

**Grant Application Guidance  
Grant Award Year: 2016-17**

**K-3 Innovative Program Grants for At-  
Risk Early Elementary Students**

**Iowa Department of Education**

## **Grant Description**

The Iowa K-3 Innovative Program Grants for At-Risk Early Elementary Students is a competitive grant made available to eligible Iowa public elementary school applicants in a year in which funds are available by the Iowa legislature. Grants are awarded to those elementary schools with a high percentage of low-income families in grades K-3.

Districts are divided into 3 categories based on enrollment size (<1199, 1200-5000, 5000 and above); schools are then ranked by percentage of K-3 grade students approved for free or reduced-price lunch as reported on the district's fall certified enrollment report (SRI). Only those elementary schools notified by the Iowa Department of Education are eligible to apply.

## **Application Forms and Deadline**

The completed online application must be submitted no later than 11:59 p.m., June 30, 2016. Applications submitted after this date will be deemed ineligible. All application forms can be accessed at [www.iowagrants.gov](http://www.iowagrants.gov). Please review this Grant Application Guidance in its entirety before beginning your application.

## **Procedures Used to Determine Approval**

Each application will be reviewed by an expert team. The scoring criteria that will be used can be found in Appendix B of this document. Reviewers will rank the applications in order from highest to lowest according to composite score.

Grant awards have historically averaged approximately \$70,000 per elementary school building. Applicants may submit budget proposals for an amount up to \$150,000. The number of grants to be awarded will be determined by the Iowa Department of Education based on the quality of the project proposal received, the established need, and the availability of funds.

Budget negotiation may be necessary to accommodate the obligation of all funds.

## **Notification of Award**

All applicants will receive a letter of approval/non-approval for funding no later than August 15, 2016.

## **Starting a New Application**

The online application can be found at [www.iowagrants.gov](http://www.iowagrants.gov). All forms in the application must be completed. Applications with missing information will be deemed incomplete and will not be scored. Fields marked with a **red asterisk (\*)** are required fields.

The required component forms of the K-3 Innovative Program Grants for At-Risk Early Elementary Students application are:

- General Information
- Cover Sheet-General Information
- District Contact Information
- Applicant Information
- Minority Impact Statement
- Student Demographic Data
- Section A: Student Learning Need
- Section B: Project Description
- Section C: Project Evaluation
- Section D: Project Budget
- Section E: Statement of Assurances

Please include the words "2016-17" and the name of your school building in your Project Title (General Information form).

The specific procedures for developing Project narratives are described below. The criteria that will be used to review applications are included in Appendix B. The criteria should guide the development of the Project design.

### **School Demographic Data**

Provide the specific demographic data requested for all grades served at your school site. Report all data as of the end of your school year or June 1, 2016, whichever is earlier.

### **Section A: Student Learning Need**

In this section describe the problem you are trying solve. Tell us about the K-3 students you serve in relation to the Risk Factors (primary and secondary) described in 281 IAC 65.4 and 65.5 and the specific academic, social, physical, or emotional student learning need of the K-3 students that negatively impacts the overall student performance and must be addressed immediately. Provide a thorough summary of the data that helped you identify the need you are proposing to address. You may also attach additional data tables, charts, and graphs that support your application in the Upload Attachments section.

### **Section B: Project Description**

In this section, describe what you are trying to accomplish, what you will do to accomplish it, and how you know it will work. Provide a clear picture of your innovative and comprehensive project design. Include a description of the evidence-based research that indicates your action plan will actually improve student performance, and a description of the data you will collect to monitor your progress in accomplishing your project goal(s).

Supporting data charts and/or graphs, research documents, and other information may be attached in the Upload Attachments section.

In the Action Plan area, list the specific action steps you intend to implement to accomplish your project goal(s). Complete all five (5) boxes for each Action Step. Click the “**Add**” button to add as many Action Steps as needed. Your Action Plan should include enough Action Steps and enough detail for each Action Step that reviewers can determine how well “thought-out” the project is and whether or not the actions will accomplish your goal.

Refer to the Appendices to help you make sure your responses are complete.

### **Section C: Project Evaluation**

In this section describe your evaluation plan for the proposed project. Describe how you will monitor implementation of your action plan and how you will monitor the impact of your action plan on the student learning need you are addressing. If your goal is not an academic/cognitive goal, describe how will you monitor the ultimate impact on the achievement you expect to see by successfully addressing your social, physical, or emotional student learning need.

