

UNIFORM NOTICE FOR FUNDING OPPORTUNITY (NOFO)

Summary Information

	Data Field	
1.	Awarding Agency Name:	Illinois State Board of Education 
2.	Agency Contact:	Kate Ulmer homeless@isbe.net (217)782-5270
3.	Announcement Type:	Initial announcement
4.	Type of Assistance Instrument:	Grant
5.	Funding Opportunity Number:	27-3999-MV
6.	Funding Opportunity Title:	Education of Homeless Children and Youth State Grant Program
7.	CSFA Number:	586-18-4058
8.	CSFA Popular Name:	State Programs: Education of Homeless Children and Youth
9.	Assistance Listing (formerly CFDA Number):	Not Applicable
10.	Anticipated Number of Awards:	30
11.	Estimated Total Program Funding:	\$1,500,000
12.	Award Range	\$10,000 - \$500,000
13.	Source of Funding:	State
14.	Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement:	No
15.	Indirect Costs Allowed Restrictions on Indirect Costs	Yes None
16.	Posted Date:	October 9, 2026
17.	Application Range:	October 9, 2026 to 4 pm on November 23, 2026
18.	Technical Assistance Session:	Session Offered: Yes via recording Session Mandatory: No A recording will be available on ISBE's Education for Homeless Children webpage: isbe.net/homeless

Agency Specific Content for the Notice of Funding Opportunity

(Education of Homeless Children and Youth State Grant Program)

For information about grants, please visit [ISBE's Funding Opportunity Page](#)

A. Program Description

[The Education for Homeless Children Act \(105 ILCS 45/1-1 et seq.\)](#) authorizes the Education of Homeless Children and Youth State Grant Program for the education of homeless children and youth. The Education of Homeless Children and Youth State Grant Program is a State grant program that parallels and supplements, but operates independently of, the federal grant program allocating funds for assistance under Subtitle B of Title VII of the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.) and supports school districts throughout Illinois in facilitating the enrollment, attendance, and success of homeless children and youth.

Subject to appropriation, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) shall award competitive grants under an Education of Homeless Children and Youth State Grant Program to eligible applicants based on the percentage of students experiencing homelessness in an applicant school district in accordance with the Act. Services provided by school districts through the use of grant funds may not replace the regular academic program and must be designed to expand upon or improve services provided for homeless students as part of the school's regular academic program.

This Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) is issued pursuant to the authorities identified below. In the event of any conflict, inconsistency, or discrepancy between this NOFO and the applicable statutory, regulatory, or other governing authority, the governing authority shall control.

- Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA), 30 ILCS 708/1 et seq.
- Administrative Rules for GATA, 44 Ill. Admin. Code Part 7000
- Education of Homeless Children and Youth State Grant Program, 105 ILCS 45/1-50
- Education of Homeless Children and Youth State Grant Program, 23 Ill. Admin. Code Part 245
- ISBE Merit-Based Review Policy

Performance Measures, Standards, and Deliverables.

Performance Measures: Provide services for at least 10 children and youth identified as homeless and provide at least one professional development opportunity for staff to better identify and support homeless students.

Performance Standards: Provide services for at least 5 children and youth identified as homeless.

Deliverables:

- Quarterly progress reports
- Quarterly expenditures reports
- Annual Grant Periodic Reporting System Report
- Final program evaluation described in application

B. Funding Information

The State Board of Education intends to approve Education of Homeless Children and Youth State Grant programs for a three-year funding cycle. Funding in each subsequent year is subject to sufficient appropriation for the program, the grantee's satisfactory progress and compliance with the grant terms and conditions during the preceding year, and timely submission and ISBE approval of an annual continuation application. Approval for the initial grant year does not guarantee funding for subsequent years.

The initial grant period is anticipated to begin upon full execution of the grant agreement and end on June 30, 2027.

ISBE may expressly approve an earlier effective date, no earlier than July 1, 2026, subject to the requirements governing pre-execution costs stated in this NOFO. Costs incurred before execution are at the grantee's own risk.

