

Fiscal Year 2026

Access and Equity in Dual Credit grant
Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)*



Submit Application Package to:

<https://il.amplifund.com/Public/Opportunities/Details/f52c562f-b49d-43a8-9727-29dbbf0c88e4>

Application Due Date: *Friday, January 30, 2026 at 11:59 p.m. CST*

The FY26 **Access and Equity in Dual Credit** grant period runs
April 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027

Grant program contact:

Adrienne Pickett, Senior Director for Academic Innovation & Partnerships

Illinois Community College Board

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*Exempt from the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) per PA 102-626, effective 8/27/21

UNIFORM NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY (NOFO)

SUMMARY INFORMATION

1.	Awarding Agency Name:	<i>Illinois Community College Board (ICCB)</i>
2.	Agency Contact:	<i>Adrienne Pickett, Senior Director for Academic Innovation and Partnerships, Adrienne.N.Pickett@Illinois.gov 217-558-2163</i>
3.	Announcement Type:	<i>Initial announcement</i>
4.	Type of Assistance Instrument:	<i>Grant</i>
5.	Funding Opportunity Number:	<i>Not applicable</i>
6.	Funding Opportunity Title:	<i>FY26 Access and Equity in Dual Credit Grant</i>
7.	CSFA Number:	<i>Not applicable</i>
8.	CSFA Popular Name:	<i>Not applicable</i>
9.	CFDA Number(s):	<i>Not applicable</i>
10.	Grant Period:	<i>April 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027</i>
11.	Anticipated Number of Awards:	<i>Up to 30</i>
12.	Estimated Total Program Funding:	<i>\$2,500,000</i>
13.	Award Range	<i>Up to \$100,000</i>
14.	Source of Funding:	<i>State</i>
15.	Cost Sharing/Matching Requirement:	<i>No</i>
16.	Indirect Costs Allowed:	<i>Yes</i>
	Restrictions on Indirect Costs:	<i>Indirect costs are capped at 15% of the award amount (Note: This is not an alternative rate.)</i>
17.	Posted Date:	<i>Monday, December 1, 2025</i>
18.	Closing Date for Applications:	<i>Friday, January 30, 2026, 11:59 p.m. CST</i>
19.	Technical Assistance:	<p><i>A Bidder's Conference webinar will be held on Monday, December 8th at 12:00 p.m. (noon). The Webex meeting link can be found at the end of this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO).</i></p> <p><i>Additional technical assistance and accessibility support will be provided to all grant recipients throughout the FY26 AEDC grant period. This includes guidance on implementation, compliance, and reporting, as well as resources to ensure equitable access and effective delivery of dual credit programming across diverse educational settings.</i></p>

A. Background and Purpose

Research has consistently demonstrated the positive impact of dual credit participation on student enrollment, persistence, and degree completion. Notably, the number of college credits earned through dual credit coursework is directly correlated with improved educational outcomes. Students who complete at least one semester of college credit while in high school not only save time and money but also position themselves more competitively for long-term academic and career success.¹

From a policy standpoint, enabling more students to complete a full semester of dual credit is a strategic and cost-effective approach to accelerating postsecondary attainment and achieving key momentum milestones. Furthermore, when dual credit opportunities are made more accessible—particularly to historically underserved student populations—all students benefit from the increased equity, readiness, and opportunity such programs provide.

The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) invites community colleges to apply for the FY26 Access and Equity in Dual Credit (AEDC) Project Grant. Now entering its third cycle, the FY26 AEDC grant aligns with the stated outcomes of the amended Dual Credit Quality Act (DCQA), Public Act 104-12, effective June 30, 2025. The purpose of the DCQA is to facilitate improved access and equity in dual credit opportunities across Illinois by accomplishing what is stated in 110 ILCS 27/10.² Successful FY26 AEDC grant applications will prioritize the statutory purpose of dual credit by focusing projects on the following required goals: 1. Supporting and improving equitable access to dual credit opportunities and 2. Providing holistic support for student success and persistence.

B. Eligible Applicants

All Illinois community colleges are eligible to apply for this Notice of Funding Opportunity. ICCB will fund a maximum of \$2,500,000 to selected community colleges to incentivize the equitable enhancement, expansion and support of dual credit efforts in the state. The maximum award is \$100,000. All 45 public community colleges in Illinois are eligible to apply. However, ICCB will only accept one application per community college.

C. Target Population

The underserved student population of focus is determined by each community college district; however, priority will be given to applications that serve at least one of the following targeted populations:

- A high percentage of the students in the high school district participate in the federal free lunch program according to reported statistics from the State Board of Education; or
- Student populations with limited access to dual credit programming, including those in rural areas, those with disabilities, first generation students, as well as historically underserved students.

