



Sweeny ISD Education Foundation ***2024-2025 Bright Minds Grant Program***

Purpose: The Sweeny ISD Education Foundation Bright Minds Grant Program is intended to support Sweeny ISD students, faculty, and staff to inspire excellence, promote innovation, and support quality learning experiences.

Program Goals:

1. Fund special projects or items to help SISD meet its academic goals. These projects or items must be one-time Foundation funding opportunities that will not generate recurring Foundation funding obligations.
2. Recognize and reward (i.e., teachers, campuses, and programs) for innovative and creative academic approaches.
3. Provide funding to encourage and refine supplementary academic methods that impact learning beyond the traditional classroom approach.

Program Impact:

Year Implemented	2021	2022	2023	2024
Campuses Reached	3	3	6	3
Total Awarded	\$91,199	\$138,148	\$42,000	27,800

Guidelines for Bright Minds Grant Applications: The purpose of this grant program is not primarily to increase performance on a standardized test but rather to enhance and extend the educational experience in the classroom.

Persons Eligible to Apply for Grants: Individuals or teams employed by Sweeny Independent School District are involved in students' instruction. This list includes teachers, counselors, administrators, coaches, interventionists, and the operations department. If you have a question about your qualifications, don't hesitate to contact SISD Education Foundation Director Nicole Larson before applying.

Eligible Proposals to be funded for the Bright Minds Grant:

1. Innovative and creative projects that expand and enrich SISD's curriculum and do not supplant programs traditionally funded by the district, state, or federal budgets.
2. One-time, new projects.

3. Projects that reflect a teacher’s original idea or a creative adaptation of an existing teaching idea, project, or strategy.
4. Projects at another campus previously funded by the Education Foundation Bright Minds Grant Program.
5. Proposals for new projects are preferred over repeat requests unless the grant is the expansion of a previously outstanding project.
6. Instructional approaches or projects designed to begin during the 2024-2025 school year meet the selection criteria.

Proposals NOT ELIGIBLE to be funded for the Bright Minds Grant:

1. Repeat requests for the same projects already funded by the SISD Education Foundation at your campus.
2. Projects where materials or services are currently available through SISD, PTO, or other funding sources.
 - a. If the technology provided by the district can accomplish what you request through another medium, the request will not be funded—for example, Chromebooks provided by SISD versus video/recording devices of the same caliber.
3. Grants that request funds solely for student field trips need to be aligned with the classroom curriculum.
 - a. Field Trips may be funded when the primary purpose and budget of the grant are focused on the implementation in the classroom. Activities must represent one component of a well-planned project integrated with other activities related to district curriculum objectives and directly impact student learning.
4. Monetary incentives or “incentive” field trips.
5. Continued maintenance or funding of previously awarded projects. For example- landscaping or supplies to keep projects going for a community garden. This does not include expansions or “next level” funding to previously awarded projects.
6. A single teacher or group of the same teachers may not apply for multiple grants during the same cycle.
7. No funds will be awarded for consumables, salaries, food, subscriptions, or speaker fees not aligned with the classroom curriculum.

Award of Funds: Individual teacher grants are eligible for funding up to \$10,000. Team proposals such as grade-level departments, content areas, campuses, or district-level departments are eligible for funding up to \$15,000. The number of awards will depend on funds from the Sweeny ISD Education Foundation. If you have a question about what category your proposal fits into, don't hesitate to contact SISD Education Foundation Director Nicole Larson before applying.

Amount:	\$10,000	\$15,000
Proposal Level:	Individual Proposals	Team Proposals

Seasonal Grant Cycles:

Bright Minds, Fall Grant (May 1, 2024, to September 22, 2024)

- Launches midnight on May 1, 2024
- Due Date 11:59 p.m. on September 22, 2024

Revised: April 2024

- Education Foundation Board of Directors Presentation October 2, 2024
 - Be prepared to answer questions regarding your grant request.
- Bright Minds Grant Express Friday, Friday, October 11, 2024
- Implementation Due Date: May 31, 2025
- Return the Impact Packet about your Bright Mind Grant to the Education Foundation by January 6, 2026.
 - When returning your impact packet, the Education Foundation will schedule a time for you to present your grant and its impact.

Implementation Date: Sweeny Education Foundation Bright Minds Grants must be spent no later than May 31, 2025, for the 24-25 Bright Minds Grants.

Selection Criteria: The project is appropriate if you can answer YES to the following questions:

- Add depth to the curriculum, promote innovation, and help motivate students?
- Support the goals and values of SISD while enhancing curriculum objectives?
- Use other means of evaluation besides standardized testing?
- Enrich the SISD curriculum and not supplant programs traditionally funded by the district, state, or federal budgets?
- Fund a one-time opportunity that will not generate recurring funding obligations other than advancing to the “next level”?
- Support collaboration among grade levels, teams, departments, parents, or the community?
- Provide a sustainable program and possible community partnership?