ISBE will determine the number of awards based on the number of applications received and the needs of the awarded applicants. ISBE reserves the right to determine the number of awards and the amount of the awards. As a result, applicants may be awarded less than the full funding amount requested. Under no circumstances shall the issuance of this NOFO be construed as an obligation, commitment, or promise on the part of ISBE to award or provide funding.

This grant will provide a tiered funding structure based on the number of students identified as homeless for a school district as designated in the most recent [Illinois Report Card](#) published by ISBE as of the application deadline. The funding tier for a consortium of two or more eligible applicants will be calculated based on the sum of all homeless students across all eligible applicants included in the proposal. No awardee will receive less than \$10,000.

Maximum award for fewer than 10 identified homeless students: \$10,000

Maximum award for 10 to 35 identified homeless students: \$15,000

Maximum award for 36 to 100 identified homeless students: \$25,000

Maximum award for 101 to 500 identified homeless students: \$50,000

Maximum award for 501 to 10,000 identified homeless students: \$100,000

Maximum award for 10,001 or more identified homeless students: \$500,000

Allowable Activities

Activities eligible for assistance under this grant program may include, but are not limited to, all of the following:

1. Rental assistance, which shall include utilities, security and utility deposits, first and last month's rent, rental application fees, moving expenses, and any other eligible expenses to be determined by the State Board.
2. Transportation assistance, including school bus transportation, public transportation passes, and gasoline assistance for a student or family with a vehicle or to a family member with a vehicle who can transport the student.
3. Emergency shelter, including temporary hotel stays.
4. Housing stability case management and housing locator services.
5. Other collaborative housing strategies, including, but not limited to, prevention and strength-based safety and housing approaches.
6. Activities set forth in Section 723(d) of Subtitle B of Title VII of the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11433(d)), which includes the following:
 - A. The provision of tutoring, supplemental instruction, and enriched educational services that are linked to the achievement of the same challenging state academic standards as the state establishes for other children and youths.
 - B. The provision of expedited evaluations of the strengths and needs of homeless children and youths, including needs and eligibility for programs and services (such as educational programs for gifted and talented students, children with disabilities, and English learners; services provided under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 or similar state or local programs; programs in career and technical education; and school nutrition programs).
 - C. Professional development and other activities for educators and specialized instructional support personnel that are designed to heighten the understanding and sensitivity of such personnel to the needs of homeless children and youths, the rights of such children and youths under this part, and the specific educational needs of runaway and homeless youths.
 - D. The provision of referral services to homeless children and youths for medical, dental, mental, and other health services.
 - E. The provision of assistance to defray the excess cost of transportation for students under § 11432(g)(4)(A), not otherwise provided through federal, state, or local funding, where necessary to enable

students to attend the school selected under § 11432(g)(3).

- F. The provision of developmentally appropriate early childhood education programs, not otherwise provided through federal, state, or local funding, for preschool-aged homeless children.
- G. The provision of services and assistance to attract, engage, and retain homeless children and youths, particularly homeless children and youths who are not enrolled in school, in public school programs and services provided to non-homeless children and youths
- H. The provision for homeless children and youths of before- and after-school mentoring and summer programs in which a teacher or other qualified individual provides tutoring, homework assistance, and supervision of educational activities.
- I. If necessary, the payment of fees and other costs associated with tracking, obtaining, and transferring records necessary to enroll homeless children and youths in school, including birth certificates, immunization or other required health records, academic records, guardianship records, and evaluations for special programs or services.
- J. The provision of education and training to the parents and guardians of homeless children and youths about the rights of, and resources available to, such children and youths, and other activities designed to increase the meaningful involvement of parents and guardians of homeless children or youths in the education of such children or youths.
- K. The development of coordination between schools and agencies providing services to homeless children and youths, as described in § 11432(g)(5).
- L. The provision of specialized instructional support services (including violence prevention counseling) and referrals for such services.
- M. Activities to address the particular needs of homeless children and youths that may arise from domestic violence and parental mental health or substance abuse problems.
- N. The adaptation of space and purchase of supplies for any non-school facilities made available under subsection (a)(2) to provide services under this subsection.
- O. The provision of school supplies, including those supplies to be distributed at shelters or temporary housing facilities, or other appropriate locations.
- P. The provision of other extraordinary or emergency assistance needed to enable homeless children and youths to attend school and participate fully in school activities.

