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September 24, 2026

Subject: NCDD Youth Self-Advocacy Mini-Grant Application Now Open

Dear Partners,

The Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities (NCDD) is excited to announce the opening of the **Youth Self-Advocacy Group Mini-Grant Application** for the 2026–27 school year.

NCDD will award **\$500.00 mini-grants to 20 schools** to support transition-age youth (ages 14–21) with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) in forming youth self-advocacy groups. These groups are designed to help students build self-determination, strengthen their leadership skills, and elevate youth voice.

Who Can Apply?

Public and private schools are eligible. Small rural schools may partner and submit one combined application. Special consideration may be given to schools collaborating with community organizations such as 4-H Extension offices, local Arc chapters, and/or People First of Nebraska chapters.

What Funded Groups Do:

- Meet at least quarterly
- Strengthen youth voice
- Build leadership and self-determination
- Support inclusion in age-appropriate school or community clubs and activities

Important Note:

Funding is intended specifically for self-advocacy groups led by youth with I/DD. It is *not* intended for unified groups that include neurotypical peers.

To apply, please complete the attached **NCDD Youth Self-Advocacy Group Mini-Grant Application**. Applications are due **October 26, 2026**, and should be emailed to DHHS.DDCouncil@nebraska.gov.

Questions may also be sent to DHHS.DDCouncil@nebraska.gov.

Please share this announcement, along with the attached flyer and application, with anyone who may be interested in this opportunity.

Thank you for helping us support youth leadership and self-advocacy across Nebraska!

Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities Youth Self-Advocacy Group Mini-Grant Application

Purpose and Guidelines

The Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities (NCDD) has set aside funding for the 2026-27 school year to provide \$500.00 to twenty schools to support the development of youth self-advocacy groups. These federally funded mini-grants support opportunities for transition-age youth (14–21) with intellectual and developmental disabilities to form self-advocacy groups that build leadership and self-determination skills.

Both public and private schools are eligible to apply. It is also permissible for small schools in rural areas to partner and submit one combined application. Please note that this funding is intended specifically for self-advocacy groups led by youth with I/DD. It is *not* intended for unified groups that include neurotypical peers.

Funded groups must meet at least quarterly, strengthen youth voice, and support inclusion in age-appropriate community or school clubs and activities. Special consideration will be given to schools collaborating with other community organizations and programs (e.g., 4-H Extension Office, local Arc chapters and People First of NE chapters).

Please complete the following application sections. Feel free to provide this information in a separate document.

SECTION 1 – Applicant Information

School/Program Name:

District:

Applicant Name and Title:

Email and Phone:

School Principal/Supervisor Name:

SECTION 2 – Proposed Youth Self-Advocacy Group

A. Group Description (Short Narrative)

Provide a brief description of the youth self-advocacy group you intend to establish for individuals ages 14–21 with intellectual and developmental disabilities. In your narrative, summarize the group's purpose, goals, anticipated participants, and how you plan to connect youth with community resources (4-H Extension offices, local Arc chapters, local People first of Nebraska chapters), partners, or opportunities. Also include the outcomes you expect to achieve and note how the project will support

NCDD's mission in advocacy, capacity building, and systems change. Please limit your narrative to 1-2 pages.

B. Meeting Plan

Describe meeting frequency (minimum quarterly) and activities.

SECTION 3 – Work Plan (Short Narrative)

Outline your planned project activities for the school year and describe your intended objectives. Include a brief overview of each activity, the timeline for implementation, and the outcomes you expect to achieve.

SECTION 4 – Budget (Up to \$500)

Federal rules prohibit spending on certain items, such as food, beverages, or entertainment.

