

Teacher Vacancy Grant FY 2027

Funding Announcement Webinar
September 2026

Grant Funding Design



Precision eligibility and grantee flexibility



Formula grant with a streamlined application process and ISBE supports



Grantees will reduce unfilled teaching positions via strategies designed for each local context such as:

Financial incentives to support recruitment/hiring

Programming to strengthen pipelines

Investments to sustain teachers and reduce attrition

Funding Flexibility

- Funds will allow districts to find creative and sustainable solutions, aligned to the causes of shortages in their schools, to fill chronically vacant positions and retain teachers.

Where to draw inspiration:

- Needs assessment
- Stay interviews
- Exit interviews
- 5Essentials Survey
- Data with educator feedback
- School Improvement Plan

Strategies Used in Pilot Program

- Funding for tuition/fees to support staff and/or current teachers in earning new endorsements and degrees
- Instructional coaching and/or mentoring programs to support newer teachers and provide upward mobility opportunities for excellent, experienced teachers
- Professional learning for teachers to learn new evidence-based practices
- School culture/climate improvement systems, initiatives, and staffing
- Programs to show appreciation to teachers and increase morale
- Supplies and materials for teachers

Monitoring/Reporting

Overall program measure: Reduction in unfilled teaching positions in participating districts

Reporting information: Quarterly expenditure reports/periodic performance report legislatively required annual program report

- Summary of all grant-funded activities to reduce unfilled positions
- Progress toward reducing unfilled positions
- Number of unfilled in the preceding fiscal year
- Number of new teachers hired during the program
- Teacher attrition rate
- Teachers participating in any program designed to reduce attrition
- Teachers retained using support of grant funds
- Number of and participation in any strategic pathway programs created

Award Information

- Total Award = Base + Variable Funding based on FY 2026 unfilled teaching positions
- Base options:
 - 11-plus unfilled teaching positions receive a **\$125,000** base.
 - Six-10 unfilled teaching positions receive a **\$65,000** base.
 - Fewer than six unfilled teaching positions receive a **\$45,000** base.
- Sample district with 14 unfilled positions:
- $\$125,000 + (\$3,336.47 \times 14) = \$171,710.58$

*Allocations will be rounded to the nearest dollar

Selection

- This is a targeted program:
- 77% of current teacher vacancies are in 12% of school districts.
- More than 2,000 unfilled teaching positions are in these 100 districts.



100 Public School Districts



FY 2026 EBF Tier 1, 2, or 3



60% Rural and 40% Urban



Highest Counts of Unfilled Teaching Positions

Application Prompts

Describe the district's plan to sustain reduced unfilled teaching positions beyond the term of the grant.

Explain the causes of teacher vacancies in the district. Please include district-specific data and your analysis of the data that led to the initiatives you will outline in Question 3.

Describe the relevant context of your district (e.g., number of schools, students served, demographic of students, teacher demographics, barriers to recruitment and retention, etc.).

Describe the district's plan for utilizing grant funds to reduce unfilled teaching positions in schools of greatest need throughout the district. These initiatives need to be directly tied to teacher recruitment and retention. If you are a continuing district from the pilot program, how are you going to adjust or expand your programs this grant cycle?

Things to Keep in Mind About Applications



The **local context** and **causes of vacancy** should drive your initiatives for reducing vacancies and increasing recruitment.

