

TITLE 23: EDUCATION AND CULTURAL RESOURCES  
SUBTITLE A: EDUCATION  
CHAPTER I: STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
SUBCHAPTER e: INSTRUCTION

PART 205  
TRUANTS' ALTERNATIVE AND OPTIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Section

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AUTHORITY: Implementing and authorized by Section 2-3.66 of the School Code [105 ILCS 5/2-3.66].

SOURCE: Emergency rules adopted at 9 Ill. Reg. 15978, effective October 18, 1985, for a maximum of 150 days; emergency expired March 17, 1986; adopted at 11 Ill. Reg. 6418, effective March 31, 1987; amended at 14 Ill. Reg. 10320, effective June 19, 1990; amended at 25 Ill. Reg. 2399, effective January 25, 2001; amended at 26 Ill. Reg. 882, effective January 15, 2002.

NOTE: Capitalization denotes statutory language.

Section 205.10 Definitions (Repealed)

(Source: Repealed at 25 Ill. Reg. 2399, effective January 25, 2001)

Section 205.20 Purpose

- a) This Part establishes the procedure and criteria for approval of applications, submitted by eligible applicants to the State Board of Education, for grants to assist the applicants in establishing truants' alternative and optional education programs as authorized in Section 2-3.66 of the School Code. [105 ILCS 5/2-3.66]
- b) Programs funded under this grant shall serve students identified as one of the following:
  - 1) a truant, as defined in Section 26-2a of the School Code [105 ILCS 5/26-2a]; or
  - 2) a chronic or habitual truant, as defined in Section 26-2a of the School Code; or
  - 3) a dropout, as defined in Section 26-2a of the School Code; or
  - 4) a potential dropout, which is any student subject to compulsory attendance as defined in Article 26 of the School Code [105 ILCS 5/Art. 26] and whose school absences or pattern of school attendance impedes the student's learning or contributes to the student's failure to meet State and/or district learning standards. Attendance problems may include chronic truancy, truancy, selective absences, excessive absences or a pattern of absences or tardiness. In assessing whether marginal school attendance problems would place a student within the definition of "potential dropout," consideration shall be given to a student's personal involvement in the education process, apparent motivation to receive an education, or any continued and obvious apathy or disaffection for education, particularly, when indications of uninvolved, lack of motivation or disaffection are coupled with currently known individual or family circumstances that, if they remain unresolved, would be reasonably expected to result in escalating attendance problems.

(Source: Amended at 25 Ill. Reg. 2399, effective January 25, 2001)

Section 205.30 Eligible Applicants

- a) Proposals for grant awards under Section 2-3.66 of the School Code may be submitted only by public school districts, regional offices of education, public university laboratory schools approved by the State Board of Education pursuant to Section 18-8.05(K) of the School Code [105 ILCS 5/18-8.05(K)], charter schools, community college districts, or area vocational centers.
- b) Joint applications for funds may be submitted. If a joint application is submitted, then an administrative agent shall be designated.
  - 1) The superintendent from each of the participating school districts and the official authorized to submit a proposal on behalf of any other eligible entity as defined in subsection (a) of this Section shall sign the joint application.
  - 2) A school district or other eligible entity shall only participate in one proposal for a program.

(Source: Amended at 26 Ill. Reg. 882, effective January 15, 2002)

205.35 Required Program Components

Each program funded pursuant to Section 2-3.66 of the School Code shall include at least the following components.

- a) A comprehensive community-based program planning process that includes, but is not limited to, the participation of business, community organizations, social service providers, government agencies, parents, school administrators and other staff members, including teachers, and students, and that leads to the development and implementation of a strategic plan.
  - 1) The plan shall contain program goals and objectives developed by analyzing social and academic challenges in the community to be served by the truants' alternative and optional education program.
  - 2) The plan shall identify available community resources and services and describe how these will be coordinated to meet the needs of students identified as eligible for the program (see Section 205.20(b) of this Part).
- b) An Individualized Optional Education Plan, which is a written document developed in accordance with Section 2-3.66 of the School Code and this Part, that outlines an individual's academic, vocational and/or life skill needs, as well as goals and objectives and various educational and social experiences needed to reach those goals and objectives. The development of this plan shall include school officials, the student, and the student's parents or legal guardians if the student is less than 18 years old. The individualized optional education plan for each student shall include:
  - 1) learning objectives or individual outcomes, such as increased school attendance, course credit, graduation, gains in achievement level, or employment;
  - 2) the basis upon which the student is referred to the program;
  - 3) the services that will be provided in relation to the student's educational, social, and/or career development needs necessary to achieve the

learning objectives or individual outcomes pursuant to subsection (b)(1) of this Section;

