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TITLE 23: EDUCATION AND CULTURAL RESOURCES
SUBTITLE A: EDUCATION
CHAPTER II: BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATIONPART 1085
GROW YOUR OWN TEACHER GRANTS

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AUTHORITY: Implementing and authorized by Section 13 of the Grow Your Own Teacher Education Act [110 ILCS 48/13] and by Section 9.17 of the Board of Higher Education Act [110 ILCS 205/9.17].

SOURCE: Adopted at 36 Ill. Reg. 17852, effective December 10, 2012.

Section 1085.10 Purpose

The purpose of this Part is to provide for the distribution of grant funds through a competitive process *to prepare highly skilled, committed teachers who will teach in hard-to-staff schools, including within the Department of Juvenile Justice School District, and hard-to-staff teaching positions and who will remain in these schools for substantial periods of time. The initiative shall ensure educational rigor by effectively preparing candidates in accredited bachelor's degree programs in teaching, through which graduates shall meet the requirements to secure an Illinois initial teaching license/certificate.* (Section 5 of the Act)

Section 1085.20 Definitions

"Accredited teacher preparation program" means, for the purposes of this Part, a regionally accredited, Illinois approved teacher education program authorized to

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prepare individuals to fulfill all of the requirements to receive an Illinois initial teaching license/certificate (Section 10 of the Act).

"Act" means the Grow Your Own Teacher Education Act [110 ILCS 48].

"Board" means the Board of Higher Education (Section 10 of the Act).

"Candidate" means a person who is eligible to receive or is receiving assistance through a program offered by a consortium. *A candidate must hold a high school diploma or its equivalent, must meet either the definition of "parent and community leader" or the definition of "paraeducator", must not have attended college right after high school or must have experienced an interruption in his or her college education, and does not hold a bachelor's degree (Section 20 of the Act).*

"Paraeducator" means an individual with a history of demonstrated accomplishments in school staff positions (such as teacher assistants, school-community liaisons, school clerks, and security aides) in schools that meet the definition of a hard-to-staff school (Section 10 of the Act).

"Parent and community leader" means an individual who has or had a child enrolled in a school or schools that meet the definition of a hard-to-staff school under the definition of "eligible school" and who has a history of active involvement in the school or who has a history of working to improve schools serving a substantial percentage of low-income students, including membership in a community organization (Section 10 of the Act).

"Student with a non-traditional background" means a student who does not hold a bachelor's degree and who begins a baccalaureate program at a point in time other than immediately following graduation from high school or one who began a baccalaureate program after high school, did not complete it, and re-enters a baccalaureate program after some passage of time.

"Cohort" means a group of teacher education candidates who are enrolled in and share experiences in the same program and are linked by their desire to become Illinois teachers in hard-to-staff schools and by their need for the services and supports offered by the Initiative (Section 10 of the Act).

"Community organization" means a nonprofit organization that has a demonstrated capacity to train, develop, and organize parents and community leaders into a constituency that will hold the school and the school district

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accountable for achieving high academic standards; in addition to organizations with a geographic focus, "community organization" includes general parent organizations, organizations of special education or bilingual education parents, and school employee unions (Section 10 of the Act).

"Consortium" means, for the purposes of this Part, an association of entities pooling their resources to offer a program. *A consortium shall be composed of at least one 4-year institution of higher education with an Illinois accredited teacher education program, at least one school district or group of schools, and one or more community organizations. The consortium may also include a 2-year institution of higher education, a school employee union, or a regional office of education. (Section 20 of the Act)*

"Continuation grant" means an award of grant funds to a consortium for a program if an implementation grant or a continuation grant was awarded in the prior fiscal year pursuant to this Part and all requirements of the prior grant agreement were met.

"Counsel out" means a systematic approach to identify a candidate who may be struggling in the program, and to determine if the candidate is performing at an acceptable level to continue without intervention or if the candidate should discontinue the program.

"Developmental classes" means classes in basic skill areas, such as mathematics and language arts, that are prerequisite to, but not counted towards, degree requirements of a teacher preparation program (Section 10 of the Act).

"DFPR" means the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation or its successor.

"Eligible school" means a public elementary, middle, or secondary school in this State that serves a substantial percentage of low-income students and that is either hard-to-staff or has hard-to-staff teaching positions (Section 10 of the Act).

"Hard-to-staff school" means a public elementary, middle, or secondary school in this State that, based on data compiled by the State Board of Education in conjunction with the Board of Higher Education, serves a substantial percentage of low-income students, as defined by the State Board (Section 10 of the Act).

"Hard-to-staff teaching position" means a teaching category (such as special education, bilingual education, mathematics, or science) in which statewide data compiled by the State Board of Education in conjunction

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with the Board of Higher Education indicates a multi-year pattern of substantial teacher shortage or that has been identified as a critical need by the local school board (Section 10 of the Act).

"Schools serving a substantial percentage of low-income students" means schools that maintain any of grades pre-kindergarten through 8, in which at least 35% of the students are eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunches, and schools that maintain any of grades 9 through 12, in which at least 25% of the students are eligible to receive free or reduced price lunches (Section 10 of the Act).

