



Illinois State Board of Education


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Chairman

Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Education

August 24, 2011

TO: Eligible Applicants

FROM: Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D. 
State Superintendent of Education

SUBJECT: **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFPs):** Illinois Statewide Technical Assistance Center

GENERAL INFORMATION

Purpose of RFP: The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) seeks to continue the implementation of the Illinois Statewide Technical Assistance Center (IS-TAC) by soliciting proposals from eligible applicants to coordinate and deliver a regionalized system of statewide technical assistance and training as outlined in this RFP and to serve as administrative agent.

Eligible Applicants: Not-for-profit organizations, institutions of higher education, professional organizations, public school districts, special education joint agreements, Regional Offices of Education, and Intermediate Service Centers with the necessary expertise and demonstrated experience pursuant to this RFP in providing technical assistance and training in Illinois are eligible to apply.

Grant Period: The initial grant period will begin no sooner than November 1, 2011 and will extend from the execution date of the grant agreement until June 30, 2012. The successful applicant may reapply via continuing application for up to three additional years, with subsequent grant periods extending from July 1 of each year through June 30 of the following year. Funding in the subsequent years will be contingent upon a sufficient appropriation for the project and satisfactory progress in the preceding grant period.

Grant Award: One grant will be awarded in fiscal year (FY) 2012 (i.e., year 1 of the project) in an amount not to exceed \$4,550,000. For purposes of compliance with Section 511 of P.L. 101-166 (the *Stevens Amendment*), bidders are advised that 100 percent of the funds for this RFP are derived from federal sources.

The grant award amounts in each of years 2 through 4 (i.e., FY 2013, FY 2014, and FY 2015) are not expected to exceed \$6,500,000 per year. Annual allocations will depend on project needs and scope of activities in each year as well as total appropriation for the project.

Application Deadline: Mail the **original and five copies** (six applications in all) to the *Illinois State Board of Education, 100 North First Street, N-253, Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001, Attn: David Andel, Special Education Services*, to ensure receipt no later than **September 30, 2011**. No electronic submissions including facsimiles will be accepted. The original and five copies must be received by the due date in order for the proposal to be considered. Late or substantively incomplete proposals will not be eligible for consideration.

Proposals may also be hand-delivered to the following locations:

Springfield Office

Chicago Office

Information Center
1st Floor
100 North First Street

Reception Area
Suite 14-300
100 West Randolph Street

Online Question and Answer Forum: An Online Question and Answer (Q & A) Forum about this RFP will be conducted via email at the following address: istacrfp@isbe.net. This email address will be available for posting questions during the application period. All questions and answers will be posted at http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/pdfs/IS-TAC_QA.pdf and will remain on the website until September 30, 2011. **Applicants are encouraged to review information posted on the forum before submitting their proposals.**

Changes to the RFP: Should the conditions of this RFP change, ISBE will post the changes at http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/grant_info.htm. Applicants are advised to check the website prior to the submission of a proposal.

Contact Person: For more information on this RFP, contact David Andel by phone at 217-782-5589 or by email at dandel@isbe.net.

BACKGROUND

Established by ISBE in 1998, the Illinois Statewide Technical Assistance Center (IS-TAC) is a state sponsored and federally funded entity consisting of four (4) collaboratively functioning projects funded by federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B discretionary monies. The purpose of the IS-TAC is to coordinate a regionalized system of technical assistance and training to build the capacity of schools to promote social and academic success of all students, including those with significant challenges and disabilities. IS-TAC promotes a prevention-based systems'-change approach, which includes data-based decision-making and research-based instructional practices.

The four collaborative projects that make up IS-TAC include the following.

1. Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Network
2. Illinois Autism Training and Technical Assistance Project (IATTAP)
3. Project Children Have Opportunities in Inclusive Community Environments and Schools (CHOICES)
4. Parent and Educator Partnership (PEP)

The mission of IS-TAC is to support local education agencies (LEAs) in implementing school-wide reform efforts that effectuate improved teaching and learning outcomes for all Illinois students and educators. Toward that end, IS-TAC promotes consistent and sustainable use of effective practices for students with special needs, including emotional and/or behavioral disabilities, autism, and other significant disabilities.

The priorities set forth by ISBE for IS-TAC and its collaborative projects include the following.

1. Increase the capacity of school districts to successfully educate all students in general education settings;
2. Implement a data-based evaluation system in collaboration with local and national entities;
3. Coordinate across projects the statewide, regional, and district planning and implementation of structures that support training, technical assistance, evaluation, and dissemination of effective school-wide practices that include PBIS, a least restrictive environment (LRE), and strategies for students with emotional and/or behavioral disabilities, autism spectrum disorders, and other severe disabilities;
4. Facilitate training, technical assistance, evaluation, and dissemination of school-wide PBIS, LRE processes, and effective strategies for students with emotional and/or behavioral disabilities, autism spectrum disorders, and other severe disabilities; and
5. Ensure family and student input and ownership in designing and implementing school-wide systems and supports for individual students with disabilities.

