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# Student Parent Support Initiative Grant

Grant Request for Proposal (RFP)

04/20/2026

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**Minnesota Office of Higher Education (OHE)**

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# Request for Proposals (RFP) Part 1: Overview

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## Grant Overview

- Grant Name: Student Parent Support Initiative Grant Program
- <https://ohe.mn.gov/competitive-grants/student-parent-support-initiative>
- Open for Proposals: April 20, 2026
- Proposal Due Date: May 21, 2026

The Office of Higher Education (OHE) is responsible for administering the Student Parent Support Initiative (SPSI) program while working in collaboration with the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH). The statute governing the grant program is located in Minnesota Statutes 136A.915 Student Parent Support Initiative (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/136A.915>).

The Minnesota Office of Higher Education (OHE) is currently accepting proposals to improve the retention and completion of pregnant and parenting students. Grants will be awarded to Minnesota postsecondary institutions, professional organizations, community-based organizations, or other applicants as deemed appropriate by the commissioner to be used to offer services that support the academic goals, health, and wellbeing of pregnant and parenting students.

Through the SPSI grant program, OHE will allocate grant funds to include, but not limited to, the following services and costs:

- Program development costs
- Costs related to the start-up of on-campus childcare
- Evaluation and data collection
- Direct assistance to pregnant and parenting students (ex. scholarships, basic needs support, emergency grants, and expenses related to childcare)

The primary goal of the program is to address the health and educational needs of pregnant and parenting students and their families to encourage persistence and completion of their higher education credentials. The broad, over-arching objective is to eliminate barriers that could result in a pregnant or parenting student not completing their term or program due to issues related to parenting, while increasing students' resiliency and self-efficacy as individuals. OHE is committed to supporting pregnant and parenting students in their postsecondary goals. OHE's mission is "to support the pursuit and completion of a higher education credential by every Minnesotan, regardless of race, gender, or socio-economic status, in order to enhance our democracy, the State's economic vitality, and individual quality of life."

The purpose of the Request for Proposal (RFP) is to solicit proposals from Minnesota post-secondary institutions, professional organizations, community-based organizations, or other applicants as deemed appropriate by the commissioner; conduct a fair and extensive evaluation based on criteria listed herein; and select the proposals able to show the most potential to:

- 1) offer services that support the academic goals, health, and well-being of pregnant and parenting students and their children;
- 2) demonstrate the ability to partner with existing campus and community services to continue, expand, or develop robust referral and support networks that help pregnant, and parenting students meet their basic needs, and;
- 3) take a whole family, or two-generation, approach to support pregnant and parenting students.

## Best Practice Framework

The following section is meant to be a guide for applicants as they prepare proposals.

The SPSI grant will provide funds to create or expand existing student parent support programs. The following program values guide the work of the SPSI grant program and should serve as a guiding star in program design and delivery, with room for customization based on varied regional or individual student needs.

Model SPSI-funded programs will identify in their application how all of these elements are modeled in their program design:

**Trust Students:** Regardless of what parameters are set around eligibility and accountability, granting money to students requires a significant amount of trust. Grantees who plan to provide direct financial assistance to pregnant and parenting students will need to actively listen to and validate the experiences of students who pursue this intervention.

Students who are systemically disadvantaged, such as pregnant and parenting students, and choose to seek assistance are also being challenged to display a level of trust that may be perceived as a risk. Trust in students and their autonomy are essential in building student trust. Whenever possible, including pregnant and parenting students' voices and perspectives in program design, program delivery approach, feedback, etc. is highly encouraged.

**Be Timely:** Family and financial crises can derail a students' future in a matter of days. A key component to the SPSI grant program is creating a process that works quickly and efficiently, so there is not a disruption in the students' learning or academic progress. This may mean thinking creatively to streamline inter-departmental processes that may normally require more time.

**Utilize a Whole-Family Approach:** Pregnant and parenting students have unique needs and life circumstances that may impact their ability to persist and achieve their educational goals. Grantees will need to incorporate a whole-family approach to supporting pregnant and parenting students, one that recognizes family circumstances as an important aspect of the pregnant and parenting students' wellbeing and works intentionally to support the needs of the pregnant and parenting students and the needs of their family.

**Create a Network of Support:** Creating a network of support for pregnant and parenting students is a primary goal for this grant program. Grantees will need to have a plan in place to support pregnant and parenting students' resilience and persistence in college and support the health and wellbeing of pregnant and parenting students and their children. This may mean collaborating with social service agencies, nonprofits, school

districts, local public health, and other community health providers in addition to services already offered within the college.

**Commit to Health and Wellbeing Activities:** Grantees will need to show a commitment to supporting the health and wellbeing needs of pregnant and parenting students and their families.

### Funding Availability

This is the third release of the request for proposal. Based upon current grant utilization among grantees and received appropriations, up to \$2,662,000 is available for this grant round. Funding will be allocated through a competitive process. Proposals may be partially funded depending on the availability of funds and/or budget efficiency. Any future grant rounds will be contingent upon available funds. If selected, the grantee may only incur eligible expenditures when the grant contract agreement is fully executed, and the grant has reached its effective date.

Funding	Estimate
Estimated Amount to Grant	\$2,662,000
Estimated Number of Awards	21
Estimated Award Maximum	\$125,000

### Project Dates

Project start date is estimated to be September 2026. Project end date is estimated to be July 31, 2027.

### Eligibility

Applicants must meet the eligibility requirements in order to be considered for this grant opportunity. The following section provides details about eligible applicants; eligible services; and eligible participant.