"Fiscal agent" means the Illinois public institution pursuant to the Board of Higher Education Act [110 ILCS 205] or a private not-for-profit institution authorized to operate within the State of Illinois pursuant to the Private College Act [110 ILCS 1005] and/or the Academic Degree Act [110 ILCS 1010]; or has been in continuous operation and granted degrees within the State of Illinois before the effective date of those Acts and has not modified the business entity since the effective dates of those Acts. This definition does not apply to consortia established before 2010.

"Initiative" means the Grow Your Own Teacher Education Initiative created under the Act (Section 10 of the Act).

"Institution" means an institution of higher education.

"Implementation grant" means an award of grant funds to a consortium for a program only if a planning grant was received in the prior fiscal year pursuant to this Part. This award may also be available to a consortium in which the composition of the membership has changed.

"Planning grant" means a one-time award of grant funds to a potential consortium that will enable the group to work with the Board to organize, coordinate and submit an application for an implementation grant.

"Potential consortium" means a consortium that has not received a planning grant pursuant to this Part.

"Program" means a Grow Your Own Teacher preparation program established by a consortium under the Act (Section 10 of the Act).

"Year of service" means, for the purposes of this Part, full-time employment for at least half a school year, or an equivalent amount of part-time employment, in:

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A public school that, at the time the individual becomes employed, is either one of the schools targeted by the program completed by the individual with assistance under this Part or another school that is hard to staff; or

A teaching position that, at the time the individual becomes employed, is a hard-to-staff teaching position.

Section 1085.25 Roles and Responsibilities

- a) The Board of Higher Education is responsible for administration of the Grow Your Own (GYO) Initiative. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to, developing and releasing applications, fiscal monitoring, maintaining a candidate database system, development and review of contracts to support the initiative, reviewing of consortia annual reports and consultant reports, coordination and communication of expectations to all consortia members, and developing and appointing an advisory board with members representative of all consortia.
- b) The consortium is responsible for pooling all its collective resources and providing a variety of support services to increase the success rate of candidates graduating from an Illinois accredited teacher education program to become and to be placed as teachers in hard-to-staff schools.
- c) The fiscal agent is responsible for providing direction and oversight for the consortium. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to, submitting grant applications and annual reports, meeting with program evaluators, monitoring grant expenditures and the budget, serving as liaison and primary contact person for the consortium, participating in cohort meetings, locating and hiring tutors, conducting meetings with academic counselors, collecting and reporting assessment and performance data, and attending consortium meetings.
- d) A cohort coordinator is responsible for direct support and counseling to candidates. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to, assisting students with class schedules, helping candidates register and answer questions about registration, answering questions about teacher education programs and entrance requirements, helping candidates solve individual problems related to their classes, basic skills tests and other college requirements, conducting cohort meetings, conducting meetings with academic counselors, meeting with program evaluators, coordinating tutorial support, monitoring academic progress of candidates, assisting the consortium by providing information regarding the anticipated completion dates of candidates to assist with placement where positions may be available, and attending consortium meetings.

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- e) The community based organization has unique responsibilities to support the success of the candidates. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to, helping improve the life outcomes of disadvantaged children and families, increasing parental involvement in schools, developing parent and candidate leadership and addressing commonly identified issues related to the school, carrying out community-school improvement activities, assisting in developing after school programs, applying for grants to support the consortium, meeting with program evaluators, identifying unique needs of candidates and providing support for those needs, working with higher education partners to locate and hire tutors to help candidates with coursework, and attending consortium meetings.
- f) An independent program evaluator is responsible for reporting the extent of candidate persistence in program enrollment, acceptance as an education major in a 4 year institution of higher education, completion of a bachelor's degree in teaching, obtaining a teaching position in a target school or similar school, subsequent effectiveness as a teacher, and persistence in teaching in a target school or similar school. The evaluation shall assess the Initiative's overall effectiveness and shall identify particular program strategies that are especially effective (Section 35 of the Act). The evaluation process will include monitoring site visits, providing technical assistance to consortia, and providing other support services to the Board as needed. The evaluator will produce an annual report that includes individual project and overall program data, identification of effective practices, and recommendations for program improvements.
- g) An accredited Illinois teacher preparation program, housed within an Illinois institution of higher education, is responsible for providing high quality undergraduate coursework and clinical experiences that will prepare beginning teachers to work in hard-to-staff schools. The programs offered will align with the areas of need derived from the GYO consortium's needs assessment of the community's K-12 schools.
- h) The hard-to-staff schools (elementary, middle and high school) are responsible for providing data (needs assessment) to the consortium on those areas that experience a multi-year pattern of substantial teacher shortage or have been identified as a critical need by the local school board, providing sites for clinical experiences for GYO participants/candidates and providing employment opportunities for GYO graduates when possible.

Section 1085.30 Eligibility

- a) A potential consortium, as defined in Section 1085.20, shall be eligible to apply for a planning grant.

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- b) A consortium, as defined in Section 1085.20, shall be eligible to apply for an implementation grant or a continuation grant.

Section 1085.40 Grant Applications

The Board will release applications for planning, implementation and continuation grants when sufficient funding is made available to the Board during any given fiscal year and the Board determines a need for grants. Each release will include information about the application requirements, the categories of allowable expenditures, the information required, and such certifications, assurances and program-specific terms of the grant required by the Board. Applications will be signed by each member of the potential consortium or consortium.