### **Section D: Project Budget**

Grant award funds may only be used to pay the direct costs of providing the school’s approved K-3 Innovative Program Grant for At-Risk Early Elementary Students. Allocated costs or costs that are considered indirect costs or overhead are not allowable expenditures under this grant.

Budget for all anticipated expenditures on this form. Provide a detailed description for each budgeted line item (i.e. type of instructional materials, type of service, position description and # FTE, etc.). Also include an explanation of how each expenditure item relates to the proposed Action Steps listed in Section B of your application.

Refer to Appendix C, Budget Guidelines, for additional guidance.

## Appendix A: Overall Criteria and Risk Factors

### Overall Criteria

1. This grant program must be used to provide research-based interventions/support for K-3 at-risk elementary students in the areas of academic (cognitive), social, physical, or emotional development.
2. The proposals will be evaluated using a rubric and scoring system based on the applicant's responses to the application questions and other factors related to risk factors, demographics, and district size.
3. High quality proposals that directly address the academic performance of K-3 at-risk students in literacy or math using research-based interventions proven to be effective in these areas are strongly encouraged and may be given preference.
4. Use of the funds to hire additional staff will only be allowed if that is a critical component of the evidence-based strategy being implemented to accomplish the goal and address the need.
5. Purchases of equipment/technology will only be allowed if they are a critical component of the evidence-based strategy being implemented to accomplish the goal and address the need.
6. Only proposals scoring at or above a threshold of 55 points will be considered for funding (beginning in the 2017-18 Grant Award Year).
7. Other factors being considered for funding will include risk factors, district size, and demographics.

### Primary and Secondary Risk Factors (IAC 281 65)

**281-65.4(279) Primary risk factor.** In identifying the at-risk population of a school district or building, the applicant shall give primary consideration to students in low-income families.

**281-65.5(279) Secondary risk factors.** In identifying the at-risk population of a school district or building, the applicant shall also give consideration to students who are:

1. Functioning below chronological age in two or more developmental areas, one of which may be English proficiency, as determined by an appropriate professional;
2. Born at biological risk, such as low birth weight (under 1500 grams – approximately three pounds) or with a diagnosed medical disorder, such as spina bifida or Down's syndrome;
3. Born to a parent who was under the age of 18; or
4. Residing in a household where one or more of the parents or guardians:
  - Has not completed high school;
  - Has been identified as a substance abuser;
  - Has been identified as chronically mentally ill;
  - Is incarcerated;
  - Is illiterate; or
  - Is a child or spouse abuser.
5. Subject to other special circumstances, such as being in foster care or being homeless.

## **Appendix B: SCORING CRITERIA FOR THE APPLICATION QUESTIONS**

### **SECTION A – STUDENT LEARNING NEED: 15 Points**

**(What is the specific problem you are trying to solve?)**

1. Describe the K-3 students you serve in relation to the Risk Factors (primary and secondary) described in 281 IAC 65.4 and 65.5.
  - a. The description of the K-3 student population is consistent with the data they shared in the demographic section of the application.
  - b. The description of the K-3 student population focuses on the primary and secondary risk factors.
  - c. The description of the K-3 student population convinces us that the K-3 students in this school are clearly “at-risk” for school failure without support and intervention.
2. Describe the specific academic, social, physical, or emotional student learning need of the K-3 students that negatively impacts the overall student performance and must be addressed immediately.
  - a. The need is clearly identified.
  - b. The need is aligned to one of the allowable domains (academic, social, physical, emotional).
  - c. The need identified would be critical to successful performance in school.
3. Please provide a thorough summary of the data that helped you identify the need you are proposing to address. In addition to the summary of the data, you may also attach additional or supporting data tables and charts as needed.
  - a. The current status of the students’ performance in this area is clear.
  - b. The current status of the students’ performance in this area is not acceptable. (This is clearly a significant problem that needs to be solved.)

