

**PROFESSIONAL EDUCATOR LICENSING  
AND STANDARDS BOARD**  
1021 Bandana Blvd E., Suite 222  
St. Paul, MN 55108  
(651) 539-4200



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS  
FISCAL YEAR 2025 TEACHER MENTORSHIP AND RETENTION OF  
EFFECTIVE TEACHERS GRANT PROGRAM**

**2023 MINNESOTA STATUTES §122A.70**

**DEADLINES**

**Intent to Submit – April 5, 2024 by 4:30pm  
Grant Proposal – April 19, 2024 by 4:30pm**

**Early submissions are encouraged.**

**PROJECT FUNDING PERIOD:**

**Grant Award Notification –Late May/Early June 2024 for July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2026**

**Alternative Format:**

Upon request, this request for proposals can be made available in an alternative format by contacting Laura Dyer, Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board, 1021 Bandana Blvd E., Suite 222, St. Paul, MN 55108, email: [Laura.Dyer@state.mn.us](mailto:Laura.Dyer@state.mn.us), phone: (651) 539-4182. TTY users should contact the Minnesota Relay Service at 1-800-627-3529 and request assistance in contacting PELSB

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) STATE FISCAL YEAR 2025  
TEACHER MENTORSHIP AND RETENTION OF EFFECTIVE TEACHERS GRANT  
PROGRAM**

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## Key Acronyms

**BIPOC:** Black, Indigenous (and) People of Color

**IOwA:** Identified Official with Authority

**MMB:** Minnesota Management and Budget

**PELSB:** Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board

**RFP:** Request for Proposals

**TOCAIT:** Teachers of Color and Indigenous Teachers

**TMRG:** Teacher Mentorship & Retention of Effective Teachers Grant

## Key Terms

### **Collaborative efforts to close opportunity gaps include:**

- (1) Ensuring school environments and curriculum validate, affirm, embrace, and integrate cultural and community strengths of students, families, and employees from all racial and ethnic backgrounds; and
- (2) Addressing institutional racism with equitable school policies, structures, practices, and curricular offerings, consistent with the requirements for long-term plans under section 124D.861, Subd. 2(c).

**Curricular:** curriculum resources used and content taught as well as access to levels of coursework or types of learning opportunities.<sup>1</sup>

**District:** a public school district or charter school.

**Environmental:** relating to the climate and culture of a school.

**Equitable:** fairness by providing curriculum, instruction, support, and other resources for learning based on the needs of individual students and groups of students to succeed at school rather than treating all students the same despite the students having different needs.

**Field:** the content area in which a teacher may become licensed to teach (also called “licensure area” or “subject area”).<sup>2</sup>

**Opportunity gap:** the inequitable distribution of resources that impacts inequitable opportunities that contribute to or perpetuate learning gaps for certain groups of students resulting from curricular,

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<sup>1</sup> Minn. Stat. §120B.113, Subd. 2(c)

<sup>2</sup> Minn. Stat. §122A.06, Subd. 5.

environmental, and structural inequities in schools experienced by students, families, and staff who are of color or who are American Indian.<sup>3</sup>

**Shortage area:**

- (1) Licensure fields and economic development regions reported by the commissioner of education or the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board as experiencing a teacher shortage; and
- (2) Economic development regions where there is a shortage of licensed teachers who reflect the racial or ethnic diversity of students in the region, where the aggregate percentage of Indigenous teachers and teachers of color in the region is lower than the aggregate percentage of kindergarten through grade 12 Indigenous students and students of color in that region. Only individuals who close the gap between these percentages qualify as filling a shortage by this definition, as stated in Minn. Stat §120B.113.<sup>4</sup>

**Teacher educator; instructor:** The individual employed or directed by a unit (teacher preparation provider) to facilitate a teacher candidate’s learning opportunities and assessments (also called “instructor”).<sup>5</sup>

**Teacher Preparation Provider:** The entity that has the primary responsibility for overseeing and delivering a teacher preparation program.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Minn. Stat. §120B.113, Subd. 2(g).

<sup>4</sup> Minn. Stat. §122A.06, Subd. 6.

<sup>5</sup> Minn. R. 8705.0200, Subp. 10c.

<sup>6</sup> Minn. Stat. 122a.06, Subd. 8 (2023).

**STATE FISCAL YEAR 2025  
TEACHER MENTORSHIP AND RETENTION OF EFFECTIVE TEACHERS GRANT  
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS  
Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB)**

**I. OVERVIEW**

PELSB makes this competitive state grant funding available to develop, sustain, or expand teacher mentorship, induction, and retention programs under Minnesota Statute §122A.70, especially those serving teachers of color and American Indian teachers.

See **Appendix A** for the legislative language that informs the Teacher Mentorship and Retention of Effective Teachers Grant Program.