- a) Applications for grant funds shall be made on prescribed forms developed by the Board and shall include, but not be limited to, the following provisions and information:
 - 1) The names, addresses, chief officers and general description of each member of the potential consortium or recognized consortium;
 - 2) Name and contact information of the fiscal agent, as defined in Section 1085.20; and
 - 3) Certification that the grant funds will be used for planning activities pursuant to Section 1085.50, implementing a program pursuant to Section 1085.60, or continuing a program pursuant to Section 1085.70.
- b) Applications shall also include additional information and documentation as specified by the type of grant:
 - 1) Planning grant requirements in Section 1085.50;
 - 2) Implementation grant requirements in Section 1085.60; or
 - 3) Continuation grant requirements in Section 1085.70.
- c) Grant applications may be obtained from the Illinois Board of Higher Education, 431 East Adams Street, Second Floor, Springfield, Illinois 62701-1404 or the Board's website at www.ibhe.org.
- d) Completed applications must be submitted to the Board at the address indicated in subsection (c) and must be received by the announced deadline for the submission of applications, which shall not be less than 45 days after the announcement and

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release of application materials. Completed applications will not be accepted after the announced deadline for the submission of applications within any fiscal year.

- e) Board staff shall review application documents for compliance with the application and eligibility requirements. The Board may request additional documentation and/or a meeting between its staff and institutional representatives to resolve questions about application documents. In the event that material submitted by an applicant institution is incomplete or not of sufficient detail to provide an understanding of the proposed projects, the Board will request additional information.
- f) After the review is complete, the Board shall provide written notification to an applicant indicating whether the applicant is eligible to receive a grant award.

Section 1085.50 Planning Grant

The Board may, if it chooses, award a small number of planning grants during any fiscal year to potential consortia (Section 30 of the Act). The Board shall indicate the maximum amount to be reserved for planning grants and the maximum amount available per grant.

- a) In addition to the application requirements of Section 1085.30, the application for a planning grant must include the following:
 - 1) Proposal
 - A) Describes a plan of work for developing a consortium and a Grow Your Own program that will be eligible for an implementation grant under this Part;
 - B) Provides evidence that at least a subset of the teachers typically prepared by the institution seeks employment in communities where hard-to-staff schools are located;
 - C) Demonstrates that the institution is not applying for funding on behalf of an existing consortium that is currently serving a group of candidates under a model substantially similar to that described in the Act and that further information is needed about the specific barriers that exist with respect to enabling individuals with a long-term commitment to those communities to complete teacher preparation; and
 - D) Demonstrates need by a hard-to-staff K-12 district for teachers in hard-to-staff positions.

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- 2) Supporting Documentation
 - A) Letters of interest from one or more school districts or schools indicating willingness to collaborate in offering opportunities for candidates in the program to complete pre-student teaching clinical experiences in hard-to-staff schools or positions; and
 - B) If additional community organizations are being considered for membership in the consortium, letters of invitation that the applicant has sent to one or more relevant community organizations proposing a role for the organizations in the proposed consortium, along with a rationale provided by the applicant for inclusion of these organizations.
 - 3) The Board shall provide the categories of allowable expenditures and require the submission of a budget summary and payment schedule, completed on the forms provided, as well as a narrative budget breakdown that provides a detailed explanation of each line item of expenditure. Allowable uses of planning grant funds shall include services and goods necessary to:
 - A) Secure the participation and commitment of the required members and the optional members of a consortium to develop a plan for collective decision-making that involves all partners and provides a mechanism for candidate input;
 - B) Attract or identify viable potential candidates for teacher preparation who are paraeducators or parent and community leaders as contemplated by the Act, including assistance that will permit potential candidates to complete developmental coursework during their first four semesters of participation that will verify their academic readiness for enrolling in teacher preparation; and
 - C) Identify barriers to teacher certification for potential members of a given cohort, and the strategies and resources for mitigating those barriers and successfully ameliorating them within the programmatic, time and funding constraints of the program.
- b) *In awarding grants, the Board shall select programs that successfully address initiative criteria and that reflect a diversity of strategies in terms of serving urban, suburban, and rural areas, the nature of the participating institutions of higher education, and the nature of hard-to-staff schools and hard-to-staff teaching positions on which a program is focused (Section 20 of the Act).*

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- c) Each proposal that is submitted by a potential consortium and meets the requirements of this Section shall be considered qualified for funding.
- d) Funding decisions shall be made by balancing the goals of geographic distribution and accessibility with the level of need and the potential number of candidates to be served.
- e) In the event that an audit or other evidence establishes that the consortium failed to perform and/or the expenditure of grant funds was not consistent with the consortium's proposal, a full or partial reimbursement to the State shall be required. For example, if an auditor finds that any amount of funds were not used or were used in a manner inconsistent with the proposal, the Board will seek reimbursement for that amount of funds.

Section 1085.60 Implementation Grant

New implementation grants shall be offered in years when the level of available funding allows one or more new programs or cohorts of candidates to be supported, given the requirements of Section 25 of the Act for ongoing support of cohorts that have begun their preparation in previous years. The Board shall indicate the maximum amount to be reserved for implementation grants and the maximum available amount per grant.