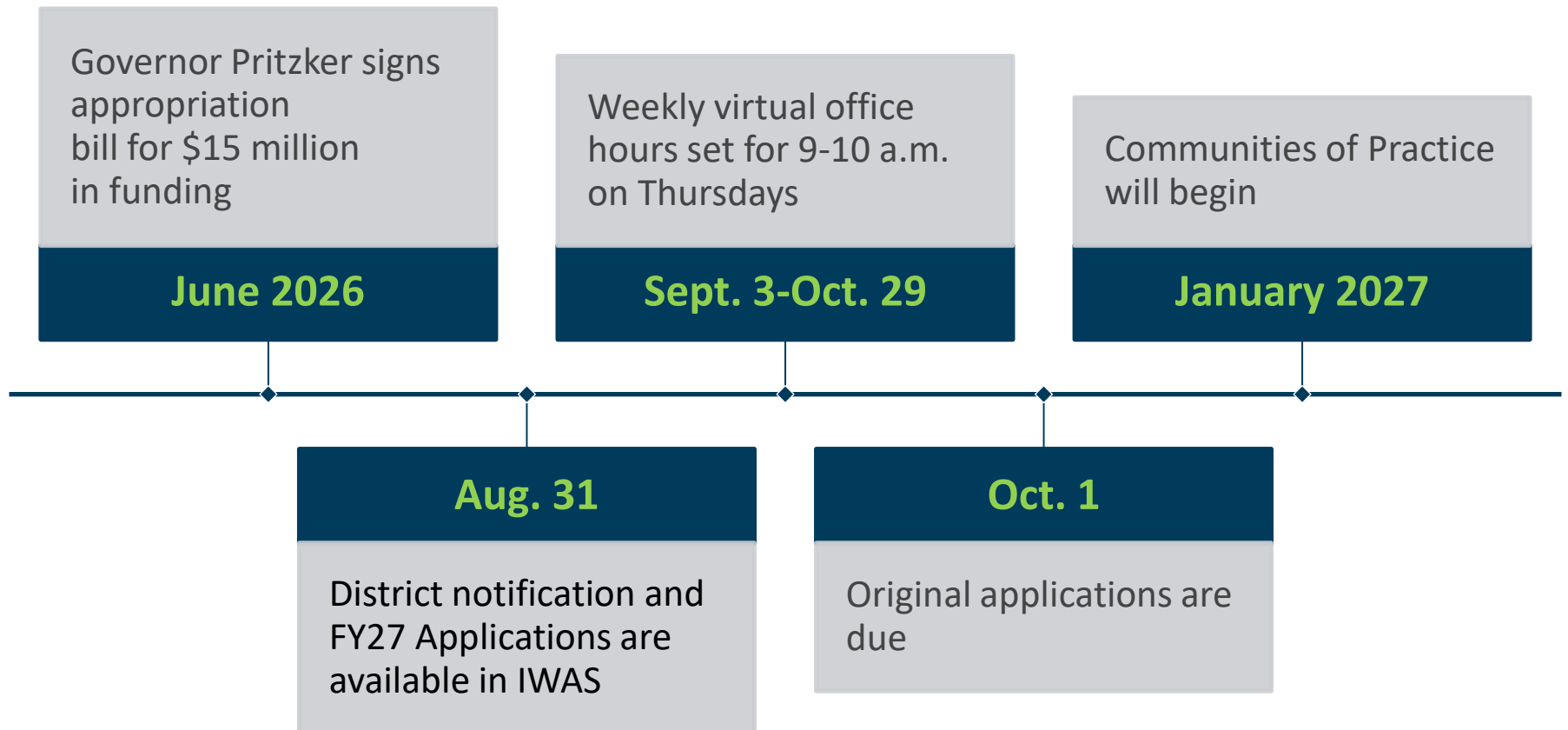


All initiatives should all be explained in your narrative questions on the Data Analysis/Grant Planning page.



Each initiative should have a rationale attached to it as well as a corresponding budget line.

Timeline for Grant Application



Technical Assistance and Support

Regular office hours with ISBE staff and informational webinars

- 9-10 a.m. on Thursdays in September and October



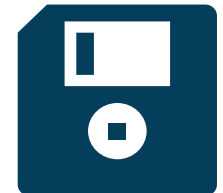
Strategic Supports: Strategy briefs and technical assistance for practices outside typical expertise of superintendents

- Found on the Teacher Vacancy Grant webpage



Communities of Practice for similar districts deploying similar strategies

- Starting in January 2027; dates to be announced





Questions?

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