Addressing Educator Shortages in Ohio
Request for Proposals (RFP)
Release Date: January 5, 2022
Submission Date: February 28, 2022

I. Program Purpose

The COVID-19 pandemic has negatively impacted and will continue to impact educator preparation programs and the availability of educators at various levels. As part of the State of Ohio’s response to the pandemic, $5.2 million from the federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief fund has been made available to increase the number of candidates admitted to and completing educator licensure programs and address shortages of educators across the state.

II. Eligible Applicants

Proposals may be submitted by Ohio’s four-year public and private colleges and universities that have Chancellor approved educator preparation programs, acting alone or in collaboration with two or more public or private colleges, universities, or community colleges. A college or university may be the lead applicant on only one application but may participate in collaboration with another institution’s application.

III. Anticipated Awards

A total of $5.2M will be awarded through a competitive review of eligible applications. Individual institutions of higher education may apply and consortia or collaborations of multiple institutions of higher education are encouraged to apply. The total number of awards under the Addressing Educator Shortages in Ohio grant will depend on the amount of each award.

There is no explicit minimum or maximum award; we expect that funding request amounts will vary based on the individual characteristics of each proposal.

The overall funding amount available of $5.2M would yield an average award of approximately $200,000 if allocated evenly across 26 applicants, for example, therefore, we expect the majority of individual application requests to be within or below the range of $150,000 to $250,000. If an individual applicant believes circumstances merit additional funding above this range, please present the rationale and justification in the application and make the desired request. A maximum award could rise toward or exceed $1 million if a significant collaborative
application is proposed with multiple partners and significant projected educator candidate enrollments.

IV. Eligible Expenses and Project Term

Each application must include a proposed budget (see Proposal requirements below). Funds awarded under the program are to be expended on eligible costs only. Eligible costs include scholarship funds (more details below) and expenses directly tied to the development and/or the implementation of the project activities and may include personnel and travel where appropriate. Other eligible expenses include but are not limited to the following: mileage, buyout time for faculty members or district personnel, communications, website development, printing or creating materials and meeting spaces. Expenses that have occurred before the grant award date are not eligible and may not be included in the budget.

While the grant project activities may begin on the date the grant is awarded, all funds must be encumbered by the end of the project on June 30, 2024 and expended by September 30, 2024.

Scholarship funds:

Selected colleges and universities will use the dollars designated to scholarships to recruit, enroll, and retain eligible students in educator preparation programs. The institution(s) must commit to continue scholarship funding at the same rate for each student supported by Addressing Educator Shortage scholarships until graduation or the student leaves the program.

Student eligibility requirements are listed below:

- Be enrolled or accepted for enrollment as a student in a selected chancellor approved educator preparation program.
- Applicants agree to teach or hold an educator position in Ohio for a minimum of 3 years post-graduation, or a time period equivalent to the number of years for which they received a scholarship.
- Student must meet with a faculty mentor and participate in institution-specific programming, as assigned by the institution, to ensure program compliance.

Eligible scholarship costs are instructional and general fees, book vouchers and meal plans. However, there must be a notification on the student’s tuition bill indicating this use. General fees are defined as those assessed uniformly to all students and those that do not allow for a waiver to be offered to any student(s). For example, a fee charged to students to provide health care coverage would not be considered to be uniformly assessed if students can opt out, and therefore would not be considered a general fee. A list of reported and approved institutional general fee amounts are found at https://www.ohiohighered.org/data-reports/tuition-financial-aid/.
V. Award Recommendations

A joint review team of Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE) and Ohio Department of Education (ODE) staff shall determine the amount of recommended funding for each applicant and the nature of any conditions on funding. The Chancellor shall make the final determination about which proposals and amounts of funding shall be awarded, in consultation with the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The Chancellor will send an award letter notifying the selected grantees. All fiscal agents in a consortium will be notified of the outcome of their proposal after the Chancellor makes funding decisions.

Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) that are awarded grants will receive an award notification after the budget is successfully submitted and accepted through ODE’s grants management system.

