and Conflict Resolution Office (MACRO) supports the development of innovative dispute resolution programs in courts, communities, schools, state and local government agencies, criminal and juvenile programs, family services and businesses. In the field of education, MACRO has identified model peace schools and has helped to develop and fund numerous school-based conflict resolution demonstration projects. Working collaboratively with the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and local school systems, MACRO's Education Initiative seeks out and supports promising efforts to explore new approaches to school-based conflict resolution and to help contribute to peaceful school environments. MACRO also works to raise public awareness of its successful school-based peacemaking projects, with the hope that such successes may be replicated in other schools.

Having developed effective working relationships, MACRO, MSDE and the University of Maryland School of Law through the Center for Dispute Resolution (C-DRUM) formed a Collaborative Partnership (hereafter "the Partnership") for the administration of a 2003-2004 pilot project to administer a Small and Innovative Grant Program for Maryland schools. The grants provided funding and training for schools to implement conflict resolution programs in ten pre-K – Grade 8 schools in six school districts in Maryland. In 2004-2005, the Small and Innovative Grant Program was broadened to include twenty K-12 schools in twelve Maryland school districts. The program support to schools was further expanded in 2005-2006, to provide intensive summer CRE training and educational materials, which include resources for developing comprehensive programs in conflict resolution education (CRE). (See [www.cdsum.org](http://www.cdsum.org) for more information. Also see Publications, the School Conflict Resolution Program Monograph 2007). The program is modeled after the efforts of the Ohio Commission on Dispute Resolution, a national leader in the field of conflict resolution education.

Over the last five years, the Collaborative Grants Program has continued to award one-year school grants together with summer training and education materials, with a focus on curriculum infusion, staff training and school discipline. Now going into its ninth year, the Maryland School-based CRE Program has provided 153 past grants to schools in 21 of the 24 school districts in Maryland.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of the Partnership's 2011-2012 Maryland School-Based Conflict Resolution Grants Program continues to be assisting Maryland schools in developing school-based conflict resolution and peace making projects. The CRE program is designed to support schools that focus on one or more of the following areas: (1) curriculum infusion, (2) staff training, or (3) school discipline. Peer mediation and bullying prevention are two widely used types of supported programs. At the core of the program is a belief that conflict resolution education can result in improvements in academic achievement, a reduction in truancy, fewer suspensions and expulsions, a decrease in time spent on dealing with discipline and an improvement in overall school climate. These school projects should be developed to meet each school's individual needs for achieving a more peaceful school environment. (Note: In the past, those schools participating in PBIS have found that their CRE program integrates well within the PBIS framework.)

The Partnership is especially interested in school plans that indicate a more comprehensive approach to building a school conflict resolution program, specifically schools that take a more holistic approach aimed at not only focusing on student-student conflicts but also in creating a safe and supportive learning environment for students, teachers and parents. Teaching school staff and parents strategies for win-win conflict resolution, problem solving, anger management and communication with respect is consistent with this approach. The Partnership is placing particular emphasis on programs that indicate sustainability and integrate violence prevention and conflict resolution into the school culture.

## CONTINUED SUPPORT

The grant funding is intended as seed money for a long-term school program, with recognition that continued support may be necessary for up to two additional years (three years total). Those interested schools that have received past C-DRUM Grants in CRE are encouraged to build on initial work in this area, and submit applications for follow-up programs. For those schools seeking additional funds and support, the ***Grant Application for Continued Support*** must be completed for second or third year grant applicants. Failure to complete the correct grant application may impact the Grant Review Committee's decision. Those schools seeking continued support must present a plan that indicates building on the prior efforts. For example, if the first year's program is focused on introducing peer mediation to the community, then perhaps the second year may include plans to expand the peer mediation program **and** integrate some conflict management skill lessons into the curriculum or offer staff training in restorative practices or bullying prevention for better class management.

## C-DRUM SUPPORT

In addition to providing funding support, C-DRUM anticipates working together with grantees to assist in their efforts. Two days of summer training will be provided to four members of each school's Conflict Resolution Team, together with an age appropriate Resource Guide for each school full of more than 400 pages of lessons and strategies to use in the classroom and other

youth programs. Schools participating for a second or third year have the opportunity to send different team members to the summer training, in order to broaden the learning and basis of support within the school. The fine tuning of the School Action Plan will be an outgrowth from the training. During the school year, a one-day winter training is conducted for school project leaders and some of the school team members, providing opportunities for advanced training and networking with other schools for gaining new program ideas. The Partnership will also highlight successes and lessons learned in order to raise public awareness of school-based conflict resolution programs and to encourage replication.