- 4) assessment procedures to determine the degree to which the student is achieving his or her learning objectives or individual outcomes;
  - 5) a time period sufficient to allow the student to achieve those objectives or outcomes; and
  - 6) a statement that the student, parent, or guardian has the ultimate choice of whether to accept the individualized optional education plan that is offered or to return to or remain in the regular education program of the school district attended.
- c) Educational services that may include either:
- 1) An Optional Education Program that provides a modified instructional program that incorporates State academic standards and, as appropriate to the student's needs, work-based learning and career development, and is established by school board policy to serve as a part-time or full-time option in lieu of regular school attendance in conformance with Section 2-3.66 of the School Code and this Part; or
  - 2) Supplemental services that provide students enrolled in the regular school program with supports (e.g., tutoring, mentoring, health services, home visits, counseling) that are needed to increase their attendance rates or prevent them from dropping out of school.

(Source: Added at 25 Ill. Reg. 2399, effective January 25, 2001)

Section 205.40 Application Procedure and Content

It is the intention of the State Board of Education to approve truants' alternative and optional education programs for a three-year period. Funding for the second and third years of operation (i.e., beginning the year following the initial grant award) shall be contingent upon the availability of funds for the program, the grantee's progress toward meeting its objectives, and the evidence presented in the proposal that a sufficient need continues to exist for the program (see Section 205.40(f) of this Part).

- a) The State Board of Education will issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) specifying the information that applicants shall include in their proposals and requiring that proposals be submitted to the State Board of Education no later than the date specified in the RFP. The RFP shall provide at least 45 calendar days in which to submit proposals.
- b) Each RFP shall indicate the descriptive information (e.g., needs assessment, community-based planning procedures, indicators used to identify students for the program, program objectives and activities, individualized optional education plan development, means of evaluation) that initial applicants will be required to provide about their proposed programs. Initial applicants are those that did not receive funding under this Part for a truants' alternative and optional education program in the year previous to an application or that are completing the last year in a three-year funding cycle. Each RFP shall identify any area or areas of high priority for the funding cycle.
- c) Each RFP shall describe the proposal format that applicants will be required to follow (e.g., cover page, program staffing, proposal abstract, proposal narrative).
- d) Each proposal shall include a budget summary and payment schedule and a narrative budget breakdown (i.e., a detailed explanation of each line item of expenditure), completed on forms provided by the State Board of Education.
- e) Each proposal shall include a Certification and Assurances for Application and Award and a Drug-Free

Workplace Certification, submitted on forms supplied by the State Board of Education.

- f) Each proposal for renewal shall contain at least the following:
- 1) a mid-year report of the current year's program, documenting the services provided and describing the degree to which the grantee is achieving its stated objectives;
  - 2) an updated narrative description of the objectives, activities, timelines, evaluation procedures and the personnel to be responsible for them in the renewal year, relating the objectives and activities proposed to the results to date, as described in the mid-year report required under subsection (f)(1) of this Section;
  - 3) an updated budget summary and payment schedule, with narrative budget breakdown, for the renewal year; and
  - 4) the assurances and certification forms referred to in subsection (e) of this Section, bearing a current signature and applicable to the renewal period.
- g) Incomplete proposals will not be considered for funding.