- a) In addition to the application requirements of Section 1085.30, the application for an implementation grant must include the following:
 - 1) The responsibility and roles of each partner in the consortium shall be set forth in a written agreement signed by each partner to be submitted with the application. The written agreement shall address at least the following:
 - A) The process and responsibilities of each partner for the recruitment, selection and assessment of candidates;
 - B) The establishment of support systems and the specific roles of each partner in providing those supports. This may include, but shall not be limited to, tutoring, peer mentoring, professional development workshops and placement supports; and
 - C) The process to develop an evaluation plan to measure the progress and success of individual candidates, as well as an evaluation of the partnership, and the role of each partner in making improvements based on the results of the evaluations.

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- 2) Information on the consortium participants, service targets and candidates.
 - A) The teacher preparation programs involved and their qualifications relevant to the requirements of the Act, including specific information on the institution's success in preparing teachers for positions in schools that serve a substantial percentage of low-income students;
 - B) The hard-to-staff schools and positions that are targeted;
 - C) The demographic make-up of the area served by the targeted schools;
 - D) Plans for recruiting candidates to the program;
 - E) Selection criteria and process for admitting candidates into the program;
 - F) Evidence that the candidates of the cohort are paraeducators or parent and community leaders;
 - G) Plans for providing support to the candidates;
 - H) Plans for ensuring each candidate successfully progresses through the program. These plans will include strategies such as tutoring, study skills training, and other strategies to ensure candidates pass the Illinois basic skills test in accordance with the rules adopted by the State Board of Education for the licensure/certification of educators (see 23 Ill. Adm. Code 25.750(b)).
 - I) Preparation status of existing candidates, if a cohort is already engaged in the program;
 - J) Procedures to use when a candidate fails to make an adequate rate of progress as specified in Section 1085.80(b), and the candidate is counseled out of the program;
 - K) A plan for contingency funding if State funding is discontinued or diminished; and
 - L) Procedures for placement supports for candidates, including identified roles and responsibilities of the consortium members in assisting with placement.

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- 3) The Board shall provide the categories of allowable expenditures pursuant to the Act and require the submission of a budget summary and payment schedule, completed on the forms provided, as well as a narrative budget breakdown that provides a detailed explanation of each line item of expenditure and covers the entire period of time during which the identified cohort is expected to be enrolled in the teacher preparation program.
- A) *Where necessary, program budgets shall include the costs of child care and other indirect expenses, such as transportation, tutoring, technology, and technology support, necessary to permit candidates to maintain their class schedules. Grant funds may be used by any member of a consortium to offset such costs, and the services may be provided by the community organization or organizations, by any other member of the consortium, or by independent contractors. (Section 25(d) of the Act)*
- B) *Grant funds may also be expended to pay directly for required developmental classes for candidates beginning a program. (Section 25(i) of the Act)*
- C) *The community organization or organizations may receive a portion of the grant money for the expenses of recruitment, community orientation, and counseling of potential candidates, for providing space in the community, and for working with school personnel to facilitate individual work experiences and support of candidates. (Section 25(f) of the Act)*
- D) *The school district or school employee union or both may receive a portion of the grant money for expenses of supporting the work experiences of candidates and providing mentors for graduates. Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 10-20.15 of the School Code, school districts may also use these or other applicable public funds to pay participants in programs under the initiative for student teaching required by an accredited teacher preparation program. (Section 25(g) of the Act)*
- E) *One or more members of the consortium may expend funds to cover the salary of a site based cohort coordinator. (Section 25(h) of the Act)*

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- F) *No funds under the initiative may be used to supplant the average per-capita expenditures by the institution of higher education for candidates. The institution of higher education may expend grant funds to cover the additional costs of offering classes in community settings and for tutoring services.* (Section 25(c) and (e) of the Act)
 - G) A consortium shall implement a program of forgivable loans to cover any portion of tuition, books and fees charged of students preparing for teaching licenses/certificates in excess of grants-in-aid received.
 - H) Applicants shall be required to describe the steps that will be taken to decrease the need for GYO State funds for the consortium and its program over time.
- b) Proposals for implementation grants shall be evaluated in accordance with the following criteria:
- 1) Feasibility, Impact and Cost-Effectiveness
 - A) The proposal identifies a need for teachers in hard-to-staff schools and hard-to-fill positions and describes either a cohort that is available to enroll in the identified preparation program or time-specific plans for identifying and attracting the members of such a cohort;
 - B) The proposal describes strategies that will be used to reach members of underrepresented groups that reflect the diversity of the students enrolled in the participating schools and outlines plans for serving additional cohorts in future years;
 - C) The proposal demonstrates that:
 - i) Coursework and experiences required for certification will be scheduled and located to be accessible to members of the cohort; and
 - ii) Supportive services (e.g., child care, counseling, tutoring) that have been identified as necessary will be offered to enable candidates to progress through the program and attain certification;

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- D) The proposal establishes a timetable and performance level for candidates as a condition for their continued receipt of assistance under this program;
 - E) The plan to evaluate the program by members of the consortium is designed to yield information that can be used both in judging the program's qualitative and quantitative impact and in identifying changes or new approaches that will improve the program's outcomes;
 - F) The proposal describes commitments and dedications of monetary and in-kind resources of each member of the consortium that will enable the consortium to sustain the program over time with a reduction in the need for GYO State funds;
 - G) The budget clearly describes the proposed use of grant funds as allowable, reasonable and cost-effective; and
 - H) The plan for recruiting and screening potential candidates will ensure that those individuals admitted will have a high likelihood of successfully completing the program in a reasonable length of time.
- 2) Quality of the Plan
- A) The proposal describes the role of each entity that is a member of the consortium, including the resources each entity will devote to this initiative, the major areas requiring collaboration among the members, and how decisions will be made with input from the members and the participants;
 - B) The proposal includes plans for assisting candidates in tapping sources of financial aid beyond those made available under this Part and by the members of the consortium;
 - C) The proposal demonstrates that the institution of higher education has the capacity (i.e., faculty and other resources) to serve the cohort in its approved teacher preparation program. If a two-year institution is involved in the consortium, the proposal delineates how coursework, other requirements, and services will be coordinated between the institutions;

