A GUIDE TO

Pursuing, Implementing, and Evaluating

GRANT FUNDING

in the

COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

07/01/98
PURPOSE FOR PURSUING GRANTS

ADDITIONAL FUNDING
The most obvious reason to pursue grants is to secure additional funding for district programs.

PLANNING AND PROBLEM SOLVING
The process of developing a grant proposal is valuable apart from any funding obtained because of the detailed levels of planning and problem solving required by the process.

MAXIMUM RETURN ON TAXPAYER INVESTMENT
Matching grants typically provide a seventy to ninety percent return on local dollars.

EQUITY AMONG SCHOOLS
Grants funds will not solve the equity issues of the community as they are manifested in the schools; however, grants can help to make up the difference in PTA funds available among the schools.

PARTNERSHIP TO ACHIEVE SHARED AGENDAS
It is important to recognize that funders give grants to move their own agenda forward. Any grant represents a joining of our purposes in partnership with the funder's purposes.

COMMUNICATION OF PRIORITY NEEDS AND DISTRICT VISION
Grant proposals allow district personnel to articulate for the district and for district patrons the vision and priorities of the district and how these can be translated into practice.
KINDS OF GRANTS

COMPETITIVE VS ENTITLEMENT

1. In competitive grant programs, applicants compete against each other for a limited number of awards.

2. In entitlement grant programs, qualified applicants need only apply to receive funds at predetermined levels.

MATCHING VS MATCH-FREE

1. Matching grants require a cash or in-kind commitment from the school district.

2. Match-free grants are monies available to the district without the requirement of matching funds.

PUBLIC SECTOR

1. State grant programs are funded by Missouri tax dollars and are typically administered by state agencies such as the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Department of Public Safety, or the Missouri Arts Council.

2. Federal grant programs are funded by federal tax dollars. Occasionally the local district accesses these funds directly, but more often the funds flow through a state agency to the local district.

PRIVATE SECTOR

1. Examples of individuals providing grants include parents or alumni.

2. Examples of private foundations providing grants include the Columbia Public Schools Foundation and the Danforth Foundation.

3. Examples of corporate foundations providing grants include the Exxon Foundation and the Ronald McDonald Children’s Charities.

4. Examples of corporate gifts include the donations of Partners in Education businesses to their school partners.
ADMINISTRATIVE

PROCEDURES
A. PURSUIT OF GRANT FUNDING

Grant funding is intended to be for purposes and projects which link and interface with existing programs and curriculum. Staff members pursuing grant funds should dialogue with district directors, coordinators, and administrators who supervise current programs associated with the proposed grant project. Discussion with these supervisors should ensure that the proposal is not a stand-alone project and that it links appropriately with current approved programs and curriculum.

During the pursuit phase of grant funding, school staff are required to follow identified procedures and policies in order to ensure budget soundness, to coordinate district requests and goals, to ensure that proposed activities are feasible, to involve appropriate personnel, to coordinate school district requests of an individual funder, and to communicate opportunities for grant funding to the school staff.

Policies and procedures to be observed during the pursuit phase are outlined below under individuals and groups to be considered as a grant proposal is developed.

**Project Director** All grant applications should designate a project director who is identified and involved in the very early stages of planning for a grant project. In some cases, the Project Director may be the district’s Grants Coordinator. The Project Director is responsible for the following:

1. Involving in the grant planning the district directors, coordinators, and administrators who supervise the various facets of school district operations which may be impacted by the grant components; including:
   a. Principals or building heads reviewing how the proposal would impact the overall building program for which they are responsible.
   b. Curriculum coordinators reviewing the proposal in light of existing curriculum and related programs.
   c. Grant Coordinator who is responsible for coordinating district requests and goals related to grants and who will disseminate copies of the completed grant proposal to the appropriate personnel in the superintendents office and the Business Office.
   d. Business Office staff reviewing grant components which are related to district personnel and budget policies and practices to ensure appropriate salaries and benefits, as well as the correct classification of services, supplies, and equipment, are included in the grant submission. Applications should be provided to the Business Office in a timely manner to allow a thorough review.
1) Indirect cost should be requested in the grant application when it is possible to do so. Indirect costs should not be used as a matching source.

