



**COMPREHENSIVE COUNSELING INITIATIVE:
ENHANCING SCHOOL PRINCIPAL AND COUNSELOR PREPARATION PROGRAM
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

Lilly Endowment views education at all levels as indispensable to the personal, civic and economic well-being and success of individuals. It also is convinced that Indiana must continue to develop the skilled workforce and intellectual capital that are essential for the state and its residents to prosper. Accordingly, the Endowment funds efforts to: 1) strengthen educational institutions and youth-serving nonprofit organizations; 2) enhance the effectiveness and morale of teachers, professors, school leaders and counselors; 3) provide resources for students to succeed across the P-16 continuum and in their pursuit of career success; and 4) engage community partners in the development of promising programs and initiatives that enhance the quality of life in Indiana and make it a place that businesses and their employees want to call home.

The Endowment believes that effective counseling programs in Indiana's K-12 schools can further these aims and enhance the impact of these efforts. To that end, the Endowment recently announced a statewide, competitive Comprehensive Counseling Initiative for Indiana K-12 Students (Counseling Initiative) to promote and support the development and implementation of innovative, promising and sustainable comprehensive counseling models to address the academic, college, career, and social and emotional counseling needs of K-12 students in Indiana public school corporations and charter schools. The Endowment's ultimate aim for the Counseling Initiative is to increase significantly the number of K-12 students in Indiana who are emotionally healthy, realize academic success, graduate from high school, obtain valuable postsecondary credentials, certifications and degrees necessary for meaningful employment, and are prepared to compete and prosper in the global society in which they will live and work. Information on this initiative is at: <http://www.lillyendowment.org/ed/counsel/Counseling%20RFP.pdf>.

The Endowment recognizes that school principals and counselors all play vital roles in addressing the academic, college, career, and social and emotional counseling needs of K-12 students. The Endowment therefore offers as part of the Counseling Initiative a new round of grant opportunities, as described in more detail below, that are focused on preparation programs for school principals and counselors. (For purposes of this initiative, the term "principal" includes school administrators.) Indiana public or private nonprofit colleges and universities that have such programs accredited by the Higher Learning Commission and that have Building Level Administrator or School Counselor programs approved by the Indiana Department of Education may apply.

Background

More than 20 years ago, the Endowment commissioned the study, *High Hopes Long Odds*, which was coordinated and disseminated by the Indiana Youth Institute (IYI). The study, prepared with the assistance of scholars from the University of Chicago and Harvard University, found significant disparities between the career aspirations of Indiana's middle school students and the students' and their parents' understanding of the steps that needed to be taken for the students to achieve those aspirations. The study highlighted the important role effective school counseling could play in addressing these disparities but noted that often counselors were too busy to provide adequate attention to those issues.

While there have been some improvements in counseling since *High Hopes Long Odds* was released, significant challenges regarding the scale and quality of counseling in Indiana's K-12 schools persist. According to (2010-11) survey data from the National Association for College Admission Counseling, Indiana ranked 45th out of the 50 states and the District of Columbia in the number of K-12 students per counselor with an average of one counselor for every 620 students. The American School Counselor Association recommends a ratio of one counselor for every 250 students.

The need to improve and expand counseling in Indiana schools was affirmed in a 2014 study supported by the Indiana Chamber of Commerce Foundation (Chamber Foundation) entitled *Indiana School Counseling Research Review*. The study provided an update on the state of school counseling in Indiana and noted that many of the issues and challenges highlighted in the 1994 *High Hopes Long Odds* study persist. The 2014 study's report included a brief history of national and state models of school counseling trends, survey results from Indiana school counselors, and research on state standards, counselor-to-student ratios and licensure requirements.

A few key findings from the 2014 study included:

- Increasingly, counselors are relied upon to perform noncounseling, tending duties (assisting with lunch and bus supervision) and a variety of noncounseling administrative duties (e.g., administering state assessments, Advanced Placement exams and other tests).
- Broad job descriptions result in inconsistent expectations between administrators and counselors about counselor responsibilities.
- With respect to performance reviews, too many counselors are still evaluated using criteria and standards developed for teacher evaluations despite the existence of better evaluation rubrics designed specifically for counselors.
- Repeated adjustments to state graduation requirements over the last several years mean that high school counselors must be versed in multiple sets of graduation requirements for students in grades 9-12. Counselors also are asked to assist students in developing individual graduation plans beginning in the sixth grade and often are responsible for helping 21st Century Scholars fulfill the Scholar Success Program requirements to qualify for important state aid.

