




March 15, 2022

TO: Eligible Applicants

FROM: Dr. Carmen I. Ayala 
State Superintendent of Education

SUBJECT: NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY (NOFO) / REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP):
Fiscal Year 2022 Phillip Jackson Freedom School Grant

CSFA Number: 586-18-2797
CSFA Title: Federal Programs-CURE-Freedom Schools

CFDA Number: Coronavirus Urgent Remediation Emergency Fund
CFDA Title: Coronavirus Urgent Remediation Emergency Fund

Program Overview

Eligibility and Application Information

Eligible Applicants: Public schools, public universities, public community colleges, not-for-profit entities, and community-based organizations are eligible to apply.

Priority will be given to joint applications between a community-based organization or a not-for-profit and another eligible entity.

Applicants will need to use their Region, County, District, Type (RCDT) code when applying. Applicants may utilize the ISBE website to verify their RCDT code at <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/RCDTSLookup.aspx>. Applicants that do not have a RCDT code may email Adenike Sosina at asosina@isbe.net for information on how to establish an RCDT code.

NOTE: The State of Illinois Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) requires applicants to complete Prequalification requirements before applying for any grant. This includes completion of the Grantee Registration and prequalification process through the Illinois GATA Web Portal at <https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/GATA/Grantee/Pages/default.aspx>. Grant applications must be submitted by the application deadline indicated in this NOFO/RFP. Applicants are advised to complete the prequalification requirements well in advance of the NOFO/RFP deadline

Successful grant applicants will be required to complete an FY 2022 Fiscal and Administrative Risk Assessment in the form of an Internal Controls Questionnaire (ICQ) available through the GATA Web Portal, an FY 2022 Organizational Risk Assessment through the ISBE Web Application Security (IWAS) system, and the FY 2022 Programmatic Risk Assessment that is found within the electronic Grant Management System budget. Grant awards will not be executed until the FY 2022 ICQ, Organizational Risk Assessment and Programmatic Risk Assessment are completed.

Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number and System for Award Management (SAM): Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or federal or state awarding agency that is exempt from those requirements under 2 CFR § 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the federal or state awarding agency under 2 CFR § 25.110(d)) is required to:

- (i) Be registered in SAM before submitting its application. If you are not registered in SAM, you may do so at www.sam.gov;
- (ii) Provide a valid DUNS number in its [application](#); and
- (iii) 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. The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) may not consider an application for a federal pass-through or state award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements.

: **Guidance** is found at <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2013-title2-vol1/pdf/CFR-2013-title2-vol1.pdf>

This grant is subject to the provisions of:

- <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs3.asp?ActID=3559&ChapterID=7>
- <https://ilga.gov/commission/JCAR/admincode/044/04407000sections.html>.

Merit-Based Review and Selection Process for Competitive Grants: ISBE is required to design and execute a merit-based review and selection process for applications. This process is incorporated by reference in all applicable funding opportunities. Applicants are advised to refer to the [ISBE Merit-Based Review Policy](#)., which can be found at https://www.isbe.net/Documents/Merit_Based_Review_Policy.pdf.

Grant Award/Cost Sharing or Matching: The total amount of federal funding available is \$17 million. The amount funded per applicant will be \$350,000. A cost sharing or matching component is acceptable but not required for these funds.

Grant Period: The grant period will begin no sooner than **May 9, 2022** and will extend from the execution date of the grant until August 31, 2023. Successful applicants may reapply via continuing application for up to two additional year (s). Funding in the subsequent years will be contingent upon compliance with federal and state law, state grant-making rules, passage of sufficient appropriations for the program, and satisfactory performance in the preceding grant period. No promise or undertaking made in this NOFO/RFP is an assurance that a grant agreement will be renewed, nor does this NOFO/RFP create any right to or expectation of renewal.

Submission Dates and Times/Other Submission Requirements: Proposals can be submitted electronically through the ISBE Attachment Manager or mailed no later than **4:30 p.m. May 6, 2022**. Directions for each submission method are found below.