**II. FUNDING AVAILABILITY**

This grant opportunity provides \$3,395,000.00 dollars in fiscal year 2025 in state funding under [Minnesota Session Laws – 2023, Regular Session, Chapter 55, Article 5, Section 65, Subd. 6](#), for the development and expansion of mentoring, induction, and retention programs and affinity group networks designed for teachers of color or American Indian teachers under Minnesota Statute §122A.70. The board may retain up to three percent of the appropriation amount to monitor and administer the grant program. Pursuant to [Minnesota Session Laws – 2021, 1<sup>st</sup> Special Session, Chapter 13, Section 8, Subdivs. 3\(c\) and \(d\)](#): **The base appropriation for grants under Minn. Stat. §122A.70, for fiscal year 2024 and later is \$2,996,000.00, of which at least \$2,330,000 each fiscal year must be granted for the development and expansion of mentoring, induction, and retention programs designed for teachers of color or Native American teachers.** (d) The board may retain up to three percent of the appropriation to monitor and administer the grant program.

Funding will be allocated through a competitive process with review by a committee for a two-year period. Grantees will be announced in early late May/early June.

The state reserves the right to offer award amounts that differ from the applicant's request.

**III. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS**

The following may apply for a program grant:

- A school district
- A group of school districts
- A school or a coalition of schools
- A coalition of teachers

**Note:** A higher education institution or nonprofit organization may partner with a grant applicant but is not eligible as a sole applicant for grant funds.

#### **IV. ESTIMATED GRANT PERIOD**

The term of the initial grant period is anticipated to be from **July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2026**.

Funds unobligated from the first year will be available in the second year.

#### **V. USE OF FUNDS**

Grantees may use grant funds to:

- Pay a stipend to a mentor who may be a current or former teacher who has taught at least three years and is not on an improvement plan
- Provide additional stipends as an incentive to mentors of color or who are American Indian,
- Financially support professional learning community affinity groups across schools, within, and between districts, for teachers from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups to come together throughout the school year. For the purposes of this grant program “affinity groups” are groups of educators who share a community racial or ethnic identity in society as persons of color or who are American Indian,
- Financially support programs for induction aligned with the district or school mentorship program during the first three years of teaching, especially for teachers who are from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups,
- Provide professional development focused on ways to close opportunity and achievement gaps for students of color and American Indian students, and
- For teachers of color and Indigenous teachers, grant funds may be used for professional development graduate coursework toward a first master’s degree in a field related to their teaching licensure or toward an additional teaching license.

Plans for the use of state funds for travel outside the state of Minnesota must follow the current Commissioner’s Plan, promulgated by the Commissioner of Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) and be approved in writing by PELSB prior to the grant review process. Please utilize [this form](#) to submit any proposed plans for out of state travel for approval at the time of application.

A charter school or school district that receives a grant must negotiate additional retention strategies or protection from unrequested leaves of absence in the beginning years of employment for teachers who are of color or who are American Indian. Retention strategies may include:

- Providing financial incentives for teachers of color and American Indian teachers to work in the school or district for at least five years and
- Placing American Indian educators and educators of color at sites with other educators of color to reduce isolation and increase opportunity for collegial support.

## **VI. GENERAL, SPECIFIC & REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

### **GENERAL EXPECTATIONS OF GRANTEEES**

Submit an end of the year evaluative progress report by the date indicated in Section 2.3 of the grant contract agreement.

Maintain a ledger to track the grant budget expenditures and payment reimbursements, plus all documents that support budget line item expenses.

If subcontracting is an allowable expenditure in the approved budget, follow applicable state and federal procurement laws and select "responsible vendors" who are not debarred or suspended, not engaged in unlawful practices and who are qualified.

Prior to executing the award document for a non-governmental organization, PELSB will conduct a pre-award risk assessment to consider the applicant's financial capacity if the grant request is over \$25,000. For a grant award over \$50,000, monitoring is required and, at least one financial reconciliation of a Grantee's expenditures during the grant period. Grant awards over \$250,000 require annual financial reconciliation of Grantee expenditures.

### **SPECIFIC PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS**

Grant applicants must express commitment to:

- (1) Allow staff participation;
- (2) Assess skills of both beginning and mentor teachers;
- (3) Provide appropriate in-service to needs identified in the assessment;
- (4) Provide leadership to the effort;
- (5) Co-operate with higher education institutions or teacher educators;
- (6) Provide facilities and other resources;
- (7) Share findings, materials, and techniques with other school districts; and

(8) Retain teachers of color and teachers who are American Indian.<sup>7</sup>

Grant applicants must seek additional funding and assistance from sources such as school districts, post-secondary institutions, foundations, and the private sector.

Approved programs should reflect effective mentoring, professional development, and retention components.

A district that receives a grant must negotiate additional retention strategies for teachers who are of color or who are American Indian in their beginning years of employment, such as financial incentives for working in the school/district for at least five years, or providing collegial support through teacher placement.

New, sustained, and expanding mentorship sites that are funded receive a board grant under Minn. Stat. §122A.70, Subdivision 2 to design, develop, implement, and evaluate their program and must participate in activities that support program development and implementation.

## REPORTING

Grant recipients must submit a report to PELSB by **September 30** of each year after receiving a grant, for each year that grant funds are active. If the due date falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the report is due by 4:30PM the prior workday. **Even though the grant contract agreement may extend for a two-fiscal year period, reports on the use of grant funds are due each year, even if funds have not been utilized.**

Pursuant to statute, the report must detail mentoring and induction efforts and assess the impact of these efforts on teacher effectiveness and retention. PELSB publishes a summary report to the legislature, which is posted on our website by November 30 of each year.

