



Security -Related Infrastructure Grant Report

The Nebraska State Board of Education developed Rule 58 to establish and administer a competitive grant program aimed at funding security-related infrastructure projects for school districts and educational service units (ESUs), including those acting on behalf of approved or accredited nonpublic schools.

Following a public hearing held on January 3, 2024, Rule 58 was officially signed into law by the Governor on March 10, 2024. Subsequently, the Office of Coordinated Student Support Services—School Safety Team—developed a comprehensive and competitive grant application process. This process was designed to ensure equitable distribution of funds to address critical infrastructure needs, leveraging a needs-based assessment and evidence-based safety practices. The application process utilized a series of questions and answers in a needs assessment, program needs and objectives, allowable uses, and budget summary for each applicant to complete. The NDE then created a 30-point rubric utilizing the application content and an Infrastructure Grant Application Evaluation Committee. The committee consisted of ten individuals to review the submitted applications against the 30-point rubric to determine awardees to receive a portion of the grant funds. Committee members were NDE administration, assistant administrators, directors, school safety team members, mental health personnel, program coordinators, former superintendents, and principals. The committee reviewed the school district and ESU submitted applications for content within the application process according to the rubric expectations to determine acceptable projects and dollar amounts to be awarded.

On February 14, 2024, The Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) released a Request For Proposals (RFP) for grants for school safety and security program during years in which grant funds are available. To support schools in navigating the application process, the School Safety Team conducted live webinars and provided recorded webinars for later viewing. These sessions offered an overview of the application process, addressed questions from applicants, and provided valuable feedback to guide schools in submitting strong applications. School Safety & Security-Related infrastructure Grant had 217 applicants 162 public and 55 nonpublic apply for a portion of the 10 million dollars in funds.

Each application was reviewed by knowledgeable NDE staff with knowledge of appropriate school safety strategies. Reviewers scored the applications using a weighted rubric with the components of; program(s): (needs, objectives, assessment, & implementation), stakeholder engagement, poverty percentage, evidence-based programs, and allowable uses.



Total amount requested by the schools is \$60,419,376 with the initial recommended by the committee at \$16,373,718.

Any grant funds awarded had to be obligated within one year of the date the funds were received by the school district or educational service unit or be returned to the Department. Funds were distributed to the awarded school districts or educational service units on August 16, 2024, and will need to have funds obligated by August 15, 2025.

During this Security-Related Infrastructure Grant Application period over \$60 million in requests were received from 217 school districts or schools with only \$10 million to distribute among the qualified applicant candidates from the public and non-public school sectors. Due to the overabundance of requests, the Infrastructure Evaluation Committee made the determination to prioritize funding projects falling in the prevention status of the four pillars of school safety (prevention, preparedness, response, recovery). Known best practice for saving lives of school students, staff, and visitors, established through The Sandy Hook Commission Report, and supported by the Iloveguys Foundation, is for all parties to remain behind locked doors. Therefore, the evaluation committee determined doors, locks, vestibules/entry ways, and access systems to be the most preventative measures for infrastructure needs in Nebraska schools and the majority of grant funds were used for such purposes for this period of grant funding. The rest of the funds were used for items like camera's/surveillance systems, bullet proof glass, fencing, and AED's.

Per Nebraska Revised Statue 79-3108 and Rule 58, the following report is due to the Clerk of the Legislature regarding Regulations for the Security-Related Infrastructure Grant:

- (A) The total number of awarded school districts or schools is one hundred and sixty-four (164).
- (B) The total number of awarded public school districts is one hundred and twenty (120) and non-public schools is forty-four (44).
- (D) The exact grade configurations covered under this grant have yet to be determined. Grade configurations will vary by the school district buildings requiring infrastructure needs in the K-12 grade levels. Not all grant recipients have reported this information as of the date of this report.



- (E & F & G)
 - One hundred and twenty (120) awarded applicants are public school districts, which received \$8,894,333 of the grant funds.
 - Forty-four (44) of the awarded applicants are non-public schools, which received \$1,105,667 of the grant funds or 11% of the ten million awarded funds.
 - The reported total student-base awarded under this grant is 194,384 students across both public and non-public schools.
 - Thirteen (13) awarded school districts with 140,361 students are from urban areas.
 - One hundred and fifty-one (151) awarded school districts covering 54,023 students are in rural areas.
 - Most of the awarded student base are in urban areas. However, 92% of the schools awarded are in geographic rural areas.
 - Geographically the infrastructure grant supports schools spread out across the state and is not confined to one area over another.
 - Most of the awarded non-public schools are geographically located in urban areas.
 - We do not currently have the grant data based on the school student population size. We will be receiving this data upon school's reporting their obligation of grant funds on August 15, 2025.

- (H & I) Fifty-three (53) Districts or Schools that applied for a portion of the Infrastructure Grant funds did not receive funds due to some of the following reasons:
 - They did not complete the application process correctly.
 - Their application score was below the minimum threshold rubric score of 15 out of 30-point total established by the Infrastructure Grant Committee.
 - Their infrastructure need request was for something not covered under the infrastructure grant. Examples:
 - Request for personnel (SRO's, mental health professionals).
 - Request for mental health services.



- Other unrelated infrastructure items.
- District or schools, which met the minimum threshold rubric score of 15 and only requested items the Infrastructure Grant Committee considered as less preventative, received only the minimum award amount of \$2000. Examples considered less preventative:
 - Bullet proof glass film.
 - Camera's/surveillance equipment
 - AED's
- Nine (9) districts or schools refused their \$2,000 minimum award amount due to it not fully funding the project(s) they had planned.
 - These funds were reallocated (2k each) to the top nine scored districts or schools to apply towards their project(s).

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