

Therapeutic Classroom Implementation Grant

Purpose

The Therapeutic Classroom Grant provides competitive grants to public school districts to establish therapeutic classrooms for learners ages 3 to 21 whose emotional, social, or behavioral needs interfere with their ability to be successful in their current educational environment (Iowa Code 256.25). Districts applying for the grant may seek funds to establish new classrooms. This worksheet will help prepare eligible schools to apply for a Therapeutic Classroom Implementation Grant.

Legislative Authority

Iowa Code 256.25 creates a competitive therapeutic classroom incentive grant for public school districts to establish therapeutic classroom(s). The grant provides an up-front award for start-up costs pending legislative appropriation for the 2026-2027 school year.

What is a Therapeutic Classroom?

"Therapeutic classroom" means a 'classroom' designed for the purpose of providing support for any student, with or without an Individualized Education Program (IEP), whose emotional, social or behavioral needs interfere with the student's ability to be successful in the current educational environment, with or without supports, until the student is able to successfully return to the student's current educational environment, with or without supports, including but not limited to the general education classroom.

Therapeutic classrooms are a part of a district's or building's tiers of support. The word 'classroom' is a descriptor of an educational set of services that create the educational environment that may include but is not required to include a separate physical setting from other students. [Iowa Administrative Code 281-14](#)

Eligibility Information

All Iowa public school districts establishing one or more new therapeutic classrooms are eligible to apply for the Therapeutic Classroom Grant.

A school or district may not apply for funding for previously established therapeutic classrooms.

Grant Application

Districts may apply for the Therapeutic Classroom grant by submitting their application in the Therapeutic Classroom Grant Application with a deadline of May 1, 2026. District applicants should prepare their application using the grant application items found on the [Therapeutic Classroom Grant webpage at educate.iowa.gov](#). Applications will be submitted through the Consolidated Accountability and Support Application (CASA).

Carefully follow the guidelines for uploading documents to CASA. Links to documents will not be accepted.

Grant Application Items

You may wish to complete the narrative sections in Word and then copy and paste them into CASA.

Introduction

Does your district intend to apply for the Therapeutic Classroom Incentive Grant for 2026-27? YES/NO

Contact Information

Provide the contact information for your Business Office.

Provide the contact information for your Therapeutic Classroom primary Program Contact/Representative.

Applicant Information

Indicate the size of the district: Small (0-599 students), Medium (600-2499 students) or Large (2500 or more students).

Indicate the [Behavioral Health District where your district office is located](#)

List the building name(s) and grade levels to be served through this grant.

Did your district apply for a Therapeutic Classroom Grant in previous years?

If yes, and funding was granted:

- Which prior year did you receive the grant award?
- Briefly describe the current status of work you've done with your previous grant, including the number of classrooms, building names, grade levels, and number of students served per year. This grant application allows only new therapeutic classrooms.

Assurances

Does this application have support from building and district leadership? YES/NO

The district assures that it has read and agrees to all assurances under the Therapeutic Classroom Grant Assurances. YES

Therapeutic Classroom Implementation Rubric

Complete and upload a copy of the Therapeutic Classroom Rubric for your building/district, provided in the application package. Save your completed rubric as a **PDF and upload it to CASA**, where requested. You may fill this out at the district or building level.

Therapeutic Classroom Narrative

1. Provide a comprehensive summary of your proposal based on your Therapeutic Classroom Implementation Rubric. Provide a timeline for implementation and ongoing monitoring of plans to address the components listed on the rubric. Include how you determined the need for Therapeutic Classroom/Services, including specific data, how this proposal will address or align with any previous or existing therapeutic classroom/services you've provided, and any other behavioral or mental health programs/funding you use. (2000 character limit)
2. Discuss strengths and opportunities for growth from the Leadership and Infrastructure components of the rubric. How will the required TC components be met? How will funds support implementation? (2000 character limit)
3. Discuss strengths and opportunities for growth from the Assessment & Data-Based Decision-making component of the rubric. How will the required components be met? How will funds support implementation? (2000 character limit)
4. Discuss strengths and opportunities for growth in the Universal Tier and Supplemental-Intensive Tiers components of the rubric. How will the required components be met? How will funds support implementation? (2000 character limit)

Optional - Collaborations/Partnerships

To establish therapeutic classroom(s) in the district, a district applicant may collaborate and partner with one or more school districts, area education agencies, accredited nonpublic schools, nonprofit agencies, and institutions. While collaborations are optional, in the event of a tie, competitive applicant districts with such partnerships will receive priority. This priority is required by Iowa Code 256.25.