## VII. STATEMENT OF INTENT

PELSB will use Intent to Submit emails to plan for proposal review and to understand the scope of the competition. **Intent to Submit communications must be sent by April 5, 2024.** Please fill out [this form](#) or send a simple statement identifying an intention to submit a grant application, the name of the school district/s applying, or the name of all teachers and districts applying as a coalition (with name of the coalition and its fiscal sponsor), as well as the [MN Economic Development Region \(EDR\)](#) that your district or coalition predominately serves, to [Grants.PELSB@state.mn.us](mailto:Grants.PELSB@state.mn.us).

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<sup>7</sup> Minn. Stat. 122A.70, Subd. 3.



## VIII. APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

### APPLICATION COVERSHEET

The application coversheet must include:

1. An original signature from the Identified Official with Authority (IOwA) to sign on behalf of the applicant. If a fiscal agent is representing another organization, both the fiscal agent applicant and a representative of the organization represented must sign. The fiscal agent and the organization represented should have a letter of agreement on file.
2. Contact information for the agency, agency head, the program contact and the accounting or business office manager.
3. Identify the grant amount requested.

### REQUIRED STATE FINANCIAL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER

*It is likely your organization already has this number; check with your business office.*

SWIFT (Minnesota's Statewide Integrated Financial Tool System) Vendor Number

This number is required for all grant applicants. If you are applying with a fiscal agent, the SWIFT number must be for the fiscal agent who will be receiving and administering the grant funds.

To get a [SWIFT Vendor Number](#)

([https://supplier.swift.state.mn.us/psp/fmssupap/SUPPLIER/ERP/h/?tab=SUP\\_GUEST](https://supplier.swift.state.mn.us/psp/fmssupap/SUPPLIER/ERP/h/?tab=SUP_GUEST))

**Please note:** PELSB can work with teacher coalitions without formal organizational support to develop a partnership with an organization that is eligible to receive and manage state grant funds on behalf of the coalition. Please contact Laura Dyer at [Laura.Dyer@state.mn.us](mailto:Laura.Dyer@state.mn.us) if your coalition would help with obtaining this type of support.

### APPLICATION NARRATIVE COMPONENTS AND BUDGET

Use the application template to develop clear and complete narrative responses for the following components based on the grant period. The total page count for the narrative components must not exceed 8 pages. Grant applicants are welcome to submit supporting documents as appendices.

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## SCORED PROPOSAL

### SECTION 1. APPLICANT INFORMATION

A. Are you applying as (check one):

- ☐ A school district
- ☐ A group of school districts
- ☐ A schools or coalition of schools
- ☐ A coalition of teachers

B. Please list all schools, districts, and partners (such as higher education institutions or nonprofit organizations) applying. If you are a coalition of teachers, please list all teachers and the district they work in. Each entry should be on its own line. **Please note:** a higher education institution or nonprofit organization may partner with a grant applicant but is not eligible as a sole applicant for grant funds.

C. Have you received a prior Teacher Mentorship and Retention of Effective Teachers grant from PELSB?  
YES NO

If so, which fiscal years?

FY20 (July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020)

FY21 (July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021)

FY22 (July 1, 2021– June 30, 2022)

FY23 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023)

FY24 (July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024) and extending to June 30, 2025 without an amendment, if needed

Did you utilize all of the funding?

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## SECTION 2. PROGRAM NARRATIVE (20 Points)

Please check which of the following activities allowed by Minn. Stat. §122A.70 that you plan to implement with grant funding and explain each proposed activity:

- ☐ Pay a stipend to a mentor who may be a current or former teacher who has taught at least three years and is not on an improvement plan
- ☐ Provide additional stipends as an incentive to mentors of color or who are American Indian
- ☐ Financially support professional learning community affinity groups across schools, within and between districts, for teachers from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups to come together throughout the school year. For the purposes of this grant program “affinity groups” are groups of educators who share a community racial or ethnic identity in society as persons of color or who are American Indian.
- ☐ Financially support programs for induction aligned with the district or school mentorship program during the first three years of teaching, especially for teachers who are from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups
- ☐ Provide professional development focused on ways to close opportunity and achievement gaps for students of color and American Indian students
- ☐ Provide teachers of color and Indigenous teachers professional development graduate coursework toward a first master’s degree in a field related to their teaching licensure or toward an additional teaching licenses

New and expanding mentorship sites that receive funding to design, develop, implement, and evaluate a teacher mentorship and retention program must participate in activities that support program development and implementation.

Please detail the proposed activities to be funded by this grant. Include a description of how the proposed activities will strengthen and/or supplement existing or attempted mentorship or retention efforts and how the requested funds allow you to do this work.

Please also explain how mentors will be trained to work effectively with mentees who are of color or who are Indigenous.

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### SECTION 3. PROGRAM NEED AND PARTICIPATING TEACHERS (30 Points)

Describe the need for this program in terms of local data, and the challenges the proposed efforts are intended to address. Your described program need should align with funding priorities outlined in Appendix A.