Electronic Submission: Completed proposals submitted electronically should be scanned into one PDF with all supporting documents and required signatures. The ISBE Attachment Manager is found at <https://sec1.isbe.net/attachmgr/default.aspx>. Choose Sosina, Adenike from the drop-down menu in Receiver Information. Submit the application using the button at the bottom of the page.

Mailed Proposals: Mail the original and an electronic copy of the proposal on a USB flash drive to Adenike Sosina, Wellness Department, 100 N. First Street, E-222, Springfield, IL, 62777 to ensure the NOFO/RFP response is in the ISBE offices no later than **4:30 p.m. May 6, 2022**. It is advised to use certified mail with guaranteed delivery date and a return receipt requested.

Late proposals will not be accepted.

Grant Award Notice: 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. Monies spent prior to programmatic approval are done so at the applicant's own risk.

Technical Assistance Session: A technical assistance session will be held at 1 pm on March 17, 2022. Registration information is found [here](#). Attendance is not required.

Changes to NOFO/RFP: ISBE will post any changes made to the NOFO/RFP prior to April 22, 2022, at <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Request-for-Proposals.aspx>. Applicants are advised to check the site before submitting a proposal.

Agency Contact: For more information on this NOFO/RFP, contact Adenike Sosina at (217) 782-5270 or asosina@isbe.net. All questions asked concerning this NOFO/RFP will be responded to in a Frequently Asked Questions document found [here](#) so all respondents can see all questions and the responses to the questions. Changes to the FAQ will not be made after April 22, 2022. Applicants are advised to check the site before submitting a proposal.

General Information

Program Background and Description

Program Purpose:

The purpose of this funding opportunity is to establish a Freedom School network to supplement the learning taking place in public schools by creating programs with a mission to improve the odds for children in poverty. Freedom Schools in multiple states use a research-based and multicultural curriculum for disenfranchised communities most affected by the opportunity gap and learning loss caused by the pandemic, and by expanding the teaching of African American history, developing leadership skills, and providing an understanding of the tenets of the civil rights movement.

Program Description:

Freedom School programs will operate at least a six-week summer program and/or a program during the school year that provides out-of-school learning opportunities that may include before-school, after-school, or weekend programming. The mission of the program is to improve the odds for children living in poverty. Programs must use a research-based and multicultural curriculum for disenfranchised communities most affected by the opportunity gap and learning loss caused by the pandemic, and by expanding the teaching of African American history, developing leadership skills, and providing an understanding of the tenets of the civil rights movement.

The teachers in Freedom Schools must be from the local community, with an emphasis on historically disadvantaged youth, including African American students and other students of color, so that (i) these individuals have access to summer jobs and teaching experiences that serve as a long-term pipeline to educational careers and the hiring of minority educators in public schools, (ii) these individuals are elevated as content experts and community leaders, and (iii) Freedom School students have access to both mentorship and equitable educational resources.

Program Background/History:

The fundamental goal of the Freedom Schools of the 1960s was to provide quality education for all students, to motivate active civic engagement, and to empower disenfranchised communities. The renowned and progressive curriculum of Freedom Schools allowed students of all ages to experience a new and liberating form of education that directly related to the imperatives of their lives, their communities, and the Freedom Movement.

Freedom Schools continue to demonstrate the proven benefits of critical civic engagement and intergenerational effects by providing historically disadvantaged students, including African American students and other students of color, with quality instruction that fosters student confidence, critical thinking, and social and emotional development.

Freedom Schools offer culturally relevant learning opportunities with the academic and social supports that Black children need by utilizing quality teaching, challenging, and engaging curricula, wrap-around supports, a positive school climate, and strong ties to family and community. Freedom Schools have a clear focus on results.

Program Objectives:

Programs must provide intentionally and imaginatively employ strategies that focus on all the following:

- Civic engagement
- Literacy
- Racial justice and equity.
- Transparency and building trusting relationships
- Self-determination and governance
- Building on community strengths and community wisdom
- Utilizing current data, best practices, and evidence
- Shared leadership and collaboration

A reflective learning culture
A whole child approach to education

Programs should provide for engaging, culturally relevant, and challenging curricula; high-quality teaching; wrap-around supports and opportunities; positive discipline practices, such as restorative justice; and leadership opportunities.