C. Eligibility Information

Eligible Applicants.

Public school districts, public university laboratory schools as defined in Section 18-8.15 of the School Code, charter schools,¹ and Regional Offices of Education. An eligible applicant shall only participate in one proposal for a State-funded homeless education program.

Joint Applications.

A consortium of two or more eligible applicants may apply as co-applicants by submitting a joint proposal. Each proposal must designate an administrative agent. The joint applicant is equally responsible for the implementation of the grant and will sign off on all certifications and assurances. All joint applications must include a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the administrative agent and each joint applicant listed in attachment 1A, signed by each district superintendent or official authorized to submit the proposal, indicating agreement to participate in the joint application. Joint applications that do not include a signed MOU at the time of submission will not be scored. Joint applicants in a consortium may not submit multiple proposals in response to this NOFO.

¹ Refers specifically to charter schools that are authorized by ISBE as opposed to charter schools authorized by LEAs. Charter schools authorized by LEAs are not eligible to apply independently from their authorizing LEAs.

Priority Points.

To be eligible to receive any priority points, a proposal must receive a base score of 61 or higher from Sections 1-5 of the Evaluation Rubric and meet the criteria specified for the applicable priority area. Eligible proposals may receive points in the following priority areas:

- School districts with one or more Comprehensive, Intensive, or Targeted schools: *(5 priority points)*
These are school districts with one or more Comprehensive, Intensive, or Targeted schools (as designated by the most recent [Illinois Report Card](#) published by ISBE as of the application deadline).
- Tier 1 or Tier 2 School Districts: *(5 priority points)*
This status is determined by Evidence-Based Funding (EBF) for FY 2027. See the [ISBE Evidence-Based Funding Distribution Calculation webpage](#).
- Rural School District(s): *(5 priority points)*

“Rural school district” means a school district that:

1. has a National Center for Education Statistics locale code of 31, 32, 33, 41, 42, or 43; **and**
2. has an enrollment of:
 - a) 3,500 or fewer students for a community unit district;
 - b) 2,500 or fewer students for an elementary district; **or**
 - c) 1,100 or fewer students for a high school district

Rural status will be verified using the NCES School and District Navigator and district enrollment data using the most recent finalized Fall Enrollment data published by ISBE as of the application deadline. ISBE will use the same dataset for all applications, regardless of when an application is submitted.

- Districts with a High Percentage of Homeless Students: *(10 priority points)*
These are districts with a homeless student percentage greater than 3% (as designated by the most recent [Illinois Report Card](#) published by ISBE as of the application deadline).

An entity may not apply for a grant until the entity has registered and pre-qualified through the [Grant Accountability and Transparency Act \(GATA\) Grantee Portal](#). Registration and pre-qualification are required annually.

During pre-qualification, verifications are performed, including a check of the federal [SAM.gov](#) Exclusion List and status on the Illinois Stop Payment List. The Grantee Portal alerts the entity of “qualified” status or informs how to remediate a negative verification (e.g., missing UEI-Unique Entity Identifier assigned in SAM.gov, not in good standing with the Secretary of State). Inclusion on the SAM.gov Exclusion List cannot be remediated.

Application Ineligibility.

An application will be deemed ineligible and will NOT be read if any of the following is applicable:

- The application is not signed by an authorized representative on Page 3 of Attachment 1.
- The application is submitted prior to the applicant obtaining a Region County District Type (RCDT) code.
- The applicant does not complete Steps 1-3 of the State of Illinois Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) [prequalification process](#) prior to application submission.
- The application is submitted after the deadline of **4 p.m. on November 23, 2026**.
- A joint application is submitted without a list of participating districts (Attachment 1A) and an MOU signed by an authorized representative for each joint applicant (Attachment 6: MOU for Joint Grant Application).
- The application is submitted with any of the following information missing:
 - Attachment 1: Uniform Application for State Grant Assistance

- Attachment 2: Program Narrative
- Attachment 3: Need, Activity, Outcome, and Measurable Objective
- Attachment 4: State Budget Summary
- Attachment 4A: Budget Summary Breakdown

Indirect Cost Rate.