#### Eligible Applicant

An eligible applicant must be one of the following:

- Minnesota postsecondary institutions
- Professional organizations
- Community-based organizations
- Political Subdivisions
- Tribal Sovereign Nations
- Child Care Providers

The following entities may be eligible to apply if they fit within the organization types listed above:

- **Business entity:** An organization that is formed under Minnesota statutes (Chapters 300-324A) pertaining to corporations, cooperative associations, partnerships, limited partnerships, or limited liability companies and that has filed documents with the secretary of state
- **Nonprofit organization:** A charitable organization that is formed for the purpose of fulfilling a mission to improve the common good of society rather than to acquire and distribute profits. The organization meets the definition in Chapter 317A (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/317A>), Minnesota Statutes 309.50, Subdivision 4 (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/309.50#stat.309.50.4>), or meets the definitions defined in the Internal Revenue Service code, with the most common type being a 501 (c)(3)
- **Political subdivision:** A county, town, city, school district, or other municipal corporation or political subdivision of the state authorized by law to enter into contracts
- **State of Minnesota:** Any state agency that meets the definition in Minnesota Statutes 16B.01 Definitions, Subdivision 2 (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/16B.01>), University of Minnesota, and Minnesota State Colleges and Universities
- **Tribal Sovereign Nation:** Any Indian Tribe or band acknowledged as a sovereign nation by the U.S. constitution

An eligible applicant must demonstrate they serve pregnant and parenting students. Funds are intended to primarily benefit parenting students who are Minnesota residents. For the purposes of the SPSI grant, the terms “student parent” and “parenting student” refer to students who are enrolled at a Minnesota postsecondary institution and who are the parent, legal guardian, or can claim as a dependent a child under the age of 18, and for students who are pregnant.

Applicants can demonstrate that they serve pregnant and parenting students by including data from one or more of the following items in the Proposal Narrative:

- Recently-conducted research on the prevalence of pregnant and parenting students on their campus or, for community-based applicants, within the population served;
- Limited data collected as a part of other social service programs on campus (i.e. collecting participant information at a campus food shelf or student-parent center); or
- Summative reports that demonstrate the prevalence of pregnant and parenting students among the population served.

If an applicant has not conducted any quantitative research around parenting status, OHE may consider their proposal if the institution includes a Letter of Support that indicates a commitment to conducting research on the prevalence of parenting students on their campus within one calendar year.

## Eligible Services

Funds awarded to grantees must be used to provide services that support the educational goals of pregnant and parenting students. This may include:

- Program development costs (including staff salaries);
- Costs related to the start-up of on-campus child care;
- Health and Wellness activities for pregnant and parenting students and/or their children
- Evaluation and data collection; and
- Direct financial assistance to pregnant and parenting students including:
  - o Scholarships
  - o Basic needs support (food, housing, diapers, and other support that is not an emergency grant)
  - o Emergency grants as defined by Federal Student Aid and
  - o Expenses related to childcare.

Postsecondary institutions may act as the fiscal agents in partnership with a local nongovernmental agency, childcare center, or other organization that serves pregnant and parenting students. A written description of the proposed partnership and letters of commitment from the partnering agency or organization must be included in the application.

### **Eligible Participant**

All pregnant and parenting students who are enrolled at, or receive services from, an SPSI grantee are eligible to benefit from these services. Pregnant and parenting students may include undocumented students, international students, and graduate students. Direct assistance to pregnant and parenting students should primarily go to students who are Minnesota residents, however, they do not have to have resident status as long as they are enrolled in a Minnesota institution.

Any additional requirements or limitations regarding student eligibility may be set by the grantee.

### **Priorities**

It is the policy of the State of Minnesota to ensure fairness, precision, equity and consistency in competitive grant awards. This includes implementing diversity and inclusion in grant-making. [Office of Grants Management \(OGM\) Policy 08-02: Rating Criteria for Competitive Grant Review](#) establishes the expectation that grant programs intentionally identify how the grant serves diverse populations, especially populations experiencing inequities or disparities.

This grant will serve pregnant and parenting students. This commitment is demonstrated through criteria three in the proposal evaluation process.

### **Collaboration**

Applicants and supporting or partnering organizations may collaborate on the content of proposals. Applicants must write and submit proposals

Applicants are encouraged to think creatively about community partnerships that support SPSI goals and outcomes. Applicants must include one health or wellness partner (i.e., local public health, WIC program, local

medical clinic/provider) as a part of this initiative. Additional partnership examples can include, but are not limited to, childcare centers/providers, community resource centers, local food banks/pantries, etc.

## Selection Criteria and Weight

Proposal Content, which addresses the requirements described in this section, is located in the [Proposal Narrative](#) section of this RFP.