Programs must strive for authentic parent and community engagement during the development of Freedom Schools and their curriculum. Authentic parent and community engagement include all the following:

- A shared responsibility that values equal partnerships between families and professionals.
- Ensuring that students and families who are directly impacted by Freedom School policies and practices are the decision-makers in the creation, design, implementation, and assessment of those policies and practices.
- Genuine respect for the culture and diversity of families.
- Relationships that center around the goal of supporting family well-being and learning.

Students participating in Freedom School programs will be required to participate in pre- and post-assessments of literacy and other program objectives.

Policy Requirements:

There are no State Board of Education policy requirements for this posting.

Performance Measures:

There will be a 10 percent increase in proficiency and growth in literacy and other program objectives for program participants by the end of the program on pre- and post-assessments.

There will be a 10 percent increase in parent and community engagement for 20 percent of student participants by the end of the program.

Targets:

There will be a 2.5 percent increase in proficiency and growth in literacy and other program objectives for program participants by the end of the program on pre- and post-assessments.

Parent and community engagement rates will be 2.5 percent higher for student participants.

Performance Standards:

There will be a 5 percent increase in proficiency and growth in literacy and other program objectives for program participants by the end of the program on pre- and post-assessments in literacy.

There will be 5 percent annual higher parent and community engagement rates for student participants.

Deliverables and Milestones:

Deliverable 1: Attendance at ISBE-sponsored workshops and trainings.

Deliverable 2: Completion of annual Grant Periodic Performance Report via IWAS.

Deliverable 3: Administration of pre- and post-assessments to program participants.

Program Specifications

Freedom Schools provide activities and support using a research-based and multicultural curriculum for disenfranchised communities most affected by the opportunity gap and learning loss caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and by expanding the teaching of African American history, developing leadership skills, and providing an understanding of the tenets of the civil rights movement.

Funding Information

Introduction:

All grant funds disbursed to administer the Freedom Schools program and all related services must be handled in accordance with the authorizing legislation (105 ILCS 5/2-3.186); the State and Federal Grant Administration Policy, Fiscal Requirements, and Procedures handbook; and 23 Illinois Administrative Code 100 (Requirements for Accounting, Budgeting, Financial Reporting, and Auditing).

Cost Sharing or Matching:

A cost sharing or matching component is acceptable but not required for these funds.

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 ISBE website. The FY22 rates are available at <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Indirect-Cost-Rate-Plan.aspx>. In the past, only the restricted rate was allowed when budgeting indirect cost reimbursements.

LEAs have the ability to 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.

Non-LEAs

- Programs eligible for an unrestricted indirect cost rate; not-for-profit entities; community-/faith-based organizations; and other non-LEA, non-university subgrantees utilize rates negotiated through the Governor's Office of Management and Budget centralized process where they will have the option to:
 - o Select the 10% diminimus rate.
 - o Submit documentation supporting a rate determined through negotiation with their federal cognizant agency.
 - o Negotiate a rate.

Non-LEA, non-university grantees may initiate the unrestricted indirect cost rate negotiation process through the GATA grantee portal at: <https://grants.illinois.gov/portal/>.

- Federal programs requiring the use of a restricted indirect cost rate, not-for-profit entities, community-/faith-based organizations, and other non-LEA subgrantees shall utilize the 8% default rate described at 34 CFR 76.564.
- Colleges and Universities will be limited to a maximum indirect cost rate of 8% or other indirect cost rate calculated by their cognizant federal agency, whichever is less, for grants administered by ISBE.

Costs associated with Fiscal Support Services (2520), Internal Support Services (2570), Staff Support Services (2640), Data Processing Services (2660), and Direction of Business Support Services (2510) charged to the Educational Fund are properly budgeted as indirect costs.

Stevens Amendment:

For purposes of compliance with Section 511 of P.L. 101-166 (the “Stevens Amendment”), applicants are advised that 100 percent of the funds for this program are derived from federal sources. The total amount of federal funding involved is \$17 million.

Reporting Requirements

Periodic financial reporting should be completed at a minimum of quarterly via the IWAS system. Programmatic reporting should be completed at a minimum of annually via the IWAS system.

