

**Superintendent Letter of Commitment
LifeSkills Training Middle School Program**



Dear Superintendent,

Thank you for your interest in the training and technical assistance grant to implement the Botvin *LifeSkills Training* (LST) Middle School Program. The LST Middle School Program is a three-year curriculum implemented in either grades 6-8 or 7-9 that has been shown to reduce adolescents' substance use, violence, and other high-risk behaviors. This opportunity through the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence (CSPV) at the University of Colorado Boulder is described in detail, including key components of the LST model that have helped make the program effective, as well as what the school(s) in your district will be committing to if selected for participation in the grant beginning in Fall 2022.

Please carefully consider if the school(s) in your district will be able to fully comply with these specifications. If so, please sign this letter and submit with the grant application. By signing this letter, you pledge your support to adhere to the fidelity and integrity of the LST model.

Timeline

The grant provides curriculum materials, training, and technical assistance for three years of LST implementation. In Year 1, the first cohort of students (grade 6 or grade 7) receives 15 LST core sessions (Level 1). In Year 2, this first cohort receives 10 booster sessions (Level 2), and a second incoming cohort receives the 15 core Level 1 sessions. In Year 3, the first cohort receives 5 booster sessions (Level 3), the second cohort receives 10 booster sessions (Level 2), and the incoming third cohort receives the 15 core sessions (Level 1).

Teachers

A successful replication of LST in your district is contingent on following the LST model and teaching all lessons in their entirety. Instructors attend a two-day initial training workshop prior to implementation, which describes the LST program in detail and fosters familiarity with the curriculum. Level 1 teachers attend training in Year 1, Level 2 and new Level 1 teachers attend training in Year 2, and Level 3 and any new Level 1 and 2 teachers attend training in Year 3. Additionally, a certified LST trainer will be available for technical assistance/consulting throughout the three-year project via telephone, video-conferencing, email, or on-site visits.

Teacher stipends will be paid for training workshops held during the summer, and reimbursement for substitutes will be provided by the grant for training workshops conducted during the school year. Assistance in approving training workshops and ensuring that teachers do not have competing training to attend during the scheduled LST workshops is greatly appreciated.

Teacher Feedback Surveys are completed annually after the first full cycle of LST has been taught (e.g., after the 15 core sessions), and teachers receive a \$30 gift card for survey completion. These online surveys further enhance CSPV's ability to assess experiences with the implementation process.

Classroom Observations

CSPV monitors the replication process to assess the degree that implementation is occurring with fidelity and integrity to the LST model through hiring local individuals to observe LST classroom sessions and use curriculum-specific checklists. Observers are a neutral presence in the classroom and do not provide feedback to instructors. Because observers make unannounced visits, LST instructors should follow the implementation schedule provided to CSPV and/or notify observers when changes have been made to the schedule.

Observers conduct four observations of each teacher implementing Level 1 of the curriculum, three observations of each Level 2 teacher, and two observations of each Level 3 teacher. A total of four observations will be completed each year of teachers who provide more than one level of the curriculum. In sites that consist of a large number of schools and/or teachers, a reduced number of classroom observations may be conducted. CSPV appreciates your cooperation with the completion of classroom observations.

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Meetings

After the application has been submitted, a CSPV representative conducts a feasibility visit to describe the elements of LST, answer questions, review implementation plans, and determine final program eligibility. It is important that this meeting is attended by all those with responsibility for the adoption and oversight of LST, which helps to build an early platform of support for the program. Superintendents are requested to attend this meeting, along with the principal and a teacher representative from each school, and the designated Site Coordinator.

Additionally, a CSPV representative visits annually during program implementation and meets with school principals and LST teachers, as well as attends LST classroom sessions, to gain a better understanding of the site's experiences with the program. The visit allows CSPV to obtain feedback regarding the implementation of the program, identify obstacles faced and overcome during implementation, and assess needs for further training and technical assistance.

Capacity-Building and Sustainability

A partnering organization offers two types of regional sustainability trainings: (1) Training-of-Trainers (TOT) workshops, which certify instructors as district trainers, eliminating the expense of outside trainers following the grant; and (2) Strategic Sustainability workshops, which provide support for participants in designing and completing planning work for long-term LST implementation. It is important that both trainings are attended by key individuals who can contribute to the long-term sustainability of LST.

Thank you for considering these grant components. If you have any questions about the requirements of the program or the grant, please contact lstgrant@colorado.edu.

I understand the points outlined above and will help ensure that the participating schools in my district adhere to all defined protocols.

(Superintendent Name)

(School District)

(Superintendent Signature)

(Date)