Principal Recruitment Program FAQs

What is the deadline for submitting the Principal Recruitment Program Request for Proposal (RFP) in IWAS?

The RFP must be submitted by 4p.m. on May 30, 2024.

Who is the contact for any questions regarding the RFP?

Any questions regarding the RFP must be sent **via email** to Shawn Walsh at swalsh@isbe.net. Any substantive questions not covered in the FAQ will be answered via frequent updates to the FAQ.

What exactly does this grant entail?

The purpose of the Principal Recruitment Program is to recruit diverse, committed candidates to enroll in principal preparation programs. The program background and history, funding information, program outcomes, and the review criteria can all be found under the General Information tab within the grant application.

My organization does not have access to the grant application on IWAS. How can I gain access?

If system access isn't available, please email support@isbe.net.

Can I utilize the Principal Recruitment Program RFP for an upcoming first-year principal mentoring program? Can our district be considered for a New Principal Mentoring RFP?

The purpose of the Principal Recruitment Program is to recruit diverse, committed candidates to enroll in principal preparation programs. Only candidates who are recruited to enroll in principal preparation programs can receive services funded by this grant. Eligible applicants for the Principal Recruitment Program include:
- Regional Offices of Education
- Illinois institutions of higher education
- Community colleges
- Statewide organizations representing principals
- Illinois public school districts
- Other educational entities in Illinois

The New Principal Mentoring Program RFP is a separate grant with distinctly different program outcomes and deliverables.

If our proposal is accepted, could we start a cohort in Fall 2024?

The grant period will begin no sooner than July 1, 2024, and will extend to June 30, 2025. Our intention is to finalize the awarded entities as soon as possible.

What is the definition of a 'diverse candidate'?

Diversity can include many different dimensions of identity, including any ways in which people are different from each other socially, physically, ideologically, and psychologically, according to Equity in the Center.

ISBE's Department of District and School Leadership (DDSL) is specifically focused on closing leadership representation gaps in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, and language due to the disproportionately low number of Latina/o/x, Black, women, and multilingual leaders in Illinois relative to those student populations.

The DDSL is specifically focused on race, ethnicity, gender, and language, but it acknowledges that other representation gaps also are important and encourages partners to address whichever gaps are most relevant to their communities. For example, diversity can include:

- Socioeconomic background
- Geographic background (e.g., rural)
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Age
- Religion

Why does representation matter?

Representation matters because a diverse workforce helps to ensure that the school staff will better understand the lived experiences of the diverse students they serve. A diverse staff increases the likelihood that the school staff either lived exact and/or similar experiences of students. Additionally, a school can harness the power of diverse staff members by having them serve as role models to show the importance of accepting and understanding cultures different from one's own.

Why is this grant focused specifically on diverse leadership?

Researchers have agreed for decades that great teaching has the most impact on students, followed by effective school leaders who are "multipliers" of positive student outcomes. When effective leaders use their outsized influence well, they create a ripple effect of positive teacher and student outcomes and a healthy culture in their schools and districts. Leadership that is both diverse and effective has even more positive impacts on students and schools than effective leadership alone. As a result, fostering a more diverse leadership pipeline in Illinois can improve academic, emotional, and career outcomes for all students.

What is the definition of 'relational recruitment'?

"Relational recruitment" is a term coined by focus groups among leaders across the state of Illinois. To be succinct, it means candidates need to be specifically sought out and "tapped/encouraged" to pursue principalship. (See Appendix A: Advisory Group Interviews on page 68 and Appendix B: Focus Groups Analysis on page 78 in the DDSL Work Plan.)

What is the definition of 'rural'?

The Census Bureau defines "rural" as any population, housing, or territory NOT in an urban area or urban cluster.

> Today, "urban areas" consist of two types of geographies:
> ● "Urban areas" have a population of 50,000 or more.
> ● "Urban clusters" have a population of at least 2,500 and less than 50,000.

The National Center for Education Statistics defines classifications of "rural" locales as follows:

Fringe:

A "fringe area" is a Census-defined rural territory that is less than or equal to five miles from an urbanized area, as well as rural territory that is less than or equal to 2.5 miles from an urban cluster.

Distant:

A "distant area" is a Census-defined rural territory that is more than five miles but less than or equal to 25 miles from an urban area, as well as a rural territory that is more than 2.5 miles but less than or equal to 10 miles from an urban cluster.

Remote:

A "remote area" is a Census-defined rural territory that is more than 25 miles from an urban area and is also more than 10 miles from an urban cluster.

Resource:

An [interactive table](#) allows you to sort all Illinois districts and identify the locale codes that classify them as a type of rural area (fringe, distant, or remote).

Does a cohort have to be in a single location or work with a single university?

No. An entity should work with candidates across the state who attend different universities.

What is the definition of 'committed candidate'?

This grant is looking to support candidates who are committed to working in a principal or assistant principal role immediately after completing the preparation program.

What is the definition of 'under-resourced'?

Under-resourced schools are typically associated with serving economically lower socioeconomic students as measured by factors such as free and reduced-priced lunch ratios while having limited resources. Under-resourced schools find it difficult to attract and retain personnel and often serve students with heightened social and academic issues.

What is the definition of 'hard-to-staff'?

The characteristics of a "hard-to-staff" school depend upon many variables. To that end, for the purpose of this grant we are defining a hard-to-staff school as a school that finds it difficult to attract and retain qualified teachers and other employees. This is often due to disparities between districts as they relate to student poverty, race, per pupil expenditures, parental engagement, and student achievement.

My entity/organization has never had a recruitment program in the past. How can we demonstrate capacity to do so for this grant?

We realize there have not been many opportunities like the Principal Recruitment Program to demonstrate this capacity. We are looking for overall capacity to carry out this project. An entity can demonstrate capacity through any other project it has completed.

What is an 'equity lens'?

Use of an "equity lens' is an intentional effort to recognize and respond to even the subtlest biases and inequities that hinder students from having full access to opportunities and educational resources to meet their needs and aspirations and their ability to sustain such efforts. This entails analyzing or diagnosing the impact of the design and implementation of decisions, policies, processes, programs, and practices of all students, especially under-served and marginalized individuals and groups, and to identify and potentially eliminate barriers. Further, leading with an equity lens entails providing a common vocabulary and protocol for evaluating decisions, policies, processes, programs, and practices to achieve equity for all students.