



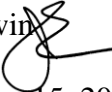
Illinois Board of Higher Education

Rod Blagojevich, Governor

Carrie J. Hightman, Chairwoman • Judy Erwin, Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Illinois Higher Education Institutions w/Nursing Programs

FROM: Judy Erwin 

DATE: September 15, 2008

RE: **FY2009 Nursing School Grant Program:
IMPROVEMENT GRANT APPLICATION**

Application DEADLINE is October 31, 2008

The Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) is seeking new applications for its *Nursing School Grant Program: Improvement Grants*. This program provides one-year grants to Illinois institutions of higher learning that prepare registered nurses (110 ILCS 205/9.31). The purpose of the Improvement Grant is to help Illinois institutions improve institutional NCLEX-RN pass rates and increase student retention.

ELIGIBLE INSTITUTIONS

Participation in this program is open to Illinois institutions of higher learning offering Associate and Baccalaureate level registered nursing degree programs that meet certain conditions. Institutions offering Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) programs must: be approved by the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (IDFPR); be accredited by the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC); and have an articulation agreement in place with at least one institution of higher learning that offers a baccalaureate degree in nursing. Institutions offering Baccalaureate (BSN or RN-BSN Completion) programs must be approved by the IDFPR and accredited by either the NLNAC or the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE).

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Eligible programs must be operating at levels below the standards for the Expansion Grant Program. The Improvement Grant program requires that the ADN and BSN programs at eligible institutions must meet one of the following conditions: a) NCLEX-RN pass rates for first-time test-takers must be less than 90 percent, or b) program attrition rates must be greater than 15 percent. The RN-BSN programs must have a program attrition rate greater than 15 percent. (Program attrition rate is generally defined as the number of students that do not complete a program expressed as a percentage of the total number of students who entered the program as a cohort.) Institutions are required to submit their nursing program attrition rates, as well as their institutional methodology.

GRANT AWARDS

In fiscal year 2008, three Improvement Grants totaling \$100,000 were awarded. It is estimated that two or three awards will be made in fiscal year 2009. Please note that 10 percent of the Nursing School Grant appropriation supports Improvement Grants, and 90 percent of the appropriation will be used to support Expansion Grants (discussed in a separate renewal application). It is anticipated that the Improvement Grants will range from approximately \$25,000 to \$33,300.

USE OF FUNDS

Improvement Grant funds are intended to improve instructional quality, increase student retention, and increase NCLEX-RN pass rates. Funds may be used to:

- develop or expand academic support services;
- improve existing classroom space;
- purchase equipment and other instructional materials needed to enhance program instruction; and
- provide a program audit by an external auditor.

When developing your grant proposal, please consider the timing of the one-year grant period. In prior years the grant period for the Nursing School Improvement Grant has ended in late February. However, it is anticipated that FY2009 grant period will start in early February 2009 and end in late May 2010.

APPLICATION MATERIALS

The application materials for the Nursing School Grant Program: Improvement Grants are provided in the following pages of this document/posting.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Completed applications are **due October 31, 2008.**

CONTACT PERSON

If you have any questions regarding this program, please contact Karen Helland at 217-782-2551 or by sending an e-mail to grants@ibhe.org.

Nursing School Grant Program Improvement Grants 2008-09 (FY2009)

INSTRUCTIONS

Please complete the following application to receive consideration for the FY2009 Nursing School Improvement Grant. Additional program details are contained in the attached administrative rules.

NEW! This year the application is a Microsoft Word form that contains expandable shaded boxes where answers may be entered electronically. For each question you have the option of typing your response in a shaded box, pasting text from another document into the shaded box, or submitting an attachment.

The form contains the following sections:

Signature Page

Obtain the signatures of institutional leaders for authorization.

Section I: Eligibility Verification

Provide the information requested regarding the nursing program(s) to ensure eligibility.

Section II: Application

Describe your proposal and how it aligns with current research. Include an evaluation plan and detail how the institution will support and sustain the project. Provide a grant budget using the categories provided. It is anticipated that the fiscal year 2009 Improvement Grants will range from approximately \$25,000 to \$33,300.