The federal Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR 200 requires that grantees be provided the opportunity to seek indirect cost reimbursements based on negotiated indirect cost reimbursement rates. Rates are determined and applied as follows.

Local Education Agencies

- Local Education Agency (LEA) indirect cost rates are developed in accordance with a delegation of authority agreement between ISBE and the U.S. Department of Education (ED). The plan includes both a restricted and unrestricted rate for each individual LEA. Both the restricted and unrestricted LEA rates are published annually on the [School Finance Publications webpage](#). In the past, only the restricted rate was allowed when budgeting indirect cost reimbursements.

LEAs can seek indirect cost reimbursement at the published unrestricted rate for any program other than those identified as restricted by ED.

- Newly organized LEAs, Regional Offices of Education, Intermediate Service Centers, area vocational centers, charter schools, university laboratory schools, and governmental entities formed by a joint agreement among LEAs utilize either the statewide average of LEA unrestricted or restricted indirect rates as appropriate, depending on program.
- LEAs that jointly administer federal program(s) utilize either the approved unrestricted or restricted indirect cost rates for the administrative district of the joint program as appropriate, depending on program.

D. Application and Submission Information

Address to Request Application Package.

Application package is located on the [ISBE Homeless webpage](#).

Content and Form of Application Submission.

Each application must be submitted in the format outlined below to be considered complete. A complete application will include all required components (the numbered items below) and signatures when mentioned. Please use the checkboxes in front of the numbers as a checklist when assembling your completed application. It is advised to attach a copy of the completed checklist with the application.

- ☐ **1. Uniform Application for State Grant Assistance (Attachment 1):** Include the name, address, telephone, and fax numbers of the entity; email, name, and telephone number of the contact person; Federal Employer Identification number; Unique Entity ID (UEI) number; SAM Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) Code; and all other listed information. The Application page must be signed by the official authorized to submit proposals. First-time applicants without an RCDT code must call or email the agency contact to obtain an RCDT code **before** submitting an application.
- ☐ **2. Participating Districts (Attachment 1A):** List requested information for all participating districts if a joint proposal is submitted. Use additional pages as needed. Required for joint proposals.
- ☐ **3. Program Narrative (Attachment 2)** maximum **10** pages:

The program's narrative must address each narrative requirement in the order in which it is presented. Label each portion of the narrative. The narratives will be limited to 10 pages. Information beyond the 10-page limit will not be included in the

review process.

Section 1 – Needs Assessment

- 1) Identify challenges that the district has encountered in meeting the requirements of the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and/or the state Education for Homeless Children Act, plus the steps taken to address those challenges.
 - Number of homeless students over the last 3 years and the percentage of overall student enrollment identified as homeless over the last 3 years
 - Trends in mobility, chronic absenteeism, achievement gaps, graduation rates, and disciplinary incidents
 - Barriers encountered during identification, enrollment, transportation, family engagement, etc.
- 2) Describe strategies already implemented for these challenges and continued unmet needs after these strategies have been implemented.
- 3) Describe the demographic characteristics of the area used to gauge the likelihood that families may become homeless.
 - Poverty rates
 - Eviction rates
 - Unemployment rates
 - Population growth or decline
 - Immigrant and refugee populations
 - Housing costs and availability
 - Major business closures or economic growth
- 4) Clearly connect how these demographic and economic conditions directly increase the risk of homelessness and educational disruption for children and youth in your district.