A review committee of community experts convenes to review and utilize a rubric to evaluate proposals based upon the following 100-point scale:

1. Need and Significance of Project (**20 Points**):
  - a. Document the need for eligible participants and services to meet the needs of eligible participants
  - b. Identify how project fits into larger framework/mission of the organization or institution
  - c. Identify how project fills gaps in services for target population and/or geographic area
  - d. Addresses the specific project focus within the broader goal of promoting postsecondary attendance, retention, and success
  - e. Discuss health and wellbeing needs of pregnant and parenting students and their families
  - f. Explain how the project is scalable, flexible, and makes an impact on the community
  - g. If applicable, summarize the extent to which the existing program has been successful
2. Quality of Project Design (**25 Points**):
  - a. Goals, objectives, activities, and outcomes to be achieved are clearly specified and measurable
    - o Principles of [best practice framework](#) incorporated into project design
  - b. Recruitment plan ensures participation by eligible participants
  - c. Describe plan on verifying that participants are enrolled at a postsecondary institution
  - d. Project compliments and coordinates with other appropriate organizational, community, and/or educational resources, agencies, and organizations serving the target population
  - e. The proposal documents how grant project implementation will implement a two-generation approach
  - f. List the planned partnerships and collaboration activities that support project outcomes. Applicants must include one health or wellness partner (i.e., local public health, WIC program, local medical clinic/provider) as a part of this initiative
  - g. Identify measurable health and wellness activities that benefit pregnant and parenting students and/or their children. This should be addressed in the proposal narrative, project budget, and project budget narrative.
3. Commitment to Equitable Services and Outcomes (**20 Points**):
  - a. Utilizes asset-based framework to capitalize on eligible participant's strengths and support their achievements

- b. Uses translation and/or interpreter services when communicating with eligible participants, if appropriate
- c. Incorporates culturally-specific pedagogies and activities into learning so that students can see themselves reflected in the content, if appropriate
- d. Staff, tutors, volunteers, etc. reflect the eligible participants that they serve
- e. Services will ensure success for eligible participants

4. Quality of Project Evaluation (**15 Points**):

- a. The project is objective and adequately measures achievement of goals and effectiveness of activities including outcome data related to the following:
  - o Number of eligible postsecondary students served
  - o Key partnerships with external resources/providers developed and/or maintained
  - o Development and use of an intake form
  - o Development of a referral and follow-up process including tracking of referral outcome
- b. Assesses the participant outcomes like changes in knowledge, performance, and practices
- c. Assesses the project's impact on student success in postsecondary education
  - o Retention of participating students from term to term or credential completion, when collected

5. Quality of Budget (**10 Points**):

- a. Extent to which the budget is cost effective, appropriate, and reflective of project requirements, project objectives and outcomes, and number of eligible participants to be served

6. Quality of Personnel, Resources, and Management (**10 Points**):

- a. Qualifications, training, and experience of key personnel are appropriate for their assignments
- b. Resources are adequate to meet project goals and objectives
- c. Adequacy of the management plan to achieve the proposed project on time and within budget
- d. Project timeline and milestones for accomplishing tasks are clearly defined

OHE will convene to review and weigh proposals based upon the following factors:

- Student Parent Support Initiative Grant available funds
- Projects serving diverse populations
- Previous performance as a grantee, if applicable

## Questions, Technical Assistance and Information Sessions

Technical assistance is available for interpreting instructions or preparing proposals by emailing [GWI.OHE@state.mn.us](mailto:GWI.OHE@state.mn.us). Please review all available materials before emailing your inquiry.

Each week, OHE will post responses to technical questions online at <https://ohe.mn.gov/competitive-grants/student-parent-support-initiative>. Technical questions must be submitted no later than **May 14, 2026**.

All prospective applicants are encouraged to attend an information session:

**Request for Proposal Workshop (Microsoft Teams)**

**April 30, 2026**, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. central time

Live workshop link available at <https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/24262792210582?p=NI3poHCOsewA3xtVNC> .

## Request for Proposals (RFP) Part 2: Submission

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Proposals must be received no later than **4:00 p.m. central time, Thursday, May 21, 2026**. Late proposals will not be accepted. Applicants must submit the following in order for the proposal to be considered complete:

- Proposal cover sheet
- Proposal narrative
- Project budget
- Project budget narrative
- Letter(s) of support, if applicable
- Resume(s), if applicable
- Financial and applicant capacity review, if applicable

Applicants must submit the items above through the OHE Competitive Grants Management system <https://applicationportal.ohe.mn.gov/Competitive-Grant-Applications/>.

Incomplete proposals will be rejected and not evaluated. Proposals must include all required proposal materials, including attachments. Do not provide any materials that are not requested in this RFP, as such materials will not be considered nor evaluated.

OHE reserves the right to reject any proposal that does not meet these requirements.

By submitting a proposal, each applicant warrants that the information provided is true, correct, and reliable for purposes of evaluation for potential grant award. The submission of inaccurate or misleading information may be grounds for disqualification from the award, as well as subject the applicant to suspension or debarment proceedings and other remedies available by law.

**All costs incurred in responding to this RFP will be borne by the applicant.**

### Proposal Content

The Student Parent Support Initiative Grant Program Request for Proposal is available online at <https://ohe.mn.gov/competitive-grants/student-parent-support-initiative>.

All proposal content is submitted through the OHE Competitive Grants Management system at <https://applicationportal.ohe.mn.gov/Competitive-Grant-Applications/>. The grants management system requires user registration.

Applicants must submit all proposal content by **4:00 p.m. central time, on May 21, 2026**, for OHE to consider the proposal as complete.

### Proposal Cover Sheet

The proposal cover sheet is fillable online through the OHE Competitive Grants Management system and includes the following:

- Applicant Information
  - o Institution or organization
  - o Organization type (Private, non-profit postsecondary institutions or Minnesota Tribal College)
  - o Address
- Applicant authorized official (administers proposal process)
  - o Name (first, last)
  - o Title
  - o Email address
  - o Phone number
- Grantee authorized signatory (signs grant contract upon award)
  - o Name (first, last)
  - o Title
  - o Email address
  - o Phone number
  - o Address (street, city, state, zip)
- Grantee authorized official (administers project upon award)
  - o Name (first, last)
  - o Title
  - o Email address
  - o Phone number
  - o Address (street, city, state, zip)
- Project Title

## **Proposal Narrative**

The proposal narrative is provided online through the OHE Competitive Grants Management System.