- Counselors are increasingly confronted with competing demands to allocate more time to the social and emotional needs of students and academic counseling, which leaves a shortage of time for college and career counseling.
- Finally, counselors have limited professional development opportunities related to college and career counseling.

Addressing these and related issues for K-12 counselors, the report offers concluding recommendations:

- Hire more elementary school counselors;
- Tighten the licensing requirements for school counselors;
- Train principals about [the role of] school counselors;
- Expand what’s working;
- Rethink [be proactive to improve] student-to-counselor ratios;
- Provide [to counselors] broader career, college and postsecondary education information;
- Ensure counselor education programs prepare graduates for the realities of school counseling.

It is important to put Indiana students’ academic, college and career readiness needs and their social and emotional needs in the context of relevant comparisons of Indiana with other states. According to IYI’s *Youth Suicide* issue brief (April 2014), suicide has been the second-leading cause of death for young Hoosiers between the ages of 15 and 24 since 2009. The same report also notes that in a national survey of 43 states, Indiana ranked first in the percentage of teenagers who have had thoughts of suicide and second in the percentage who have attempted to take their own lives.

In comparisons of the 50 states and the District of Columbia, Indiana ranks near the bottom with respect to citizens holding high-quality postsecondary degrees and certificates and lower than each of our neighboring states (American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau, 2014). In terms of economic success, in 2015 the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis reported the state’s per capita income ranking as 39th. Especially alarming is the trend that the state’s per capita income rank adjusted for inflation has declined over the past 20 years from 29th to 39th.

The Endowment believes that one way to enhance and support efforts to improve educational attainment and prepare individuals for successful lives now and in the future is by expanding and improving academic, college, career, and social and emotional counseling in Indiana’s K-12 schools. Across the continuum of K-12 education, school counselors play important roles in the healthy development of children and youth. According to the College Board, “Effective school counselors convey the expectation that all students, regardless of their background and economic status, can become college and career ready. Elementary counselors can help create early awareness of college and career options; middle school counselors can create opportunities to explore and deepen college and career knowledge; and high school counselors complete the continuum by creating access to college and career pathways that lead to the widest range of life options for students.”

To identify and document exemplary models of school counseling programming and to develop a framework of practices that schools could replicate, the Endowment provided funding in 2015 to the Chamber Foundation to work with the Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning (CELL) at the University of Indianapolis. Their report, *Recognizing Promising Models of School Counseling for Indiana: Summary & Findings*, confirmed that counselors are being asked to perform too many noncounseling duties and, as a result, they do not have sufficient time to address college and career readiness concerns and the social and emotional needs of students. Furthermore, the study indicated that too many counselor education programs in Indiana do not adequately prepare counselors for their responsibilities with respect to college and career counseling.

The Endowment also supported a study commissioned by the Chamber Foundation to explore the perceptions, partnerships and decision-making processes of school superintendents, principals, administrators and school counselors. The study, conducted by researchers from Butler University and Fleck Education, resulted in the report, *Superintendents & Principals: Partners in Success* (2016), which offered six recommendations:

- Institute school counselor leadership training.
- Improve administrator training programs.
- Enhance collaboration between administrators and school counselors.
- Develop a universal school counselor evaluation tool.
- Enhance overall professional development and consultation training.
- Create a statewide marketing campaign to educate the greater school community about the roles and responsibilities of an effective school counseling program.

**COMPREHENSIVE COUNSELING INITIATIVE:
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Recognizing the complex and systemic challenges to effective school counseling in Indiana's K-12 schools, the Endowment announced the Counseling Initiative to promote and support the development and implementation of innovative, promising and sustainable comprehensive counseling models that address the academic, college, career, and social and emotional counseling needs of K-12 students in Indiana's public school corporations and charter schools. As stated earlier, the ultimate aim of the Counseling Initiative is to increase significantly the number of Indiana students who are emotionally healthy, realize academic success, graduate from high school, obtain valuable postsecondary credentials, certifications and degrees necessary for meaningful employment, and are prepared to compete and prosper in the global society in which they will live and work.