Section 2 – Program Description, Objectives, and Activities

- 1) Describe the qualifications of the staff responsible for the proposed activities and other services. Consider the use of grant funds to hire additional personnel based on the potential for continued funding.
 - Certifications
 - McKinney-Vento training
 - Years of experience serving vulnerable populations
- 2) Describe how the proposed activities will enable homeless children and youth to achieve stability and integration within the regular education programs.
- 3) Describe how the proposed activities will help homeless children and youth in meeting challenging State academic content, student performance standards, and prepare them for self-sufficiency.
- 4) Describe how the proposed activities and services will address effective mechanisms for involving parents or guardians of homeless children and youth in their children's education.
- 5) Address activity sustainability.
 - Plans for maintaining services after grant funding
 - Integration with district resources
 - Community partnerships that provide continued support
- 6) Complete Objectives and Activities (Attachment 3)

Section 3 – Coordination of Services

Coordination must be designed to ensure that homeless children and youth have access and reasonable proximity to activities and related support services and raise the awareness of school personnel and service providers of the effects of

short-term stays in shelters and other challenges with ongoing education and training efforts.

- 1) Provide specific examples of community partners and describe the role each partner will play in supporting homeless students and families.
- 2) Provide the amount of funding set aside from the participating district(s)'s Title I, Part A homeless reservation, the amount of funding expended from that reservation, and a description of how funds will supplement this homeless reservation and other funds authorized under the federal McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act.
- 3) Describe how awareness and training activities will be provided to school personnel and service providers to increase understanding of McKinney-Vento requirements and the educational impact of homelessness.
- 4) Explain how coordination efforts will improve access to services, educational stability, and student outcomes.
- 5) Demonstrate that effective coordination with private, nonprofit entities, social services agencies, and others serving homeless children and youth and their families will occur, as necessary, so that the applicant is able to provide services that are appropriate and comprehensive. Evidence of effective coordination may include, but is not limited to, a written coordination plan, letters of commitment or confirming emails, MOUs, or agreements. (See Attachment 5 for an agreement template, referral protocols and referral logs, documentation of joint activities, and/or resource-sharing documentation.)

Section 4 – Evaluation Plan

- 1) Identify specific data sources that will be used to measure program effectiveness. Include both process measures (e.g., number of students identified, served, or referred) and outcome measures (e.g., attendance, academic achievement, educational stability, graduation rates).
- 2) Establish a timeline for data collection and review.
- 3) Describe who will be responsible for collecting, analyzing, and reporting data.
- 4) Explain how evaluation results will be used to improve program implementation, address service gaps, and inform future planning.

☐ 4. Objectives and Activities (Attachment 3) maximum 5 pages:

Describe the proposed activities and services to be provided and how these activities and services will meet the needs of the homeless children and youth to be served. Clearly connect the activities to needs. Every identified need should include an activity, expected outcome, and measurable objective. See example below.

Need	Activity	Expected Outcome	Measurable Objective
Chronic absenteeism	Transportation assistance	Increased attendance	Increase attendance of identified homeless students from 85% to 92%
Academic gaps	Tutoring and credit recovery	Improved academic performance	Increase in academic proficiency by 10%
Social-emotional challenges	Counseling and case management	Improved student engagement	75% of homeless students receiving counseling will demonstrate improvement in social-emotional functioning as measured by counselor assessments.

- ☐ 5. **State Budget Summary (Attachment 4):** The budget MUST be submitted on this form. No other budget form will be accepted. District budgets MUST be signed by the district superintendent. Other applicants should have an

authorized official sign the form.

- ☐ **6. Budget Summary Breakdown (Attachment 4A):** The Budget Summary Breakdown MUST include descriptions of the anticipated expenditures, correlated to the line items set forth on the State Budget Summary. The Budget Summary Breakdown should also include subcontract information, if applicable.
- ☐ **7. Collaboration Documentation (Attachment 5):** Provided as an optional template to demonstrate coordination of services.
- ☐ **8. MOU for Joint Grant Application (Attachment 6):** Only required for joint applications

Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and registration in the System for Award Management (SAM).

Each applicant is required to:

- i. Be registered in SAM before submitting its application with a UEI assigned. To establish a SAM registration, go to [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov).
- ii. Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal, Federal pass-through, or State award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal or State awarding agency. It also must state that the State awarding agency may not make a Federal pass-through or State award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the State awarding agency is ready to make a Federal pass-through or State award, the State awarding agency may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal pass-through or State award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal pass-through or State award to another applicant.

Submission Dates and Times.