As stated previously, the purpose of this RFP is to continue the implementation of the IS-TAC. Each project is explained in detail below. Applicants are also strongly encouraged to visit each of the individual project's website for additional project details in preparing proposals in response to this RFP. Hyperlinks are provided respectively.

Project Overview

Each individual project within the IS-TAC provides standardized professional development (project-specific), technical assistance, and coaching to educators and parents throughout the state. Each IS-TAC project currently uses a coaching and support network model that focuses on building capacity among district staff to implement evidence-based practices and use data to support instructional decision making. A detailed explanation of each project is provided below.

1. Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Network

Background: PBIS is a proactive systems' approach for creating and maintaining safe, consistent, and effective learning environments in schools. PBIS utilizes a Response to Intervention (RtI) process which focuses on prevention and efficient use of data to guide decisions for improving schools' ability to teach and support positive social and academic behavior of all students. Evidence-based instructional processes for both behavior and academics are central to the implementation of PBIS. Rather than a prescribed program, PBIS is a systems' model that guides schools to design, implement, and evaluate effective school-wide, classroom, and student-specific behavioral and instructional plans. PBIS includes school-wide procedures and processes for all students, all staff, and all school settings including: a) specific settings within the school environment; b) individual classrooms and teachers; c) small group and simple student interventions for those at-risk; and d) individual student supports for students (1-3%) who have intensive and comprehensive needs across home, school, and community.

Program Specifications: The Illinois PBIS initiative has been developing and supporting an infrastructure to ensure systematic application of PBIS across Illinois schools since 1998. This includes training, implementation support, and evaluation procedures at building, district, regional, and state levels. Building local education agency (LEA) capacity through development of a statewide cadre of skilled PBIS coaches within districts, special education cooperatives, Regional Offices of Education (ROEs), and Intermediate Services Centers (ISCs) has been a priority of the Network since its inception. As of June 30, 2010, there are approximately 1,298 implementing schools with 1,752 PBIS coaches positioned throughout the state, including 292 external coaches and 1,460 internal coaches in approximately 337 LEAs.

The Illinois PBIS Network Goals are:

- ◆ Increase data-based decision-making on behavior and academic instruction;
- ◆ Increase consistent use and effect of research-based behavioral and academic instructional strategies among all school staff at school-wide, classroom, and individual student levels;
- ◆ Reduce use of reactive discipline measures in schools (e.g., office discipline referrals, detentions, suspensions, expulsions) for all students;
- ◆ Increase academic achievement levels of all students;
- ◆ Implement effective intervention plans for students with the most comprehensive behavioral and emotional needs that support and evaluate their success across home, school, and community;
- ◆ Increase capacity of general education settings to successfully educate students with disabilities and prevent academic and/or social failures of all students; and
- ◆ Increase capacity of schools and districts to address *over- and under- representation* of students by ethnicity relative to discipline, disability status, and academic achievement with access to data on these outcomes.

Project Personnel: The LEAs are supported by a PBIS Network state team (one statewide PBIS director, six technical assistance directors (TADs), and 30 technical assistance coordinators (TACs), and additional operational positions. These individuals provide coordination, training, and technical assistance to districts and district coaches who directly support and guide fidelity of implementation and sustainability of PBIS in schools.

Fiscal Information: One (IS-TAC) grant will be awarded in FY 2012 (Year 1 of the project) in an amount not to exceed \$4,550,000. Of this amount, \$2,063,000 is to be allotted for the PBIS Network for project expenditures associated with staff and services. The grantee will assume all contracts for personnel currently employed. All personnel matters including the hiring, replacing, and/or removal of currently employed staff must be approved by ISBE management prior to action.

Further details of the statewide implementation of PBIS may be accessed at <http://www.pbisillinois.org>.

2. Illinois Autism Training and Technical Assistance Project (IATTAP)

Background: IATTAP focuses on educating and supporting children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and their families. According to the Illinois Education QUICKSTATS 2009 (http://www.isbe.net/research/pdfs/quickstats_2010.pdf), 15,224 students are receiving special education services under the category of *Autism* in the state of Illinois.

Program Specifications: To address the challenges Illinois schools face in providing appropriate education and support to this population, IATTAP, in partnership with Illinois State University (ISU), offers a free 54 hour on-line course on best practices for educating and supporting individuals with ASD. During FY 2010, 1140 individuals completed the on-line course. Applicants should plan on serving a commensurate number in FY 2012.

In addition, IATTAP follows the on-line course work with field-based guided practice for participating school teams. Six experiential practicum weeks were held during FY 2010 with participating teams from 35 districts and special education cooperatives and 71 schools, for a total of 173 participants in the FY 2010 practicum. If requested, an IATTAP coach then meets with school teams prior and during the following school year. As the teams' capacities for supporting students with ASD increases, an internal coach is identified by the school. During FY 2010, 51 teams requested on-going coaching support and other post-practicum activities.

Lastly, the Focus Family Support for Autism Spectrum Disorders (FFSASD) Project through ISU, in conjunction with IATTAP, works intensely with families with children with ASD to identify and achieve goals across the home, school, and community environments. During FY 2010, IATTAP worked with 33 different families from 29 different schools.

