**Section 35.60 Approval of Entities and Their Role**

The State Superintendent of Education shall, through a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) process governed by the State procurement process, approve one or more entities to administer and implement the new principal mentoring program according to the requirements stated in Section 35.30, including delivering the training program for mentors that is required under Section 35.50. Eligible entities are defined as regional offices of education, intermediate service centers, Illinois higher education institutions, statewide organizations representing principals, and school districts.

a) Any entity seeking approval under this Section shall submit to the State Superintendent an application, in a format prescribed by the State Superintendent, outlining the organization's qualifications for serving potential mentors and recipients of mentoring. Applications shall be submitted to the State Superintendent by a date set forth in the RFP application.

b) The State Superintendent shall approve one or more entities whose applications:

1) provide evidence of an overall commitment to professionalizing education and school improvement efforts;

2) demonstrate capacity to meet the needs of an identified geographic area or set of districts; and

3) indicate that the applicants have staff or access to other presenters who:

A) have been employed in roles requiring mastery of the Illinois Professional School Leader Standards; and

B) have experience in providing professional development to educators.

c) Each approved entity shall, with respect to each mentor who enrolls with that entity:

1) provide or arrange for another entity approved under this Section to provide the initial training required under Section 35.50 if the individual has not already completed it;

2) to the extent necessitated by the level of demand, facilitate the individual's assignment to one or more new principals based on the factors set forth in Section 2-3.53a of the School Code;

3) provide support and professional resources to the mentor in the course of his or her mentoring relationships;

4) provide at least annually networking sessions to enhance the mentor's skills and provide structured opportunities for problem-solving;

5) guide the mentor in the compilation of information that will contribute to the evaluation of individual mentoring relationships and of the mentoring program as a whole;

6) receive and distribute payments to mentors as delineated in Section 35.20(h); and

7) provide annual continuation training.

d) Approval of entities shall be valid for a term of three years. To request continuation funding in years two and three of a grant term, an approved entity shall submit a continuation application in a format specified by the State Superintendent of Education, containing:

1) a description of any significant changes in the material submitted as part of its initial approved application; or

2) a statement that no significant changes have occurred.

e) An approved entity’s continuation application shall be approved if the application conforms to the requirements of subsection (d), provided that the State Superintendent has received no evidence of the entity's failure to provide the required services under the program and provided that there is sufficient appropriation for such purposes.

f) The State Superintendent of Education may evaluate any approved entity at any time to ensure the consistent quality of the mentoring program. Upon request by the State Superintendent, an approved entity shall supply information regarding its activities in conjunction with the mentoring program, which the State Superintendent may monitor at any time. In the event an evaluation indicates that an approved entity is not furnishing services in keeping with subsection (c), the State Superintendent will withdraw approval of the entity.

(Source: Amended at 46 Ill. Reg. 13192, effective July 13, 2022)