Submit complete proposals via email to homeless@isbe.net no later than **4 p.m. on November 23, 2026**. **Late proposals will not be accepted.**

All questions asked concerning this NOFO will be responded to in a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document so all respondents can see all questions and the responses to the questions. Changes to the FAQ will not be made after November 16, 2026. Applicants are advised to check the site before submitting a proposal.

E. Application Review Information

In determining need, the State Board of Education may consider the number of homeless children and youths enrolled in preschool, elementary school, and secondary school within the school district and shall consider the needs of such children and youths and the ability of the district to meet such needs. The State Board of Education may also consider the extent to which the applicant exhibits in the application and in current practice a commitment to education for all homeless children and youths.

In determining the quality of applications, the State Board of Education will consider the following:

1. The applicant's assessment of needs and the likelihood that the services presented in the application will meet such needs.
2. The types, intensity, and coordination of the services to be provided.
3. The involvement of parents or guardians of homeless children or youths in the education of these children.
4. The extent to which homeless children and youths are effectively integrated within the regular education

- program.
5. The quality of the applicant's evaluation plan for the services.
 6. The extent to which services provided will be coordinated with other services available to homeless children and youths and their families.
 7. Other measures indicative of high-quality services, such as the extent to which the school district will provide case management or related services to unaccompanied youths.

Criteria.

Selection Criteria and point values are as follows:

- Not Provided – 0 Points
 - Proposal requirements are absent.
- Very Limited – 1 Point
 - Proposal provides very few details to meet the project outcomes.
- Somewhat Limited – 2 Points
 - Proposal is unclear and lacks enough evidence to meet project outcomes.
- Moderate – 3 Points
 - Proposal provides moderate detail and conveys potential to meet project outcomes.
- Strong – 4 Points
 - Proposal provides good detail and strong evidence to meet project outcomes.
- Very Strong – 5 Points
 - Proposal exceeds expectations and provides a solid plan to meet project outcomes.

Evaluation Rubric.

Section 1: Needs Assessment There is sufficient need for the program, as evidenced by the number or proportion of students identified as eligible for program services. Convincing evidence is presented of the applicant's inability to adequately meet the needs of its homeless children and youth without the additional assistance provided pursuant to this Part. (25 points)	Possible Points
The proposal effectively uses data to identify and explain homelessness-related unmet needs within the district, including trends in student identification, mobility, attendance, achievement, graduation, and discipline.	5
The proposal demonstrates a clear understanding of federal McKinney-Vento and state homeless education requirements and accurately identifies barriers to compliance and service delivery.	5
The proposal provides convincing evidence that existing resources are insufficient to adequately address the needs of its homeless children and youth.	5
The proposal analyzes demographic and economic factors that contribute to the risk of homelessness within the district, including poverty, housing instability, unemployment, population changes, and other relevant indicators.	5
The proposal connects local demographic and economic conditions to increased risks of homelessness and educational disruption for children and youth in the district.	5
Section 1 Total (25 points possible)	25
Section 2: Program Description, Objectives, & Activities The proposed activities and other services to be provided have a strong potential for helping the applicant design and continue programs that enable homeless children and youth to achieve stability and integration within the regular education programs in order to reach the same challenging State content and student performance standards to which all children and	