## **GRANTS AVAILABILITY AND ELIGIBILITY**

Priority will be given to schools that submit applications demonstrating a strong commitment to creating a program that will have a powerful and sustainable effect on the school's culture. For this reason, the grants will focus on support in the areas of curriculum infusion, staff training and school discipline. **Funding for all program grants is subject to pending approval of an MOU between MACRO and C-DRUM.**

Peer mediation is viewed by many as an alternative to address less severe school disputes and an opportunity to provide necessary skills to students. In this respect, it falls into the focus area of school discipline. However, schools proposing to initiate peer mediation are expected to plan for the incorporation of school wide curriculum infusion of CRE within the first two years of the program.

## **COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS**

Applicants are encouraged to collaborate with members of the school community as well as community organizations such as community service agencies, youth serving agencies, or community-based dispute resolution programs. Collaboration with other schools in the community is also encouraged. Schools may also work with outside educational consultants and trainers, though the grant applications and the ultimate accountability for the program is tied to the schools.

A Resource List of Trainers and Consultants for Maryland Schools in Conflict Resolution Education is available on the C-DRUM website, at [www.cdum.org](http://www.cdum.org) under Initiatives, Schools. The listing is not a roster of recommended educational service providers but rather a convenient "on-line yellow pages" for Maryland educators. Grant writers are also encouraged to consult their Director of Student Services and Principals for suggestions, if outside trainers are of interest.

## **USE OF GRANT FUNDS**

Grant funds may be used by schools for a variety of purposes directly associated with the school's conflict management program, including: initiating a new program; strengthening an existing conflict management program; contracting with trainers, consultants or consultant services; paying for substitute teachers, teacher stipends, or travel expenses; providing refreshments and materials for trainings; and purchasing additional training materials. (Reminder: grant recipients will be

receiving age appropriate resource guides containing hundreds of pages of lessons which may be photocopied for other educators at their school.)

Please note: Grant funds may not be used for costs associated with the purchase of TV's, computer hardware, and other similar equipment purchases.

## **GRANT REQUIREMENTS**

Grant requests must be prepared using the appropriate application form and should be submitted with letters of support and any other attachments. The request should be consistent with the Partnership's purposes and the MACRO Grant Guidelines (see Attachment A).

All schools that are awarded a grant will be required to:

1. Identify a team of at least four school staff to coordinate the implementation or expansion of the conflict management program. All teams must include:
  - At least one building administrator (includes principal, assistant principal);
  - At least one classroom educator;
  - At least one of the following: guidance counselor, school social worker, school psychologist, school nurse, school resource officer, curriculum advisor, or non-paid community volunteer in the school.
2. Participate in a two-day training in late June, with four team members in attendance for the full two days. A summer stipend of \$120 per day is anticipated for all staff attending who are 10 month employees, and continuing education credits will be available for those interested.

If for any reason a team member is unable to attend the training, it is his/her responsibility to notify their school project contact and the designated team alternate in order to fulfill the grant requirements.

Reapplying schools that have received a C-DRUM grant in any year since 2005-2006 should identify staff team members for summer training who have NOT attended past C-DRUM summer trainings, because much of the material will be repetitive of prior summer trainings.

3. Complete a school action plan that will be initiated at the summer training, outlining the goals and objectives of the school's conflict management program and the manner in which the program will be implemented.
4. Implement the school conflict management action plan.
5. Involve the school community in the program implementation.

6. Expend all grant funds in a way that is consistent with the approved budget and the action plan. If spending changes become necessary, a Budget Reallocation Form will need to be completed and approved by C-DRUM.
7. Provide an update on their project via the Mid-Year Report and Final Report (The Mid-Year Report and Final Report will be available on the C-DRUM website).

As summer is often a time when educators take their vacations, a sample of various strategies to recruit people to your conflict management team is provided below:

- Financial Support: Grant funds may be used for graduate credit and travel expenses related to the two-day training. While a few financial incentives are available, please be advised that these incentives will not prove the most beneficial for long term motivation.
- Research Based Strategies: Many educators are hungry for strategies that they can use in the classroom to decrease the amount of time spent on discipline-related issues and to increase the amount of real teaching time. The research on conflict management shows that the modeling of these skills by educators and the training of their students in these important life skills can help educators achieve these goals.