The source of this guidance is The Code of Federal Regulations: <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200>

Allowable Expenses Include:

- Resources for self-advocacy organizations to convene meetings, such as meeting materials, virtual platform subscriptions, or closed captioning services
- Facilitator stipend, supplies, and printing.
- Resources to train youth self-advocacy members on advocacy, leadership, disability rights, or self-determination skills.
- Speaker fees, speaker travel costs, or venue fees.
- Organizational staff time to carry out grant activities

Unallowable Expenses Include:

- Food and Refreshments: For any event lasting under 3.5 hours, funds shall **not** be used to purchase food for participants at grantee-sponsored advisory meetings, focus groups, etc.
- Capital Expenditures: Acquisition, construction, or structural renovation of facilities are **not** allowable expenses.
- Incentives and Giveaways: Funds shall **not** be used to purchase incentives (gift cards) or giveaways (pens, water bottles, trinkets, note pads, etc.) for participants at any grantee-sponsored event.
- Lobbying
- Fundraising
- Membership

For a complete list of allowable/unallowable expenses, visit the Code of Federal Regulations.

Budget Table:

Facilitator stipend: \$_____

Supplies/materials: \$_____

Other allowable costs (describe): \$_____

Total Request (max \$500): \$_____

In-Kind Match: Although in-kind match or support is not required, please indicate if your school plans to provide any (e.g., teacher special duty pay), demonstrating long-term commitment.

SECTION 5 – Project Sustainability

NCDD's Youth Self-Advocacy Group Mini-Grants are awarded for one school year. Applicants must describe their plan to sustain the project once Council funds end (e.g., who will maintain the project).

- The sustainability plan should identify the activities, features, or practices that the applicant wants to sustain.
- A description of whether their school or other agencies or collaborators will assume responsibility for maintaining the project.

Note: Schools who receive a mini-grant must reapply for additional funding through a competitive process.

SECTION 6 – Data and Reporting Commitments

As a condition of this federal funding, applicants agree to collect and provide data to NCDD on Key Performance Indicators (KPI) in both the mid-year and final reports. (KPI guidance will be provided.)

SECTION 7 – Signature

I certify the information provided is accurate and that funds will be used for allowable purposes.

Applicant Signature: _____ Date: _____

Administrator Signature: _____ Date: _____

Applications are due Monday, October 26, 2026.

Email completed application to DHHS.DDCouncil@nebraska.gov.

The NCDD Grant Review Committee will review and score all eligible applications.

The 20 highest-scoring applications will be selected. NCDD will notify applicants which schools are selected.

Build Youth Voice. Support Self-Advocacy.

NCDD Youth Self-Advocacy Group Mini-Grants | 2026–2027 School Year

NCDD will provide \$500.00 to 20 schools for the 2026–27 school year.

Mini-grants support transition-age youth ages 14–21 with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) in forming youth self-advocacy groups.

The purpose of the youth self-advocacy groups is to build self-determination and leadership skills.



1. GRANT AT A GLANCE



\$500
per school



20
schools



Ages
14–21



Public and private schools are eligible.

Small rural schools may partner and submit one combined application.

Special consideration may be given to schools collaborating with community organizations and programs, such as 4-H Extension offices, local Arc chapters, and/or People First of NE chapters.

3. WHAT FUNDED GROUPS DO



- Meet at least quarterly.
- Strengthen youth voice.
- Build leadership and self-determination.
- Support inclusion in age-appropriate community or school clubs and activities.

Note: Funding is not intended for unified groups that include neurotypical peers; rather, it is intended to support leadership development for students with I/DD.

4. WHAT TO INCLUDE IN THE APPLICATION

- ✓ Applicant information
- ✓ Group description and meeting plan
- ✓ School-year work plan
- ✓ Budget up to \$500
- ✓ Data/reporting commitments, including mid-year and final reports.
- ✓ Sustainability plan

Applicant/administrator signatures



Apply for a \$500 mini-grant

Complete the NCDD Youth Self-Advocacy Group Mini-Grant Application. Applications are due October 26, 2026, by emailing NCDD at DHHS. DDCouncil@nebraska.gov. Visit [NCDD website](https://www.ncdd.org).