youth are held, including preparation for self-sufficiency. The proposed activities and services address effective mechanisms for involving parents or guardians of homeless children and youth in their children's education. (35 points)	
The proposal demonstrates that staff responsible for the proposed activities possess the necessary qualifications, certifications, training, and experience to effectively serve children and youth experiencing homelessness.	5
The proposal demonstrates how proposed activities will help homeless children and youth achieve educational stability and successfully participate in regular education programs.	5
The proposal presents a realistic and sustainable plan for maintaining services beyond the grant period, including integration with existing district programs, resources, and funding sources.	5
The proposal demonstrates how proposed services will support homeless children and youth in meeting challenging State academic content, student performance standards, and preparing them for self-sufficiency.	5
The proposal describes activities and services that are well-designed, evidence-based, and responsive to the identified needs of homeless children and youth.	5
The proposal establishes a clear connection between each identified need, the proposed activity, expected outcome, and measurable objective, providing a strong framework for evaluating program effectiveness and student success.	5
The proposal provides activities and services that address effective mechanisms for involving parents or guardians of homeless children and youth in their children's education.	5
Section 2 Total (35 points possible)	35
Section 3: Coordination of Services The proposal demonstrates that effective coordination with private, nonprofit entities, social services agencies, and others serving homeless children and youth and their families will occur, as necessary, so that the applicant is able to provide services that are appropriate and comprehensive. (15 points)	
The proposal demonstrates strong collaboration with community organizations, agencies, and partners that will provide ongoing support and resources for homeless children, youth, and families.	5
The application demonstrates how coordination among partners will ensure homeless children and youth have access and reasonable proximity to services and activities, improve educational stability, reduce barriers to participation, and support positive student outcomes.	5
The application describes a clear plan for providing ongoing awareness and training activities for school personnel and service providers that increase understanding of McKinney-Vento requirements, the effects of homelessness and short-term shelter stays, and strategies for supporting educational continuity.	5
Section 3 Total (15 points possible)	15
Section 4: Evaluation Plan The proposed evaluation process is designed to assess the effectiveness of the program's activities and services in relation to the program's goals and objectives and likely to produce data that can be used to improve the program. (15 points)	
Evaluation methods include objective performance measures clearly related to the project's intended outcomes and will produce quantitative and qualitative data.	5

The program evaluation process includes procedures for reviewing and analyzing results and making recommendations for improvement.	5
The applicant details how evaluation results will be used to improve program implementation, address service gaps, and inform future planning.	5
Section 4 Total (15 points possible)	15
Section 5: Budget The proposed budget is consistent with the proposal's activities and appears to be cost-effective. (10 points)	
The proposed budget is reasonable and aligned with the activities, deliverables, and timeline described in the proposal.	5
The number of students to be served is appropriate relative to the requested funding, demonstrating strong value and cost-effectiveness.	5
Section 5 Total (10 points possible)	10
TOTAL POINTS	100
Section 6: Priority Points Only applications that receive a base score of 61 or higher from Sections 1-5 of the Evaluation Rubric will be eligible for priority points.	
Comprehensive, Intensive, or Targeted Eligible School(s): These are programs that serve at least one or more of the state's Comprehensive, Intensive, or Targeted schools (as designated by the most recent Illinois Report Card published by ISBE as of the application deadline).	0 or 5
Tier 1 or Tier 2 School District(s) Served: These are programs that serve at least one or more of the state's Tier 1 or Tier 2 school districts as determined by Evidence-Based Funding (EBF) for FY 2027. See the ISBE Evidence-Based Funding Distribution Calculation webpage .	0 or 5
Rural School District(s): These are programs that serve students who attend one or more rural school districts in alignment with the state's definition of rural school districts . Rural status will be verified using the NCES School and District Navigator and district enrollment data using the most recent finalized Fall Enrollment count data published by ISBE as of the application deadline. ISBE will use the same dataset for all applications, regardless of when an application is submitted.	0 or 5
Districts with a High Percentage of Homeless Students: These are districts with a homeless student percentage greater than 3% (as designated by the most recent Illinois Report Card published by ISBE as of the application deadline). For applications submitted by two or more eligible entities, priority points under this criterion will be determined using a weighted average homelessness rate calculated across all participating eligible entities, weighted by each entity's student enrollment and homelessness count.	0 or 10
Section 6 Total (25 points possible)	25

Minimum Score

Proposals that score under 61 points are not eligible for priority points and will not be funded.

Tiebreaker

In the event of a tie, the applicant with the higher amount of priority points will be given priority.

Merit-Based Review

ISBE's evaluation process is described in Section II.C. of [ISBE's Merit-Based Review Policy](#). Following the notification of grant awards, an applicant may request copies of reviewer scores and comments by contacting the Wellness and

Student Care Department at homeless@isbe.net.

Anticipated Announcement and State Award Dates, if applicable.

It is anticipated that successful applicants will receive a Notice of Award via email approximately 90 days after the application deadline. The award letter is NOT an authorization to begin performance or expenditures. After the merit-based appeal timeframe has ended, awardees will receive additional information from the program area that includes the next steps for finalizing the grant.