The major goals of IATTAP are to:

- ◆ Build local capacity to establish and implement effective educational supports and services in the least restrictive environment for children with ASD;
- ◆ Promote a proactive approach to working with individuals with ASD and their families;
- ◆ Help children with ASD remain with their families in their communities and become productive individuals;
- ◆ Increase the percentage of students on the autism spectrum who are educated in the general education classroom; and
- ◆ Increase the effective and meaningful involvement of parents in their children's education.

Project Personnel: Currently, IATTAP employs one project director, five regional contacts, one research consultant, and one project assistant.

Fiscal Information: One (IS-TAC) grant will be awarded in FY 2012 (Year 1 of the project) in an amount not to exceed \$4,550,000. Of this amount, \$738,000 is to be allotted for IATTAP for project expenditures

associated with staff and services. The grantee will assume all contracts for personnel currently employed. All personnel matters including hiring, replacing, and/or removal of currently employed staff must be approved by ISBE management prior to action.

For additional information on IATTAP activities and resources refer to the website at <http://autism.pbisillinois.org>.

3. **Project CHOICES/Early CHOICES**

Background: Project Children Have Opportunities in Inclusive Community Environments and Schools (CHOICES), ISBE's Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) initiative, has provided technical assistance to school districts in Illinois since 1988. Project CHOICES partners with school districts to support education in the school and classroom where students would be educated if not identified as having a disability. The training and technical assistance provided to schools focuses on building skills for moving students with disabilities into the general education classroom and community environments. There are two distinct programs within Project CHOICES. One supports school-age children and the other supports preschool children, ages three through five, with disabilities.

For school-age children (funded through IDEA Part B, Section 616), Project CHOICES provides support to districts at multiple levels (district, school, classroom) to ensure that district policies support district wide implementation of professional learning and new instructional practices. Project CHOICES consultants offer coaching supports to district internal coaching teams. District teams subsequently deliver training to the school and classroom levels.

Project CHOICES has three areas of focus:

- ◆ Ensure all students have access to general education curriculum;
- ◆ Develop the capacity of district and building teams to address access and equity issues; and
- ◆ Increase family and community involvement to support and sustain effective practices.

The preschool program, Early CHOICES (funded through IDEA Part B, Section 619), specifically provides training, technical assistance, coaching, and resources to district and school personnel and families. The purpose of the project is to increase the skills and capacities of schools to educate young children with disabilities, ages 3-8 years old in the least restrictive environment (LRE). Early CHOICES is an LRE initiative which provides collaborative support at the district and school levels to ensure that all young children learn in typical preschool and general education settings, while addressing and showing progress toward the Illinois Early Learning/Learning Standards (http://www.isbe.net/earlychi/pdf/early_learning_standards.pdf).

Project Personnel: Currently the Project CHOICES team consists of one statewide CHOICES director, one assistant director, six family contacts, five consultants, one information specialist, and two administrative assistants.

Fiscal Information: One (IS-TAC) grant will be awarded in FY 2012 (Year 1 of the project) in an amount not to exceed \$4,550,000. Of this amount, \$786,667 is to be allotted for Project CHOICES, and \$206,000 is to be allocated for Project Early CHOICES for expenditures associated with staff and services. The grantee will assume all contracts for personnel currently employed. All personnel matters including hiring, replacing, and/or removal of currently employed staff must be approved by ISBE management prior to action.

Further information regarding the statewide implementation of Project CHOICES/Early CHOICES can be accessed at <http://www.projectchoices.org>.

4. **Parent and Educator Partnership (PEP)**

Background: The PEP project advances ISBE's priority to improve the delivery of training and technical assistance to parents and educators of school-age children with disabilities.

PEP provides services in the following areas:

- ◆ Develop and support parent leadership skills;
- ◆ Provide training and information on the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;
- ◆ Assist local education agencies (LEAs) in meeting the requirements of Title 1, Section 1118 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/pg2.html#sec1118>); and
- ◆ Support the ISBE State Performance Plan (SPP) Part B Indicator #8, Parent Involvement (http://www.isbe.state.il.us/spec-ed/pdfs/state_performance.pdf).

Project Personnel: The PEP team consists of one statewide PEP director and two project assistants.

Fiscal Information: One (IS-TAC) grant will be awarded in FY 2012 (Year 1 of the project) in an amount not to exceed \$4,550,000. Of this amount, \$183,333 is to be allotted for PEP for expenditures associated with project staff and services. The grantee will assume all contracts for personnel currently employed. All personnel matters including hiring, replacing, and/or removal of personnel must be approved by ISBE management prior to action.

Further information outlining PEP activities may be accessed at <http://www.pepartnership.org>.