VI. Proposal Review Process and Timeline

Proposals can be submitted beginning February 14, 2022 and are due no later than February 28, 2022. They must be submitted in the following manner:

A. One electronic PDF file sent to educators@highered.ohio.gov.

B. Applicants are responsible for timely submissions of proposals. Proposals become property of ODHE and are subject to public record laws of the state. Proposals containing all the required elements will receive careful consideration but cannot be guaranteed funding. Accepted proposals will be evaluated by a joint ODE and ODHE review team and may have representatives from other state agencies and other stakeholders, following the rubric approved by ODHE. The Chancellor will make final decisions based upon the quality of the proposal in addressing the RFP criteria and its required elements. The schedule below may be revised by ODHE due to circumstances and any changes will be communicated to the applicants via e-mail and posted on the Addressing the Educator Shortage web page.

- Request for Proposals (RFP) Release Date: January 5, 2022
- Webinar for overview and to address questions: January 18, 2022
- Proposals Submission Window: February 14-28, 2022
- Proposal Review Begins: March 1, 2022
- Notification of Awarded Proposals: March 23, 2022

ODHE will provide an opportunity for potential applicants to seek assistance regarding their application through a webinar noted above. Applicant questions are to be submitted in writing via email to educators@highered.ohio.gov. Responses to questions will be posted online to provide the information to interested parties.

Additional information regarding the program is available by contacting Krista Maxson, Associate Vice Chancellor, P-16 Initiatives, at kmaxson@highered.ohio.gov.
VII. Proposal Requirements

A. Format of proposal as a whole

Proposals must be submitted in Arial 10-point font or larger, there is an exception for tables and images. Please see below for page allocations and directions for each section of the proposal. Please clearly label each of the following sections within the proposal submission. Only complete proposals will be accepted for review.

1. **Cover Letter (one page):** Institution(s) name(s); IRN number(s); identify the primary contact, financial aid representative, and the legal notice(s) and authorized signatory by name, title, address, phone number, and email address.

2. **Executive Summary (one page):** Include: 1) overview of the recruitment strategy to reach to the targeted populations for recruitment; 2) an overview and rationale of the selected educator preparation programs; 3) list of key partners; and 4) outline of the project with its intended goals.

3. **Project Narrative (15 pages max):** Should address the proposal criteria in order (see section B).

4. **Budget Table (Budget Grid):** Complete a budget grid and attach it to the proposal. Please see [Budgeting - Supporting Documentation -10-5-18-1 (ohio.gov)](http://www.ohio.gov) for guidance on appropriate use of object codes and purpose codes.

5. **Gantt Chart:** Provide a Gantt chart that outlines the key project tasks and activities and the estimated timeline for each task and activity. The Gantt chart may also indicate the person or team responsible for implementing and completing each task or activity. The Gantt chart should include the data reporting and completion dates for the grant. All funds must be encumbered by the end of the project on June 30, 2024 and expended by September 30, 2024.

6. **Required Attachments:**
   
   A. **Institutional support:** Provide letters of support from the President and/or Chief Academic Officer of the IHE, letter of commitment for matching funds from Chief Financial officer or Chief Development officer. The letter from the IHE should include a commitment to provide clear and accurate data to track progress for at least the next 5-years or the completion of all students funded by the project.

   B. **Partnership support:** Provide letters of support from all partners. These partnerships may include local school districts, community schools, other institutions including universities, colleges, community colleges, community organizations, financial partners, and other partners/stakeholder groups to achieve the maximum level of sustainability post-grant.

   a. Partner district(s) letters may include items such as establishing grow your own programs, supporting field experience placements, educator placement upon graduation and providing mentoring through initial years in profession, mentoring may be a partnership with IHE.

   b. Partnering institutions should indicate their commitment to support all recruited student participants through completion of their educator
preparation programs, including providing completion funds if necessary.

C. **Personnel:** Submit the resumes/CVs of those who will lead the grant, lead recruitment efforts, and lead retention efforts. If personnel will be hired, please include the responsibilities and requirements for the position.

**B. Project Narrative and Criteria**

- **Criteria:** Total of 100 Points

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The Project Narrative is required to address the following criteria and should provide complete responses that address the subsections under project rationale, project plan, project metrics, partnerships, and sustainability.