Please provide the requested information pertaining to this application:

Teacher of Color and Indigenous Teacher Participants	Total Number	Percentage out of all teacher mentorship & retention program participants
Total teachers of Color or Indigenous Teachers (TOCAIT) supported by Teacher Mentorship & Retention of Effective Teachers (TMRG) Grant funding	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Of those who are teachers of color and/or Indigenous teachers, please list the following information:</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage out of all teachers of color and Indigenous teachers</b>
Tier 3 teachers new to the profession or district	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Tier 2 teachers new to the profession or district	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Tier 1 teachers new to the profession or district	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Teaching residents (i.e., those in a special in-service induction program, usually with a reduced instructional loads during the first year of employment and additional mentoring and/or professional development. For the purposes of this grant, residents are not pre-service candidates seeking initial licensure in their field and participating in a PELSB-approved residency program or student teachers completing other licensure programs.)	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Teachers in license shortage areas within your <a href="#">Economic Development Region</a> (see Table 9 on p. 22 of <a href="#">PELSB's Biennial 2023 Teacher Supply &amp; Demand Report</a> )	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Teachers with special needs, as defined by the <a href="#">Minnesota Human Rights Act</a>	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Experienced teachers in need of peer coaching	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

<b>Total Amount of Funding for Teachers of Color and Indigenous Teachers (TOCAIT) Requested</b>	
Click or tap here to enter text.	
<b>Total Amount of Additional Incentive Stipends for Mentoring TOCAIT Requested</b>	<b>Average Amount per Teacher</b>
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Total Amount Requested to Support Professionally Learning Community Affinity Groups</b>	<b>Average Amount per Teacher</b>
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Total Amount Requested for Graduate Courses for TOCAIT Toward a First Master's Degree in a Field Related to Licensure or an Additional Teaching License</b>	<b>Average Amount per Teacher</b>
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Total Amount Requested to Provide Mentorship Stipends to Teachers</b>	<b>Average Amount per Teacher</b>
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Total Amount Requested to Support Programs for Induction</b>	<b>Average Amount per Teacher</b>
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Total Amount Requested to Provide Professional Development Directly Related to Addressing the Opportunity and Achievement Gap for Students of Color and Indigenous Students</b>	<b>Average Amount per Teacher</b>
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

#### **SECTION 4. EXPERIENCE AND CAPACITY FOR MENTORSHIP AND RETENTION EFFORTS (15 Points)**

- A. Describe existing or prior mentorship and retention efforts in your district(s) or school(s) relevant to your proposal, focusing on the experience and capacity of your district or coalition to successfully implement the proposed activities.
- B. In addition, please describe:
  - 1. Whether or not you have received this grant before, briefly summarizing what activities were funded and how much funding was awarded
  - 2. Where you have sought or will seek additional funding for this program, as required by and specified in statute
  - 3. If you are a school or district making this application, describe (as required by statute) how you have negotiated additional retention strategies or protection from unrequested leave of absence for teachers who are of color or who are American Indian in their beginning years of employment, such as financial incentives for working in the school/district for at least five years or providing collegial support through teacher placement.

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**SECTION 5. PROGRAM GOALS, ACTIVITIES, AND PRIORITIES (25 Points)**

Describe the goals and activities that align with the purpose of this funding. For example:

Goal	Activity Description	Timeline or Frequency	Priority
Goal 1: Increase retention of teachers of color	Activity 1: Form an affinity group to...	Monthly	High, 2 <sup>nd</sup> most important thing we need to do

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**SECTION 6. INTENDED OUTCOMES & PROGRESS MONITORING (5 Points)**

The state is committed to funding services that produce a measurable result, outcome, or product for the targeted population identified in your application and the people of Minnesota. Grant applicants must develop indicators of the success and effectiveness of their program. Additionally, grant applicants must measure and evaluate the success and effectiveness of each of the goals, activities, and outcomes listed in Section 5 of the application in a report to PELSB by September 30, 2024 and by September 30 of each year that grant funds are active.

In the application, identify the individual(s) responsible for collecting data and preparing reports. Then, complete the table below:

Progress Monitoring criteria/outcomes	Identified Individual/s and Methods for Collection	Data Used
<i>Example:</i> 10% increase in retention	Program coordinator will track new educators	Previous and current employment #s

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## SECTION 7. BUDGET WITH DESCRIPTIONS (5 Points)

Create and attach a **plainly formatted** Excel budget for the requested grant funds. Specify the grant amount requested and detail all *necessary and reasonable* expenditures anticipated during the project period that align with project goals and activities. Necessary means it is important to the success of the project. Reasonable means that fair market price is paid for the item or services.

**Submissions with decorative colors, logos, non-standard fonts, blocked out sections, and/or information related to other grants or prior awards will be returned for revision.**

The budget must include a brief narrative description of each line-item.

Please use the suggested format below:

Program Item	Budget Amount	Narrative Description
Item A	\$X	Description
Item B	\$X	Description
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$X</b>	

Reviewers should be able to determine if the budget aligns with the project activities and primary purpose of the funding. The planned budget expenses must be **necessary, reasonable** and fundable by statute [see Appendix A].

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## APPLICATION SUBMISSION AND SIGNATURE

Applications must be emailed to [Grants.PELSB@state.mn.us](mailto:Grants.PELSB@state.mn.us) by **4:30PM on Friday, April 19, 2024**.