Now, the Endowment is offering a complementary program for Indiana public or private nonprofit colleges and universities accredited by the Higher Learning Commission that have Building Level Administrator or School Counselor programs approved by the Indiana Department of Education (eligible applicants). This program is called the Comprehensive Counseling Initiative: Enhancing School Principal and Counselor Preparation Program (the Enhancement Program).

In furtherance of the ultimate aim of the Counseling Initiative, the two primary objectives of the Enhancement Program are as follows:

- To ensure that emerging school principals understand comprehensive counseling models and improve meaningfully (i) their preparation to ensure that the academic, career, college, and social and emotional needs are prioritized and properly addressed for Indiana's K-12 students, (ii) their expertise to recruit, evaluate properly and retain effective school counselors, and (iii) their ability to develop, oversee and advocate for effective school counseling programs, including with professionals inside the school and with external partners.
- To ensure that emerging school counselors understand comprehensive counseling models and improve meaningfully (i) their ability to develop and deliver specifically or broadly programs and services that address academic, career, college, and social and emotional counseling needs for Indiana's K-12 students, (ii) their preparation to work effectively with school administrators on the prioritization and deployment of a comprehensive counseling model, and (iii) their engagement with external partners and providers in the provision of other supportive services and programs.

There are two phases to the Enhancement Program: a noncompetitive planning grant phase and a competitive implementation grant phase. Both phases are open to eligible applicants.

Planning Grants

Each eligible applicant may request a planning grant of up to \$20,000 for a Building Level Administrator (Principal) Program or a planning grant of up to \$20,000 for a School Counselor (Counselor) Program, or both. Thus, an eligible applicant that offers both a Principal and a Counselor program may request a separate planning grant for each program. If an eligible applicant has multiple campuses that offer one or both programs, each campus may submit a planning grant request as if it were a separate college or university.

To request a planning grant, an eligible applicant must submit to the Endowment a request signed by both the president and a college dean or department chair who will be actively involved in the strategies and activities to be funded with the planning grant. Planning grant requests from campuses of multi-campus universities should be signed by both the chancellor or lead officer of the campus and the dean or department chair who will be actively involved in the strategies and activities to be funded with the planning grant and indicate that the president of the university has been informed of the submission of the planning grant request.

Letters of intent should be single-sided and sent to the Endowment by regular or express mail postmarked no later than Feb. 8, 2017.

The request should be one to two pages in length and include the following:

- The amount requested.
- An expression of interest in examining whether the eligible applicant's Principal or Counselor Program can be enhanced to further the objectives of the Enhancement Program. Although planning grant recipients will not be required to submit an implementation grant proposal, it is expected that most recipients will use planning grant funds largely to determine whether an implementation grant award could be used to fund sustainable activities that further the Enhancement Program's objectives.
- A brief overview of the eligible applicant's current Principal or Counselor Program (including curricula and key program activities). The overview should include information about the number of students currently enrolled in the Principal or Counselor Program and the numbers of enrollees in, and graduates of, such programs during the previous three years.
- A description of any engagements of primary or secondary schools, nonprofit organizations, governmental entities, community leaders or businesses with its Principal and Counselor Program, e.g., K-12 schools that host college and university student practicums, business executives who serve as adjunct professors, or agencies that provide internship experiences for college and university students preparing for a principal or counseling career.
- A general description of the eligible applicant's anticipated strategies and activities to be supported by the planning grant, a budget for those activities and a related budget narrative. Examples of possible strategies and activities are listed below, but the list is not to be viewed as required, exclusive or exhaustive.
- A statement of whether or not the eligible applicant presently contemplates submission of an implementation grant proposal.