Additional Documents

Submit with the application form.

- 1) Copy of a current **Articulation Agreement** for ADN programs only.
- 2) Copies of current **Accreditation Letters** for nursing programs.

DUE DATE

Completed application materials are due no later than **October 31, 2008** and shall be submitted to:

Illinois Board of Higher Education
Attn: FY09 Nursing Improvement Grants
431 East Adams, 2nd Floor
Springfield, IL 62701-1404

If you have any questions regarding this program, please contact Karen Helland at 217-782-2551 or by sending an e-mail to grants@ibhe.org.

Nursing School Grant Program
Improvement Grants 2008-09 (FY2009)

Signature Page

Instructions: Type your answers in the boxes (boxes will expand with text). Obtain the required signatures and submit the original Signature Page with your application.

Name of the Institution: Type your answers in boxes

Person to Contact: _____

Mailing Address: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Fax Number: _____

Chief Nursing Administrator: *As the chief nursing administrator of the nursing program at the aforementioned institution, I am submitting this Nursing School Improvement Grant application.*

Name: _____

Title: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

President / Chief Executive Officer: *I am authorized by the aforementioned institution to approve the submission of the application for the Nursing School Improvement Grant.*

Name: _____

Title: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Nursing School Grant Program Improvement Grants 2008-09 (FY2009)

Section I: Eligibility Verification

Name of the Institution: Type your answer _____

Only answer the questions that are applicable to the nursing program(s) in your proposal. You may need to answer questions for more than one program. For example, if your proposal includes RN-BSN and BSN programs, you would answer questions 5-6 and 7-9. Or, if your proposal only includes the associate degree program, then you would only answer questions 1-4.

Your institution is eligible if the answers for your nursing program(s) are “yes” and you provide the requested documentation before the **October 31, 2008 deadline**.

If your proposal includes an ADN program, answer questions 1-4.

1) Is the program approved by the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation? Yes No

2) Is the program accredited by the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC)? Yes No
Attach a copy of the current accreditation letter.

3) Does the institution have an articulation agreement with at least one institution of higher learning that offers baccalaureate degrees for registered nurses? Yes No
Attach a copy of a current articulation agreement.

4) Does the program meet **at least one** of the following criteria? Yes No

(i) Is the NCLEX-RN pass rate for first-time applicants less than 90 percent for the academic year 2007-08?

	Number of Candidates	Number Pass	Pass Rate (%)
3rd Qtr 2007			
4 th Qtr 2007			
1 st Qtr 2008			
2 nd Qtr 2008			
Totals			*

* The total pass rate should be less than 90 percent.

(ii) Is the program attrition rate **greater than 15 percent** during the academic year 2007-08?

Explain your definition and methodology for attrition rate.
Type your response in this expanding box

Nursing School Grant Program Improvement Grants 2008-09 (FY2009)

*If your proposal includes a **RN-BSN** program, answer questions 5 & 6.*

- 5) Is the program accredited by the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC) or the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE)? Yes No
Attach a copy of the current accreditation letter.

- 6) Is the program attrition rate greater than 15 percent during the academic year 2007-08? Yes No

Explain your definition and methodology for attrition rate.
Type your response in this expanding box

*If your proposal includes a **BSN and/or ABSN** program, answer questions 7-9.*

- 7) Is the program approved by the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation? Yes No

- 8) Is the program accredited by the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC) or the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE)? Yes No
Attach a copy of the current accreditation letter.

- 9) Does the program meet **at least one** of the following criteria? Yes No

- (i) Is the NCLEX-RN pass rate for first-time applicants less than 90 percent for the academic year 2007-08?

	Number of Candidates	Number Pass	Pass Rate (%)
3rd Qtr 2007			
4 th Qtr 2007			
1 st Qtr 2008			
2 nd Qtr 2008			
Totals			*

* The total pass rate should be less than 90 percent.