Statewide Collaboration

The IS-TAC projects, along with other existing ISBE initiatives, maintain a collaborative relationship and provide a statewide foundation for training content, technical assistance, and instructional coaching. Such collaboration facilitates the sharing of resources and expertise across projects, thereby increasing the statewide reach of all projects. Other existing ISBE initiatives include the Statewide System of Support (SSOS) established to work with low-performing schools under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools' (IARSS) Regional Delivery System, and the Illinois Response to Intervention (I-RtI) Network. A brief overview of each initiative, including their relevance to the IS-TAC, is provided below.

1. Statewide System of Support

As part of the system for academic accountability, ISBE places schools that are not making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) on Academic Early Warning (AEW) or Academic Watch (AW) status based on performance of their students on state assessments. In addition, schools that use Title I, Part A funding are subject to specific federal requirements related to school improvement under the ESEA, with schools that fail to achieve standards being required to offer school choice options and supplemental educational services.

State and federal laws also require that technical assistance or in other words, a system of support, be established to help these schools improve academic performance. A regionalized delivery system consisting of 44 ROEs, three ISCs, and 10 Regional System of Support Providers (RESPROs) is currently in place to provide support to districts and schools in need of improvement.

In summer 2011, ISBE launched the enhanced Statewide System of Support (SSOS) project, which provides high quality, coordinated, and consistent support to the RESPROs to quickly scale up services as deemed necessary by ISBE. The enhanced SSOS will ensure that Illinois districts and schools receive quality, timely, and relevant assistance in the following areas: 1) standards-aligned instructional practices; 2) data-driven decision making practices for continuous improvement; 3) educator talent and effectiveness; 4) analysis and dissemination of research and effective practices; and 5) effective interventions for turning around low-performing schools.

Research suggests that the following essential elements are germane to progressive school improvement practices: 1) comprehensive planning for continuous improvement; 2) conditions for learning; 3) community and family engagement; 4) professional development; 5) leadership; 6) curriculum; 7) instruction; and 8) assessment. The SSOS is charged with assisting districts and schools in evaluating the

presence of these essential elements, identifying gaps, and measuring progress for continual improvement. Based on this process, SSOS will provide participating districts and schools with targeted and differentiated interventions based on their needs to improve student achievement. The tiered interventions currently being employed are categorized as: Level 1: Continuous Improvement; Level 2: Targeted Improvement; Level 3: Intensive Support; and Level 4: Most Intensive Support. Further information regarding tiered interventions can be found in Appendix A.

ISBE envisions a fully coordinated and comprehensive system of professional development, instructional coaching, and other practical support to the LEAs. To that end, the IS-TAC will work within the existing SSOS structure by providing the necessary resources to scale up the statewide implementation of PBIS and RtI. IS-TAC services must align and integrate with SSOS services to ascertain consistency of services. This coordination of effort must include the sharing of resources between projects. Regionally-based IS-TAC personnel, under this RFP, are expected to work in coordination with SSOS staff to provide direct support to external district coaches. IS-TAC will continue to provide services to LEAs with the greatest level of need including those identified as Level 2 or Level 3 in the SSOS framework and including those with high percentages of students with emotional and/or behavioral disabilities, autism spectrum disorders, and other severe disabilities. Further details of ISBE's SSOS project may be accessed at http://www.isbe.net/sos/htmls/state_sys_support.htm.

2. IARSS Regional Delivery System

IARSS provides access to high quality, consistent professional development to schools and communities in Illinois through a regional delivery system. The IARSS Regional Delivery System includes 44 ROEs and three ISCs that provide statewide services to schools. IARSS members have researched, designed, delivered, and evaluated professional development for thousands of educators and provided related services in areas such as content curriculum (i.e., math and reading), standards alignment, quality classroom assessment, gifted education, new teacher and principal mentoring, and various other pertinent topics. This Regional Delivery System is intended to build capacity and promote sustainability for school reform, while allowing a differentiated approach to better meet the diverse needs of LEAs and schools.

Similar to SSOS, ISBE expects project coordination with other state initiatives to leverage resources, reduce duplication of services, and increase cost effectiveness while providing high quality and consistent professional development on a regional basis. Accordingly, the IS-TAC must work with the IARSS Regional Delivery System to organize, schedule, and deliver training within each of the six regionally-designated areas and the City of Chicago. See Appendix B for a map of the regional designations (<http://www.isbe.net/regionaloffices/pdf/roedirectory.pdf>).

3. I-RtI Network

In addition to the SSOS and the IARSS Regional Delivery System, the IS-TAC must also coordinate activities with the I-RtI Network which was launched by ISBE the spring of 2011. In September 2010, the U.S. Department of Education (ED) awarded ISBE a five-year State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) under Part D of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA 2004). The overarching goal of Illinois' SPDG Project is to scale up implementation of a coordinated, statewide system of personnel development that will increase the capacity of school systems to establish and use a multi-tiered model of scientific, research-based instruction, intervention, and assessment to improve the progress and performance of all students, including those with disabilities. The I-RtI Network serves as the primary mechanism for accomplishing SPDG Project objectives. Further details of Illinois' SPDG Project are available in ISBE's federal grant application, which may be accessed at http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/pdfs/SPDG_RtI_rfp.pdf.

