Peer Review and Mentoring Grants for the 2017 - 2018 School Year

Information for Applicants

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Purpose
The Peer Review and Mentoring Grant (PRMG) program provides support for public school districts, independent public charter schools, and Cooperative Educational Service Agencies (CESAs) to develop new or redesign ongoing peer review and mentoring support programs for initial educators in Wisconsin.

Research studies continue to substantiate that an effective mentoring support system for educators new to the profession will lead to greater retention in the field, and Wisconsin requires that each initial educator be afforded a mentor. The U.S. Department of Education’s Beginning Teacher Longitudinal Study found that first-year teachers who were not assigned a mentor were twice as likely as teachers with a mentor to leave the profession within their first five years (see the National Center for Education Statistics report on Public School Teacher Attrition and Mobility).

Wisconsin Initial Educator Support System
To support initial educators, Wisconsin school districts per PI 34.17 (2) are required to provide ongoing orientation, support seminars and qualified mentors for all initial educators within their districts. In addition, districts per PI 34.17 (3) must designate a DPI-trained administrator to be available to serve on an initial educator’s Professional Development Plan (PDP) team. Further, institutions of higher education per PI 34.17 (3) must also designate representatives to be trained and available to serve on an initial educator’s PDP team. This provides a connection from pre-service to in-service within a performance-based system.

Definitions
In Wisconsin, an “Initial Educator” refers to an individual who has successfully completed for the first time an approved educator preparation program in the teacher, administrator, or pupil services professional category after August 31, 2004, as per PI 34.01 (23).

To help ensure that initial educators in Wisconsin receive the support they need to become effective, professional educators, Wisconsin Administrative Rule PI 34.17 (2) requires school districts to provide initial educators with support and a qualified mentor. The specific requirements are:

a) The initial educator shall receive ongoing orientation from the employing school district which is collaboratively developed and delivered by school boards, administrators, teachers, support staff and parents.

b) The initial educator shall be provided support seminars by the employing school district which reflect the Wisconsin Teacher, Administrator, or Pupil Services Standards (http://dpi.wi.gov/tepdl/programs/standards) and the mission and goals of the school district.

c) The initial educator shall be provided with a qualified mentor by the employing school district. The mentoring period may be for less than 5 years.
“Mentor” means an educator who is trained to provide support and assistance to initial educators and who will have input into the confidential formative assessment of the initial educator and who is not to be considered as part of the formal employment evaluation process, per PI 34.01(34) and PI 38.04.

“Qualified” means the person holds an appropriate license as per PI 34.01 (47).

“Peer Review” refers to the confidential formative assessment provided to initial educators by peers outside of their formal evaluation. As per the definition of mentor, peer review can occur by the mentor. In the Wisconsin Educator Effectiveness (EE) System, some districts may use effectiveness coaches (or for peer review).

**Wisconsin Equity Plan**
In the Wisconsin Teacher Equitable Access Plan, which is required by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended, Wisconsin has defined “inexperienced teachers” as those within their first three years of teaching. Wisconsin defines “unqualified teachers” as those teachers of record who have not completed an approved educator preparation program and are teaching on an emergency permit or teachers teaching out-of-field on an emergency license. That is, emergency credentialed teachers are considered unqualified within the plan. The plan addresses state strategies to eliminate the inequitable distribution of inexperienced or unqualified teachers working in schools with high enrollments of students of color and/or poverty. In Wisconsin, nine (9) school districts have been identified as having the greatest need regarding the inequitable distribution of inexperienced initial educators or unqualified educators (Beloit, Green Bay, Janesville, Kenosha, Madison, Milwaukee, Racine, Waukesha, and West Allis-West Milwaukee).
Grant Application Guidance

A. Eligibility
Eligible applicants include any of the following: (1) a CESA, (2) a consortium of two or more school districts and/or independent public charter school, or (3) a consortium combining any of the aforementioned organizations.

Other organizations, such as universities or professional organizations, may participate in Peer Review and Mentoring Grant activities, but they cannot serve as fiscal agents nor as direct consortium partners. Only school districts, independent charter schools, and CESAs may receive disbursements from the state for the PRMG.

B. Application Requirements
All PRMG applications must include all of the following sections:

a. Signatures, names and titles of individuals who developed the grant application (attach separately).

b. A list of school districts, independent charter schools, and/or CESAs that will participate in the program (Section V).

c. A statement of which entity (fiscal agent) will be administering the program (Section V).

d. A statement of need for the grant (Section VI-A, B, C).

e. A description of the proposed program, including its rationale, goals and objectives (Section VI-D).

f. A description of the program activities to be completed during the duration of the program, with a timetable for completion of each major activity (Section VI-D).

h. A description of how the program activities enhance pupil achievement (Section VI-E).

i. A description of the evaluation plan including the indicators used to measure the achievement of program goals and objectives (Section VI-H).

j. A description of the applicant(s)’s capacity to continue the program after the grant period is complete (Section VI-I).

k. A description (i.e., a position description) of the selection, training, roles and responsibilities of the mentors (attach separately).

l. A description of how the grant award will be allocated, including how the applicant will match at least 20 percent of the grant awarded as required under s. 115.405(1), Stats (Section VI-J).