ISBE may, in its discretion and subject to applicable law and the availability of appropriated funds, approve reimbursement of otherwise allowable grant costs incurred on or after July 1, 2026, and before execution of the grant agreement. Such costs must fall within the grant term and budget period expressly approved by ISBE, support approved grant activities, be reasonable and allocable to the grant, comply with the grant's nonsupplanting requirements, and be adequately documented. Reimbursement requires ISBE's express written approval and inclusion of the costs in the approved grant budget. Applicants incur costs before approval at their own risk. This provision does not guarantee a grant award or reimbursement. Any approved pre-execution costs count toward the total grant award.

A grantee seeking reimbursement of pre-execution costs must submit, within 30 days after execution, the expenditure and activity report required by 30 ILCS 708/125. ISBE must approve that report before making any payment. No grant funds will be disbursed before execution of the grant agreement.

F. Award Administration Information

State Award Notices.

The Notice of State Award (NOSA) will specify the funding terms and specific conditions resulting from the pre-award risk assessments and the merit-based review process. The authorized representative of a final awardee's organization must accept the NOSA found within the Compliance section of the electronic grant management system (eGMS) companion grant application. The NOSA is not an authorization to begin performance or incur costs.

Administrative and National Policy Requirements.

No subcontracts or subgrants are allowed without prior written approval of the State Superintendent of Education. If subcontracts or subgrants are allowed, then all project responsibilities are to be retained by the grantee to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of the grant. All subcontracts and subgrants must be documented and must have the prior written approval of the State Superintendent of Education. Approval of subcontracts and subgrants shall be subject to the same criteria as are applied to the original proposal/application. The following information is required if any subcontracts/subgrants are to be utilized:

1. Name(s) and address(es) of subcontractor(s)/subgrantee(s).
2. Need and purpose for each subcontract/subgrant.
3. Measurable and time-specific services to be provided.
4. Associated costs (i.e., amounts to be paid under each subcontract/subgrant); and
5. Projected number of participants to be served.

The grantee may not assign, convey, or transfer its rights to the grant award without the prior written consent of the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE).

Grantees will be required to cooperate fully with ISBE to produce all reports for state reporting. Data for these reports is to be provided as requested. Further, all programs must cooperate with site visits by ISBE staff and cooperate with any questions regarding data, reporting of programming, and the production of the final report to ISBE.

Grant funds shall not be used to supplant other efforts currently funded with local, state, or federal resources.

Reporting.

Periodic financial reporting must be completed at least quarterly via the IWAS system.

Quarterly grant programmatic reports are required and must include, at a minimum, a summary of progress toward accomplishing each program objective with supporting data or data representations to include an assessment of program quality and recommendations for improvement and sustainability. A form link will be distributed to submit quarterly grant programmatic reports.

Annual grant programmatic reports are required via a Grant Periodic Reporting System (GPRS) submission. Submit the report for approval via the GPRS report section in IWAS.

The final program evaluation report as required for the program must include, at a minimum:

- A summary of progress toward accomplishing each program objective with supporting data or data representations to include an assessment of program quality and recommendations for improvement and sustainability.
- A summary of program impact and recommendations based on data for future programming and engagement
- Consideration of the importance of program sustainability and details of how support will continue after the grant concludes.

Additional reporting may be required dependent on programmatic risk assessment.

G. State Awarding Agency Contact(s)

Illinois State Board of Education
Wellness and Student Care Department
Kate Ulmer
homeless@isbe.net
217-782-5270

H. Other Information, if applicable

Attachments.

- Mandatory for All Applications
 - Attachment 1: Uniform Application for State Grant Assistance
 - Attachment 2: Program Narrative
 - Attachment 3: Need, Activity, Outcome, and Measurable Objective
 - Attachment 4: State Budget Summary
 - Attachment 4A: Budget Summary Breakdown
- Encouraged for All Applications
 - Attachment 5: Collaboration Documentation
- Mandatory for Joint Applications
 - Attachment 1A: Participating Districts
 - Attachment 6: MOU for Joint Grant Application