2) Grant applications which require matching funds should identify the amount of the required match and the source of the matching funds.

   e. Director of Instructional Media Services reviewing the grant proposal in light of current district policies and practices related to technology and media.

   f. Director of Building Services reviewing components of the grant which may require consideration of an adequate power source in the building affected by the grant, or which may impact the physical plant in other ways.

2. Obtaining from the appropriate budget manager a written commitment for any matching funds which are required by the grant criteria.

3. Acquiring the signature of the appropriate supervisor in the superintendent’s office.

4. Discussing with the appropriate supervisor in the superintendent’s office the need for approval of the grant application by the Board of Education.

**Board of Education** Approval from the Board of Education is required for some grant applications which are presented from within the school district. The appropriate supervisor in the superintendent’s office will determine if Board of Education approval is required and will make the arrangements necessary if Board approval is needed.

Board of Education approval is required when:

1. The school district is required to allocate new funding for some component of a grant proposal.

2. The grant proposal creates a new and on-going personnel commitment.

3. The funder requires approval by the Board of Education.

4. A new program is created which significantly impacts current curriculum and programs.

5. The appropriate supervisor in the superintendent’s office judges it to be desirable for reasons not stipulated above.
B. IMPLEMENTATION OF GRANT PROJECTS

During the implementation of grant projects, school staff are required to adhere to identified procedures and policies. Administrative and fiscal oversight and support are necessary to ensure project objectives and deadlines are met and project budgets are appropriately managed. The necessary requirements are outlined below under groups and individuals to be considered during the implementation phase.

Project Director All grant applications should include a designated project director who is identified in the very early stages of planning for a grant project. In some cases, the Project Director may be the district’s Grants Coordinator. The Project Director is responsible for the following:

1. Being the only authorized signatory for the expenditure of funds associated with the grant; approval signatures by the appropriate administrators at the building and district level will be required in the same manner as all district purchases.

2. Ensuring that expenditures are allowable, all purchasing deadlines are met, and all reporting requirements are met. The Project Director shall request from the funding entity any relevant administrative and fiscal regulations.

3. Arranging with Business Office staff to obtain and review on a monthly basis the grant’s financial records to ensure agreement with official district budget and accounting records. Any errors shall be corrected immediately.

4. Being the school district’s sole contact with the funding entity except when unusual circumstances require contact by district administration.

5. Preparing any budget amendments for submission to the granting agency. Proposed budget amendments should be forwarded to the Business office, also in a timely manner, prior to submission for review.

6. Preparing the final and any interim reports as required and forward them to the Business Office for review before submission to the granting agency.

7. Maintaining the required documentation in their files for the necessary time period for possible audit, usually 3 years.

8. Complying with all district procedures and policies related to bidding, purchasing, salaries, wages, and benefits.
Director of Business Services The Business Office staff are responsible for the following:

1. Providing the Project Director with account codes which identify the project funded by the grant.

2. Allocating the budget according to the terms and conditions of the grant approval and creating a report writer for the Project Director to monitor and review financial transactions of the grant project.

3. Maintaining grant-related records for audit purposes for the necessary time period, including invoices, pay records, and other appropriate records.

C. EVALUATION AND DISSEMINATION OF GRANT PROJECTS

During the evaluation phase of grant projects, school staff are required to adhere to identified completion procedures. Requirements are outlined below under groups and individuals to be considered during the evaluation phase.

Project Director The Project Director will submit information on all grant projects to the superintendent's office for possible inclusion in the Superintendent's Annual Report or for other uses.

Superintendents Office

1. Arrangements will be made by personnel in the superintendent's office which allow the Board of Education to receive appropriate reports on grant activities, either within departmental and building reports, within the Superintendents Report, or as a separate grants report delivered verbally or through an executive summary.

2. The superintendent's staff will develop activities to allow the impact and results of grant projects to be shared with all appropriate building staff in the district.

3. The superintendent's staff will evaluate the results and impacts of completed grant projects for consideration of continuation or replication.