Planning grant funding may be used to support a wide range of strategies and activities to determine if the eligible applicant could enhance its Principal or Counselor Program in ways that would further the objectives of the Enhancement Program. Such strategies or activities might include:

- Planning, organizing and participating in collaborative meetings with representatives from K-12 schools, community groups, government agencies, professional associations, college or university program alumni, or businesses to investigate gaps in the eligible applicant's preparation of principals and counselors for their roles in K-12 counseling.
- Conducting research with respect to planning tools, resources and best practices for preparing school principals and counselors to address the academic, college, career, and social and emotional needs of K-12 students.
- Visiting with exemplary principal or counselor preparation programs at other colleges or universities.
- Attending conferences featuring sessions on exemplary principal or counselor preparation programs.
- Analyzing data with respect to placement, compensation, turnover and other aspects of the K-12 counseling profession.

- Devoting staff to the development of the design, objectives, goals or evaluation plans for programs, curricula or activities that could be included in an implementation grant proposal.
- Engaging consultants to perform a program assessment, conduct best practices research, engage in program redesign or provide technical assistance in preparing grant applications.

The Endowment expects to award planning grants by Feb. 28, 2017.

Implementation Grants

Implementation grants will be awarded on a competitive basis, with maximum awards of \$150,000 to support a Principal Program or \$200,000 to support a Counselor Program. An eligible applicant and each campus of a multi-campus university may propose to support either a Principal Program, a Counselor Program, or both.

Receiving a planning grant is not a prerequisite to submitting an implementation grant proposal; however, each proposal for an implementation grant should demonstrate that the eligible applicant has engaged in a thoughtful and detailed process similar to what would be funded and followed with planning grant support.

To be considered for an implementation grant, an eligible applicant should prepare and submit a one-page executive summary and a narrative not to exceed eight pages. If an eligible applicant has both a Principal Program and a Counselor Program, it may propose a separate implementation grant for each program. As with planning grant requests, if an eligible applicant has multiple campuses that offer one or both of these programs, each campus may submit an implementation grant proposal or grant proposals as if it were a separate college or university.

Implementation grant proposals should be single-sided and sent to the Endowment by regular or express mail postmarked no later than June 30, 2017.

The Executive Summary for an implementation grant proposal should include the following elements:

- The amount proposed.
- An overview of the faculty, staff, counselors, administrators, teachers, community organizations, professional organizations, businesses, consultants and others who led the preparation of the implementation grant proposal and those who will lead or manage its implementation of the grant if the college's or university's proposal is approved.
- A brief description of the activities or program elements to be funded through the proposed implementation grant to enhance the eligible applicant's Principal or Counselor Program in furtherance of the objectives of the Enhancement Program.
- The expected outcomes of the programs and activities to be funded through the proposed implementation grant and a broad overview of the metrics, methods, and other quantitative or qualitative criteria that will be used to assess those outcomes.

The narrative should include the following elements:

- A description of the eligible applicant's existing Principal or Counselor Program, including curricular, practicum, and related activities and components.
- A description of the enhancements to the eligible applicant's Principal or Counselor Program it proposes to be funded by the implementation grant and how such enhancements are additive to its current programs and will further the objectives of the Enhancement Program.
- An outline of specific goals, performance indicators and baseline data that will be used to assess the accomplishment of the eligible applicant's implementation grant-funded programs and activities.
- An indication of how the implementation grant-funded activities and programs will be sustained after the grant expires. Proposals that demonstrate leveraging of financial support from sources other than the Endowment will receive favorable consideration.

An implementation grant proposal should also include appendices that contain the following information:

- A listing of personnel (faculty, administrators and others) currently involved in the Principal or Counselor Program, courses or other activities that will be supported or affected by the implementation grant and an abbreviated (five pages maximum) curriculum vita for each of these individuals. If new personnel are being proposed, general job descriptions and hiring plans should be provided.
- Statements of support from K-12 school staff or faculty, community representatives, public officials, business leaders or others demonstrating knowledge of and support for the proposal and their commitment to help implement and sustain the program enhancements or activities described in it.
- A Gantt chart depicting the timeline for proposed activities and performance indicators to be accomplished on an annual basis for each time period ending June 30 for the duration of the grant.
- The current annual budget for the eligible applicant's Principal or Counselor Program.
- A detailed line-item budget and budget narrative for each of the fiscal years in the proposed grant period. The proposed grant period must end no later than June 30, 2021. Within the grant period, implementation grant funds may be used according to a timetable at the discretion of the grant recipient.