Content and Form of Application Submission

Instructions: 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. **Applications that do not have all the required documents will not proceed in the competition.** 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, and telephone and fax numbers of the entity; email, name, and telephone number of the contact person; Federal Employer Identification number; DUNS number; SAM CAGE Code; and all other listed information. The Application page must be signed by an official authorized to submit proposals.
- 2. Program Summary (Attachment 2):** Include the proposed number of students to be served, anticipated number of teachers, and summary of strategy to recruit and retain teachers and students. Describe how teachers will have access to summer jobs and teaching experiences that serve as a long-term pipeline to educational careers.
- 3. Proposal Abstract (Attachment 3):** Include information on program activities, organizational capacity, and ability to implement a Freedom Schools program.
- 4. Program Narrative (Attachments 4A-4D) maximum 4 pages per attachment:** Follow the specifications found under Program Narrative Requirements below.
- 5. Objectives and Activities (Attachment 5) maximum 5 pages:** Use the form provided to list the objectives and activities of the proposed project in a time-specific format. Applicant should address all the objectives that are listed in this NOFO/RFP on pages 4-5.

- 6. Proposal Evaluation Design (Attachment 6)** maximum 2 pages: Use the form provided to complete the evaluation design.
- 7. Federal Budget Summary (Attachment 7):** 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.
- 8. Budget Summary Breakdown (Attachment 7A):** The Budget Summary Breakdown **MUST** include descriptions of the anticipated expenditures, correlated to the line items set forth on the Federal Budget Summary. The Budget Summary Breakdown should also include subcontract information, if applicable. The Budget Narrative (**Attachment 7B**) should describe how funds will be used to support direct instruction to students and program objectives.

Program Narrative Requirements

Need

Summarize the needs by describing the process used with the community to determine the need for the project, the availability of resources for the project, and the data used to determine the need (e.g., student achievement data, demographic data, student behavioral data, and parent data).

Describe how the proposed program and services will address the needs of the community, the students, and the families in a culturally, competently, and developmentally appropriate manner to improve the academic performance of the students.

Describe the partnership between the applicant and the community. Describe the relevance and the commitment of each collaborative partner in the proposed program to the implementation and success of the project. The description should support the historical performance of each partner and its capacity to implement the services as described.

Describe how the Freedom Schools will enhance current services provided in the community and not duplicate services currently provided.

Program Design

Provide a program schedule of operation including a sample schedule for one week. If programs are offered at more than one site, include information for each site and the range of programming at each site. Include a rationale for the proposed hours of operation.

Based on the hours of operation, provide details of how the program objectives will be met.

Describe in detail how the activities are expected to improve student academic achievement as well as overall student success.

Describe in detail how the proposed activities are research-based and provide a multicultural curriculum for disenfranchised communities by expanding the teaching of African American history, developing leadership skills, and providing an understanding of the tenets of the civil rights movement.

Provide details on how students will have access to equitable educational resources.

Instruction

Detail how teachers in Freedom Schools will be recruited and retained.

Explain how teachers in your Freedom Schools program will have access to summer jobs and teaching experiences that serve as a long-term pipeline to educational careers.

Describe how teachers will be trained to provide curriculum that is engaging, culturally relevant, and challenging.

Provide details on how restorative justice practices will be instituted.

Community Connections

Provide a detailed plan of civic engagement activities that will occur during the program.

The applicant must explain how their proposal will engage parents and families with their student and community.

Detail how students will have access to mentoring.

A detailed plan that centers around the goal of supporting family well-being and children's development learning.

Review Criteria

Application Review and Selection Process

The selection of the grantees will be based upon the overall quality of the application. The scoring is based upon the following criteria:

- Need is defined as the identification of stakeholders, facts, and evidence that demonstrate the proposal supports the grant program purpose.
- Quality is defined as the totality of features and characteristics of a service, project, or product that indicates its ability to satisfy the requirements of the grant program.
- Evaluation is defined as the ability to judge or determine the significance, worth, or quality of a service, project, or product.
- Capacity is defined as the ability of an entity to execute the grant project according to the project requirements.

Twenty priority points will be given to joint applications between a community-based organization or a not-for-profit and another eligible entity.