**Applications sent to any other email address will not be accepted. Late applications will not be accepted.**

Provide **one electronic copy via e-mail** by **April 19, 2024** at 4:30PM to [Grants.PELSB@state.mn.us](mailto:Grants.PELSB@state.mn.us).

Only one application per school district is eligible for review.

Submit the application in the following format:

1. In the subject line of the email put "FY25 Teacher Mentorship Grant Application – [Your Organization's Name]."
2. Save and attach your signed application as a PDF and budget as a combined PDF.
3. Save and attach your budget as an Excel document as well.
4. Label your documents with the name of your organization. Example: "[Organization Name] FY25 Teacher Mentorship Proposal"

Then submit to the designated email box by **Friday, April 19, 2024, 4:30PM, Central Daylight Time**. **Links, zip files, and Google documents will not be accepted.** Please save or print Google documents to PDF for submission. Costs associated with preparing the application must be borne by the applicant. The burden of proof of timely submission is on the applicant.

## IX. APPLICATION SCREENING AND REVIEW

### PHASE 1: Screening

Applications that meet the following criteria will be forwarded for review.

1. Received in the designated email box by the due date and time.
2. Applicant meets the eligibility requirements.
3. Application includes a narrative and budget.

### PHASE 2: Application Components Reviewed and Scored

The components to be scored are summarized below. Total points possible are 100.

## EVALUATION RUBRIC

Criteria	Not Recommended	Recommended	Highly Recommended
<b>Section 2</b> <b>Program Narrative</b> <b>(20 Points)</b>	<b>7 Points:</b> The proposal does not provide a sufficient explanation of each program activity, who will be served and how the proposed activities will realize and/or strengthen existing or attempted mentorship or retention efforts. Several proposed activities are not allowable by statute. The groups served and/or program impact do not align with the grant funding purpose as outlined in statute.	<b>15 Points:</b> The proposal provides a reasonable explanation of each program activity allowable by statute to be funded by the grant, who will be served, how they will be supported, and how the proposed activities will realize and/or strengthen existing or attempted mentorship or retention efforts. The groups served and program impact align with the grant funding purpose as outlined in statute.	<b>20 Points:</b> The proposal provides a clear and detailed explanation of each program activity allowable by statute to be funded by the grant, including the types of teachers who will be served, how they will be supported, and how the proposed activities will realize and/or strengthen existing or attempted mentorship or retention efforts. The proposal emphasizes efforts to support the mentorship and retention of teachers of color and Indigenous teachers as prioritized in the legislative appropriation for this grant program.
<b>Section 3</b> <b>Program Need &amp; Participating Teachers</b> <b>(30 Points)</b>	<b>14 Points:</b> Explanation of need is not clear and local data is either not provided or does not sufficiently support a case for the need to receive grant funds in order to have the capacity to provide mentorship and retention efforts to teachers.  Proposed programs do not focus enough on supporting teachers of	<b>23 Points:</b> Proposed programs will provide support to teachers of color and Indigenous teachers, teachers who are new to profession or district, teaching residents, teachers in license shortage areas, teachers with special needs and/or experienced teachers in need of coaching.  Amount requested per teacher falls under	<b>30 Points:</b> Proposed programs emphasize support to teachers of color and Indigenous teachers, including Tier 2 & 3 teachers who are new to the profession or district, teaching residents, teachers in license shortage areas, teachers with special needs and/or experienced teachers in need of coaching.

Criteria	Not Recommended	Recommended	Highly Recommended
	<p>color and Indigenous teachers, teachers who are new to profession or district, teaching residents, teachers in license shortage areas, teachers with special needs and/or experienced teachers in need of coaching.</p> <p>Explanation of need and/or data on program participants is not sufficient to demonstrate need and/or capacity.</p>	<p>allowable costs and is a reasonable amount for the proposed work.</p> <p>Explanation of program need and capacity, as well as data on program participants demonstrates reasonable need and ability to execute proposed program activities.</p>	<p>Amount requested per teacher falls under allowable costs and is a reasonable amount for the proposed work.</p> <p>Explanation of program need and capacity, as well as data on program participants provide a very clear and compelling case.</p>
<b>Section 4 Experience &amp; Capacity for Mentorship &amp; Retention Efforts (15 Points)</b>	<p><b>7 Points:</b> The applicant's explanation of capacity and experience leave questions about their ability to execute the proposed programs successfully and/or achieve intended outcomes. Capacity to retain teachers is limited due to stated structural issues (e.g., low salaries, or challenging school environments, etc.) not sufficiently addressed by the district. No stated efforts to seek additional funding.</p> <p>No mention of completed or planned negotiation not done or planned (required if a</p>	<p><b>11 Points:</b> The applicant demonstrates a reasonable capacity to execute the proposed programs, through an explanation of the applicant's capacity and/or success of, or lessons learned from, past or current mentoring and retention programs or related programs. Capacity to retain teachers may be limited due to structural issues but these issues are being sufficiently addressed in other ways by the applicant.</p> <p>Applicant has negotiated agreement to retain or protect beginning teachers of</p>	<p><b>15 Points:</b> More than most other grant applicants, the applicant demonstrates a clear and strong capacity to execute the proposed programs, through a detailed explanation of capacity, including success of past or current mentoring and retention programs.</p> <p>Applicant (if a district) provides detailed description of negotiated agreement to retain or protect beginning teachers of color and teachers who are American Indian from layoffs.</p>