(Source: Amended at 25 Ill. Reg. 2399, effective January 25, 2001)

Section 205.50 Proposal Review and Approval

- a) Proposals submitted for initial funding under this Part shall be evaluated in accordance with the following criteria and points:
  - 1) There is sufficient need for the program/services, as evidenced by the number or proportion of students identified as eligible for program services (see Section 205.20(b) of this Part). (20 points)
  - 2) Criteria and indicators for identifying students who are eligible for the program are clearly established and likely to target those students most in need of services. (20 points)
  - 3) Program objectives and activities are well-defined, linked to identified needs, and likely to lead to improved outcomes for the students served in the program. (20 points)
  - 4) The program is cost-effective as evidenced by the cost of proposed services in relation to the numbers to be served and the services to be provided. (20 points)
  - 5) The evaluation strategies will effectively gauge the success of the program and yield sufficient data that can be used to improve the program. (10 points)
  - 6) The proposal demonstrates strategies, other than those routinely offered by the regular school program, that will be effective in decreasing the dropout rate and increasing school attendance. (10 points)
- b) Proposals submitted for a renewal period shall be evaluated in accordance with the following criteria:
  - 1) The evaluation of the current year's project indicates that its stated objectives are being met, that the project has been conducted in conformance with the proposal approved by the State Superintendent of Education, and that a sufficient need continues to exist for the

truants' alternative and optional education program; or

- 2) In instances where certain objectives of the project are not being met, the grantee has described the relative status of each such objective, the reason(s) for incomplete achievement, and either:
  - i) the steps to be taken to ensure that the objective will be met during the renewal period, if the objective remains a valid part of the proposal for renewal; or
  - ii) if the grantee has determined that the objective should be deleted from its plan or altered in light of the previous year's experience, then the grantee has provided its rationale for such deletion or change and has described how the program's goals for the renewal period will be met in light of the change.
- c) The selection of proposals for funding may be based in part on geographic distribution and/or the need to provide resources to public school districts and communities with varying demographic characteristics.
- d) Priority consideration may be given to proposals with specific areas of emphasis, as identified by the State Board of Education in a particular RFP.
- e) The State Superintendent of Education will make final determinations in accordance with the criteria stated in subsections (a) and (b) of this Section.

(Source: Amended at 25 Ill. Reg. 2399, effective January 25, 2001)

Section 205.55 Proposal Review and Approval Criteria - Renewal  
Applications (Repealed)

(Source: Repealed at 25 Ill. Reg. 2399, effective January  
25, 2001)

Section 205.60 Allocation of Funds

The State Superintendent of Education shall determine the amount of individual grant awards on the basis of the following criteria. The final award amounts will be based on these criteria following negotiation with the grant recipient:

- a) the total funds appropriated for truants' alternative and optional education programs;
- b) the program needs, resources, and amounts requested in the top-ranked proposals determined pursuant to Section 205.50(a) and (b) of this Part; and
- c) the need to assure delivery of truancy prevention services and truants' alternative and optional education programs on a statewide basis and in a manner that will have the greatest impact in preventing truancy and students from dropping out of school.

(Source: Amended at 25 Ill. Reg. 2399, effective January 25, 2001)

Section 205.70 Terms of the Grant

Each RFP shall inform potential recipients of the terms and conditions that apply to their receipt and use of grant funds under this program, including at least the following:

- a) All grants issued under this Part shall be governed by the Illinois Grant Funds Recovery Act [30 ILCS 705].
- b) Applicants may be asked to clarify certain aspects of their proposals. A negotiated and finalized proposal returned to the applicant, with an authorized signature affixed to the cover page, will constitute an approved grant agreement with the State Board of Education.
- c) Orders for payment will be submitted to the Office of the Comptroller by the State Board of Education according to a negotiated payment schedule. Payments may be reduced from scheduled amounts if periodic reports show excessive cash on hand.
- d) The grantee may operate its own program or enter into a subcontract with another not-for-profit entity to implement the program.
- e) Grant recipients must submit a final project report to the State Board of Education within 30 days after the ending date of the grant period.
- f) An approved budget may be amended by completing an amendment to the approved budget, using forms supplied by the State Board of Education, to show the new amounts required and attaching an explanation for the changes. A budget amendment is necessary whenever an approved individual line item changes by more than \$1,000 or 20 percent (whichever is larger) from the approved budget. A budget amendment must also be submitted for approval when a grantee proposes to use funds for allowable expenditures not identified in the approved budget. Changes will be approved if the proposed distribution of resources or activities would have been approvable within the original application.
- g) The annual RFP shall indicate the proportion of grant funds that can be used for administrative expenses.

(Source: Amended at 26 Ill. Reg. 882, effective January 15, 2002)

Section 205.80 Notification of Grant Awards (Repealed)

(Source: Repealed at 25 Ill. Reg. 2399, effective January 25, 2001)