¹ Taylor, J. L., Allen, T. O., An, B. P., Denecker, C., Edmunds, J. A., Fink, J., Giani, M. S., Hodara, M., Hu, X., Tobolowsky, B.F., & Chen, W. (2022). Research priorities for advancing equitable dual enrollment policy and practice. Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah.

https://cherp.utah.edu/_resources/documents/publications/research_priorities_for_advancing_equitable_dual_enrollment_policy_and_practice.pdf.

² [Bill Text: IL HB2967 | 2025-2026 | 104th General Assembly | Enrolled | LegiScan](#). Expanding equitable access to dual credit for all students, especially those from historically underserved populations; ensuring high-quality instruction and alignment with postsecondary standards; promoting strategic partnerships between secondary and postsecondary institutions; supporting credentialing and professional development for dual credit instructors; and advancing student success through evidence-based practices and holistic support systems.

D. Goals, Objectives, and Priority Activities

The FY26 AEDC grant aims to increase and enhance equitable access to dual credit opportunities particularly by expanding the number of credits high school students earn toward IAI GECC transfer and CTE pathways. ***Note: Goals 1 and 2 are required for each applicant's grant project. Goals 3 and 4 are optional and may be pursued in addition to but not in place of Goals 1 and 2.***

Goal 1: Supporting and improving equitable access to dual credit opportunities (required).

Expand dual credit access statewide, with a focus on historically underserved student populations, while maintaining inclusive eligibility for all students.

Goal 2: Providing holistic support for student success and persistence (required).

Use data informed and student-centered practices to implement strategies that guide students through dual credit enrollment, college completion, and career entry.

Goal 3: Expanding opportunities for credentialing high school teachers for dual credit instruction and supporting their professional growth (optional).

Support high school teachers in obtaining the necessary academic credentials to become qualified dual credit high school instructors of courses aligned with grant-identified subject areas.

Goal 4: Facilitating ongoing education and professional development related to dual credit course instruction and program management (optional).

Offer professional development and engagement opportunities for college faculty and qualified dual credit high school instructors to deepen their understanding of dual credit policy, practice, and innovation.

Goals must include supporting data (institutional, local, regional, state contexts), priority activities (data informed, developed in support of objectives and performance measurements), key performance measures, and a timeline.

While developing the objectives, consider how performance will be measured and what performance indicators would reflect progress toward the objectives. These performance standards and measures should be considered with the data needs of the program.

E. Allowable Activities and Costs

The following list of allowable activities is not designed to be exhaustive and should be used as guidance.

Goal 1 - Supporting and improving equitable access to dual credit opportunities:

- Collaborate with community-based organizations, nonprofits, and anchor institutions to promote dual credit awareness and enrollment.
- Scale and replicate existing dual credit programs to additional high schools or districts.
- Establish clear postsecondary pathways that connect dual credit to college enrollment and completion.
- Provide transportation, tutoring, and technology access to support dual credit student participation.

Goal 2 - Providing holistic support for student success and persistence:

- Embed academic and career advising into dual credit programming to implement best practices.
- Use regional workforce data to align dual credit offerings with high-demand career pathways.

- Track student enrollment and progress in dual credit courses for career exploration and transfer planning.
- Expand access to transferable GECC courses (e.g., Math, English, Science) and CTE pathway courses.
- Create individualized student success plans that include postsecondary and career goals.

Goal 3 - Expanding opportunities for credentialing high school teachers for dual credit instruction and supporting their professional growth:

- Develop and approve professional development plans* for high school teachers pursuing dual credit instructor qualifications.
- Fund graduate coursework or credentialing programs directly related to dual credit subjects for high school faculty.
- Host workshops and trainings on dual credit pedagogy, curriculum alignment, and assessment.
- Provide stipends for high school teachers pursuing required qualifications.

*A professional development plan must identify which credentials the candidate will pursue and which courses will be taught as a result of completing the said credential. *Note: Up to 25% of grant expenditures may be allocated to this goal.*

Goal 4 - Facilitating ongoing education and professional development related to dual credit course instruction and program management:

- Attend state or national conferences focused on dual credit equity and early college.
- Facilitate mentorship or coaching between college faculty and high school teachers.
- Participate in ICCB-sponsored webinars, workshops, or learning communities.
- Engage in cross-institutional collaboration to share best practices and innovations.
- Host or attend professional development events focused on dual credit implementation, student support, and campus engagement.
- Create resource hubs or toolkits for dual credit instructors and administrators.

Supporting high school teachers on professional development plans with stipends and tuition assistance is allowable.

This grant may cover the cost of existing fees for students that qualify for support services through the grant (based upon criteria proposed by the college as a part of project design). However, new student fees implemented after March 1, 2026 are not allowed to be covered by these funds.

