

MEMORANDUM

To: All District and School-Level Administrators and Teachers
From: Dr. Marcia Oglesby, *Director, DCSD Grants & Partnerships*
Through: Dr. Cherisse M. Campbell, *Chief, Community Engagement & Innovative Partnerships*
Date: February 27, 2026
Subject: *Funding Focus Friday: Innovative Education Fund Transforms Ideas Into Impact*

It's no secret that some of our greatest breakthroughs for students often begin with the creativity, resourcefulness, and commitment of our innovative educators and forward-thinking school leaders. I am pleased to share an exciting opportunity that aligns directly with our District's commitment to engagement, transformation, and measurable student achievement gains: the [Innovative Education Fund \(IEF\)](#), offered through the Georgia Foundation for Public Education.

The IEF, funded by Georgia's PEACH Education Tax Credit, offers \$25,000 to \$50,000 to pioneer programs that improve outcomes for Georgia students over a 12-month period. This opportunity invites creative DCSD thinkers to implement new ideas or expand already successful programs. **The application period is open through March 16.**

For the 2026 cycle, the Georgia Foundation for Public Education is offering three funding pathways:

- Prototype Grants: \$25K-\$50K to pilot a new, innovative education program or approach.
- Expansion Grants: \$25K-50K to scale an existing program that has demonstrated success.
- Innovation for Impact Fund: Up to \$30,000 for schools identified as CSI or TSI, beginning with a half-day "Innovation Sprint" to design targeted solutions for improving student outcomes.

Why This Opportunity Matters for DCSD

The IEF supports DCSD's goals of enhancing academic outcomes, increasing student engagement, and strengthening school-family-community partnerships. It gives schools the flexibility to create tailored programs while providing resources to measure impact and scale success. IEF grants are awarded upfront for immediate implementation, and grantees will track outcomes, share insights, and highlight best practices through mid-year and final reports, with opportunities for site visits to showcase their work.

Examples of Funded Programs

The IEF has supported programs that expand opportunities, enhance instruction, and improve student outcomes. The list of past grant winners is [HERE](#). A few examples include:

1. **Latin American Association + Cross Keys High School (DCSD)** - *\$50,000 Expansion Grant* - Expanded after-school and summer programming for thousands of students, providing academic support, enrichment opportunities, and culturally responsive services that strengthened attendance, engagement, and family involvement.
2. **Cartersville High School (Cartersville City Schools)** - *\$50,000 Prototype Grant* - Established a comprehensive mentorship and leadership program connecting students with educators and community leaders, resulting in improved academic performance, stronger relationships, and enhanced college and career readiness.

3. **Herman J. Russell West End Academy (Atlanta Public Schools) - \$45,000 Expansion Grant**
Expanded a STEAM club initiative that increased student exposure to science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics, fostering creativity, collaboration, and hands-on learning experiences that boosted student interest in STEM pathways.
4. **Marietta Sixth Grade Academy & Marietta Middle School (Marietta City Schools) - \$50,000 Prototype Grant** - Piloted a sheltered content program for newcomer English Learners, providing targeted language and academic instruction that improved comprehension, confidence, and academic success among multilingual learners.
5. **L.P. Miles Elementary School (Atlanta Public Schools) - \$25,000 Prototype Grant**
Launched the “Learn & Earn” Project-Based Learning initiative, which empowered students to explore entrepreneurship, develop real-world problem-solving skills, and engage in community-based projects that increased motivation and applied learning.
6. **Next Generation Men & Women, Inc. (Multi-District Partnership) - \$50,000 Expansion Grant**
Delivered workforce readiness, leadership development, and life-skills programming to students across multiple districts, equipping youth with the competencies needed to transition successfully into postsecondary education or careers.

These examples illustrate the wide-ranging opportunities IEF offers, including academic enrichment, mentorship, workforce readiness, and targeted support for special populations, all initiated by educators and partners who recognize a need and craft a solution.

Learn more about the IEF [HERE](#). Application portal is [HERE](#). For questions about the state application, contact Jaclyn Colona at jaclyn.colona@doe.k12.ga.us.

Remember to follow the [DCSD Grant Guidelines](#) and coordinate with [Grants & Partnerships](#) on next steps. We are here to support you in shaping your ideas and strengthening your submissions. To begin your application, have questions answered, or get experienced advice, email us at grantsandpartnerships@dekalbschoolsga.org.

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[Ms. Tanya Arrington](#), Strategic Partners Manager

[Dr. Donald Porter](#), Lead Grant Strategist
[Ms. Demetric Crittle](#), Coordinator

Looking for more grant inspiration and options? The full, searchable February 2026 issue of the Monthly Education Grants Alert (MEGA) is available [HERE](#).

Good luck!