Reference the [Selection Criteria and Weight](#) section for further details about the following sections of the narrative:

- Need and Significance of Project (20 Points)
- Quality of Project Design (25 Points)
- Commitment to Equitable Services and Outcomes (20 Points)
- Quality of Project Evaluation (15 Points)
- Quality of Budget (10 Points)
- Quality of Personnel, Resources, and Management (10 Points)

## Budget

The project budget provides an overview for specific expenses to be reimbursed throughout the project period. The project budget is required to be submitted within the proposal. In addition, an applicant must complete a budget narrative by thoroughly describing each budget line item and providing justification for the expense.

An applicant must populate a budget for which will include the following items:

- Personnel Costs
  - o Salary
  - o Fringe
- Personnel Travel Costs (In State)
  - o Grantee authorized official
  - o Other staff
- Consumable Supplies and Instructional Materials
- Equipment Costs
- Marketing and Communication
- Other Services and Direct Costs
- Indirect Costs (maximum of 8% of Personnel Costs)

### Personnel (Salary and Fringe)

Reimbursable salary costs are for staff who have dedicated SPSI responsibilities written into their position description. If a staff member has other duties outside of the program, then the expense must be prorated based on the percentage in which the staff duties are directly related to program. Stipends are allowable to personnel providing an eligible service to students. Stipends to personnel should be included under this budget category. Requests for reimbursement must align with the budget approved by the OHE Authorized Official. Fringe benefits up to the salary percentage on the approved budget are reimbursable under personnel costs.

Fringe benefits are a form of pay in addition to the employees' salary. Fringe benefits may include items, such as; health insurance, dental insurance, short- and long-term disability, life insurance, cafeteria plan, and dependent care assistance.

*Note: The employee contribution percentage of payroll taxes should already be accounted for under gross salary. The employer contribution percentage of payroll taxes can be reimbursable, if you show proof of payment during the reimbursement process.*

### Personnel Travel Costs (In State)

Personnel travel is reimbursable, within Minnesota for SPSI related duties. Travel outside of Minnesota is not reimbursable. Personnel travel costs include mileage, lodging, and meals for the staff needing to travel for a program related event or activity. Costs incurred must align with the specific dates of travel for the corresponding program activity.

The Grantee will be reimbursed for travel and subsistence expenses in the same manner and in no greater amount than provided in the Nonrepresented Employees Compensation Plan (“Commissioner’s Plan”) promulgated by the Commissioner of Minnesota Management and Budget. The Commissioner’s Plan can be found at this link: <https://mn.gov/mmb/employee-relations/labor-relations/labor/nonrepresented-employees-compensation-plan.jsp>.

### **Consumable Supplies and Instructional Materials**

Consumable supplies and instructional materials are costs associated with supplies and materials for programing and events.

### **Equipment Costs**

Equipment costs include costs related to buying equipment to the start-up of on-campus child care or family friendly space.

### **Marketing and Communications**

Marketing and communication, include costs that are associated with promoting SPSI to inform target populations of the program offering. Marketing and communication may also include costs associated with outreach to students and their support systems.

### **Other Services and Direct Costs**

Other Direct Costs includes costs that are directly related to services being provided to students that were not covered under the other eligible expense categories. This may include Health and Wellness activities/events for pregnant and parenting students and/or their children and direct financial assistance to pregnant and parenting students including scholarships, basic needs support, emergency grants, and expenses related to child care.

### **Indirect Costs (Maximum of 8% of Personnel Costs)**

Indirect expenditures must be limited to eight percent of the total personnel costs.

### **Budget Narrative**

An applicant must complete a budget narrative by thoroughly describing each budget line item and providing justification for the expense.

### **Letter of Support**

A letter of support is uploaded (Word or PDF format) to the OHE Competitive Grants Management System.

An applicant must submit one letter from a supportive or partnering entity, outside of the applicant’s organization.

An applicant may elect to submit additional letters from other entities.

## Resumes

Resumes are uploaded (Word or PDF format) through OHE Competitive Grants Management System.

If funding from this grant will support a staff position related to the project, the applicant must submit a copy of the staff's resume. If the staff position is currently vacant, the applicant may submit a copy of the job posting or job description. Upon filling the position, whether during the application process or after notice of award, the applicant must submit a copy of the staff's resume.

An applicant may elect to submit additional resumes of staff who will be working on the project, but who will not be supported through funding from this grant. If this is the case, the applicant must ensure the resume documents are clearly labeled.

## Financial and Applicant Capacity Review

In accordance with [Minnesota Statute §16B.981<sup>1</sup>](#) and [OGM Policy 08-06: Preaward Risk Assessment of Potential Grantees<sup>2</sup>](#) and agency policies, OHE is required to consider a grant applicant's past performance and financial and operational capacity before awarding grants.

Only applicable to business entities, nonprofit organizations, and political subdivisions.

To complete the Financial and Applicant Capacity Review form, applicants must describe and acknowledge components of their organization and/or provide financial documentation.

The Financial and Applicant Capacity Review form includes the following fields of which some may pre-populate based upon previous forms in the proposal process:

### Applicant Capacity Review

#### *Capacity Response*

- Describe the applicant's history of performing the work that will be funded by this grant. This includes describing the applicant's current staffing, organization structure, budget, and administering grants from State Government and other sources.