### **SECTION B – PROJECT DESCRIPTION: 20 Points**

**(What are you trying to accomplish? What will you do to accomplish it? How do you know it will work?)**

1. Based on the need described previously, what is the improvement goal you propose to accomplish as a result of receiving this grant?
  - a. Less is more. In most cases a focused, singular improvement goal is better than multiple goals.
  - b. The goal is specific to the need and focused on a specific student performance within the academic, social, physical, or emotional domains.
  - c. The goal includes a measurable indicator of performance that is a significant improvement from the current status.
  - d. The goal is ambitious but attainable.
  - e. The goal includes a timeline for attainment.
2. What are the actions you propose to take to accomplish the goal?
  - a. The actions are directly aligned to the identified need.
  - b. The actions are clear and specific.
  - c. It is easy to see how these actions will address and improve the need they have identified.
  - d. The actions are well thought out and comprehensive in relation to what they are trying to accomplish.
3. What is the evidence that these actions will actually improve student performance in the area of need? (Provide a summary in the text box and you may attach supporting research articles as needed.)
  - a. The applicant has provided research that indicates these actions have a track-record of success for improving K-3 student performance in the area of need they are trying to improve.
4. What data will you collect to monitor your progress?
  - a. The data are clearly aligned to the area of need they are trying to improve.
5. Complete a detailed action plan for the project within section B of the application or using the template below.
  - a. Action steps are complete – it’s easy to determine what will be done, by whom, and by when.
  - b. Actions are directly aligned with the problem they are trying to solve (the goal to address the area of need).
  - c. Timelines are reasonable.

- d. The action steps should lead to the desired result – the project has been “thought through” well enough that it appears the applicant won’t be caught off guard by unanticipated needs. There is enough detail within the action plan for this to be obvious.

Goal	Action Steps	Person(s) or Groups Responsible	Timeline	How will we know when this action step is complete?

**SECTION C – PROJECT EVALUATION: 15 Points**

1. Describe how you will monitor the implementation of the actions.
  - a. Monitoring strategies will provide good information about the level of implementation.
  - b. Monitoring strategies will provide information about whether or not it is reasonable to expect changes in achievement (student learning).
2. Describe how you will monitor the impact of the actions on the student learning need you are addressing
  - a. Monitoring strategies focus on student learning in the area of need.
  - b. Multiple data sources are planned for monitoring impact.
3. If your goal is not an academic/cognitive goal, how will you monitor the ultimate impact on achievement you expect to see by successfully addressing your social, physical or emotional student learning need?
  - a. Monitoring strategies focus on student academic achievement.
  - b. Multiple data sources are planned for monitoring change.
  - c. Data sources are valid and reliable sources for monitoring change in student academic achievement.

**SECTION D – PROJECT BUDGET: 15 Points**

1. Budget is aligned directly with the actions being proposed.
2. Budget is reasonable in relation to the actions.
3. Budget section is complete.

## Appendix C: Budget and Accounting Guidelines

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### *General Guidelines*

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The K-3 Innovative Early Elementary Grant for At-Risk Students is considered a categorical grant as defined by 281 IAC 98. Project budgets are subject to approval by the Iowa Department of Education and based on availability of funding.

Moneys received for this grant shall only be used for to pay the direct costs of providing the school's approved project. Grant award moneys may not be used to pay for costs that are allocated costs or that are considered indirect costs or overhead.

Budget expenditures must integrate with and support the school's innovative project and have a direct impact on student learning. Refer the "Overall Criteria" found in Appendix A for further guidance on allowable expenditures.

All anticipated expenditures should be listed on the grant application budget page. Provide a detailed "Description" for each expenditure category (i.e. type of instructional materials, type of service, position description and # FTE, etc.). Also, include an explanation of how each expenditure item relates to the proposed Action Steps listed in Section B.

Budget changes that exceed 10% during the year must be approved by the Iowa Department of Education. 281 IAC 65.15.

Iowa Administrative rule 281 IAC 98, Financial Management of Categorical Funding, is included in the Attachments section of the online grant application.

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### *Definitions*

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#### **Administrative Costs**

Administrative costs shall not exceed 10% of the total grant budget. Administrative costs are those additional direct costs which the school may incur as a result of this project. IAC 281-65.6(2). In order for the cost of administration be considered an additional direct cost, "the costs must be necessary because of something that is unique to the project that is causing the need for the service, not otherwise needed or not otherwise provided to similar programs; the cost must be in addition to costs which are normally otherwise incurred; and the costs must be measurable directly without allocating." 281 IAC 98.2(5)

#### **Capital Outlay (Equipment)**

Capital Outlay means the purchase of transportable, non-consumable items that meet the Iowa Uniform Financial Accounting definition of "Equipment" and that cost \$500 or more per unit.