1. **Project Rationale (15 Points):** Provide a rationale for the project, the educator preparation program(s) and the population(s) targeted for recruitment, what specific problem or issue will be addressed in a local and historical context. Include research that supports the implementation of the proposed project and if appropriate provide a summary of local, state, or national data that supports or justifies the project.
   
   a. **Needs assessment:** Provide a rationale for the project and an assessment of the need for educators in the grade bands and subject areas addressed by the proposal. Provide evidence through employment data and/or letters indicating the need for additional educators from superintendents and/or principals.
   
   b. **Workforce Development:** Explain how the proposal addresses creating a workforce that contains educators from 1) particularly underserved regions of the state, including both urban and rural locations, 2) underrepresented student populations, which may be based on age, race, income, academic preparation, and first-generation status, among other factors, and/or 3) other distinguishing factors that are uniquely important to increasing the overall strength of Ohio’s educator workforce.

2. **Project Plan (25 Points):** Provide a detailed plan of action and timeline for the project activities, milestones, outcomes and deliverables. Provide anticipated increases in enrollment and completions in the targeted programs over the next five years. The narrative should give a clear indication of how and when the planning will occur; include key decisions that will be made based on data and root-cause analyses and processes. The narrative must also include a description for disseminating and communicating any
lessons learned from the project. Dissemination and communication of the project outcomes and deliverables must include but are not limited to reaching out to other Ohio IHEs, districts and/or schools.

   a. **Recruitment plan:** Include plans to offer and support specific pathways to address educator shortages, these may include grow-your-own programs, pathways for high-school students, currently enrolled college students, paraprofessionals, transfer agreements with community colleges and second career individuals to enter the educator preparation pipeline. Accelerated programs to licensure are encouraged. Consider the incorporation of innovative programs and college credit plus.

   b. **Retention plan:** Include academic and non-academic supports such as tutoring, summer bridge programs, mentorship and counseling programs, cohort models and community building, and financial support to ensure candidate success in completing the program and obtaining an Ohio educator license.

3. **Project Metrics (10 points):** Include the baseline data of enrollments disaggregated by race and ethnicity or other relevant demographic information in selected programs reported in the Project Rationale and Project Narrative. Describe how the project will impact these data points and how the data will be monitored and reported at semi-annually. A brief description should include what anticipated changes will occur in these data points that would demonstrate progress in reaching the project’s goals. Include dates for reporting these data.
   a. **Data:** Submit baseline data in selected programs disaggregated by race, ethnicity, and may include other relevant demographics. Demonstrate a commitment to provide clear and accurate data to track progress for at least the next 5-years or the completion of all students funded by the project, included in institutions support letter. Explicit targets to increase enrollment, by category, over time would be provided and monitored via regular data updates.

4. **Partnerships (20 points):** Include a description of partners or partnership organizations or stakeholders that will assist with the implementation of the project. Describe the rationale for these partnerships and how they will be used to inform and/or implement the project. Include a management and communication plan for coordinating partnership efforts. Letters of support from these partners should be included in an appendix as noted in partnership support. If you currently have other sources of funding to support this or a similar project that this proposal may enhance, please include the amount, duration and a brief description of and how it will contribute to the efforts outlined in this proposal.
   a. Please note that in an effort to provide as many opportunities and options for students, preference in RFP scoring and funding will be provided to consortia-based applications providing multiple selected programs and pathways for program completion as compared to individual IHEs with single pathways.

5. **Sustainability (15 points):** Provide a description of short-term and long-term plans for continuing the project once the grant funding has been expended. Include specific strategies and personnel for the sustainability of the project’s activities.
a. A commitment to continue scholarship funding at the same rate for each student supported by Addressing Educator Shortage scholarships until graduation or the student leaves the program.

b. Description of how partnerships with community organizations, school districts, community schools, community colleges, financial partners, and other partners/stakeholder groups will support sustainability.

6. **Personnel (10 points)**: List the personnel assigned to this project. Provide an explanation of the role of each project member and identify a project lead with their contact information. As noted in required attachments, please be sure to include resumes or plan for hiring of staff with the position description noting the responsibilities and requirements of the position.