The application requires that applicants list goals, objectives, and activities. For the purposes of this application, goals are long-term statements about what the proposed program intends to accomplish across the period of the program. Objectives are specific, measureable, attainable, results-based, and time-bound aims derived from the program goals. Activities are the specific actions the proposed program will carry out in order to accomplish the objectives and goals.
All sections of the application must be completed in order for an application to be considered for approval. Completion of the application completes most of the required components. The list of names, titles and signatures of individuals that completed the application and the description of the selection, training, roles and responsibilities of mentors in the program may be attached separately or included in a relevant section of the application.

B. Program Components
PRMG applications must include the following program components:
   a. An ongoing orientation for initial educators that is collaboratively developed and delivered by administrators, teachers, support staff and parents.
   b. Seminars (or other professional development and support strategies) that meet the needs and concerns of initial educators and reflect the Wisconsin standards for teacher development, licensure, and educator effectiveness.
   c. A mentor for all initial educators.
   d. The development of a professional development plan or educator effectiveness plan for the initial educator which includes a list of activities, timelines for achievement, and assessments based on standards.

C. Fundable Activities
Funds must be used to support induction, mentoring, and peer review activities for initial educators (i.e., teachers, administrators, and pupil services professionals); for professional educators to work with initial educators; and for the purpose of expanding current practices for peer review and mentoring, encouraging experimental or pilot programs, and improving the inequitable distribution of inexperienced or unqualified educators. Priority will be given to proposals that include the following:
   • Provide peer review and mentoring support to inexperienced (first three years of teaching) initial educators in one or more of the nine districts identified in Wisconsin’s Teacher Equitable Access Plan (Beloit, Green Bay, Janesville, Kenosha, Madison, Milwaukee, Racine, Waukesha, and West Allis-West Milwaukee);
   • Provide mentoring support to unqualified (emergency license/permit holders) who are serving as teachers of record and working toward full licensure;
   • Provide support, training, and professional development for mentors of initial educators to learn and complete the Professional Development Plan (PDP) process;
   • Provide support to educators in utilizing the results of Educator Effectiveness Plans (EEP) to inform (align) the development of PDP and vice versa;
   • Provide support seminars based on district needs in the form of regional professional learning communities;
   • Provide training to mentors to provide support and assistance to initial educators through confidential formative assessment;
   • Provide training for administrators at the professional educator level to serve as mentors for initial educator administrators;
   • Provide training for pupil service professionals at the professional educator level to serve as mentors for initial educator pupil service professionals;
   • An identified peer review and mentoring need that is demonstrated through student and/or staff data.
D. Application Timeline
March 24, 2017: Application due
May, 2017: Notification of grant award
July 1, 2017: Grant start date
June 30, 2018: Grant end date
August 1, 2018: End-of-Year Report due
August 31, 2018: Deadline for Budget Modifications
September 30, 2018: Final claim due

Grant Period
The grant period begins on July 1, 2017. Grant recipients may begin to expend grant funds
beginning July 1, 2017; however, all expenditures are contingent upon the approval of the grant
application. The grant period ends June 30, 2018.

Review Process
DPI staff and outside reviewers will rate each of the grant applications using a predetermined
rubric. Following the review, the DPI will communicate the results to the grant contact person or
the grant coordinator identified in the application. If there are issues or concerns for grants that
are awarded, these will need to be addressed by applicants before the DPI issues the grant award.

Financial Requirements
Grant recipients shall adhere to the guidelines set by the Wisconsin Uniform Financial Account
Requirements (WUFAR). Information about WUFAR is available on the DPI’s website at
http://dpi.wi.gov/sfs/finances/wufar/overview. The DPI encourages applicants to contact
their business manager for assistance with the budget portion of the application. Grant
recipients must also follow the guidelines set forth in the Financial Management Handbook
for Federal and State Grant Programs.

Available Award Amounts
Each applicant/consortium is eligible for a grant not to exceed $25,000. Grants are for one
(1) fiscal year only, and funds must be encumbered by June 30, 2018. Funds cannot be
 carried over the fiscal year. Program activities may begin on July 1, 2017.

Priority Area
The DPI is using the PRMG program as one strategy in the Wisconsin Teacher Equitable Access
Plan for ensuring that schools with an inequitable distribution of inexperienced or unqualified
teachers have access to funds to provide additional support through peer review and mentoring
to these educators. Priority will be given to proposals that include the nine (9) targeted districts.

Matching Funds
As a condition of receiving a grant, the applicant/consortium shall provide matching funds in an
amount equal to at least 20% of the amount of the grant awarded. The matching funds may be in
the form of money, in-kind services, or both. The 20% match may come from local funds or
federal funds, such as Title II A.
**Payment of Grant Funds**
Grant funds must be encumbered by June 30, 2018. A final program fiscal report is due no later than September 30, 2018. Program activities must occur during the grant period (July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018).

**Budget Modifications**
If a grant recipient determines that a modification to the original approved budget is necessary, the grant recipient shall request review and approval from the DPI. The grant recipient shall not expend funds until the DPI approves the transfer of funds from one budget category to another.

To request a budget modification, grant recipients shall submit the revised budget detail and budget summary along with a brief narrative explaining the reasoning for the modification to Jacob Hollnagel, at (608) 266-5195 or jacob.hollnagel@dpi.wi.gov. DPI will notify grant recipients seeking a budget modification of approval or denial in writing within 30 days.

**Report Requirement**
Award recipients will be required to submit an end of year report. The report request will ask awardees to summarize and provide evidence of what impact the planned activities had on the stated goals and objectives. The DPI will provide grantees the report information at a later date and post the requirements to the [PRMG webpage](#).