The I-RtI Network provides statewide training, technical assistance, and coaching to educators and parents in Response to Intervention (RtI) focused on the academic processes and practices. In conjunction, the PBIS Network provides training, technical assistance, and coaching in RtI with a focus on the social, emotional, behavioral processes and practices. Both the RtI and PBIS initiatives focus on

improving student performance in grades K-12 through the implementation of a multi-tiered system of instruction, intervention, and assessment, utilizing a response to intervention process. They both also promote administrative leadership; scientific, research-based curricula and instruction at grades K-12; data-based decision-making; universal screening and progress monitoring; and parent involvement. By using standardized curriculum and systematic professional development, technical assistance, and coaching structure, the consistency of the IS-TAC's services will be improved, as will the systemic acquisition of knowledge and skills gained by the participants.

ISBE will coordinate an introductory meeting of all IS-TAC staff and personnel from other ISBE existing initiatives after the selection process is completed to define roles and responsibilities within the required collaborative relationship.

PROGRAM SPECIFICATIONS

Program Purpose: The primary purpose of the IS-TAC is to improve educational outcomes for all children in Illinois. This is accomplished through a coordinated statewide effort with a regionalized delivery system of training and technical assistance established for the purpose of building the capacity of schools to promote social, emotional, behavioral, and academic success. The four projects that constitute IS-TAC (i.e., PBIS, IATTAP, Project CHOICES/Early CHOICES, and PEP) require overarching coordination to insure project goals, activities, and timelines are accomplished. The following section outlines program specifications as well as provides information germane to proposal preparation.

Required Collaborations: A major component of this grant is the requirement of collaboration among IS-TAC projects (i.e., PBIS, IATTAP, CHOICES/Early CHOICES, and PEP) and with other ISBE statewide initiatives (i.e., SSOS, IARSS, and I-RtI Network). To facilitate the collaborative effort, the grantee must establish an IS-TAC governing board comprised of the IS-TAC project directors and one or more representatives from each statewide initiative. Membership on the IS-TAC governing board must also include the ISBE IS-TAC project director, the IS-TAC coordinator, and other stakeholders, as deemed appropriate. The governing board will have direct involvement in the oversight and management of the IS-TAC including, but not limited to, the following activities.

- ◆ Monitoring the key tasks and activities to ensure full and effective delivery of IS-TAC services;
- ◆ Reviewing evaluation data on each IS-TAC project and using such data to identify needed improvements in the project;
- ◆ Assisting in the refinement and/or development of IS-TAC training and resource materials, including review and approval of such materials in conjunction with ISBE; and
- ◆ Assisting in the recruitment, hiring, and/or dismissal of project personnel.

IS-TAC Personnel: The IS-TAC grantee must directly employ, contract with, and/or purchase the full-time equivalencies (FTE) of individuals who serve as project staff. The following table provides general information regarding the IS-TAC staffing structure by respective project. Any hiring, replacing, and/or dismissal of existing personnel must be approved by ISBE management prior to action.

IS-TAC Projects	Summary of Staffing Structure	Directories of Existing Personnel (Websites)
Illinois Statewide Technical Assistance Center (IS-TAC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ IS-TAC Coordinator: The grantee will hire this position. A job description is provided in the next section of this RFP. ◆ State-wide Parent Consultant: The grantee will assume the current personnel contract for the state-wide parent consultant in the amount of \$72,739 (prorated for 8 month initial grant 	http://www.is-tac.org/

	<p>period).</p> <p>♦ State-wide Transition Consultant: The grantee will assume the current personnel contract for the state-wide transition consultant in the amount of \$71,029 (prorated for 8 month initial grant period).</p>	
Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Network	PBIS Network employs one statewide PBIS director, six technical assistance directors (TADs), and 30 technical assistance coordinators (TACs).	http://www.pbisillinois.org/ (Pathway: About the Network/Contacts)
Illinois Autism Training and Technical Assistance Project (IATTAP)	IATTAP employs one project director, five regional contacts, one research consultant, and one project assistant.	http://autism.pbisillinois.org/members.htm
Project CHOICES/Early CHOICES	Project CHOICES employs one statewide CHOICES director, one assistant director, six family contacts, five consultants, one information specialist, and two administrative assistants.	http://www.projectchoices.org/about-us/meet-the-team.aspx
Parent and Educator Partnership (PEP)	PEP team consists of one statewide PEP director and two project assistants.	http://www.pepartnership.org/contact.aspx

The following conditions apply relative to project personnel.

- ♦ A total budget amount for the FY 2012 grant award is provided of which respective amounts are allocated to each individual project. Salaries and other related personnel costs must be paid from the respective allocations whereby sufficient funds are included to cover personnel expenses relative to existing staff. Further information regarding project allocations is provided in the *Fiscal Information* section of this RFP;
- ♦ The grantee must hire one full-time coordinator to administer the IS-TAC project within a timeline prescribed by ISBE;
- ♦ The grantee must assume all personnel (i.e., contracts) currently employed with the IS-TAC respective of the individual projects;
- ♦ The grantee will assume the employment of all existing IS-TAC personnel at their current levels of salary and benefits;
- ♦ Any hiring, replacement, and/or dismissal of personnel during the grant term (i.e., FY 2012 through FY 2015) must be approved by ISBE management prior to action;
- ♦ The grantee must assume responsibilities for all staff evaluation activities; and
- ♦ The individual project directors are responsible for communicating progress with the ISBE IS-TAC director until the IS-TAC coordinator position is filled. Such contact includes regular interactions with the IS-TAC governing board referenced earlier.

