SWEENY INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
EDUCATION
FOUNDATION



BRIGHT MINDS GRANT

Where do I start?

Bright Minds Grant

The Sweeny ISD Education Foundation Bright Minds Grant intends to support Sweeny ISD students, faculty, and staff to inspire excellence, promote innovation, and support quality learning experiences. This presentation will serve as a guidebook on what the SISD Education Foundation is looking for in award-winning grants!





Where Do You Start?

- Will the grant idea be new and creative?
- What are you trying to do?
- What is the purpose?
- What do you want to accomplish?
- How are you going to do it?
- When do you want to do it?
- Who is going to do what?
- Who else is involved and how?
- What kind of resources are required?
- What are the costs?

Excellence. Innovation. Quality Learning.

WHAT IS INNOVATIVE?

- New and Creative!
  - Especially the way something is done
  - Something original
  - Solutions that meet new requirements
  - Enhances the educational experience
  - Inspires students to learn
  - Introduces new ideas or methods
  - New ideas on how something can be achieved.





THINK IN TERMS OF:

- Groundbreaking
- Pioneering
- Novel
- Modern
- State of the art
- Outside of the Box
- How to motivate students and activate their eagerness to be life-long learners



ELIGIBLE PROPOSALS

- 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
- One-time, new projects.
- Projects that reflect a teacher's original idea or a creative adaption of an existing teaching idea, project, or strategy.
- Projects currently done at another campus previously funded by the Education Foundation Bright Minds Grant Program.
- Proposals for new projects are preferred over repeat requests unless the grant is the expansion of a previously outstanding project.
- Instructional approaches or projects designed to begin during the 2022-2023 school year meet the selection criteria.

PROPOSALS NOT ELIGIBLE

- Repeat requests for the same projects already funded by the SISD Education Foundation at your campus.
- Projects where materials or services are currently available through SISD, PTO, or other funding sources.
- Grants that request funds solely for student field trips that are not aligned with the classroom curriculum.
- Monetary incentives or "incentive" field trips.
- 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.
- A single teacher or group may not apply for multiple grants during the same cycle.
- No funds will be awarded for consumables, salaries, food, subscriptions, or speaker fees not aligned with the classroom curriculum.

Successful Grant Writing Tips

- Read through the grant application and gather thoughts before beginning the application.
- Double check your grammar and spelling before uploading it to the grant application form.
- Be creative and original.
- Take yourself through the different roles if you are writing independently
- Divide up roles for your program or projects when working with a team of co-applicants.
- Use your strengths or group strengths.
- Ask colleagues for help.
- Seek out colleagues who have been a recipient of a SISD Education Foundation Bright Minds Grant for advice.
- Focus on the project, not the materials.



Successful Grant Writing Tips

- **Avoid using acronyms.**
- Be brief but concise.
- Be positive and compelling while telling your story.
- Keep the impact on the students at the forefront of why you are writing the grant.
- Avoid unsupported assumptions.
- Follow the SISD Education Foundation Bright Minds Grant guidelines.
- As a Non-Educator, review your work. This step will ensure that your proposal is clear, persuasive, and defined.
- Make sure to align your proposal to instruction, impact on students, and the district's values and goals.
- How will this grant motivate students to be life-longer learners?
- Proof your work- DO NOT RELY ON SPELL CHECK.





Develop a Timeline

- Use a backward design from the due date.
  - Rough out the applications.
  - Talk with your principal or supervisor.
    - Apply and receive approval for Intent to Apply.
  - Familiarize yourself with the grant applications.
  - Begin getting budget prices together and start gathering quotes.
  - Talk with others who are involved.
  - Talk with the tech specialist if the grant relates to technology.
  - Finalize the application.
  - Have applications reviewed by supervisor or colleagues.
  - Submit the completed grant application on time.
  - Do not wait until the last minute.



Overcoming Obstacles

- Show how it fits into SISD's strategic plan, vision, and goals.
- Relate to campus goals.
- Put objectives in simple terms.
- Don't just use numbers.
- Keep it acronym and jargon-free.
  - The SISD Education Foundation Bright Minds Grant Committee contains several non-educators, so watch acronyms and industry jargon.
- Focus on the project and not the materials.
- Watch your time! Don't be the last minute, Lucy.
- Ideas must be new and creative.
- It must not be something currently done on your campus unless taken to the next level.
- This must be a new way of accomplishing a goal that enhances student learning.
- Talk with your colleagues who have written grants in the past.



Overcoming Obstacles Cont.

- Evaluation of the objectives must be measurable:
  - Surveys, teacher feedback
  - Student and parent responses
  - Test scores
  - Increase in academic performance
  - Increase in attendance rate
  - Capturing student attention
  - Love of learning through the deliverables of our grant and other statistics.



Key Things to Remember

- Don't build your application around purchasing something for your classroom, campus, or department.
- Build it around the need - problem- idea- goal, and the creative way to address it.
- Do not forget to receive approval for your Intent to Apply before completing the application.
- If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact us.

Responsibilities for Grant Recipients

ACCOUNTABILITY FOR GRANT RECIPIENTS

- Use the awards for purposes intended.
- Complete the grant Winner and Donor Appreciation Packets.
  - Completing these packets, or lack thereof, will be considered for future grant requests.
- Agree to share feedback.
- The Sweeny ISD Education Foundation logo and name will be branded with the project or program.
- Unused funds will be returned to SISD Education Foundation.
- Notify the SISD Education Foundation if you leave Sweeny ISD.
- All POs will be closed on the last day of school.
- Failure to fulfill all grant requirements may jeopardize receiving the current and future grant funds.



IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, DO NOT HESITATE TO CONTACT US!

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