Evaluation Criteria

These overall criteria are built into the rubric on the next page. The attachment number in the parentheses following the criteria lists the portion of the proposal that will be used to determine if the criteria has been met. The points for each section as well as the individual criteria are also included in the rubric.

Following the notification of grant awards, an applicant may request copies of reviewer scores and comments by contacting Adenike Sosina at asosina@isbe.net.

Selection criteria and point values are as follows:

Not Provided	Very Limited	Somewhat Limited	Moderate	Strong	Very Strong
0	1	2	3	4	5
Proposal requirements are absent.	The proposal provides very few details to meet the project outcomes.	The proposal is unclear and lacks enough evidence to meet project outcomes.	Proposal provides moderate detail and conveys potential to meet project outcomes.	Proposal provides good detail and strong evidence to meet project outcomes.	Proposal exceeds expectations and provides a solid plan to meet project outcomes.
Section 1: Need 20 Points					Possible Points
Applicant details the process used with the community to determine the need for the project, the availability of resources for the project, and the data used to determine the need. (Attachment 4A Narrative Need)					5
The proposed program and services will address the needs of the community; the students; and the families, in a culturally, competently, and developmentally appropriate manner to improve the academic performance of the students. (Attachment 4A Narrative Need)					5
The partnership between the applicant and the community is relevant. The commitment of each collaborative partner is demonstrated in the proposed program. The applicant provides information that supports the historical performance of each partner and its capacity to implement the services as described. (Attachment 4A Narrative Need)					5
Applicant describes how the Freedom Schools will enhance opportunities/services and not duplicate opportunities/services currently available. (Attachment 4A Narrative Need)					5
Section 2: Quality 20 Points					Possible Points
The activities are expected to improve student academic achievement as well as overall student success. (Attachment 4B Narrative Program Design)					5
The proposed activities are research-based and provide a multicultural curriculum for disenfranchised communities, expand the teaching of African American history, develop leadership skills, and provide an understanding of the tenets of the civil rights movement (Attachment 4B Narrative Program Design)					5
Applicant provided details on how restorative justice practices will be instituted. (Attachment 4C Narrative Instruction)					5
The applicant provides details on how students will have access to mentors. (Attachment 4D Narrative Community Connections)					5

Section 3: Capacity 50 Points	Possible Points
A detailed plan of civic engagement activities that will occur during the program is provided. (Attachment 4D Narrative Community Connections)	5
Detailed information is provided on how teachers in Freedom Schools will be recruited and retained. (Attachment 4C Narrative Instruction)	5
Evidence is provided that teachers will be trained to provide a curriculum that is engaging, culturally relevant, and challenging. (Attachment 4C Narrative Instruction)	5
Applicant explains how teachers in the Freedom Schools program will have access to summer jobs and teaching experiences that serve as a long-term pipeline to educational careers. (Attachment 2 Program Summary)	5
A detailed plan that centers around the goal of supporting family well-being and children’s development learning is provided. (Attachment 4D Narrative Community Connections)	5
The applicant has provided a plan on how students will be recruited and retained. (Attachment 2 Program Summary)	5
The proposal is practicable, and the proposed activities are likely to contribute to the achievement of program goals and objectives. The proposal includes a realistic timeline, and proposed activities correlate to the proposed budget. Demonstrates the organizational capacity to fulfill the requirements of the grant and provide adequate support for the program. (Attachment 3 Proposal Abstract)	5
The applicant provides a budget and budget detail that is relevant to the number of students served. The proposed budget is focused on direct services to students. (Attachment 7 Federal Budget Summary, Attachment 7A Budget Summary Breakdown)	5
Previous experience and/or capacity demonstrate the ability to provide educational and related activities that will complement and enhance the academic performance, achievement, and positive youth development of the students to be served. (Attachment 3 Proposal Abstract)	5
The applicant has the experience and/or capacity to provide wrap around support to students and families. (Attachment 3 Proposal Abstract)	5
Section 4: Evaluation 10 Points	Possible Points
The applicant has a detailed evaluation plan that includes pre and post assessment administration. (Attachment 6 Proposal Evaluation Design)	5
Evaluation methods include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data. (Attachment 6 Proposal Evaluation Design)	5