Grant recipients must provide a budget narrative explaining the reasonableness and necessity of all costs. Proposed and actual expenditures will be evaluated using standard grant regulations in state and federal law. Additional questions about acceptable grant activities and costs can be proposed at the Bidder's Conference and will be answered in a FAQ that will be made available on ICCB's website.

F. Application Package

This is a competitive process. Applications submitted under this grant program will undergo a merit-based review process. All parts of the application package must be completed by the deadline to be considered. Applicants should ensure that all elements are clearly addressed.

However, applicants **will not** be notified if there are items that are missing from their application. Applicants must use the templates provided in EUNA Grants (powered by AmpliFund): <https://il.amplifund.com/Public/Opportunities/Details/f52c562f-b49d-43a8-9727-29dbbf0c88e4>

Applicants must complete each section of the application in its entirety including the following information in the order listed below and utilizing a header for each Numbered Section as follows:

1. GATA-Exempt Grant Application (5 points)

Applicants must complete each section of the Application in its entirety including the following information in the order listed below and utilizing a header for each Numbered Section.

2. Abstract (5 points)

Provide a one-page (or less) abstract that may be single-spaced and describes the following:

- A description of the proposed project activities and services.
- A list of anticipated staff, consultants, partners, and service providers with whom the institution will engage.
- A list of the principal objectives and measurable goals as they relate to dual credit enhancement, expansion, and outcomes.
- A clear rationale and data marker for identifying how the identified target population will be reached via the project.

3. Project Narrative (40 points)

The Project Narrative submitted under this NOFO should be organized, clear, and understandable. The eligible applicant must submit a narrative of **no more than ten pages total** double spaced, 12-point font. Please note charts and graphs are a part of the page limitation.

The following information must be utilized as sub-headers for the **Project Narrative** in the order listed below.

- **Basic Project Information (10 points):** Provide a concise summary of the proposed project's scope, impact, regional context, and the population to be served.
- **Statement of Need (10 points):** This section should describe programmatic needs. Include a description of proposed activities **as it minimally relates to Goals one and two**, the identified characteristics of the target population to be served in the district, and the dual credit needs in the community/district service area, the anticipated impact of the activities in the district, including the impact on closing equity gaps for access to dual credit for the target population(s).
- **Fiscal Need (8 points):** Describe the specific financial needs of your institution to deliver the project proposed. Financial needs should be explicitly addressed.
- **Program Justification (10 points):** This statement should provide data on potential student impact. Institutional data should be provided to clearly identify need for additional support to assess and expand access to dual credit.
- **Scalability and Replicability (2 points):** Provide a description of how the project could be scaled or replicated by others in the State. *All resources and products developed with grant funds will be provided from the grantee to the ICCB to share with the field.*

4. Project Work Plan (30 points)

Clearly describe the project activities and associated timeline for each activity to be carried out during the grant period and person(s) responsible for each activity to be carried out during the grant period. The activities should clearly relate to the goals of the grant. **The Project Work plan must include the anticipated number of students to be served** with new or expanded programs. It should also include a description of the impact the project will have on students, the community,

the institution, etc. **Detailed descriptions should include measurable project goals, objectives, and activities and should include short-term and long-term indicators of success.** The expectation is that applicants will propose activities aligned with Goals 1 and 2 (minimally) and identify project objectives. **In addition, the plan must include a project timeline, inclusive of these goals.**

5. Description of Partnerships (10 points)

Please use of a chart or table in your description of partnerships that explains activities, outcomes, and the partner(s) responsible. A description of any partnerships (internal or external) should include the role of each partner and their area(s) of expertise. At least one anticipated partner, for instance a school district, a community organization, etc., should provide a letter of support.

6. Uniform Budget (10 Points)

Each applicant must submit an effective budget for only the initial grant period on the State of Illinois Uniform Grant Budget template. Applicants should submit budgets based upon the total estimated costs of the project using the 15-month grant period on the template. This grant is GATA-exempt (as noted on the title page); however, ICCB uses this budget template for all grant opportunities, including those exempt from GATA.

G. Application Submission Information – EUNA Grants (powered by AmpliFund) Submission

Each grant application package must be submitted no later than Friday, January 30, 2026 at 11:59p.m. CST in EUNA Grants. Grant application and materials will be found in EUNA Grants at the following link:

<https://il.amplifund.com/Public/Opportunities/Details/f52c562f-b49d-43a8-9727-29dbbf0c88e4>.

Please submit all questions electronically to iccb.dualcredit@Illinois.gov with the subject line: **[Community College's Name] FY26 AEDC grant**. It is up to the applicant to ensure that all items are completed and submitted via EUNA Grants.

A Bidder's Conference webinar will be held on **Monday, December 8th at 12:00 p.m. (noon).**

<https://illinois.webex.com/illinois/j.php?MTID=m131482727a6b613b56b7fe4faf5dda83>

Meeting number (access code): 2634 098 1188

Meeting password: PMwphuRG737

Interested applicants are encouraged to attend to receive important information and guidance regarding the FY26 AEDC grant application process. All questions asked and answered during the Bidder's Conference will be included in the FAQ that will be posted to ICCB's website.