Job Description for IS-TAC Coordinator: Grant funding awarded in FY 2012 must be used for the planning, implementation, and refinement of the IS-TAC. The coordination of services and integration among IS-TAC projects and with other ISBE statewide initiatives will precipitate certain adjustments in the configuration of IS-TAC services. The grantee must be prepared to continually assess changing conditions and accommodate evolving responsibilities for the efficient operation of IS-TAC. To that end, a full-time, dedicated project coordinator must be hired as described below.

In conjunction with ISBE staff, the grantee will select and hire or contract with an individual who will serve as a full-time IS-TAC coordinator. The individual must have, at a minimum, a master's degree in education or a related field; multiple years of experience in the field of education, with K-12 administrative experience preferred; three

years experience managing a technical assistance project of similar scope and magnitude; prior experience, strong knowledge, and practical skills in school improvement reform and RtI; and experience and skills in working with adult learners.

The coordinator's responsibilities will include, but are not limited to, the following duties.

- ◆ Manage the full implementation of IS-TAC activities and services;
- ◆ Provide support to individual IS-TAC project directors for the continued programmatic implementation of each project;
- ◆ Supervise the work of the statewide parent consultant, statewide transition consultant, and the evaluation coordinator;
- ◆ Work with and report to the IS-TAC governing board, including participation in the process for recruiting, selecting, and/or dismissing individual project personnel as appropriate. All personnel decisions must be approved by ISBE management prior to action;
- ◆ Work collaboratively with the SSOS to align and coordinate services to participating district sites identified as needing Level 2 or Level 3 interventions (see Appendix A);
- ◆ Work collaboratively with the IARSS to coordinate scheduling and delivery of individual projects' training within the six designated geographic regions and the City of Chicago;
- ◆ Conduct regular IS-TAC meetings involving all project staff and, when appropriate, the ISBE IS-TAC director;
- ◆ Work and meet regularly with an ISBE intra-agency team responsible for providing guidance and direction to the IS-TAC and the SSOS;
- ◆ Maintain regular and ongoing communication via online, teleconference, and/or in-person meetings with the ISBE IS-TAC director;
- ◆ Prepare and submit to the ISBE IS-TAC director periodic project data and other information as requested;
- ◆ Submit periodic reports (number and format to be provided by ISBE);
- ◆ Facilitate quarterly meetings of the IS-TAC project directors;
- ◆ Administer the IS-TAC statewide evaluation plan; and
- ◆ Participate in quarterly meetings of advisory bodies to provide updates on the status of the IS-TAC and the individual projects.

Project Evaluation: An integrated evaluation of the projects administered by IS-TAC is necessary to collect useful data and make subsequent decisions regarding the improvement of services. The project evaluation must be designed to address the following questions.

- ◆ Does project (i.e., PBIS, IATTAP, CHOICES, and PEP) training and technical assistance provided by IS-TAC result in actual project implementation at the district and/or school level?
- ◆ If schools implement projects, do they implement with fidelity?
- ◆ If schools implement projects, are they able to sustain implementation?
- ◆ Does project implementation result in benefits to students?
- ◆ Does project implementation result in benefits to students with complex needs?

ISBE has existing data-management systems which collect various data from the individual projects. The systems, which independently manage school and district program implementation information and individual student outcome information, are currently undergoing upgrades in order to functionally integrate and aggregate program data for greater usability at the state and local levels. The grantee will assume all costs related to project

evaluation of which an amount of \$181,352 should be budgeted to administer the current IS-TAC statewide evaluation plan through June 30, 2012. ISBE staff will provide transition information regarding the continuation of the existing evaluation plan that must be assumed by the selected grantee. The selected grantee will be instrumental in planning the evaluation process beyond FY 2012.

FISCAL INFORMATION

One grant will be awarded in FY 2012 in a prorated amount not to exceed \$4,550,000. It is anticipated that the grant will continue for three additional years (FY 2013 through FY 2015), with an estimated annual amount not to exceed \$6,500,000. Actual annual grant amounts will depend on the needs addressed, the scope of activities to be delivered, and the total appropriation for the project.

FY 2012 allocations to each of the individual projects are listed below. The grantee selected under this RFP must subsequently require budget proposals from each respective project prior to the execution of a grant agreement. Individual project budgets must then be approved by ISBE prior to the expenditure of any funds. Forms will be provided by ISBE to the selected grantee. Each budget must provide sufficient detail to ascertain fiscal compliance with program requirements and federal and state grant administration regulations. For information about budget proposal preparation, applicants are advised to refer to the *Fiscal Requirements and Procedures* handbook available at http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/fiscal_procedure_handbk.pdf.