Criteria	Not Recommended	Recommended	Highly Recommended
	district applicant) for efforts to retain or protect beginning teachers of color and teachers who are American Indian from layoffs.	color and teachers who are American Indian from layoffs or provided description of such negotiations in process.	
<b>Section 5 Program Goals, Activities &amp; Priorities (25 Points)</b>	<b>12 Points:</b> The proposal does not provide a clear and/or sufficient description of each program goal and activity. The proposed activities do not sufficiently align with the funding purposes as outlined in statute.	<b>19 Points:</b> The proposal provides a reasonable description of each program goal and activity. The proposed activities align with the funding purposes as outlined in statute.	<b>25 Points:</b> The proposal provides very clear and detailed descriptions of each program goal and activity compared to other applications. The proposed goals and activities align with priorities to support and retain teachers of color and American Indian teachers, teachers in license shortage areas, and teachers with special needs.
<b>Section 6 Intended Outcomes &amp; Progress Monitoring (5 Points)</b>	<b>2 Points:</b> Intended outcomes are unclear and/or not closely aligned with the purpose of the grant program. The proposal does not articulate a clear means of measuring the outcomes of funded activities.	<b>3 Points:</b> The proposal articulates a feasible means of measuring the stated intended outcomes of funded activities that are aligned with the purposes of the grant program.	<b>5 Points:</b> The proposal articulates a clear, detailed and feasible means of measuring the clear, intended outcomes of funded activities that are aligned with the priorities of increasing the retention of teachers of color and American Indian teachers for awarding grants in this program.

Criteria	Not Recommended	Recommended	Highly Recommended
<b>Section 7 Budget (5 Points)</b>	<b>2 Points:</b> The budget is not itemized and/or does not clearly match what is described in the rest of the proposal. Requested funds are not necessary or reasonable.	<b>3 Points:</b> The budget provides an itemized description of how necessary and reasonable funds will be spent.	<b>5 Points:</b> The budget provides a clear, itemized description of how necessary and reasonable funds will be spent. Each item matches what is described in the rest of the proposal.

### PHASE 3: Review of Outcomes

PELSB staff will review the outcomes resulting from the reviewers' evaluation of applications. PELSB may offer grant award amounts that differ from the applicant's grant request, including award amounts for specific program items. During this phase, PELSB staff or grant services staff may contact an applicant to obtain clarification on one or more sections of their application. PELSB staff or grant services staff may contact reviewers to obtain clarification on their feedback. All funding decisions made by PELSB are final.

#### Pre-Award Risk Assessment

Before executing grants for a non-governmental organization, if awards exceed \$25,000, PELSB must conduct a risk assessment on financial capacity as well as prior performance.

#### Delays

OTHER - The following may result in a delay of preparation of any grant awards:

- Clarifications to the budget or work plan
- Invalid SWIFT VENDOR ID Number
- Pre-Award Risk Assessment Review

The agency *anticipates* the review to be completed by late May/early June 2024. Grant applicants are expected to be notified within two weeks of when the review has been completed. Grant review feedback is considered public information, but not until all grant contract agreements have been negotiated and executed with the selected grant applicants.

Grant applicants recommended for an award must wait until the grant contract agreement is fully executed **before** providing any services and before incurring expenditures. Any expenses incurred prior to the full execution of the grant contract agreement are not reimbursable and are the responsibility of the applicant/grantee.

## **X. ASSISTANCE DURING PROPOSAL SOLICITATION**

The question and answer document will be available by February 21, 2024. A virtual informational session for interested grant applicants will be held on March 26, 2024 at 4:30PM.

PELSB Grant Specialist Laura Dyer is available to provide additional information or answer questions. Questions should be emailed using “FY25 TMRG” (Teacher Mentorship and Retention Grant) in the subject line. Email: [Laura.Dyer@state.mn.us](mailto:Laura.Dyer@state.mn.us) Phone: 651-539-4182

Questions related to the grant opportunity may only be answered by PELSB’s program contact representative identified above or their successor. Information received from an unauthorized source is not binding and could result in misinformation.

## **XI. GRANT ADMINISTRATION REGULATIONS**

Administrative guidelines will be sent to grantees which will outline details on the grant award process, applicable regulations, monitoring expectations, fiscal procedures, reporting requirements, and more, upon contract execution.

## **XII. FINANCIAL REVIEW PROCESS**

All organizations except municipal school districts applying for grants in the amount of \$25,000 and higher in the state of Minnesota must undergo a financial review prior to the award process. In order to comply with [Minnesota’s Policy 08-06 Financial Review of Nongovernmental Organizations](#), please submit one of the following documents with your application, based on the following criteria:

- Grant applicants with annual income of under \$50,000, or who have not been in existence long enough to have a completed IRS Form 990 or audit should submit their most recent board-reviewed financial statements.
- Grant applicants with total annual revenue of \$50,000 or more and less than \$750,000 should submit their most recent IRS Form 990.
- Grant applicants with total annual revenue of over \$750,000 should submit their most recent certified financial audit.