- (ii) Is the program attrition rate greater than 15 percent during the academic year 2007-08?

Explain your definition and methodology for attrition rate.
Type your response in this expanding box

Nursing School Grant Program
Improvement Grants 2008-09 (FY2009)

Section II: Application

Name of the Institution: Type your response _____

Improvement Grant funds may be used to support strategies aimed at increasing student retention and improving institutional NCLEX-RN pass rates. Acceptable expenditures include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Developing or expanding academic support services to improve student retention and increase NCLEX-RN pass rates;
- Improving existing classroom space;
- Purchasing equipment and other instructional materials to improve instructional quality; and
- Paying for the required program audit by an external auditor who is registered as a public accountant by the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation.

Improvement Grants shall **not** be used to hire faculty.

Grant Proposal

When developing your grant proposal, please consider the timing of the grant period. In prior years the grant period for the Nursing School Improvement Grant has ended in late February. However, it is anticipated that the FY2009 grant period will start in early February 2009 and end in late May 2010.

Describe the proposed use of grant funds including: (1) evidence of current research and best practices to support your proposed strategies; (2) an evaluation plan to identify the expected outcomes and how you will measure success; and (3) explain projected institutional support and sustainability of grant-funded activities.

Please submit the proposal by either typing or copying/pasting your proposal in the expandable box below or submit a separate document. Note that some formatting does not transfer into the box.

Type your response in this expanding box OR cut and paste into the box

Nursing School Grant Program Improvement Grants 2008-09 (FY2009)

Additional Performance Measures

Answer the following questions for the nursing program(s) included in your grant proposal.

- 1) What is the first year retention rate(s) for the nursing program(s) included in your proposal? Use your institution's definition for retention rate and explain your methodology. Academic Year
2007-08
- Explain your definition and methodology for retention rate. ADN _____%
Type your response in this box RN-BSN _____%
BSN _____%
ABSN _____%
- 2) What is the job placement rate within the first 6 months of graduation from the nursing program(s) included in your proposal? Use only job placements that require an associate or baccalaureate degree in nursing. Academic Year
2007-08
- For example, a 100 percent job placement rate is when 20 of the 20 graduates in academic year 2007-08 are employed in nursing within the first 6 months after graduation. ADN _____%
RN-BSN _____%
BSN _____%
ABSN _____%
- 3) How many associate and baccalaureate degrees in nursing did your institution confer during the past three academic years?
- | Academic Year
2005-06 | Academic Year
2006-07 | Academic Year
2007-08 |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| ADN _____ | ADN _____ | ADN _____ |
| RN-BSN _____ | RN-BSN _____ | RN-BSN _____ |
| BSN _____ | BSN _____ | BSN _____ |
| ABSN _____ | ABSN _____ | ABSN _____ |

Nursing School Grant Program

Improvement Grants 2008-09 (FY2009)

<p>Budget</p> <p>Please use the following categories to describe your proposed budget. Categories are adapted from the Statewide Accounting Management System (SAMS) Manual. It is anticipated that the FY2009 Improvement Grants will range from approximately \$25,000 to \$33,300. Do <u>not</u> exceed \$33,300.</p> <p>Type brief descriptions and the dollar amounts in the shaded boxes (boxes will expand with text).</p>	
<p>Personal Services:</p>	<p>Use only for expenditures as compensation made for an employee's personal services rendered on behalf of the grant project. <i>Improvement Grant funds may NOT to be used to hire faculty.</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">\$ <u>Type dollars</u></p> <p><u>Type your brief description</u></p>
<p>Benefits:</p>	<p>Additions to the total compensation package that may include group insurance, social security, retirement, and other items.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">\$ <u>Type dollars</u></p> <p><u>Type your brief description</u></p>
<p>Contractual Services:</p>	<p>Expenditures for professional or technical services and transportation charges exclusive of "Travel" and "Audit." Also expenditures incident to the grant project operation for postage, publications, subscriptions, and services exclusive of commodities.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">\$ <u>Type dollars</u></p> <p><u>Type your brief description</u></p>
<p>Commodities:</p>	<p>Expenditures in connection with current operation for the purchase of articles of a consumable nature which show a material change or appreciable depreciation with first usage and equipment having a unit value not in any instance exceeding \$100.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">\$ <u>Type dollars</u></p> <p><u>Type your brief description</u></p>
<p>Travel:</p>	<p>Expenditures directly incident to official travel by employees of the grant project or direct payment to private agencies providing transportation or related services.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">\$ <u>Type dollars</u></p> <p><u>Type your brief description</u></p>

