

REQUESTS FOR PROPOSALS

on behalf of the
North Dakota Juvenile Justice State Advisory Group

Purpose

In an effort to assist schools with student behavior issues, the North Dakota Juvenile Justice State Advisory Group (SAG) is providing support for the implementation of school-based interventions. North Dakota's SAG recognizes that fostering a safe, supportive and productive learning environment to keep kids engaged in school is critical to preventing juvenile justice system involvement. Research demonstrates that youth who are disengaged from school are more likely to end up in the juvenile and/or adult justice systems. Thus, it is the hope that together schools and communities can examine and employ the most effective ways to address behavior that holds students accountable while still keeping them engaged in school.

Funding is being made available on a competitive basis to support North Dakota elementary, middle and high schools in implementing targeted interventions. This could include development of interventions by the school, or contracting with outside agencies to provide technical assistance, training, coaching and/or specific interventions. The SAG will consider all levels of implementation and types of interventions.

Background

The SAG was established pursuant to the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (JJDP) Act, one of the most successful standard-setting statutes that recognizes the value of citizen-driven efforts to prevent delinquency. Membership of the SAG is appointed by the Governor based on composition requirements set by the JJDP Act. The SAG is responsible for advocating for at-risk youth and delinquency prevention. More information on the SAG can be found at: www.ndaco.org/SAG.

Description of Proposals

Proposals should include targeted interventions that are considered evidence-based or a promising practice and designed to encourage positive behaviors and reduce negative behaviors among students. Targeted interventions are those that provide specialized assistance, focused support and/or a tailored approach to specific behaviors that is non-punitive but holds students accountable for their actions. Employing targeted interventions has proven to be effective in addressing student behavior while still holding youth accountable for inappropriate behavior.

It is recognized that meaningful alternatives to punitive approaches takes time and must be built on school-wide participation, and thus time for planning of the appropriate interventions is allowed as part of the proposal. Recognizing that schools throughout the state are very different in terms of size and resources, proposals can range from very small to somewhat large. In addition, partnerships between schools, families and/or community entities to support academic readiness and overall well-being in highly encouraged.

Specifically, the SAG will support interventions that aim to:

- Reduce disciplinary actions, law enforcement citations, and/or suspensions and expulsions;
- Promote positive student behaviors;
- Increase family engagement, attendance and academic performance; and/or
- Improve school climate.

This could include initiatives that address the underlying factors of the behavior, including family instability, mental health challenges, and lack of education or life skills. Examples of school-based interventions that have been previously supported by the SAG include restorative justice, teen court, Check and Connect, Building Assets Reducing Risks, parent training, and mentoring. However, funding is not limited to those specific interventions.

Priority for Black, Indigenous & People of Color (BIPOC)

Due to the over-representation of BIPOC youth in the juvenile justice system, proposals that contain interventions that have a particular focus on ensuring equal access to services, creating cultural competence, and/or community connection and support for (BIPOC) youth and families will be given higher priority.

Funding and Project Period

Approximately \$500,000 in federal grant funding is available for planning and implementation of targeted interventions. Grants can range from \$5,000 to \$200,000. However, larger funding requests should be respective of district-wide or regional collaborations. There is flexibility with the proposed timeline for implementation, and time for collaborative planning is encouraged. For example, proposals could include planning during the spring of 2025 with implementation of interventions in the fall of 2025. The proposed budget should correspond to the anticipated timeline of activities. Funding must be fully expended no later than September 30, 2028.

Proposal Specifications

A complete proposal consists of the following documents. The SAG will score applications using the percentage allocations indicated.

1. Application Cover Page

Applicants should complete and submit the application cover page found at: www.ndaco.org/jifunding. Applicants must have an active registration in the System for Award Management (Sam.gov), with registrations being renewed every 12 months. The page must be signed by a person duly authorized to execute and legally bind the organization to contractual obligations.

2. Program Narrative (70%)

The program narrative should be submitted as an attachment. The narrative should be single-spaced, using a 12-point Arial font, with no more than 1-inch margins, and not exceed five pages. The document should include the following items numbered correspondingly:

a. Description of the Project (15%)

The following items should be included as part of the project description:

- 1) A description of the school-based intervention(s) to be implemented and whether they are an evidenced-based or promising practice;
- 2) Data used to determine what intervention(s) are needed
- 3) What strategies have already been tried or implemented; and
- 4) The intended impact of the interventions to be implemented.

b. Project Planning, Design and Implementation (35%)

Applicants should detail the process for planning and implementation of the interventions. Current efforts and the support of school administration should be included. Partnerships with community entities or outside agencies, as well as the extent of their involvement, should be described, as applicable. Include a timeline of activities related to project implementation.

This section should also include details regarding other sources of funding to support the project if applicable.

c. Capabilities and Competencies (10%)

This section should describe the roles and responsibilities of project staff. The experience and capability of the people that will be planning, implementing and overseeing the interventions should be discussed.

d. Plan for Collecting Performance Data and How it will be Used for Continuous Quality Improvement (10%)

Describe the intended outcomes and process for measuring project performance. Identify how data will be collected and how the information will be used to evaluate the impact of the project and guide changes if necessary. Indicate an understanding of the requirement to report on specific performance measures that relate to the intended purpose of the grant funding.

3. Budget Worksheet and Narrative (30%)

A budget breakdown with narrative should be provided using the Excel template found at www.ndaco.org/jjfunding. The budget should detail all expenses to be covered with grant funds and be complete, allowable, and cost effective (reasonable, allocable, and necessary for project activities) in relation to the proposed activities. A brief narrative should be included for each budget item explaining the purpose for the item. *Funds must be used to supplement existing funds for program activities and cannot replace or supplant funds that have been appropriated for the same purpose.* Matching funds are not required but applicants should document other funds to be used. Detailed cost calculations should be shown to demonstrate how the applicant arrived at the amounts being requested.

Expenses included in the budget need to be allowable (refer to the OJP Financial Guide found at: <https://www.ojp.gov/funding/financialguidedoj/overview>). Any travel expenses (mileage/meals/hotel) need to be budgeted at state per diem rates (see OMB Fiscal and Administrative Policy found at: www.omb.nd.gov/financial-transparency/fiscal-policies-and-guidelines).

Submission Process and Award Information

Proposals should be emailed no later than 5:00 pm on January 24, 2025 to: ljahner@ndaco.org, and include the following attachments:

- Application Cover Page (Word form)
- Program Narrative (Word or Pdf)
- Budget Detail Worksheet and Narrative (Excel workbook)

The SAG will score proposals using the criteria specified above. Notification of awards will be made no later than Friday, February 7, 2025.

Applicants awarded funding will be required to submit quarterly financial and progress reports as well as reporting on required federal performance measures. Any questions should be directed to Lisa Jahner at (701) 425-0821 or via email at ljahner@ndaco.org.