### **XIII. GRANT CLOSE-OUT, SUSPENSION, AND TERMINATION**

**Close-out:** Each grant award shall be closed out as promptly as feasible after expiration or termination. In closing out the award, the following shall be observed:

1. The grant recipient shall submit the evaluation report, as required by the terms of the grant contract agreement.
2. The close-out of a grant award does not affect the retention period for State and/or Federal rights of access to grant records.

**Suspension:** When a grant recipient has materially failed to comply with the terms of a grant, PELSB may, upon reasonable notice to the grant recipient, suspend the grant in whole or in part. The notice of suspension will state the reason(s) for the suspension, any corrective action required of the grant recipient, and the effective date.

**Termination:** PELSB may terminate any grant in whole, or in part, at any time before the date of expiration whenever PELSB determines that the grant recipient has materially failed to comply with the terms of the grant. PELSB shall promptly notify the grant recipient in writing of the termination and the reason(s) for the termination, together with the effective date.

### **XIV. GRANT CONTRACT AGREEMENTS**

State grant contract agreements are found in the [Forms and FAQs tab](#) located on the Office of Grants Management website.

### **XV. TIMELINE FOR PROPOSALS, AWARDS, AND FUNDED PROJECTS**

By February 21, 2024	Request for Proposals (RFP) available to applicants
March 26, 2024 (at 4:30pm)	Virtual Informational session for interested applicants
April 5, 2024 (by 4:30pm)	Deadline for receipt of Intent to Submit
<b>April 19, 2024 (by 4:30pm)</b>	<b>Deadline for receipt of Proposal</b>
Late May/Early June 2024	Notification of recommended grant awards
May/June 2024 – June 30, 2026	Project period starts with date of contract encumbrance and complete execution of the grant contract agreement

Provide one electronic copy of the application via e-mail by 4:30PM April 19, 2024 to [Grants.PELSB@state.mn.us](mailto:Grants.PELSB@state.mn.us) Do not cc PELSB's grants administrator or send additional copies.

**Any proposal submitted late will not be accepted.**

All proposals will be acknowledged upon receipt. **Each late or ineligible applicant will be notified that their proposal will not be considered.**

Only one application per school district is eligible for grant review.

## **XVI. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

We will take steps to prevent individual and organizational conflicts of interest, both in reference to applicants and reviewers per [Minn. Stat. §16B.98](#) and [Conflict of Interest Policy for State Grant-Making](#). Organizational conflicts of interest occur when:

- a grantee or applicant is unable or potentially unable to render impartial assistance or advice to PELSB due to competing duties or loyalties; and/or
- a grantee's or applicant's objectivity in carrying out the grant is or might be otherwise impaired due to competing duties or loyalties.

In cases where a conflict of interest is suspected, disclosed, or discovered, the applicants or grantees will be notified and actions may be pursued including, but not limited to, disqualification from eligibility for the grant award or termination of the grant agreement.

## **XVII. PUBLIC DATA**

Per [Minn. Stat. §13.599](#):

- Names and addresses of grant applicants will be public data once proposal responses are opened, after the date for final submission has passed.
- All remaining data in proposal responses (except trade secret data as defined and classified in [Minn. Stat. §13.37](#)) will be public data after the evaluation process is completed (for the purpose of this grant, when all grant agreements have been fully executed).
- All data created or maintained by PELSB as part of the evaluation process (except trade secret data as defined and classified in Minn. Stat. §13.37) will be public data after the evaluation process is completed (for the purposes of this grant, when all grant agreements have been fully executed).

## **XVII. AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND NON-DISCRIMINATION REQUIREMENTS**

- A. The grantee agrees not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status in regard to public assistance, membership or activity in a local commission, disability, sexual orientation, or age in regard to any position for which the employee or applicant for employment is qualified. [Minn. Stat. §363A.02](#). The grantee agrees to take affirmative steps to employ, advance in

employment, upgrade, train, and recruit minority persons, women, and persons with disabilities.

- B. The grantee must not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of physical or mental disability in regard to any position for which the employee or applicant for employment is qualified. The grantee agrees to take affirmative action to employ, advance in employment, and otherwise treat qualified disabled persons without discrimination based upon their physical or mental disability in all employment practices such as the following: employment, upgrading, demotion or transfer, recruitment, advertising, layoff or termination, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, and selection for training, including apprenticeship. Minnesota Rules, Part [5000.3500](#).
- C. The grantee agrees to comply with the rules and relevant orders of the Minnesota Department of Human Rights issued pursuant to the Minnesota Human Rights Act.

## **APPENDIX A: COPY OF STATUTE**

## 2023 Minnesota Statutes

### 122A.70 TEACHER MENTORSHIP AND RETENTION OF EFFECTIVE TEACHERS.

Subdivision 1. Teacher mentoring, induction, and retention programs. (a) School districts must develop teacher mentoring programs for teachers new to the profession or district, including teaching residents, teachers of color, teachers who are American Indian, teachers in license shortage areas, teachers with special needs, or experienced teachers in need of peer coaching.

(b) Teacher mentoring programs must be included in or aligned with districts' teacher evaluation and peer review processes under sections 122A.40, subdivision 8, and 122A.41, subdivision 5. A district may use staff development revenue under section 122A.61, special grant programs established by the legislature, or another funding source to pay a stipend to a mentor who may be a current or former teacher who has taught at least three years and is not on an improvement plan.