Nursing School Grant Program
Improvement Grants 2008-09 (FY2009)

Printing:	<p>Expenditures for printing, printing paper, stationery, pamphlets, and envelopes.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>\$ Type dollars</u></p> <p><u>Type your brief description</u></p>
Equipment:	<p>Visible tangible property of a non-consumable nature with a unit value exceeding \$100. [Regardless of value, all equipment must be clearly marked with the institution's inventory decal and the institution must maintain adequate control over all property, regardless of cost.]</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>\$ Type dollars</u></p> <p><u>Type your brief description</u></p>
Telecom- munications:	<p>Expenditures for lease, rental or purchase of telecommunications equipment, supplies, maintenance, and service, which include telephone, radio and other voice, data, or video interconnection systems.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>\$ Type dollars</u></p> <p><u>Type your brief description</u></p>
Program Audit:	<p>The independent examination verifying grant expenditures and compliance with the terms of the grant agreement and applicable statutes and rules. Expenditures for audit services should be reported on this line instead of contractual services.</p> <p>A program audit is due within 120 days of termination or end of the Nursing School grant period. You may use grant funds to pay for the program audit.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>\$ Type dollars</u></p> <p><u>Type your brief description</u></p>
TOTAL	<p>It is anticipated that the FY2009 Improvement Grants will range from approximately \$25,000 to \$33,300. Do <u>not</u> exceed \$33,300.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>\$ Type dollars</u></p>

SUBTITLE A

TITLE 23: EDUCATION AND CULTURAL RESOURCES
SUBTITLE A: EDUCATION
CHAPTER II: BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATIONPART 1100
NURSING SCHOOL GRANT PROGRAM

Section	
1100.100	Purpose
1100.200	Definitions
1100.300	Eligible Nursing Program
1100.400	Application Process
1100.500	Expansion Grants
1100.600	Improvement Grants
1100.700	Award Process
1100.800	Audit Requirements

AUTHORITY: Implementing and authorized by Section 9.31 of the Board of Higher Education Act [110 ILCS 205/9.31].

SOURCE: Emergency rules adopted at 30 Ill. Reg. 17113, effective October 16, 2006, for a maximum of 150 days; adopted at 31 Ill. Reg. 3145, effective February 7, 2007.

Section 1100.100 Purpose

The purpose of the Nursing School Grant Program is to address the nursing shortage in Illinois by *increasing the number of nurses graduating from Illinois institutions of higher learning* [110 ILCS 205/9.31]. The Program is comprised of two grant categories: Expansion Grants and Improvement Grants. Grants for both categories shall *be awarded on the basis of performance criteria* [110 ILCS 205/9.31] and a competitive application process.

Section 1100.200 Definitions

"Board" means the Board of Higher Education.

"Eligible Nursing Program" means a nursing program at an Illinois institution of higher learning that prepares registered nurses in accordance with Section 1100.300 and offers at least one of the following nursing degree programs:

"ADN" means an Associate Degree in Nursing. Upon completion of the program, a graduate may be eligible to take the examination for licensure as a registered nurse (NCLEX-RN).

"BSN" means a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. This program admits pre-licensure students and awards a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing.

SUBTITLE A

"RN-BSN" means a baccalaureate completion program that admits registered nurses and awards a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing.

"Expansion Grant" means a competitive grant, renewable for up to three years, under this Part that supports high-performing eligible nursing schools for the purpose of expanding nursing program capacity and either increasing the number of students preparing for initial licensure as registered nurses (ADN or BSN) or increasing the number of registered nurses completing baccalaureate completion programs (RN-BSN).