#### *Certification of No Felony Financial Crime*

- Certify that no current principals have been convicted of a felony financial crime in the last ten years. 16B.981 Subd. 2 (6) requires that no current principals of a grantee have been convicted of a felony financial crime in the last 10 years. A principal is defined as a public official, a board member, or staff (paid or volunteer) with the authority to access funds provided by this grant opportunity or to determine how those funds are used. By signing below, I warrant that no current principal of my organization has been convicted of a felony financial crime in the last 10 years. I certify that this

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/16B.981>

<sup>2</sup> <https://mn.gov/admin/government/grants/policies-statutes-forms/>

information is true, correct, and reliable. The submission of inaccurate or misleading information may be grounds for disqualification from the grant contract agreement award and may subject me/my organization to suspension or debarment proceedings, as well as other remedies available to the State, by law. \*The response must be completed by business entities, nonprofit organizations, and political subdivisions.

- o Signature, Title, Date
- o Please upload an organizational chart or list of principals that you certify with the above statement.

#### *Certification of Good Standing with Secretary of State*

- Certify that applicant has filed and is up to date with the Secretary of State. OHE will verify applicant's status with the Secretary of State Office. Potential grantee must certify that the organization has a status of "In Good Standing" with the Secretary of State as required by 16B.981 Subd. 2 (3) and as part of the response to this Grant Request for Proposal. Is your organization (for-profit or nonprofit) registered with the Secretary of State and has a status of "In Good Standing"?
  - o Yes
  - o No

#### **Financial Review**

OHE requires applicants to submit financial information as part of the grant proposal process. OHE audit staff will review the applicant's financial documents and perform a risk assessment to ensure the organization is financially stable. The types of financial documents and certifications required by applicants vary by type and size of organizations, as described in the sections below.

#### *Nonprofit Organization Financial Documents*

Requesting **\$50,000 or less** in total grant amount: Must submit financial documents representing most recently completed year (**1 year total**).

Requesting **over \$50,000** in total grant amount: Must submit financial documents representing most recently completed three years (**3 years total**).

Financial Documents to Upload:

- Most recently completed IRS Form(s) 990 or Form(s) 990-EZ
- Most recently completed Certified Financial Audit(s), if potential nonprofit grantee is required to complete an audit under Section 309.5 Subd. 3
- Board-reviewed financial statements, proof of tax-exempt status, and documentation of internal controls, if potential nonprofit grantee is not required to file Form 990 or Form 990-EZ or has not been in existence long enough to have a completed IRS Form 990, Form 990-EZ, or audit

*Business Entity Financial Documents*

Requesting **\$50,000 or less** in total grant amount: Must submit financial documents representing most recently completed year (**1 year total**).

Requesting **over \$50,000** in total grant amount: Must submit financial documents representing most recently completed three years (**3 years total**).

Financial Documents to Upload:

- Most recently completed Federal Tax Return
- Most recently completed State Tax Return
- Current Financial statements
- Documentation of internal controls and current financial statements, if potential business entity has not been in business long enough to have filed a tax return

A business entity will also certify that the business is not under bankruptcy proceedings and disclose any liens on assets.

## Request For Proposals (RFP) Part 3: Proposal Review Process

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### Review Process

Funding will be allocated through a competitive process. First, OHE in collaboration with MDH will ensure applicants meet all eligibility requirements and the proposal deadline. If requirements are not met, the proposal will not be submitted to the review committee. Next, a committee of community specialists with industry knowledge will use the point scale provided above to evaluate proposals. Reviewers will meet and discuss the proposals and then put forth their recommendations. Lastly, OHE will review all committee recommendations and is responsible for award decisions. OHE retains the right to offer partial awards based upon competitive priorities and available funds.

Applicants will be notified via email when their award notifications are available.

### Timeline

**April 20, 2026:** Request for Proposal posted on the OHE website at <https://ohe.mn.gov/competitive-grants/student-parent-support-initiative> and available in OHE grants management system at <https://applicationportal.ohe.mn.gov/Competitive-Grant-Applications/>.

**May 14, 2026:** Questions due no later than 4:00 p.m. central time

**May 21, 2026:** Proposals due no later than 4:00 p.m. central time

**June 1, 2026:** Selected applicants undergo pre-award risk assessment

**June 8, 2026:** Committee begins review of proposals

**July 6, 2026:** Applicants notified

**July 15, 2026:** Mandatory Grantee Orientation from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. Central Time.

**July through August 2026:** Prepare grant documents and negotiate grant contract agreement. Grant documents are due **three weeks prior** to the intended start time of the program.

**September 2026:** Execute grant contract agreement and begin grant program.

### Conflicts of Interest

State grant policy requires that steps and procedures are in place to prevent individual and organizational conflicts of interest, both in reference to applicants and reviewers per [Minnesota Statutes § 16B.98 Subd. 2-3](#) and [OGM Policy 08-01 Conflict of Interest in State Grant-Making Policy](#).

Organizational conflicts of interest occur when:

- a grantee or applicant is unable or potentially unable to render impartial assistance or advice to the Department due to competing duties or loyalties
- 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 in question or disclosed, the applicants or grantees will be notified and actions may be pursued, including but not limited to, revising the grant work plan or grantee duties to mitigate the risk, requesting the grant applicant to submit an organizational conflict of interest mitigation plan, disqualification from eligibility for the grant award, amending the grant, or termination of the grant contract agreement.