H. Grant Pre-Qualification - N/A

I. Funding Information

Grant Period:

The grant period is April 1, 2026 - June 30, 2027 (fifteen months)

Funding Availability:

A total of \$2,500,000 is appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to the ICCB for grants to eligible entities for the implementation of the AEDC grant as outlined under this NOFO. ICCB will accept only one grant application per college.

Recipients are not eligible to renew or extend existing grant-funded projects but may supplement or scale current initiatives.

Funding Methodology:

A minimum of 60% of the FY26 AEDC grant’s scope and associated expenditures should be dedicated to the equitable expansion of **Type A dual credit courses**. This prioritization ensures that resources are strategically invested in high-impact offerings that promote access, affordability, and academic momentum—particularly for underserved student populations. Type A courses, which are delivered at high schools or district-managed locations, play a critical role in reducing barriers to college credit and advancing statewide goals for postsecondary attainment.³

Type A Course	Type B Course	Type C Course	Type D Course
<p>A dual credit course delivered at a high school or other district-managed location, taught by one or more qualified district-employed teachers.</p> <p>These courses allow students to earn both high school and college credit simultaneously, while remaining in a familiar learning environment that supports access and equity.</p>	<p>A dual credit course taught at a high school or other district-managed location by one or more qualified college faculty members.</p> <p>These courses provide students with the opportunity to earn both high school and college credit in a familiar setting, while benefiting from direct instruction by postsecondary educators.</p>	<p>A dual credit course delivered through alternative instructional models, including online formats, distance learning, co-teaching arrangements between district teachers and college faculty, or other hybrid combinations of Type A and Type B courses.</p> <p>These flexible approaches expand access to college credit by accommodating diverse learning environments and instructional resources.</p>	<p>A dual credit course taught at a college campus or a college-operated satellite location (not managed by the school district), delivered by one or more qualified college faculty members.</p> <p>These courses immerse high school students in the collegiate environment, offering rigorous academic experiences and direct access to college-level resources while earning both high school and college credit.</p>

Funding Deadlines:

Please note that no extensions will be given for expending funds.

- Grant funds must be obligated at the end of the grant period.
- Goods and products must be received by 60 days after the end of the grant period unless written authorization extending the timeline is provided by the Grantor.
- Services must be fully delivered within the grant period.
- Grant funds must be expended by 60 days after the end of the grant period.

Indirect Costs:

Indirect Costs are capped at 15% of the award amount. Institutions use their approved indirect cost rate (as documented on the GATA grantee portal) to accumulate eligible indirect costs up to the cap.

Cost Sharing or Matching:

No cost sharing or matching is required.

J. Review Criteria and Selection Process

The ICCB staff will use the criteria listed in this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) and a scoring rubric to review the applications and will award points accordingly. Decisions to award grants and the

³ The Model Partnership Agreement (MPA) identifies the different dual credit course types, see Frequently Asked Questions on the Model Partnership Agreement Under the Dual Credit Quality Act July 2019, P. 2. [DCQA_MPA_FAQ.pdf](#)

funding levels will be determined per application based upon compliance with the requirements of this NOFO and the scoring of the grant proposal.

Applicants must demonstrate that they meet all requirements under this NOFO as described throughout. Applications will be scored based on the following criterion:

- GATA-Exempt Grant Application and Abstract (10 points)
- Project Narrative (40 points)
- Project Work Plan (30 points)
- Description of Partnerships and Letter(s) of Support (10 points)
- Uniform Budget (10 points)

100 Points possible

Completion and submission of all required documents are through EUNA Grants at <https://il.amplifund.com/Public/Opportunities/Details/f52c562f-b49d-43a8-9727-29dbbf0c88e4>.

K. State Awarding Agency Contact

Adrienne Pickett

Senior Director for Academic Innovation & Partnerships

Illinois Community College Board

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Email: Adrienne.N.Pickett@Illinois.gov

L. Grant Deliverables

- Carry out deliverables of the proposed scope of work, encompassing all required activities for the selected Objective(s).
- Work to meet or exceed all of the identified indicators of performance.
- Report on quarterly programmatic progress reports and fiscal metrics via EUNA Grants.
- Participate in any required professional development, technical assistance, or learning workshops.

"Fixed Amount Award" means a type of grant agreement providing a specific level of support without regard to actual costs incurred under the award. While total funding will be predetermined for awards, reporting will be required. Grantee will receive the specific sum of the award regardless of the actual costs incurred.

Programmatic Progress Reports will be submitted on a quarterly basis by filling in a template and uploading the form to EUNA Grants. Instructions will be provided to grant recipients.