For more information on comprehensive conflict management programs, refer to <http://www.disputeresolution.ohio.gov/introschoolcm.htm> or see the book *Does it Work? The Case for Conflict Resolution Education in Our Nation's Schools* edited by Dr. Tricia Jones and Dr. Dan Kmitta available at: [www.acresolution.org](http://www.acresolution.org).

- Administrative Support and Staff Buy-in: Experience has demonstrated the importance of administrative support and teacher buy-in for achieving sustainable results. It may be valuable to conduct a needs assessment in the spring of 2011 to determine what your administration and staff feels is needed and indicate where a conflict management program could best assist in meeting those needs. If you are interested, refer to <http://disputeresolution.ohio.gov/schools/assessmentevaluationscm.htm> for specific suggestions on assessment tools.
- In-service or Staff Meetings or Written Communication either via email or hard copy: It is a good idea to communicate to the school staff that your school is interested in applying for this grant and what the grant entails. At this time, you may choose to share some basic information about conflict management and what these types of programs can achieve. This information may be obtained from C-DRUM's website at [www.cdum.org](http://www.cdum.org) or at [www.state.oh.us/cdr/](http://www.state.oh.us/cdr/) under the Schools heading.

Funding for this program is provided by MACRO and managed by C-DRUM. Therefore, participating schools must comply with the relevant MACRO Grant Guidelines provided in Attachment A. Administration, promotion and technical assistance will be provided by the faculty

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and students of the University of Maryland School of Law Mediation Clinic and C-DRUM. All schools that are funded will receive some technical and implementation support from a University of Maryland School of Law Mediation Clinic student or a C-DRUM Administrator.

## **HOW AND WHEN TO APPLY**

To be considered for a grant award, each school must submit two **signed** copies of the application **postmarked by Friday, April 15, 2011** to:

Grant Review Committee  
C-DRUM, University of Maryland School of Law  
500 West Baltimore Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21201-1786  
410-706-4270 (FAX)

If you have any questions regarding the application form or the grant program, please contact Barbara Grochal either at 410-706-3143 or at [bgrochal@law.umaryland.edu](mailto:bgrochal@law.umaryland.edu).

## **REVIEW PROCESS AND SELECTION CRITERIA**

All applications will be reviewed by the Grant Review Committee. The Grant Review Committee, which includes representatives of MSDE, MACRO, and C-DRUM, will select the grant recipients. The committee will evaluate applications on the basis of the answers to the questions contained in the application form. Depending upon the extent to which a proposal supports the Partnership's purposes and upon the availability of funding, grant recipients will be fully funded, partially funded, deferred, or not funded.

The criteria to be used in reviewing the applications include a demonstrated:

- Focus on one or more of the following areas of conflict resolution work: curriculum infusion, staff training and school discipline;
- Commitment of the school to the long-term goal of providing all students, personnel and parents with opportunities to learn non-violent conflict management skills;
- **Thoroughness with respect to planning as evidenced by a detailed budget. In particular the budget should be as specific as possible. Those budgets that reflect figures without supporting details may be judged critically.**
- Innovative approach to school-based conflict management and peace making (see [www.cdrum.org](http://www.cdrum.org) or [www.state.oh.us/cdr/](http://www.state.oh.us/cdr/) for examples of past projects);
- Collaboration within the school and among other stakeholders;

- Commitment of the four person team to attend the required two-day training in its entirety and implement a school conflict management program in their school;
- Prospect of sustainability of the program;
- Prospect of replicability.

In addition, there will be some consideration of geographic balance, need and diversity.

The Committee reserves the right to ask applicants to clarify information regarding their application both before and after the deadline date.

### **NOTIFICATION OF GRANT AWARDS AND PROJECT COMMENCEMENT**

The Partnership plans to announce the names of grant award recipients by May 20, 2011. Written notification will be sent to all applicants indicating whether their applications will be funded, and if so, the grant amount and the dates of the Summer Training. Approximately four weeks later, the Superintendent or authorized agent of the grant recipient will receive two copies of the Subrecipient Agreement between the University of Maryland and the school. In order to accept the award, the authorized agent of the grant recipient must sign both copies of the Subrecipient Agreement and return these as directed. C-DRUM will not issue any grant funds until this signed agreement is received. *Please keep in mind when submitting a grant request that if approved, it will take **at least eight weeks** after your request is approved for funds to be distributed.*

All projects must commence within 90 days of receiving grant funds or other projected start date as indicated in the grantee's time line. If the project is not operational within that time frame, the grantee must report to C-DRUM the steps being taken to initiate the project, the reason for delay, and the expected start date. Failure to implement projects within this 90 day period or to obtain an extension may result in cancellation of the grant award.