Equipment purchased with grant funds must integrate with and support the innovative project, have a direct impact on student learning, and be used for the children and staff served at this grant school. Purchases of equipment/technology will only be allowed if they are a critical component of the evidence-based strategy being implemented to accomplish the goal and address the need.

Capital outlay items must be listed on the project inventory sheet at the end of each year.

#### **Fiscal Year**

Grant funds are awarded based on the state fiscal year (July 1 through June 30). All grant funds must be fully expended by June 30 of the fiscal year of the award. Funds not fully expended by June 30 of the grant year will revert; funds from this grant do not carry over to the next fiscal year.

The state fiscal year for this grant is July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017.

**Instructional Materials and Supplies**

Instructional materials and supplies may include such items as: Instructional Supplies, Software, Curriculum Materials (textbooks, etc.), Instructional Books & Periodicals, Library Books and Resources, or other instructional materials.

**Parent Involvement Activities**

List all costs related to activities designed to increase parent engagement (training, communications, school volunteers, home instruction, and parent rights) in this category.

Grant funds may be used to provide food or non-alcoholic beverages for students, staff, or parents, provided there is no local policy prohibiting these costs. Food and beverage costs must be for critical activities or functions related to the actions and goals of the project.

**Salaries, Wages, and Benefits**

List the salaries and wages for all personnel providing direct services for the grant project, as reflected in job descriptions and described in the grant application. For each position, provide the FTE of the position, the BOEE licensing status of the position (if applicable), and the anticipated percent of time the individual(s) will be assigned directly to this project. Costs must be prorated for employees who are assigned to the grant project on a part-time basis.

List the proportionate share of employee benefits for all personnel providing direct services to the grant project. Employee benefits include: employer share of FICA, retirement, health, dental, vision, life, and long-term disability insurances.

**Staff Development and Training**

Staff development training must be specifically identified. Staff training or development costs shall be used to support the research and staff development related to this grant. All grantees are expected to attend Department of Education K-3 Innovative At-Risk Grant meetings. Include the cost of substitute personnel, travel, and any materials, books, or periodicals related to the training in this section. All out-of-state travel must be approved by the Iowa Department of Education, on forms provided for that purpose, at least one month in advance of the anticipated travel date.

**Student Activities**

List all costs related to student non-classroom activities here.

Grant funds may be used to provide food or non-alcoholic beverages for students, staff, or parents, provided there is no local policy prohibiting these costs. Food and beverage costs must be for critical activities or functions related to the actions and goals of the project.

**Supplement Not Supplant**

“Supplement, not supplant” means that the categorical funding shall be in addition to general purpose revenues; that categorical funding shall not be used to provide services required by federal or state law, administrative rule, or local policy; and that general purpose revenues shall not be diverted for other purposes because of the availability of categorical funding. Supplanting is presumed to have occurred if the school district or area education agency uses categorical funding to provide services that it was required to make available under other categorical funding or law, or uses categorical funding to provide services that it provided in prior years from general purpose revenues, or uses categorical funding to provide services to a particular group of children or programs for which it uses general purpose revenues to provide the same or similar services to other groups of children or programs. These presumptions are rebuttable if the school district or area education agency can demonstrate that it would not have provided the services in question with general purpose revenues if the categorical funding had not been available.” 281 IAC 98.1

**Uniform Financial Accounting**

Grant expenditures shall be classified in accordance with [Iowa Uniform Financial Accounting](#).

The Source and Project code for this Award is "3234."

**Unallowed Costs**

Grant funds may not be used for facility construction, remodeling, or renovation; upgrades to or maintenance of buildings; incidental or non-instructional supplies or materials; computer hardware or software for staff; technology infrastructure; technology set-up fees; gifts or monetary awards of any kind; stipends to students or parents/guardians for attendance at grant related activities; the cost of office furniture; salaries and employee benefits for any staff that do not directly support grant activities as described in the school's approved plan; professional dues, memberships, or contributions; legal or audit expenses; instructional or other services the district is otherwise required to provide; indirect costs; or any other costs not directly related to project activities, functions, or anticipated outcomes.