<u>IS-TAC Expenditures:</u>	<u>To include the following</u>
IS-TAC Coordinator	(\$ To be determined by grantee)
IS-TAC Governing Board Related Expenses	(\$ To be determined by grantee)
Parent Consultant Contract	\$ 72,739
Transition Consultant Contract	\$ 71,029
Evaluation Plan/Contract(s)	\$ 181,352
General Administration (optional but not more than \$136,500)	(\$ To be determined by grantee)

<u>IS-TAC Individual Project Allotments:</u>	
PBIS	\$2,063,000
IATTAP	\$ 738,000
Project CHOICES	\$ 786,667
Project Early CHOICES	\$ 206,000
PEP	\$ 183,333

Total ISTAC Budget for FY 2012 **\$4,550,000**

Allowable Expenditures: Funds* may be used for:

- ♦ Salaries, benefits, and other related personnel costs for a full-time IS-TAC coordinator and other existing personnel specific to each IS-TAC program;
- ♦ Travel expenses for IS-TAC coordinator to fulfill the responsibilities outlined in this RFP. Travel expenses, including mileage and, where overnight stay is required, lodging and per diem, are subject to the state rates according to the Governor’s Travel Control Board as outlined in the Reimbursement Schedule of the Travel Guide for State Employees and any annual changes found therein. The Travel Guide can be found at http://www.state.il.us/cms/2_servicese_oth/trvlguid.htm;
- ♦ Supplies and materials necessary to fulfill the goals and activities outlined in this RFP;
- ♦ Room and/or facility rental;

- ◆ Office space rental (if necessary);
- ◆ Equipment to support activities of the IS-TAC. The total amount must not exceed three (3) percent of the total budget. Such purchases will primarily occur in the initial year of the project and therefore an annual line item for equipment is not expected;
- ◆ Postage, printing, duplicating, telephone, fax; and
- ◆ General Administration, Fiscal Services, and/or indirect costs associated with the overall administration of the IS-TAC may be proposed. These costs, however, **must be cumulatively limited to not more than three (3) percent of the total funding request.**

*It is anticipated that the successful grantee will contribute local resources (e.g., in-kind contributions such as use of equipment, space in a building) for the IS-TAC, and these must be described in the proposal.

Non-Allowable Expenditures: Funds may **not be** used to:

- ◆ Supplant salaries, activities and/or services funded by other federal, state, and local sources; or
- ◆ Cover costs of moving, remodeling, or building.

Criteria for Continuation Funding: Funding for FY 2013 through FY 2015 will be contingent upon the following factors:

- ◆ A sufficient appropriation for the project;
- ◆ Satisfactory progress in the preceding grant period in relation to the goals, objectives, activities specified in the approved proposal; and
- ◆ A continued need for grant funds as evidenced by documented refinement and full implementation of the project.

For purposes of compliance with Section 511 of P.L. 101-166 (the *Stevens Amendment*), bidders are advised that 100 percent of the funds for this RFP are derived from federal sources.

PROPOSAL NARRATIVE REQUIREMENTS

The proposal narrative must include the information requested below.

- ◆ **Expertise and Experience:** Describe the applicant's expertise and experience in the delivery of professional development content suitable to any or all of the projects of IS-TAC. Describe any previous experience providing technical assistance activities in Illinois.
- ◆ **Partnerships and Collaboration:** Describe any previous partnership or collaborative effort with IS-TAC or with any individual project supported by IS-TAC.
- ◆ **Project Personnel:** Describe in detail the timeline and process for hiring the IS-TAC project coordinator. In addition, describe activities to be implemented for monitoring grant requirements until the coordinator position can be filled. Include in the narrative a description of activities outlining the process for establishing the IS-TAC governing board.
- ◆ **Capacity:** Discuss the capacity of the applicant to administer the project. The description must include administrative, organizational, and fiscal capacity to manage a project of the scope and magnitude set forth in this RFP.
- ◆ **Communication Plan:** Propose a plan to engage in regular communication with ISBE staff and members of the IS-TAC governing board. Include specific information on venues of communication and reporting activities.

- ◆ **In-Kind Contributions:** Discuss the in-kind contributions that the applicant will provide if awarded the grant to contribute to the overall efficiency.

PROPOSAL FORMAT

Each proposal must be submitted in the format outlined below. Please use the following as a checklist in assembling your completed proposal. **Substantively incomplete proposals will not be reviewed.**

All attachments must be completed, signed by an authorized official as requested, and submitted with the proposal. This RFP and all application forms are available on the ISBE website at http://www.isbe.net/special/html/grant_info.htm. Application forms are interactive, but must be submitted in paper format along with the proposal. Electronic submissions of any form are not accepted.