Are you collaborating/partnering with external agencies to establish therapeutic classrooms in your district?
YES/NO

If so, provide a letter from each collaborating agency or organization outlining the roles and responsibilities of their collaboration. Upload as a **PDF**.

Use of Funds

Complete all tabs of the Therapeutic Classroom Budget Worksheet and then upload it to CASA. Upload as an **EXCEL file**. Do not use a link.

See Allowed Allocations and Expenditures for additional information.

Grant Award Information

Funds Available

The Therapeutic Classroom Grant provides up-front incentive funds. Pending legislation, the Iowa Department of Education will distribute up to the maximum amount allocated to competitive applicant districts using the following formulas.

The following guidelines apply

- Small Districts (0-599 students) may apply for funding 1-2 therapeutic classrooms
- Medium Districts (600-2499 students) may apply for funding 1-3 therapeutic classrooms
- Large Districts (2500 or more students) may apply for funding 1-6 therapeutic classrooms

Iowa Code requires classrooms to serve 1-5 students, 6-10 students, OR 11-15 students. The maximum allowable grant funding formula is based on the following student rates:

- 1-5 students = $SCPP \times 1.5 \times 5$
- 6-10 students = $SCPP \times 1.5 \times 10$
- 11-15 students = $SCPP \times 1.5 \times 15$

Total allowable funding = # of therapeutic classrooms x # of students/classroom

Note: The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice. The distribution of funds depends on their allocation. The grant is supplemental, and while it is based on the number of students the therapeutic programming will serve, it is independent of the per-pupil funding districts already receive.

Selection Criteria

Applicants will be awarded funds based on competitive selection criteria. Each grantee must implement a program that builds required therapeutic classroom supports. All therapeutic classrooms must be established to serve both students with and without IEPs. All applicants must meet the minimum score of 70 to be considered for funding.

The Department will evaluate and score each district applicant against the following competitive criteria:

Area	Description	Points
Need & Goals for Therapeutic Classroom/s Leadership/Infrastructure	Extent to which the applicant district has: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> clearly identified need identified how TC components for leadership and infrastructure will be met identified how funds will support leadership and infrastructure components 	20
Criteria for Classroom Referral, Admission, Monitoring and Exit (ADBDM)	Extent to which the applicant district has: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> outlined ADBDM for the building/district outlined ADBDM for student supports 	20
Therapeutic Classroom Plan Universal Supplemental-Intensive Tiers	Extent to which the applicant district outlined a plan to establish therapeutic classroom components, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identified how the universal tier will be met identified how supplemental-Intensive tiers will be met described how funds will support implementation 	45
Use of Funds	Extent to which the applicant district outlined allowable expenditures aligned with the required therapeutic classroom components with high-quality and evidence-based actions and activities.	15
	Total	100

Selection

The selection process below will be used in the following order to award district applicants after the district proposals are scored on the above competitive selection criteria. An effort will be made to fund awards across district sizes and regional districts.

Categories of competitive applicants will be prioritized in the following way:

1. New Districts previously applied, but never awarded
2. New Districts first-time applicants
3. Previously awarded district applicants (for new buildings and classrooms only)

Submission in CASA

All applications, with uploaded components, must be submitted through CASA. Please check with the administration for access. We encourage you to have the answers in Word, then cut/paste them into the corresponding location within CASA. Carefully follow the guidelines for uploading documents to CASA. Links to documents will not be accepted.

To access the Therapeutic Classroom Grant Application (FY27) data collection, follow the instructions below.

Instructions

1. Login to CASA using your EdPortal account login: <https://portal.ed.iowa.gov>
2. Click CASA on the menu.
3. Click on the "Other" folder.
4. Click on Therapeutic Classroom Grant Application (FY27).
5. Complete the required questions and click Submit.