### **CHANGES IN THE PROJECT**

Grant funds may not be used for any purpose or activities other than those stated in the original grant application without submitting a written change of purpose request for C-DRUM's approval using the program Budget Reallocation Form. The grant recipient's change of purpose request must include the reason for the change as well as a detailed description of what they would like to do, how they will evaluate the change and a revised project budget detailing any related cost changes. However, moving small amounts of money (10% or less) from one category to another category of the original project budget does not constitute a change in the project and does not require C-DRUM's authorization.

## **NETWORKING OPPORTUNITY**

All applicants, whether funded or not, will be invited to participate in a listserv designed to provide ongoing information about conflict resolution education programs, trainings and materials.

### **Attachment A Maryland Mediation and Conflict Resolution Office**

## **Grant Guidelines Relevant to the Schools Program**

### **PURPOSE OF THE MARYLAND MEDIATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION OFFICE (MACRO) GRANT PROGRAM**

MACRO's mission is to collaborate with stakeholders statewide to develop and expand conflict resolution services and education in courts, communities, schools, state and local government agencies, criminal and juvenile justice programs, family service programs, and businesses; and to promote quality assurance in mediation throughout Maryland. MACRO's grant program provides funding for start-up projects and other programs which support and further its mission.

### **ACCOUNTING REQUIREMENTS**

#### **Establishing Revenue and Expenditure Accounts**

Grant recipients must maintain full and accurate records of all financial transactions and accounts related to the grant-funded project, including invoices and receipts for expenses incurred, and time sheets for any salaries paid for with grant funds. These records must be maintained for three years after the close of the grant.

#### **Management Reviews and Audits**

MACRO periodically conducts audit reviews of grant recipients. If requested, grant recipients must agree to be subject to a review or audit of their grant funded project.

### **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

#### **Mid-Year and Year-End Financial and Progress Reports**

MACRO/C-DRUM requires each grant recipient to submit a signed Mid-Year and a Year-End financial and progress report. MACRO/C-DRUM will provide each grant recipient with copies of these forms. Electronic copies may be requested by contacting the Grants Administrator. The due dates for these reports will be stated in the grant agreement letter sent to each grant recipient.

Grantees must use these forms to accurately record all expenses incurred using MACRO/C-DRUM grant funds, as well as to answer several narrative questions addressing the progress of their project. At the end of the grant period, all MACRO/C-DRUM grant must be spent. If funds are not fully spent by June 29, 2012, then the school will need to return the funds to C-DRUM.

Upon the completion of your project, the Year-End reporting form should be used to prepare a closing or end-of-grant report to indicate that all MACRO/C-DRUM grant funds have been spent. With this report, MACRO/C-DRUM requires each grant recipient to submit the conclusions of their project evaluation and a description of the results of their project, indicating whether project objectives have been met.

#### Interest on Grant Funds

Grant funds are not required to be kept in an interest bearing account. If they are kept in such an account, though, interest earned on unspent balances should be reflected in the grantee's semi-annual report and plans for its expenditure should be included in the grantee's budget. In no instance should interest earned on grant funds be commingled with or revert to the grantee's general funds.

#### Unspent or Remaining Grant Funds

*All grant funds must be spent by the end of the grant period.* If the school project management finds the need to revise project plans, they can submit a Budget Reallocation Form and request approval to do so, spending the grant funds in full. After June 29, 2011, grant recipients must file a Year-End Report, and if funds remain unspent, the school or school system must return the remaining grant funds to C-DRUM via a check made payable to the "The University of Maryland."

*Remaining MACRO/C-DRUM grant funds may not be reverted into any general operating funds.* Grantees who have completed their original project prior to the end of the grant period and still have funds remaining must return the remaining funds to MACRO/C-DRUM with a Year-End Report within 30 days of the completion of the project.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF MACRO SUPPORT

Grantees must agree to include the following acknowledgment on all published materials, reports or products created as part of the grant funded project: "Produced with support from the Maryland Mediation and Conflict Resolution Office."