**Section 1085.50 Planning Grant**

*Grow Your Own Illinois may, if it chooses, award and administer a small number of planning grants during any fiscal year to potential consortia* (Section 30 of the Act). GYOI shall indicate the maximum amount to be reserved for planning grants and the maximum amount available per grant.

a) In addition to the application requirements of Section 1085.30, the application for a planning grant must include the following:

1) Proposal

A) Describes a plan of work for developing a consortium and a Grow Your Own program that will be eligible for an implementation grant under this Part;

B) Provides evidence that at least a subset of the teachers typically prepared by the institution seeks employment in communities where hard-to-staff schools are located;

C) Demonstrates that the institution is not applying for funding on behalf of an existing consortium that is currently serving a group of candidates under a model substantially similar to that described in the Act and that further information is needed about the specific barriers that exist with respect to enabling individuals with a long-term commitment to those communities to complete teacher preparation; and

D) Demonstrates need by a hard-to-staff school or by a K-12 district for teachers in hard-to-staff positions.

2) Supporting Documentation

A) Letters of interest from one or more early childhood programs, school districts or schools indicating willingness to collaborate in offering opportunities for candidates in the program to complete pre-student teaching clinical experiences in hard-to-staff schools or positions; and

B) If additional community organizations are being considered for membership in the consortium, letters of invitation that the applicant has sent to one or more relevant community organizations proposing a role for the organizations in the proposed consortium, along with a rationale provided by the applicant for inclusion of these organizations.

3) GYOI shall provide the categories of allowable expenditures and require the submission of a budget summary and payment schedule, completed on the forms provided, as well as a narrative budget breakdown that provides a detailed explanation of each line item of expenditure. Allowable uses of planning grant funds shall include services and goods necessary to:

A) Secure the participation and commitment of the required members and the optional members of a consortium to develop a plan for collective decision-making that involves all partners and provides a mechanism for candidate input;

B) Attract or identify viable potential candidates for teacher preparation who are para educators or parent and community leaders as contemplated by the Act, including assistance that will permit potential candidates to complete developmental coursework during their first four semesters of participation that will verify their academic readiness for enrolling in teacher preparation; and

C) Identify barriers to teacher certification for potential members of a given cohort, and the strategies and resources for mitigating those barriers and successfully ameliorating them within the programmatic, time and funding constraints of the program.

b) *In awarding grants, GYOI shall select programs that successfully address initiative criteria and that reflect a diversity of strategies in terms of serving urban,* suburban, and *rural areas, the nature of the participating institutions of higher education, and the nature of hard-to-staff schools and hard-to-staff teaching positions on which a program is focused* (Section 20 of the Act).

c) Each proposal that is submitted by a potential consortium and meets the requirements of this Section shall be considered qualified for funding.

d) Funding decisions shall be made by balancing the goals of geographic distribution and accessibility with the level of need and the potential number of candidates to be served.

e) In the event that an audit or other evidence establishes that the consortium failed to perform and/or the expenditure of grant funds was not consistent with the consortium's proposal and the Grant Agreement, a full or partial reimbursement to the State through the Board shall be required. For example, if an auditor finds that any amount of funds was not used or was used in a manner inconsistent with the proposal, GYOI will seek reimbursement for that amount of funds.

(Source: Amended at 44 Ill. Reg. 11419, effective June 24, 2020)