## **Public Data**

Per [Minnesota Statutes § 13.599](#)

- Names and addresses of grant applicants and amount requested will be public data once proposal responses are opened.
- All remaining data in proposal responses (except trade secret data as defined and classified in §13.37) will be public data after the evaluation process is completed. For the purposes of this grant, data will be considered public when all the grant contract agreements have been fully executed.
- All data created or maintained by Minnesota Office of Higher Education as part of the evaluation process (except trade secret data as defined and classified in §13.37) will be public data after the evaluation process is completed. For the purposes of this grant, Data will be considered public when all the grant contract agreements have been fully executed.

# Request For Proposals (RFP) Part 4: Award Requirements and Grant Management Responsibilities

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## Preaward Risk Assessment and Financial Review

In accordance with [Minnesota Statute §16B.981](#) and [OGM Policy 08-06: Preaward Risk Assessment of Potential Grantees](#) and agency policies, OHE is required to consider a grant applicant's past performance and financial and operational capacity before awarding grants. Granting agencies will request, review, and analyze information, including Financial & Applicant Capacity Review documents, as referenced in this RFP, as applicable.

## Grant Contract Agreements

Each grantee must formally enter into a grant contract agreement. The grant contract agreement will address the conditions of the award, including implementation for the project. Grantees should read the grant contract agreement, sign, and once signed, comply with all conditions of the grant contract agreement. No work on grant activities can begin until a fully executed grant contract agreement is in place and the State's Authorized Representative has notified the Grantee that work may start. The funded applicant will be legally responsible for assuring implementation of the work plan and compliance with all applicable state requirements including worker's compensation insurance, nondiscrimination, data privacy, budget compliance, and reporting.

## Grant Provisions

The 2025 Minnesota Statutes 136A.915 Student Parent Support Initiative Grant is available online at <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/136A.915>.

Grant contract agreement templates are available for review at: <https://mn.gov/admin/government/grants/policies-statutes-forms/>.

## Orientation

July 15, 2026 from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. Central Time

Following award notification, OHE will host a virtual mandatory orientation for the grantees. Other entities involved in the success of the project are encouraged but not required to attend orientation. The purpose of orientation is to prepare grantees for grant administration.

## Work Plan and Budget

Work Plan and Budget submission is through the grants management system at <https://applicationportal.ohe.mn.gov/Competitive-Grant-Applications/>.

A grantee must complete and submit Work Plan and Budget documents following award notification and prior to executing a grant contract with OHE.

The Work Plan includes detailed information about the program target population, objectives, timeline, outcomes, and evaluation methods. Once the plan is approved, the grantee has the ability to make changes within the scope of the program but must consult with OHE prior to making changes to the Work Plan.

### **Health and Wellness Programming**

The Work Plan and Budget must include a list and description of health and wellness programs. Health related activities can include, but are not limited to, screenings, education and support related to alcohol misuse, substance use disorders, depression, anxiety, intimate partner violence, tobacco and nicotine, and other health concerns for student parents, and should be determined in consultation with parenting students. Health and wellness programs, services, and materials must be medically accurate, age appropriate, culturally and linguistically appropriate, and inclusive of all populations.

### **Expenditures**

Grantees can only incur eligible expenditures upon the grant contract effective or execution date, whichever is later. Expenditures incurred prior are not eligible for reimbursement through the grant.

Allowable expenditures are limited to the project as described in the proposal content and must align with the following budget categories:

- Personnel Costs
  - o Salaries for grantee personnel
  - o Fringe benefits based on salaries paid
- Personnel Travel Costs (In State)
  - o Grantee authorized official
  - o Other staff
- Consumable Supplies and Instructional Materials
- Equipment Costs
- Marketing and Communication
- Other Services and Direct Costs
- Indirect costs (no more than 8% of total Personnel Costs)

### **Personnel Costs (Salary and Fringe)**

Reimbursable salary costs are for staff who have dedicated SPSI responsibilities written into their position description. If a staff member has other duties outside of the program, then the expense must be prorated based on the percentage in which the staff duties are directly related to program. Stipends are allowable to personnel providing an eligible service to students. Stipends to personnel should be included under this budget category. Requests for reimbursement must align with the budget approved by the OHE Authorized Official. Fringe benefits up to the salary percentage on the approved budget are reimbursable under personnel costs.

Fringe benefits are a form of pay in addition to the employees' salary. Fringe benefits may include items such as, health insurance, dental insurance, short- and long-term disability, life insurance, cafeteria plan, and dependent care assistance.

*Note: The employee contribution percentage of payroll taxes should already be accounted for under gross salary. The employer contribution percentage of payroll taxes can be reimbursable, if you show proof of payment during the reimbursement process.*

### **Personnel Travel Costs (In State)**

Personnel travel is reimbursable, within Minnesota for SPSI related duties. Travel outside of Minnesota is not reimbursable. Personnel travel costs include mileage, lodging, and meals for the staff needing to travel for a program related event or activity. Costs incurred must align with the specific dates of travel for the corresponding program activity.

The Grantee will be reimbursed for travel and subsistence expenses in the same manner and in no greater amount than provided in the Nonrepresented Employees Compensation Plan ("Commissioner's Plan") promulgated by the Commissioner of Minnesota Management and Budget. The Commissioner's Plan can be found at this link: <https://mn.gov/mmb/employee-relations/labor-relations/labor/nonrepresented-employees-compensation-plan.jsp>.

### **Consumable Supplies and Instructional Materials**

Consumable supplies and instructional materials are costs associated with supplies and materials for programing and events.

