

Educator Initiative Grant - Guidelines for Grant Requests

PURPOSE

The Educare Foundation is a non-profit organization, founded in 1995, which provides financial support to the Mankato Area Public Schools which goes beyond the normal operating budget to fund programs and activities that enhance educational opportunities for all students, encourage teachers to explore new ways of learning and provide a vital link between the community and the classroom.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Individuals or teams of individuals employed by Mankato Area Public School District 77 who are involved in the instruction of students, K-12, are eligible.

ELIGIBLE PROPOSALS

Instructional approaches or projects that meet the selection criteria.

DUE DATE

Visit Educare website at www.educarefoundation.org for deadline details. Supporting materials are due in the Educare Foundation Office on or before the deadline. **There are no exceptions. Late applications will not be considered. Grant applications must include required signatures.**

SELECTION CRITERIA

Grants will be awarded depending on the degree to which the proposal:

- Addresses important target areas. Target areas are defined as core subject tutoring, technology aided learning, world language competency and high expectation learning programs.
- Encourages and develops 21st Century Skills. Twenty-first century skills represent the necessary student outcomes for the 21st century, that is, students need to obtain Learning and Innovation Skills (creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem solving, etc.), Information, Media and Technology Skills, Core Subjects and 21st Century Themes (global awareness, financial literacy, etc.), and Life and Career Skills (initiative and self-direction, among others).
- Represents a creative or innovative approach to the accomplishment of objectives. (It should address a new project as opposed to one accomplished or under way, or one being repeated from a previous year.)
- Is collaborative. This can be across classroom, grades and/or schools.

- Is clear and logical, including: (a) objectives; (b) description of instructional procedures and methods; (c) sound evaluation procedures incorporated in the proposal; (d) an itemized budget
- Is replicable and has the ability to be self-sustaining.
- Will affect ongoing curriculum improvement.

SELECTION PROCESS

1. Electronic versions of the application and guideline files are available for download at www.educarefoundation.org. Printed copies of the application and guidelines may be obtained by request from the school principal offices or at the Foundation Office: 10 Civic Center Plaza, Suite 2, Mankato, MN 56001.
2. Signed applications must be received at the Foundation Office no later than the posted deadline on the application and our website. Your grant request will not be considered if the application is not signed properly.
3. Applications will be reviewed by the Educare Grant Application Review Committee comprised of Educare Foundation directors, campus administrators representing elementary, middle and/or the high schools and a member of the School Board.
4. Each grant application submitted will be evaluated by the committee using a grant evaluation form. The committee will: decline, approve with modified funding or approve with full funding.
5. The Grant Review Committee will forward its recommendations to the Educare Foundation Board of Directors for approval.
6. Following approval by the Educare Foundation Board, approved grants are presented to the Mankato Area Public Schools' Board for formal acceptance.
7. Applicants will be notified of decisions, officially, the second week of May.
8. Grant Application Review Committee members may conduct site visits during project implementation to observe progress.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF GRANT RECIPIENTS

Grant recipients are responsible to:

- Prepare a completion report as required by the Foundation Board, including a final report of expenses and an evaluation of actual versus planned outcomes. This information is helpful with future grant evaluations. A request for this information will be made of you in late September with an early November deadline.
- Use grant awards for purposes specified in the grant applications.
- Awards must be used within two years of award notification. Any unused or excess grant funds after two years will be expired and return to Educare.

HELPFUL HINTS FOR WRITING GRANT PROPOSALS

1. It is strongly recommended that you consult the district technology department, before submitting your request if you are seeking funds for technology-aided learning or devices.
2. Proposals should directly involve students as fully as possible.
3. Grants may be used to compensate experts who come to work with students, but usually not to pay teachers or staff.
4. Funds can be used to purchase equipment or to provide field trip transportation, but should be integrated with curriculum materials and activities to make a complete project.
5. Proposals that incorporate matching funds or community resources will be looked on favorably. (Students or PTA groups might raise matching funds, for example. Community organizations may donate needed equipment, services or free admission to events.) Such contributions are a sign of commitment to the project and will multiply the effectiveness of the grant award.
6. Encourage interdisciplinary or team teaching projects or those that involve various age groups. These often have greater impact than single-classroom efforts, fill needs unmet in the regular curriculum and encourage more grant applications in the future.
7. Good ideas can be lost through poorly written proposals. Be specific in expressing your ideas and ask others to critique your proposal prior to sending the information to the review committee.
8. There are excellent web sites with tips for writing winning grant proposals.

EDUCARE GRANT APPLICATION TIMELINE

Visit www.educarefoundation.org for application deadline and timeline for grant review and final notification process.

If you have any questions, contact the Educare Grants Committee at grants@educarefoundation.org or call the District Office at 507-387-1868.