Implementation grant funding may be used to support a wide range of enhancements to an eligible applicant's Principal or Counselor Programs in ways that further the Enhancement Program's objectives. Such activities might include:

- Developing new course offerings;
- Adding features to current courses and practicum or internship opportunities;
- Recruiting adjunct faculty to teach content-specific topics or courses;
- Offering continuing education for college or university faculty to update their knowledge and skills relating to comprehensive school counseling models;

- Engaging in expanded outreach efforts to prospective program license seekers or degree seekers;
- Attending seminars and conferences with K-12 school representatives, employers, public officials, mental health professionals and others to address the academic, college, career, and social and emotional counseling needs of Indiana K-12 students.

Several factors that might be considered in developing program enhancements to be proposed for funding by an implementation grant include the following:

Principal Programs: Principals should be prepared to lead and support school counseling staff and possess a clear and accurate understanding of essential counseling duties, effective counselor evaluation models and techniques, appropriate accountability standards, and the important roles that counselors can play in staff and faculty decision making. In preparing implementation grant proposals with respect to Principal Programs, eligible applicants are encouraged to consider preparation programs, curricula and activities that prepare principals in matters such as the following:

- Understanding best practice comprehensive counseling models, offering effective counselor training, providing opportunities for professional development and continuing education, and offering related school administrator support for counselor success.
- Deploying effectively counseling staff and resources and engaging community organizations, businesses and others to enhance school counseling programs.
- Adopting counselor evaluation practices that appropriately address the roles counselors play in the holistic and healthy development of students.
- Engaging school counselors as integral members of school administrative and faculty teams.

Counselor Programs: Counselors should be prepared to examine, evaluate, enhance and expand programs, services, practices and curricula that address the academic, college, career, and social and emotional counseling needs of K-12 students. In preparing implementation grant proposals with respect to Counselor Programs, eligible applicants are encouraged to consider programs, curricula and activities that prepare counselors in matters such as the following:

- Understanding best practice comprehensive counseling models and effective techniques that support in a comprehensive manner academic, college, career, and social and emotional counseling.
- Aligning counseling programs, services and practices with school district and individual school goals and anticipated needs.
- Engaging in continuing education resources, peer learning and professional development opportunities.
- Seeking out and utilizing online tools and related materials to complement, organize and evaluate counseling activities.

Criteria for Review

The following criteria, among others, will guide the Endowment's grantmaking decisions with respect to implementation grant proposals:

- The extent to which the proposal demonstrates that the eligible applicant explored relevant research on best practices in Principal or Counselor Programs, has compared its current programs to best practices, and has thoughtfully identified and described the strengths and weaknesses of its current programs compared to which it aspires.
- The extent to which the activities and strategies it proposes further the Enhancement Program's objectives and are compelling and clearly articulated.
- The extent to which the proposal demonstrates meaningful engagement with K-12 schools, professional associations, community partners or other stakeholders in the development of the proposal and that engagement with these partners will continue through implementation. If the applicant did not or will not engage others in planning and implementing a proposal, it should describe the rationale for not doing so.
- The extent to which the proposal demonstrates that the eligible applicant is committed to implementing the proposed enhancements to its Principal or Counselor Program within the time frame represented and to sustaining these enhancements after the implementation grant period ends. Proposals that demonstrate support from sources other than the Endowment will be favored.
- The extent to which the proposal indicates that the eligible applicant has developed and is committed to conducting an evaluation plan to demonstrate the impact of the proposed enhancements, including qualitative and quantitative evaluation measures.

Timeline

The timeline for planning and implementation grant submissions and awards is as follows:

- Planning grant requests must be sent to the Endowment by regular or express mail postmarked no later than Feb. 8, 2017.
- Planning grant applicants should be notified of grant approvals by Feb. 28, 2017.
- Implementation grant proposals must be sent to the Endowment by regular or express mail postmarked no later than June 30, 2017.
- Implementation grant applicants should be notified of grant approvals by Sept. 30, 2017.

Grant proposals and inquiries should be sent to:

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