### **Equipment Costs**

Equipment costs include costs related to buying equipment to the start-up of on-campus child care or family friendly space.

### **Marketing and Communication**

Marketing and communication, include costs that are associated with promoting SPSI to inform target populations of the program offering. Marketing and communication may also include costs associated with outreach to students and their support systems

### **Other Services and Direct Costs**

Other Direct Costs includes costs that are directly related to services being provided to students that were not covered under the other eligible expense categories. This may include Health and Wellness activities/events for pregnant and parenting students and/or their children and direct financial assistance to pregnant and parenting students including scholarships, basic needs support, emergency grants, and expenses related to child care.

*Note: Grant funds may be used to purchase and provide gift cards to eligible students. However, grantees will only be reimbursed for gift card expenses if they provide documentation showing gift cards were provided to students, not just purchased.*

### **Indirect Costs (Maximum of 8% of Personnel Costs)**

Indirect expenditures must be limited to eight percent of the total personnel costs.

### **Ineligible Expenditures**

Ineligible expenditures contain items that are not eligible for reimbursement through the SPSI Grant. Ineligible expenditures include but are not limited to:

- Baseline research on pregnant and parenting student population
- Capital expenditures
- Fundraising
- \*Taxes, except sales tax on goods and services and payroll taxes
- Lobbyists, political contributions
- Bad debts, late payment fees, finance charges, or contingency funds
- Parking violations and traffic violations
- Out of state transportation and travel expenses.
  - o Minnesota will be considered the home state for determining whether travel is out of state.

\* **Taxes:** The employee contribution percentage of payroll taxes should already be accounted for under gross salary which is reimbursable. The employer contribution percentage of payroll taxes can be reimbursable, if you show proof of payment during the reimbursement process.

### **Business with the State**

A grantee must register and complete setup as a vendor with the State of Minnesota's SWIFT System (<https://mn.gov/mmb/accounting/swift/>) prior to executing a grant contract with OHE. The grantee's federal tax identification number is required to complete registration. Contracts and grant reimbursement will be finalized within the SWIFT vendor portal. Grantees who are already established as vendors but do not remember information, should contact Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) vendor helpline at (651) 201-8106 or [efthelpline.mmb@state.mn.us](mailto:efthelpline.mmb@state.mn.us).

### **Accountability and Reporting Requirements**

Grantees must adhere to all accountability and reporting requirements. Grant reimbursement and future grant eligibility is contingent upon fulfillment of requirements.

## Grant Payments

Per [State Policy on Grant Payments](#), reimbursement is the method for making grant payments. All grantee requests for reimbursement must correspond to the approved grant budget. The State shall review each request for reimbursement against the approved grant budget, grant expenditures to-date and the latest grant progress report before approving payment. Grant payments shall not be made on grants with past due progress reports unless OHE has given the grantee a written extension.

OHE will reimburse grantees only for eligible expenditures. The submission process is through emailing invoice and supporting documentation to [GWI.OHE@state.mn.us](mailto:GWI.OHE@state.mn.us) and [cha.her@state.mn.us](mailto:cha.her@state.mn.us) and include the following items:

- Invoice (template will be provided and grantees must use template)
- Supporting Documents, including a General Ledger

OHE reserves the right to request additional documentation for verification prior to approval for reimbursement. Grantees must respond and complete follow-up items within 15 days of receiving a request for additional documentation from OHE. OHE will issue payment to a grantee within 30 days of a completed and approved reimbursement request.

## Grant Reporting

Grant report submission is through **emailing the report to [GWI.OHE@state.mn.us](mailto:GWI.OHE@state.mn.us) and [cha.her@state.mn.us](mailto:cha.her@state.mn.us).**

All grantees are required to submit two reports. The Progress Report is due end of **February 25, 2027** (Effective Date – January 31), and the Final Report is due **August 27, 2027** (February 1 through July 31).

Details of Data Needed:

- Number of Student Parents who completed an intake (parent, legal guardian, acting as a parent for child(ren) under 18 and can claim as a dependent, or expectant parent)
- Number of Student Parents who participated in SPSI activities
- Number of Student Parents who received one-on-one SPSI support
- Number of SPSI Student Parents who re-enroll for next term
- Number of SPSI Student Parents who graduated
- Number of referrals to campus supports
  - How many were health-related services
- Number of referrals to community-based supports
  - How many were health-related services

## Grant Monitoring

Grant Monitoring Report is finalized within the grants management system at <https://gwi-ohe.intelligrants.com/>.

Minnesota Statutes 16B.97 Grants Management (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/16B.97>) and Office of Grants Management Policy 08-10 Grant Monitoring require one monitoring visit during the grant period on all state grants over \$50,000 before final payment is made.

OHE reserves the right to select additional grantees for monitoring who have state grants of \$50,000 or less. OHE will also consider requests from grantees to conduct monitoring services.

OHE will notify grantees within a reasonable amount of time to allow preparation for the monitoring process. OHE will base monitoring schedules upon the availability of all parties who are required to be in attendance. To the extent possible, monitoring will be conducted at the location of the grantee and will occur within six months of the contract effective date.

## Grant Financial Reconciliation

All grantees are required to undergo Financial Reconciliation for expenditures at least once during the grant period before final payment is made. Financial Reconciliation may be conducted on a more frequent basis. The process involves reconciling a grantee's reimbursement request for a given period with supporting documentation for that request, such as purchase orders, receipts and payroll records.

## Grantee Performance Evaluation

Grantee Performance Evaluation available upon request.