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- D) The proposal describes the needs of the participating schools and demonstrates that the consortium's plan for certification under the program is relevant to those needs and will have an impact on the availability of qualified staff;
 - E) The plan of work for the program includes specific strategies for overcoming known barriers faced by the participating schools in retaining qualified teachers and for addressing and overcoming the barriers faced by the individuals who make up the cohort to be enrolled in the program; and
 - F) The proposal describes the consortium's plans for extending support to candidates for at least their first 2 years of teaching. This includes such activities and services as mentoring (if the district does not already offer a teacher mentoring program) and group meetings of the cohort. If the district offers a teacher mentoring program, the consortium should work with the existing district mentoring program to provide mentoring support to the new teacher.
- 3) Experience and Qualifications
- A) The proposal provides evidence that faculty and relevant staff of the institution are knowledgeable regarding the needs of hard-to-staff schools and the specific issues that candidates from non-traditional backgrounds encounter when attempting to complete preparation for teaching careers;
 - B) The proposal demonstrates that the community organization that is a member of the consortium has a record of success in conducting projects or initiatives with a specific focus on involving parents and others in school improvement, either in the participating schools or schools with similar characteristics, and has the capacity (including staff and other resources) to recruit candidates for and support them as they progress through the program; and
 - C) The individual who is identified as coordinator for the cohort has experience in education and/or community organizing and in supporting individuals in the collegiate environment and is knowledgeable about group dynamics, support services and cultural issues relevant to the cohort.
- 4) Evaluation Plans

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- A) The proposal relates plans for the evaluation of candidates' teaching skills to the relevant portions of the institution's educational unit assessment system (see 23 Ill. Adm. Code 25.140) and demonstrates that candidates in the program will be expected to meet the standards applicable to the approved program; and
- B) The proposal includes a plan for the evaluation of the program by the members of the consortium that will provide:
 - i) Information on the progress of candidates within the preparation program; and
 - ii) When applicable, information on this initiative's outcomes in terms of candidates' placement into hard-to-staff teaching positions or hard-to-staff schools and their retention in those positions.
- c) *In awarding grants, the Board shall select programs that successfully address initiative criteria and that reflect a diversity of strategies in terms of serving urban, suburban, and rural areas, the nature of the participating institutions of higher education, and the nature of hard-to-staff schools and hard-to-staff teaching positions on which a program is focused. (Section 20 of the Act)*
- d) The Board shall approve proposals for funding and make final determinations regarding the amounts to be provided based upon:
 - 1) The total funds appropriated for this initiative;
 - 2) The needs and resources described and the amounts requested in the top-ranked proposals identified in accordance with the criteria set forth in subsection (b); and
 - 3) The need to make programs under this Part accessible on a geographic basis in a manner that will increase the availability of candidates to serve in hard-to-staff schools and positions in all areas of the State.
- e) In the event that an audit or other evidence establishes that the consortium failed to perform and/or the expenditure of grant funds was not consistent with the consortium's proposal, a full or partial reimbursement to the State shall be required. For example, if an auditor finds that any amount of funds were not used or were used in a manner inconsistent with the proposal, the Board will seek reimbursement for that amount of funds.

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Section 1085.70 Continuation Grant

- a) A consortium that has received an implementation grant award or a continuation grant pursuant to this Part for a cohort of candidates in the prior fiscal year shall be subject to the requirements of this Section with respect to continued funding for that cohort in subsequent years.
 - 1) The responsibility and roles of each partner in the consortium shall be set forth in a written agreement signed by each partner to be submitted with the application annually. The written agreement shall address at the least the following:
 - A) The process and responsibilities of each partner for the recruitment, selection and assessment of candidates;
 - B) The establishment of support systems and the specific roles of each partner in providing those supports. This may include, but shall not be limited to, tutoring, peer mentoring, professional development workshops, etc.; and
 - C) The process to develop an evaluation plan to measure the progress and success of individual candidates, as well as an evaluation of the partnership, and the role of each partner in making improvements based on the results of the evaluations.
 - 2) In addition to the application requirements of Section 1085.40, the application for a continuation grant must include the following:
 - A) An end-of-year report from the project director on the following:
 - i) Current status of the program and the status of each cohort member;
 - ii) The activities and support provided to date, including monetary and in-kind; and
 - iii) The degree to which candidates are achieving the program's objectives.
 - B) An updated proposal including:

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- i) Objectives, activities, timelines and evaluation procedures for the renewal year, showing that it continues to meet all of the requirements set forth in Section 1085.60;
 - ii) Results/outcomes that have been achieved to date; and
 - iii) The relationship of results to any changes proposed for program operations from the previous year.
 - C) An updated budget including:
 - i) Budget summary;
 - ii) Payment schedule; and
 - ii) Narrative budget breakdown that describes any needed variances from the budget proposed in the prior year of funding.
- b) When the consortium membership has changed or there is a plan in place to replace one or more of the partners, the consortium must contact the Board prior to submitting an application for a continuation grant. The consortium must submit written notification of the membership change. The Board will prescribe the form or format when releasing the Request for Proposals (RFP). The Executive Director of the Board shall review the notifications consistent with the following:
 - 1) If the 4-year institution of higher education with an Illinois accredited teacher education program is replaced or the school district or group of schools is replaced, the consortium is not eligible for a continuation grant. The newly formed consortium may be eligible for a planning or implementation grant and may be eligible for continuation grants in the years following the receipt of a planning or implementation grant.
 - 2) If the partners want to add a school district or group of schools to the consortium, the Executive Director shall consider whether this change is viable and what impact this will have on the candidates. If the re-organization appears viable and there is no apparent risk that this change will interfere with the progression of candidates through the program, the Executive Director shall recognize the re-organized consortium. The re-organized consortium may be eligible for a continuation grant.

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- 3) A consortium may replace or add community organizations as it deems appropriate. If there is no apparent risk that the re-organization will interfere with the progression of candidates through the program or harm the consortium, the Executive Director shall deem that the re-organized consortium is eligible for a continuation grant.
- c) A consortium that has received an implementation grant award or a continuation grant pursuant to this Part for a cohort of candidates in the prior fiscal year shall be subject to the requirements of this Section with respect to continued funding for that cohort in subsequent years.
- 1) The responsibility and roles of each partner in the consortium shall be set forth in a written agreement signed by each partner to be submitted with the application annually. The written agreement shall address at the least the following:
 - A) The process and responsibilities of each partner for the recruitment, selection and assessment of candidates;
 - B) The establishment of support systems and the specific roles of each partner in providing those supports. This may include, but shall not be limited to, tutoring, peer mentoring, professional development workshops, etc.; and
 - C) The process to develop an evaluation plan to measure the progress and success of individual candidates, as well as an evaluation of the partnership, and the role of each partner in making improvements based on the results of the evaluations.
 - 2) In addition to the application requirements of Section 1085.40, the application for a continuation grant must include the following:
 - A) An end-of-year report from the project director on the following:
 - i) Current status of the program and the status of each cohort member;
 - ii) The activities and support provided to date, including monetary and in-kind; and
 - iii) The degree to which candidates are achieving the program's objectives.

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- B) An updated proposal including:
 - i) Objectives, activities, timelines, and evaluation procedures for the renewal year, showing that it continues to meet all of the requirements set forth in Section 1085.60;
 - ii) Results/outcomes that have been achieved to date; and
 - iii) The relationship of results to any changes proposed for program operations from the previous year.
- C) An updated budget including:
 - i) Budget summary;
 - ii) Payment schedule; and
 - ii) Narrative budget breakdown that describes any needed variances from the budget proposed in the prior year of funding.
- d) The Board shall, contingent upon appropriation or allocation of funds for this initiative, provide continuation funding to consortia that:
 - 1) Demonstrate that a majority of the candidates in the cohort served have completed coursework required under the teacher preparation program during at least one semester of the preceding year, as described in Section 1085.50(b);
 - 2) Demonstrate success in providing the supports necessary to retain candidates in the program; and
 - 3) Demonstrate that their programs continue to comply with the provisions of the Act and this Part.
- e) If, for any reason, the amount of funds available for release is not sufficient to distribute the continuation grants in a given fiscal year, the Board shall distribute prorated shares to grantees.
- f) In the event that an audit or other evidence establishes that the consortium failed to perform and/or the expenditure of grant funds was not consistent with the consortium's proposal, a full or partial reimbursement to the State shall be required. For example, if an auditor finds that any amount of funds were not used

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or were used in a manner inconsistent with the proposal, the Board will seek reimbursement for that amount of funds.

Section 1085.80 Candidates

- a) Candidate Eligibility
 - 1) Meets the definition of a candidate in Section 1085.20;
 - 2) Meets the selection criteria determined by the consortium; and
 - 3) Eligible for student financial aid and *takes advantage of existing financial aid resources before using funds* from the Forgivable Loan Program described in Section 1085.90. (Section 20(8)(L) of the Act)
- b) Performance Plan for Each Candidate. The Board shall *provide a level of performance to be maintained by candidates as a condition of continuing in the program.* (Section 20(8)(K) of the Act) Measures to be implemented to ensure that each candidate makes adequate progress to complete the coursework required under the teacher preparation program shall include at least the following:
 - 1) Any developmental classes that are prerequisites to a candidate being fully admitted into an Illinois education preparation program are to be completed within the first 4 semesters of a candidate's participation in the program;
 - 2) The candidate successfully completes a minimum of 15 hours of coursework required under the teacher preparation program each academic year; and
 - 3) Any candidate not completing coursework required under the teacher preparation programs for 2 consecutive semesters due to extenuating circumstances, including, but not limited to, military leave, health, etc., shall apply for a temporary leave from the GYO program. This application must be approved by the consortium partners. If the application is not approved or none is submitted, the candidate shall be deemed exiting the program without cause and subject to loan repayment.
- c) Information on Each Candidate. The Board shall identify the information that each consortium will be required to collect and update, including, but not limited to, the following:

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- 1) Data by candidate, to be reported or updated at least once per academic year:
 - A) Name, address and demographics;
 - B) Eligibility criteria;
 - C) Date of enrollment, anticipated date of graduation, anticipated date of program completion, date of completion or exit;
 - D) If candidate exits before completion, provide explanation;
 - E) Developmental courses and tutoring;
 - F) Basic skills, teacher licensure and other test scores;
 - G) Grade point average (GPA) for all courses and for courses that compose the degree requirements of a teacher preparation program;
 - H) Annual amount of program loans, cumulative amount of program loans, and each year of teaching service; and
 - I) Information on the position taken by the graduate.
- 2) Data by cohort, to be reported or updated each academic year:
 - A) Pass rates on basic skills test, content test, Assessment Professional Test, and/or other tests identified by the Board;
 - B) Number who intentionally exit voluntarily or do not register for two consecutive semesters;
 - C) Percentage who progress at the expected rate through the program; and
 - D) Percentage of candidates within the original cohort that start and complete the program.

Section 1085.90 Forgivable Loan Program

Every program under the initiative shall implement a program of forgivable loans to cover any portion of tuition, books, and fees of candidates under the program in excess of the candidates'

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grants-in-aid. All students admitted to a cohort shall be eligible for a forgivable student loan. Loans shall be fully forgiven if a graduate completes 5 years of service in hard-to-staff schools or hard-to-staff teaching positions, with partial forgiveness for shorter periods of service. The Board shall establish standards for the approval of requests for waivers or deferrals from individuals to waive this obligation. The Board shall also define standards for the fiscal management of these loan funds. (Section 25(a) of the Act) Any candidate in a program administered under this Part may receive a forgivable loan for tuition, books and fees associated with completion of the teacher preparation program, provided those expenditures are not otherwise paid for through grants-in-aid or other resources of the consortium. Any amount expended for an individual's tuition, books and fees shall be considered a part of that individual's loan, regardless of how the payment is administered and regardless of whether the individual receives any actual payment of funds. The cumulative total amount of any candidate's loan shall not exceed \$25,000.

- a) Pursuant to Section 25(a) of the Act, loan funds provided to candidates as part of this program *shall be fully forgiven if a graduate completes 5 years of service in hard-to-staff schools or hard-to-staff teaching positions, with partial forgiveness for shorter periods of service.* Forgiveness and repayment of loans shall be determined as provided in this Section.
- b) An individual may accrue the service required for forgiveness of loans under this Part in one or more eligible schools or positions.
- c) If an individual has not assumed employment in an eligible school or position within 2 years after receiving a teaching license/certificate, the individual shall be required to begin the repayment of amounts loaned under this Part. No interest shall apply.
- d) An individual who drops out of the program shall be required to begin repaying the amounts loaned in the month following the month when it becomes evident that he or she will not be completing coursework required under the teacher preparation program for 2 consecutive semesters.
- e) If a graduate has not completed 5 years of service within 10 years after receiving a teaching license/certificate, the individual shall be required to begin the repayment of amounts loaned under this Part. The amount due shall be the total amount borrowed, less a percentage reflecting the relationship that any time taught by the individual in eligible schools or positions bears to the total 5 year commitment. Loan amounts shall be reduced in increments of 10% for each semester completed.
- f) Repayment of loans shall be made in no more than 60 equal installments. The minimum monthly payment will be determined by dividing the total amount due

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by 60. An individual may prepay the balance due on the loan in its entirety at any time or make payments in addition to the minimum amount owed each month without penalty.

- g) In addition to the loan forgiveness permitted under Section 25 of the Act, the Board may defer or waive an individual's obligation to repay an amount due as provided in this subsection (g).
- 1) The Board shall waive the repayment obligation for an individual who is counseled out of a preparation program or found ineligible to continue, provided that the individual's exit from the program is not due to a violation of law or of applicable institutional policies.
 - 2) The Board shall waive the repayment obligation for an individual who drops out of a preparation program or demonstrates that he or she is unable to complete a portion of the required teaching service due to:
 - A) The onset or exacerbation of a disability;
 - B) The need to care for an immediate family member during serious illness or disability;
 - C) Destruction of the individual's residence; or
 - D) Other circumstances that require the individual to assume responsibilities that cannot be avoided without serious financial hardship or other family disruption (e.g., death of a spouse that results in the need to take a second job or assume operation of a business).
 - 3) The Board shall waive the repayment obligation for a candidate who does not complete a preparation program due to the unavailability of a State appropriation for this initiative for at least 2 consecutive years.
 - 4) The Board shall waive the repayment obligation for any candidate in good standing who cannot complete the preparation program due to the consortium's ineligibility for funds under Section 1085.70.
 - 5) The Board shall defer the repayment obligation for a period of time specifically related to the circumstances when an individual:
 - A) Is unemployed or is working for fewer than 30 hours per week;