Subd. 2. **Board grants.** The Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board must make grant application forms available to sites interested in developing, sustaining, or expanding a mentorship program. A school district or group of school districts, a school or coalition of schools, or a coalition of teachers may apply for a program grant. A higher education institution or nonprofit organization may partner with a grant applicant but is not eligible as a sole applicant for grant funds. The Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board, in consultation with the teacher mentoring task force, must approve or disapprove the applications. To the extent possible, the approved applications must reflect effective mentoring, professional development, and retention components, and be geographically distributed throughout the state. The Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board must encourage the selected sites to consider the use of its assessment procedures.

Subd. 2a. **Funded work.** (a) Grant funds may be used for the following:

(1) additional stipends as incentives to mentors who are of color or who are American Indian;

(2) financial supports for professional learning community affinity groups across schools within and between districts for educators from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups to come together throughout the school year. For purposes of this section, "affinity groups" means groups of licensed and nonlicensed educators who share a common racial or ethnic identity in society as persons who are of color or who are American Indian;

(3) programs for induction aligned with the district or school mentorship program during the first three years of teaching, especially for teachers from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups;

(4) professional development focused on ways to close opportunity and achievement gaps for students of color and American Indian students; or

(5) for teachers of color and American Indian teachers, graduate courses toward a first master's degree in a field related to their licensure or toward an additional license.

(b) A charter school or district that receives a grant must negotiate additional retention strategies or protection from unrequested leaves of absence in the beginning years of employment for teachers who are of

color or who are American Indian. Retention strategies may include providing financial incentives for teachers of color and teachers who are American Indian to work in the school or district for at least five years and placing American Indian educators at sites with other American Indian educators and educators of color at sites with other educators of color to reduce isolation and increase opportunity for collegial support.

Subd. 3. **Criteria for selection.** (a) At a minimum, applicants for grants under subdivision 2 must express commitment to:

- (1) allow staff participation;
- (2) assess skills of both beginning and mentor teachers;
- (3) provide appropriate in-service to needs identified in the assessment;
- (4) provide leadership to the effort;
- (5) cooperate with higher education institutions or teacher educators;
- (6) provide facilities and other resources;
- (7) share findings, materials, and techniques with other school districts; and
- (8) retain teachers of color and teachers who are American Indian.

(b) The Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board must give priority to applications to fund programs to induct, mentor, and retain Tier 2 or Tier 3 teachers who are of color or who are American Indian, and Tier 2 or Tier 3 teachers in licensure shortage areas within the applicant's economic development region.

Subd. 4. **Additional funding.** Grant applicants must seek additional funding and assistance from sources such as school districts, postsecondary institutions, foundations, and the private sector.

Subd. 5. **Program implementation.** A grant recipient may use grant funds on implementing activities over a period of time up to 24 months. New and expanding mentorship sites that receive a board grant under subdivision 2 to design, develop, implement, and evaluate their program must participate in activities that support program development and implementation.

Subd. 5a. **Grant program administration.** The Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board may enter into an interagency agreement with the Office of Higher Education or the Department of Education. The agreement may include a transfer of funds to the Office of Higher Education or the Department of Education to help administer the competitive grant process.

Subd. 6. **Report.** By September 30 of each year after receiving a grant, recipients must submit a report to the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board on program efforts that describes mentoring and induction activities and assesses the impact of these programs on teacher effectiveness and retention. The board must publish a summary report for the public and submit the report to the committees of the legislature with jurisdiction over kindergarten through grade 12 education policy and finance in accordance with section 3.302 by November 30 of each year.

**EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective July 1, 2023.

**Section 65, Subd. 6.** Mentoring, induction, and retention incentive program grants for teachers of color.

(a) To develop and expand mentoring, induction, and retention programs designed for teachers of color or American Indian teachers under Minnesota Statutes, section 122A.70:

\$	3,500,000	2024
\$	3,500,000	2025

(b) Any balance does not cancel but is available the following fiscal year.

(c) The base for grants under Minnesota Statutes, section 122A.70 for fiscal year 2026 and later is \$4,500.00, of which at least \$3,500.00 each fiscal year is for grants to develop and expand mentoring, induction, and retention programs designed for teachers of color or American Indian teachers.

**Minnesota Laws of 2021, 1st Special Session, Chapter 13, Article 3, Section 8, Subdivision 3**

**Subd. 3. Mentoring, induction, and retention incentive program grants for teachers of color.**

(a) For the development expansion of mentoring, induction, programs designed for teachers of color or American Indian teachers under Minnesota Statutes, section 122A.70:

\$ 3,004,000 ..... 2022

\$ 2,996,000 ..... 2023

(b) Any balance does not cancel but is available in the following fiscal year.

(c) The base appropriation for grants under Minnesota Statutes, section 122A.70, **for fiscal year 2024 and later** is \$2,996,000, of which at least \$2,330,000 each fiscal year must be granted for the development and expansion of mentoring, induction, retention programs designed for teachers of color or American Indian teachers. (d) The board may retain up to three percent of the appropriation amount to monitor and administer the grant program.