"Improvement Grant" means an annual competitive grant under this Part that supports eligible nursing schools with the purpose of increasing student retention and improving institutional NCLEX-RN pass rates.

"Institution of Higher Learning" means a public or nonpublic institution of higher education located within Illinois that offers associate, baccalaureate or post-baccalaureate degrees and that is authorized to operate in the State of Illinois.

"NCLEX-RN" means the National Council Licensure Examination-Registered Nurse. Passing the NCLEX-RN is required of candidates for licensure as a Registered Nurse (RN) in Illinois.

Section 1100.300 Eligible Nursing Program

Illinois institutions of higher learning offering registered nursing degree programs must meet the following criteria to be eligible to receive a grant under this Part:

- a) ADN programs must:
 - 1) Be approved by the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (DFPR);
 - 2) Be accredited by the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC); and
 - 3) Have an articulation agreement with at least one institution of higher learning that offers baccalaureate degrees for registered nurses.
- b) BSN programs must:
 - 1) Be approved by DFPR; and
 - 2) Be accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) or the NLNAC.

- c) RN-BSN programs must be accredited by the CCNE or the NLNAC.

Section 1100.400 Application Process

- a) Eligible nursing programs will be notified by the Board when funding opportunities and application materials for grant opportunities under this Part are available.
- b) Application materials may be obtained from the Illinois Board of Higher Education, 431 East Adams Street, Second Floor, Springfield, Illinois 62701-1404 or the Board's website at www.ibhe.org.
- c) Completed application materials signed by the institution's chief executive officer must be received by the Board by the announced deadline for the submission of applications, which shall not be less than 45 days from the announcement and release of application materials. Application materials will be due no later than October 31 of each year.
- d) Grantees maintaining eligibility criteria in accordance with Section 1100.500(b) or Section 1100.600(b) may annually reapply for funding.

Section 1100.500 Expansion Grants

- a) In a given fiscal year, at least 90 percent of the Program appropriation shall support Expansion Grants.
- b) Eligibility Criteria
 - 1) ADN and BSN programs must meet both of the following criteria:
 - A) NCLEX-RN pass rate for first-time test takers must be equal to or greater than 90 percent.
 - B) Program attrition rate must be equal to or less than 15 percent.
 - 2) RN-BSN programs must have a program attrition rate equal to or less than 15 percent.
- c) Grant applications for Expansion Grants under this Part shall include, but need not be limited to, the following:
 - 1) Comprehensive description of the proposed use of funds in accordance with subsection (e), including evidence of current research and best practices to support proposed strategies.

SUBTITLE A

- 2) Budget by line item, including personal services, contractual services, commodities, equipment, telecommunications, travel, and audit.
 - 3) Performance measures, including, but not limited to, the following:
 - A) Eligibility criteria in accordance with subsection (b);
 - B) First-year retention rate;
 - C) Job placement within 6 months of degree completion; and
 - D) Number of degrees conferred (three-year trend).
 - 4) Statement of institutional support and sustainability of grant-funded activities.
 - 5) Evaluation plan.
 - 6) Program audit and an interim evaluation report from the previous year, if the applicant received an Expansion Grant under this Part.
- d) Awards
- 1) The grant awards for eligible nursing programs shall be determined using a competitive process to review applications that shall include, but need not be limited to, the following criteria:
 - A) Evidence of effective program goals and performance measures;
 - B) Proposed use of funds and budget justification demonstrating an effective use of program resources;
 - C) An effective evaluation plan including reliable measures of performance and program outcomes;
 - D) Evidence of institutional support and sustainability of grant-funded activities; and
 - E) Number of completed applications received in accordance with subsection (c).
 - 2) The number and amount of grant awards is subject to the Program appropriation.