1. **Cover Page (Attachment 1):** Must be signed by the official (e.g., district superintendent, director of special education) authorized to submit the proposal.
2. **Proposal Narrative:** Provide a response to each prompt listed in the *Proposal Narrative Requirements* section of this RFP. The Proposal Narrative must be double-spaced, using 12-point font size, and have one inch margins. The Proposal Narrative may not exceed 15 pages. Pages exceeding the maximum length will not be included in the proposal review.
3. **Budget Summary (Attachment 2a):** A Budget Summary for year 1 of the grant must be submitted on the form provided and signed by the official authorized to submit the proposal. All budget pages must be prepared in accordance with the *State and Federal Grant Administration Policy and Fiscal Requirements and Procedures handbook* found at http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/fiscal_procedure_handbk.pdf.
4. **Budget Summary Breakdown (Attachment 2b):** A Budget Summary Breakdown must be completed for year 1 (maximum of \$4,550,000) of the project. The breakdown must include detailed descriptions of anticipated expenditures, correlated to the line items set forth on the Budget Summary. Subcontract information must be included, if applicable (see item 7 of the document titled *Certification and Assurances and Standard Terms of the Grant* in Attachment 5).
5. **Certifications and Assurances (Attachments 3-8):** Each applicant is required to submit the certification forms listed below and attached to this RFP. These must be signed by the official legally authorized to submit the proposal and to bind the applicant to its contents:
 - A. Program-Specific Terms of the Grant (Attachment 3)
 - B. Certification and Assurances and Standard Terms of the Grant (Attachment 4)
 - C. Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility, and Voluntary Exclusion (Attachment 5)
 - D. Certificate Regarding Lobbying (Attachment 6) and Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (Attachments 6a – 6c)
 - E. Notice to All Applicants Regarding Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (Attachment 7)
 - F. Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (Attachment 8)

CRITERIA FOR REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PROPOSALS

The grantee will be selected through a competitive proposal review process conducted by a panel of reviewers. Proposals will be scored according to the criteria outlined below and ranked by score. The total number of points possible is 100. Proposals will be considered ineligible if not submitted in the format set forth above or if substantively incomplete. Final determination of funding will be made by the State Superintendent of Education based upon the recommendations resulting from the review process.

- A. **Proposed Project (30 points):** The proposed plan demonstrates a sound approach to carrying out the project.
- B. **Capacity (30 points):** The applicant demonstrates the administrative, organizational, and fiscal capacity to implement a project of this magnitude and scope within the established timeframe.
- C. **Expertise and Experience (30 points):** The applicant demonstrates sufficient expertise in the delivery of professional development, technical assistance, and coaching content and experience with similar projects.
- D. **Budget and Cost-Effectiveness (10 points):** The proposed budget is cost-effective and reasonable in relation to the proposed activities and expected outcomes; is of an amount that may realistically be expected to have an impact on the stated needs; and provides sufficient evidence that funds from the IS-TAC project will supplement, rather than supplant, other local, state, and federal funding.

Differentiated Illinois Statewide System of Support (SSOS)

LEVEL 1: Continuous Improvement		
Incentives (positive and negative)	Resource Opportunities	Capacity Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEA directed • Public notification of assessment scores • Recognition of incremental improvement • Access to quality research-based materials • Unified ISBE approach • Transparency and shared accountability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research-based materials • SSOS-defined menu of services • ISBE-established self-assessment tool • Five-step guided process • IIRC and ISBE-established online improvement planning tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of all LEAs (867 districts) • SSOS-approved menu of resources

LEVEL 2: Targeted Improvement		
Incentives (positive and negative)	Resource Opportunities	Capacity Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEA with regional support direction • Two-year commitment and accountability • Funding: 1003 (a) • Level 1 Incentives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional assistance with the ISBE-established self-assessment tool • Resources and monitoring through regional support system (e.g., monitoring, coaching, consulting, planning, training, modeling) • Guided Data analysis • Level 1 Opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circa 15% of LEAs (130 districts) across levels 2-4 with approximately 123 districts served at this level • Two year data • Members of the Regional System of Support

LEVEL 3: Intensive Support		
Incentives (positive and negative)	Resource Opportunities	Capacity Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEA with direction from the SSOS • Two-year commitment and accountability • Differentiated approach at school-level • Directing resources to the LEA through partnerships with IASB, IPA, IASA, etc. • Funding: 1003 (a) and (g) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work more closely with the SSOS • Share responsibility for intensive support across agency (Roundtable) • Flexibility according to size and district characteristics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circa 4% of the 15% of LEAs, therefore approximately 5 districts served at this level • Renewable • Agency staff engaged in partnership with district • ISBE level • Multi-phased improvement

LEVEL 4: Most Intensive Support		
Incentives (positive and negative)	Resource Opportunities	Capacity Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly prescriptive by ISBE • Radical departure from current practices • Diversion of funds • Negotiate status of closed schools • Money to overcome Title I barriers • ISBE takes federally-authorized bold actions • Directing resources to the LEA through partnerships with IASB, IPA, IASA, etc. • District/School Closure • Funding: 1003 (a) and (g) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISBE directs SSOS involvement with the LEA • Close or radical redirection of school/district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circa 2% of the 15% of LEAs, therefore approximately 2 districts served at this level