Prior to the closeout of the grant, OHE will evaluate the performance of all grantees. OHE includes the following information in the evaluation process:

- Grantee name, grant amount, start and end dates of the grant period award, and amount of grant paid to grantee
- Grant description, purpose, and proposed grant outcomes
- Description of actual grant outcome
- Compliance with reporting requirements
- Grant monitoring visits and financial reconciliation results, if applicable
- If applicable:
  - o Additional conditions placed on the grant as part of the pre-award risk assessment process
  - o If there were any fraud, waste, or abuse concerns
  - o If the grant was terminated for cause
- Significant changes that arose during the grant award period
- Status of any financial/audit concerns involving the grantee

Evaluations of grantee performance for grant contract agreements over \$25,000 must be provided by OHE to the Minnesota Department of Administration. In addition, OHE will share grantee performance evaluations with other state agencies upon request. Evaluations are considered public per Minnesota Statute 13.599 Grants ([https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/2023/cite/13.599?keyword\\_type=all&keyword=13.599](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/2023/cite/13.599?keyword_type=all&keyword=13.599)).

OHE considers past grantee performance before awarding subsequent grants to grantees.

## Authorized Representatives

Pursuant to [Minnesota Statutes §16B.98, subd. 5 \(d\)](#), grantees must clearly post on the grantee’s website the names of, and contact information for, the grantee’s leadership and the employee or other person who directly manages and oversees a grant contract agreement on behalf of the grantee.

## Contracting and Bidding Requirements

**Municipalities:** Grantees that are political subdivisions or municipalities must use these guidelines:

- Municipalities are required to comply with [Minnesota Statutes §471.345, Uniform Municipal Contracting Law](#).
- The Grantee and any subrecipients must comply with prevailing wage rules per [Minnesota Statutes §§ 177.41](#) through [177.50](#), as applicable.
- Municipalities and any subrecipients must not contract with vendors who are suspended or debarred by the State of Minnesota or the federal government: [Suspended and Debarred Vendors, Minnesota Office of State Procurement](#)<sup>3</sup>
- The Grantee must maintain written standards of conduct covering conflicts of interest and governing the actions of its employees engaged in the selection, award, and administration of contracts.

**Nongovernmental entities:** Grantees that are nongovernmental entities must use these guidelines:

- Any services and/or materials that are expected to cost \$100,000 or more must undergo a formal notice and bidding process.
- Services and/or materials that are expected to cost between \$25,000 and \$99,999 must be competitively awarded based on a minimum of three (3) verbal quotes or bids or awarded to a targeted vendor.
- Services and/or materials that are expected to cost between \$10,000 and \$24,999 must be competitively awarded based on a minimum of two (2) verbal quotes or bids or awarded to a targeted vendor.
- The grantee must take all necessary affirmative steps to assure that targeted vendors from businesses with active certifications through these entities are used when possible:

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<sup>3</sup> <https://mn.gov/admin/osp/government/suspended-debarred/>

- o [State Department of Administration's Certified Targeted Group, Economically Disadvantaged and Veteran-Owned Vendor List](#)<sup>4</sup>
  - o [Metropolitan Council Underutilized Business Program](#)<sup>5</sup>
  - o Small Business Certification Program through Hennepin County, Ramsey County, and City of St. Paul: [Central Certification Directory](#)<sup>6</sup>
- The grantee must maintain written standards of conduct covering conflicts of interest and governing the actions of its employees engaged in the selection, award and administration of contracts.
  - The grantee must maintain support documentation of the purchasing or bidding process used to contract services in their financial records, including support documentation justifying a single source bid, if applicable.
  - Notwithstanding the above, the State may waive bidding process requirements when:
    - o Vendors included in response to competitive grant request for proposal process were approved and incorporated as an approved work plan for the grant; or
    - o It is determined there is only one reasonably able and available source for such materials or services and that grantee has established a fair and reasonable price.
  - The Grantee and any subrecipients must comply with prevailing wage rules per [Minnesota Statutes §§177.41](#) through [177.50](#), as applicable.
  - The grantee and any subrecipients must not contract with vendors who are suspended or debarred by the State of Minnesota or the federal government: [Suspended and Debarred Vendors, Minnesota Office of State Procurement](#)

## Audits

Per [Minnesota Statutes § 16B.98 Subdivision 8](#), the grantee's books, records, documents, and accounting procedures and practices of the grantee or other party that are relevant to the grant or transaction are subject to examination by the Commissioner of Administration, the State granting agency, the State Auditor, the Attorney General, and the Legislative Auditor as appropriate. This requirement will last for a minimum of six years from the grant contract agreement end date, receipt, and approval of all final reports, or the required period of time to satisfy all state and program retention requirements, whichever is later.

## Affirmative Action and Nondiscrimination

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

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.mmd.admin.state.mn.us/process/search/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://mcub.metc.state.mn.us/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://cert.smwbe.com/>

employee or applicant for employment is qualified per [Minnesota Statutes § 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.

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](#).

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.

## **Voter Registration**

The grantee will comply with [Minnesota Statutes §201.162](#) by providing voter registration services for its employees and for the public served by the grantee.

## **Request for Proposal (RFP) Part 5: Right of Cancellation**

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The State reserves the right to cancel this solicitation if it is considered to be in its best interest. The State reserves the right to negotiate modifications to the proposal or to reject any and all proposals received as a result of this Request for Proposals. The State does not intend to award a grant contract agreement solely on the basis of any response made to this request or pay for information solicited or obtained.