7. **Budget Narrative (5 points)**: The budget narrative will provide the estimated annual and total budget and average per-student scholarship amount. Each student is not required to receive the same scholarship amount, but the budget narrative should explain the rationale for the funding request. List each budgeted item covered by the grant, including the line-item cost for each item. Describe and justify the amounts for each budget line item. Describe the timing of expenditures in relation to the Gantt Chart included in the proposal. The budget narrative will also indicate how the institution(s) proposes to provide the required funds to continue scholarship funding at the same rate for each student supported by Addressing Educator Shortage scholarships until graduation (or stop out) once the grant funds end. These completion funds are considered matching funds and should be supported by letters of commitment.

VII. Reporting Requirements

The Ohio Department of Higher Education will monitor, which may include site visits and desk audits, each project for which an award is granted to ensure that there is fiscal accountability and operating progress, and that the desired outcomes are achieved. Regular reports will be required from all awardees through a standard reporting template or system and awardees may be asked to attend an annual meeting in a virtual format to share their work and accomplishments to date with ODHE, ODE and their college and university colleagues. ODHE may request additional documentation up to three years after project completion to review the investments’ impacts.

VIII. Legal Notices

The applicant understands that if its application is accepted by the state, the applicant shall enter into an agreement with the state governing the use of the awarded funds. The applicant agrees to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations in the conduct of the work hereunder.

The state reserves the right to fund any application in full or in part, to request additional information to assist in the review process, to require new applications from interested parties, to reject any or all applications responding to this announcement, or to reissue the announcement if it is determined that it is in the best interest of the State of Ohio. Issuing this announcement does not bind the state to making any awards. The state
reserves the right to adjust the dates for this announcement for whatever reasons are deemed appropriate. The state reserves the right to waive any non-substantive infractions made by an applicant, provided that the applicant cures such infraction upon request.

All costs incurred in preparation of an application shall be borne by the applicant. Application preparation costs are not recoverable under an award. The State of Ohio shall not contribute in any way to recovering the costs of application preparation.

The funding decisions are final. Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application(s) at the conclusion of the review process.

The applicant understands that the information provided herein is intended solely to assist the applicant in submittal preparation. To the best of the state’s knowledge, the information provided is accurate. However, the state does not warrant such accuracy, and any errors or omissions subsequently determined will not be construed as a basis for invalidating this solicitation. Interested parties bear the sole responsibility of obtaining the necessary information to submit a qualifying application. The state retains the right to modify or withdraw this solicitation at any time. By submitting an application, applicants expressly agree to these terms.

IX. Trade Secrets

All lead applicants are strongly discouraged from including in a proposal any information that the lead applicant considers to be a “trade secret,” as that term is defined in Section 1333.61(D) of the Ohio Revised Code. All information submitted in response to this RFP is public information unless a statutory exception exists that exempts it from public release under the Ohio Public Records Act in Section 149.43 of the Ohio Revised Code.

If any information in the proposal is to be treated as a trade secret, the proposal must:

1. Identify each and every occurrence of the information within the proposal with an asterisk before and after each line containing trade secret information, and underline the trade secret information itself;

2. Identify that the proposal contains trade secret information in the cover letter; and

3. Include a summary page immediately after the cover letter that lists each page in the proposal that includes trade secret information and the number of occurrences of trade secret information on that page.

To determine what qualifies as trade secret information, refer to the definition of “trade secret” in the Ohio Revised Code at 1333.61(D), which is reproduced below for reference:

(D) “Trade Secret” means information, including the whole or any portion or phase of any scientific or technical information, design, process, procedure, formula, pattern,
compilation, program, device, method, technique or improvement, or any business information or plans, financial information, or listing of names, addresses, or telephone numbers that satisfies both of the following:

(1) It derives independent economic value, actual or potential, from not being generally known to, and not being readily ascertainable by proper means by, other persons who can obtain economic value from its disclosure or use.

(2) It is the subject of efforts that are reasonable under the circumstances to maintain its secrecy.

   a. The Ohio Department of Higher Education requires non-disclosure agreements from all non-ODHE persons who may have access to proposals containing trade secret information, including evaluators.

   b. If the applicant claims that a record is not subject to disclosure under the Ohio Public Records law based on trade secret, it will bear costs of defending this claim.