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- B) Is experiencing a financial hardship (e.g., receiving public assistance, earning an amount per month that is no greater than 200% of the amount of the loan payment, or experiencing circumstances such as those outlined in subsection (g)(2) of this Section);
 - C) Has re-enrolled as a full-time student in an institution of higher education (for example, to pursue a master's degree) or in a program under this Part (for example, to obtain program training by attending a teacher education program for a specialized area, such as math or science); or
 - D) Is deployed for active duty as a member of the U.S. Armed Services, reserve forces of the United States or as a member of the Illinois National Guard.
- 6) Each request for a waiver or deferral of repayment shall be submitted in a format specified by the Board. The affected individual shall describe the specific circumstances that apply. This description shall be accompanied by evidence such as a physician's statement, insurance claim or other documentation of the relevant facts.
- h) When a teaching license/certificate is issued to an individual who received assistance under this Part, the license/certificate shall be accompanied by:
- 1) A statement indicating the total amount of the loan received by the individual and identifying the dates applicable to repayment under this Section; and
 - 2) A claim form that the individual may use to claim forgiveness of the loan amount, which shall require the individual to identify the periods of service completed in eligible schools or positions and the school administrators who can verify the individual's service.
- i) Management of Loans
- 1) It shall be the responsibility of each 4 year institution of higher education, and of any 2 year institution that participates in a consortium, to assist the Board with the forgivable loan process in the following manner:
 - A) By keeping records of the amounts provided to or on behalf of each individual for tuition, fees and books;

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- B) By keeping up-to-date contact information regarding the address and telephone number of each individual during the individual's preparation at that institution; and
 - C) By notifying the Board within 30 days after a candidate fails to enroll in coursework as expected or otherwise ceases to participate in the program and informing the Board of the total amount of the candidate's loan for direct expenses as of that point in time.
- 2) When a candidate leaves a 2 year institution and enters a 4 year institution to continue in a program under this Part, the 2 year institution shall inform both the Board and the 4 year institution of the total amount of the candidate's loan for direct expenses as of that point in time. Each 2 year institution shall ensure that the affected 4 year institution continues to receive any information that subsequently affects the amount of a candidate's loan.
 - 3) Each institution shall notify the Board as to who will be responsible for this information and shall provide contact information for the responsible individual within the institution.
- j) It shall be the responsibility of the Board to take such actions as may be necessary to secure repayment when necessary.

Section 1085.100 Grant Agreement

- a) Grant funds may not be expended except pursuant to a written grant agreement, and disbursement of grant funds without a grant agreement is prohibited. At a minimum, a grant agreement shall:
 - 1) Describe the purpose of the grant and be signed by authorized representatives of the Board and each member of the consortium;
 - 2) Name and contact information of the project director;
 - 3) Specify how payments shall be made and the financial controls applicable to the grant, including an agreement to file quarterly reports describing the progress of the activities and the expenditure of the related grant funds pursuant to the Illinois Grant Funds Recovery Act [30 ILCS 705];
 - 4) Specify that the use of grant funds will be consistent with Section 1085.50 for a planning grant, Section 1085.60 for an implementation grant or Section 1085.70 for a continuation grant;

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- 5) Specify the period of time for which the grant is valid and the period of time during which grant funds may be expended by the grantee;
 - 6) Contain a provision that all funds remaining at the end of the grant agreement, or at the expiration of the period of time grant funds are available for expenditure or obligation by the grantee, shall be returned to the State within 45 days;
 - 7) Contain a provision that any grantees receiving grant funds are required to permit the Board, the Auditor General or the Attorney General to inspect and audit any books, records or papers related to the projects for which grant funds were provided;
 - 8) Contain a provision in which the grantee certifies under oath that all information in the grant agreement is true and correct to the best of the grantee's knowledge, information and belief, that the funds shall be used only for the purposes described in the grant agreement, and that the award of grant funds is conditioned upon that certification;
 - 9) Provide that the institution shall contract with an external auditor who is a certified public accountant licensed by DFPR to conduct an audit of the expenditure of grant funds provided under this program at the end of the grant period to verify that grant funds were expended pursuant to the grant agreement and not for unauthorized purposes; and
 - 10) Require the grantee to use the interest earned on any grant funds for eligible projects. The interest earned on grant funds shall not change the amount of the grant.
- b) The Board may withhold or suspend the distribution of grant funds for failure to file required quarterly reports.
 - c) Upon the execution of a grant agreement, the Board will process a voucher to the grantee in accordance with the terms of the grant agreement, provided that the funds have been appropriated and have been made available to the Board.

Section 1085.110 Audit Guidelines

- a) To fulfill the audit requirements of this Part, the grantees shall contract with an external auditor who is a certified public accountant licensed by DFPR to perform an audit as specified in subsection (b).
- b) The external auditor shall:

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- 1) Receive copies of the institution's application, a certified grant agreement and a copy of this Part;
 - 2) Verify the expenditure of funds as provided for in this Part, and ensure that funds were expended on authorized expenditures listed in the grant agreement; and
 - 3) Provide an audit report to the Board including a description of the tests performed and the audit findings.
- c) In the event that an audit or other evidence establishes that an overpayment was made in a grant to an institution, a reimbursement to the Board shall be required. A reimbursement is required in the following situations:
- 1) Grant funds were not expended within the grant period; or
 - 2) Grant funds were expended for purposes not authorized under the grant agreement.
- d) In the event that no audits are submitted, an institution shall reimburse the State for the total amount of the grant.

Section 1085.120 Grant Funds Recovery Act

Grant funds are subject to the Illinois Grant Funds Recovery Act and all other applicable laws governing contracts and agreements in the State of Illinois. Pursuant to the Illinois Grant Funds Recovery Act, grants may be revoked and misspent grant funds recovered.