SUBTITLE A

- e) Use of Grant Funds. Expansion Grant funds may be used to expand capacity and increase the number of students preparing for careers as registered nurses. Acceptable expenditures may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - 1) Hiring additional qualified nursing faculty;
 - 2) Developing or expanding instructional programs (e.g., online, weekend, evening);
 - 3) Developing or expanding academic support programs;
 - 4) Securing additional clinical instruction sites;
 - 5) Increasing classroom space;
 - 6) Purchasing equipment and other program-related instructional materials; and
 - 7) Evaluation, dissemination of program results, and program audit.
- f) Grantees may annually reapply for funding under this Part.
- g) Grantees must submit a final evaluation report.

Section 1100.600 Improvement Grants

- a) In a given fiscal year, no more than 10 percent of the Program appropriation shall be directed to Improvement Grants.
- b) Eligibility Criteria
 - 1) ADN and BSN programs must meet at least one of the following criteria:
 - A) NCLEX-RN pass rate for first-time test takers must be less than 90 percent.
 - B) Program attrition rate must be greater than 15 percent.
 - 2) RN-BSN programs must have a program attrition rate greater than 15 percent.
- c) Grant applications for Improvement Grants under this Part shall include, but need not be limited to, the following:

SUBTITLE A

- 1) Comprehensive description of the proposed use of funds in accordance with subsection (e), including evidence of current research and best practices to support proposed strategies.
 - 2) Budget by line item, including personal services, contractual services, commodities, equipment, telecommunications, travel, and audit.
 - 3) Performance measures, including, but not limited to, the following:
 - A) Eligibility criteria in accordance with subsection (b);
 - B) First-year retention rate;
 - C) Job placement within 6 months of degree completion; and
 - D) Number of degrees conferred (three-year trend).
 - 4) Statement of institutional support and sustainability of grant-funded activities.
 - 5) Evaluation plan.
 - 6) Program audit from the previous year, if the applicant received an Improvement Grant under this Part.
- d) Awards
- 1) The grant awards for eligible nursing programs shall be determined using a competitive process to review applications that shall include, but need not be limited to, the following criteria:
 - A) Evidence of effective program goals and performance measures;
 - B) Proposed use of funds and budget justification demonstrating an effective use of program resources;
 - C) An effective evaluation plan including reliable measures of performance and program outcomes;
 - D) Evidence of institutional support and sustainability of grant-funded activities; and
 - E) Number of completed applications received in accordance with subsection (c).

SUBTITLE A

- 2) The number and amount of grant awards is subject to the Program appropriation.
- e) Use of Grant Funds. Improvement Grant funds may be used to support strategies aimed at increasing student retention and improving institutional NCLEX-RN pass rates.
 - 1) Acceptable expenditures may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - A) Developing or expanding academic support services to improve student retention and increase NCLEX-RN pass rates;
 - B) Improving existing classroom space;
 - C) Purchasing equipment and other instructional materials necessary to improve instructional quality; and
 - D) Program audit.
 - 2) Improvement Grants shall not be used to hire faculty.
- f) Grantees may apply annually for funding under this Part.
- g) Grantees must submit an evaluation report.

Section 1100.700 Award Process

- a) Board staff shall review application materials and make recommendations to the Board for approval.
- b) Once grants are awarded by the Board, the Board shall notify each applicant in writing concerning its application.
- c) The Board shall establish a grant agreement with those institutions awarded a grant under this Part that specifies the terms and conditions of the grant.

Section 1100.800 Audit Requirements

- a) All grantees are required to provide an annual program audit to the Board.
- b) After the initial program year (fiscal year 2007), applications must include a program audit of grant funds received in the previous year.
- c) Program audits must be performed by an external auditor who is registered as a public accountant by DFPR.

SUBTITLE A

- d) Program audits must include a statement of revenues and expenditures to verify the use of grant funds. Grant funds not expended as identified by the audit shall be refunded to the State.
- e) In the event that a grant recipient does not reapply for a grant under this Part in a subsequent year, a program audit must be submitted to verify the use of grant funds.
- f) The cost of a program audit is an allowable use of grant funds.