**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. Grow Your Own Illinois 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.

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 appropriate tests in accordance with the rules adopted by the State Board of Education for the licensure of educators (23 Ill. Adm. Code 25.720);

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.

3) GYOI 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) *When 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 thosecosts, and the services may be provided by the community organization or organizations, by any other member of the consortium, or by independent contractors.* (Section25(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)

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;

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;

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

The proposal includes a plan for the evaluation of the program by the members of the consortium that will provide:

A) Information on the progress of candidates within the preparation program; and

B) 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, GYOI 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) GYOI 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 and the Grant Agreement, a full or partial reimbursement to the State, through the Board, 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, Grow Your Own Illinois will seek reimbursement for that amount of funds.

(Source: Amended at 44 Ill. Reg. 11419, effective June 24, 2020)