Proposals representing a creative or innovative approach to accomplishing specific program objectives and providing a sound evaluation procedure are incorporated into the Bright Minds Grant. All Bright Minds Grant proposals must provide a clear and logical plan, including:

1. Specificity of the objectives
2. Clarity of description of instructional procedures or methods
3. Correlation between project design and need
4. Correlation between objectives and evaluations.

Selection Process:

1. Awarded winners will be notified during the Bright Minds Express. Those who were not funded will be advised after the Bright Minds Express to ensure the awards are secret. We are sorry for the pain this may cause those who do not receive an award. The SISD Education Foundation will provide thorough feedback to encourage the future success of grant applications- including scoring criteria, scorecards, and recommendations for future applications.
2. Project funds will be available 5-7 business days after your signed grant agreement is returned to the Education Foundation Executive Director. Account numbers for purchasing will be shared with the grant award recipient, campus personnel in charge of purchasing, and the campus principal.

Responsibilities for Grant Recipients:

1. Use the awards for purposes intended.
2. Complete the Grant Winner and Donor Appreciation Packets. These include, but are not limited to, post-grant evaluation reports, project photos, and impact reports provided by the SISD Education Foundation. Completing these packets, or the lack thereof, will be considered for future grant requests.
3. Agree to share feedback in staff development sessions, including successful procedures and ideas.
4. All recipients must include the Sweeny ISD Education Foundation logo and the name where their project or program is being displayed or recognized, including social media, websites, and newsletters. A logo file will be provided with the award packet. This will help raise awareness of SISD Education Foundation support.
5. If, for any reason, a grant recipient is unable to administer the approved, all funds will be returned to the SISD Education Foundation. The grant recipient may reapply later.
6. Funds not used for the project or program will be returned to the SISD Education Foundation.
7. All materials funded will remain the property of Sweeny ISD.
8. Notification to the SISD Education Foundation if you leave Sweeny ISD.
9. If the recipient of a teacher grant transfers to another school within Sweeny ISD, the teacher may transfer the grant program to the transfer school, subject to the approval of both campus principals. If the transferring teacher is one member of a group grant, the grant will remain at the school awarded the grant.
10. All POs will be closed on May 31, 2025. Any remaining funds will be returned to the SISD Education Foundation to support future grants.
11. Failure to fulfill all grant requirements may jeopardize receiving the current and future grant funds.

Guidelines for Completing the Application:

1. Fill out the Intent to Apply form on the SISD Education Foundation website.
 - a. Approval will be sent to your campus principal, director, or any department director that may be involved in the project or program.
 - b. Intent to Apply forms can be filled out at any time. You can only apply for the grant if you receive approval before the grant cycle opens.
2. If your Intent for Approval needs to be approved, you will receive an email with reasons for the denial or if our campus administrator or director needs more information.
3. Once approved, you will be emailed the Bright Minds Grant application to fill out. Applications will include the following:
 - a. Contact information for the primary contact for the application.
 - i. Please include all participants in a group application.
 - b. Narrative for the grant application

Bright Minds Grant Milestones

Bright Minds Grants Cycle:	Fall
Open Date	May 1, 2024
Due Date	September 22, 2024, at 11:59 pm
SISD Education Foundation Q&A	October 2, 2024
Bright Minds Grant Express	October 11, 2024
Implementation Date	May 31, 2025
Impact Packet Due	January 6, 2026

Grant Agreement:

1. I have obtained the consent of my principal/director to carry out his project.
2. If applicable, I agree that I have the approval of the district's Technology department.
3. If applicable, I agree that I have the approval of the district's Director of Operations department.
4. I agree to complete post-project evaluations, financial forms, and Donor Appreciation Packet within the state timeline.
5. I certify that I wrote this grant or was part of the team that wrote this grant and that grants awarded are subject to the rules and conditions of the Sweeny ISD Education Foundation.
6. I accept that the decision on the project's approval is up to the sole and absolute discretion of the Sweeny ISD Education Foundation.
7. I acknowledge the authority of the Sweeny ISD Education Foundation to withhold and recover grant funds in case such funds are, or appear to be, misused or not used for the intended purpose the grant was made or in the event the grant applicant is unable to administer the project. I agree to return any funds that are not used for said purposes.
8. I understand that I must use the Sweeny ISD Education Foundation Bright Minds Grant funds solely to enhance the educational experience of the students of Sweeny ISD and that my actions should further the mission of the SISD Education Foundation. All materials funded are the property of Sweeny ISD.
9. I have read and agree to all terms and guidelines stated in the Grant Agreement.