

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: May 1, 2026
Subject: *Funding Focus Friday: Step Into Success with Shoes That Fit*

The Department of Grants and Partnerships is pleased to share an opportunity for schools to explore support through [Shoes That Fit](#). This national nonprofit organization provides new athletic shoes to children in need so they can attend school prepared to learn, play, and thrive. Shoes That Fit began in 1992 and now serves children across all 50 states and the District of Columbia, helping address one of the most visible signs of childhood poverty.

For many students, worn-out, too small, or uncomfortable shoes are not a minor issue. They can affect attendance, participation, self-esteem, classroom focus, physical activity, and peer engagement. This opportunity aligns closely with [DCSD's Strategic Plan priorities](#) by supporting student achievement, strengthening school-family-community engagement, and removing barriers that may prevent students from fully accessing the school experience.

Schools are encouraged to consider applying, especially where staff have identified students who may benefit from properly fitting athletic shoes. Through this program, students and teachers may benefit in several meaningful ways:

- **Improved student confidence and dignity:** New shoes can reduce embarrassment, peer teasing, and the stigma students may feel when their basic needs are visible to others.
- **Stronger classroom engagement:** Students who are more comfortable and less distracted by physical discomfort may be better prepared to focus, participate, and learn.
- **Increased physical activity and school participation:** Proper athletic shoes can help students take part in recess, physical education, sports, field days, and other school activities.
- **Support for attendance and readiness to learn:** Meeting a basic need can help students arrive at school feeling cared for, prepared, and connected.

Applying to [Shoes That Fit](#) is straightforward. Keep in mind that completing the Shoes That Fit [request form](#) adds a school to the organization's waiting list and does not guarantee that shoes will be provided. Also, about 100 schools are currently on the waiting list. Although the turnaround won't be immediate, getting your school into the queue is the first step.

After [submitting the request form](#), and especially if your school receives approval or follow-up from [Shoes That Fit](#), please notify the [Department of Grants and Partnerships](#) so we can track school participation and identify opportunities for additional support.

A new pair of properly fitting athletic shoes can remove a visible barrier to learning, restore student confidence, and help children participate more fully in school with dignity and joy. Thank you for

continuing to seek practical, student-centered resources that help our scholars step forward with confidence, dignity, and purpose.

Remember to follow the [DCSD Grant Guidelines](#) and coordinate with the [Department of Grants and 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.

[Dr. Marcia Oglesby](#), *Director*
[Ms. Tanya Arrington](#), *Strategic Partners Manager*

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

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

Good luck!