



Bethel Park Educational Foundation

The Bethel Park Educational Foundation (BPEF) is a community-based, non-profit organization, whose goal is to support programs that promote quality education. The Foundation works to facilitate communication and involvement among students, parents, school staff, business leaders and community citizens.

Public schools face a variety of new challenges as state and federal funding sources have been reduced or eliminated. BPEF hopes to find alternate ways of funding important initiatives within our schools and stimulate the system to evolve as an institution. The Foundation does not receive any public funding; our programs are supported by individual, community, corporate partners. Our supporters donate, knowing their gifts are creating opportunities for students to have exceptional educational opportunities. They know that providing a quality education favorably impacts the entire community.

The Bethel Park Educational Foundation is independent of the school district but works closely with the school board, administration, teachers, and students. All programs that benefit Bethel Park students are considered for financial support. The program list grows and evolves to reflect the needs of the student, teacher, school, and district as they are identified.

The Bethel Park Educational Foundations seeks to:

- create initiatives that support imaginative and creative opportunities for excellence and innovation in a Bethel Park education.
- collaborate with educational, cultural, public, and private entities to enhance and enrich the educational experience of Bethel Park students.
- develop supportive relationships between the Bethel Park School District, community, and alumni to raise funds for the purposes set forth above.
- encourage academic excellence in the Bethel Park School District by providing funding not available through traditional local, state, or federal resources.
- provide a perpetual source of funds through endowment gifts received from all parties interested in supporting excellence in a Bethel Park education.

Proposals for funding are initiated by students, teachers, and administrators for the benefit of Bethel Park School District students. Each is reviewed and evaluated by the BPEF board members. The proposals which best meet the Foundation's objectives will be recommended for funding and implementation. Program evaluation is an aspect of the proposal that is often neglected but important to the Foundation. To that end, proposals should consider and articulate how success with the intended goal(s) will be measured.

- ✧ No grant shall be administered as a direct monetary payment to the awardee.
- ✧ No grant will be awarded for food, beverages, parties, recreational activities, field trips, or studying abroad.
- ✧ Evaluations of the funded projects will be provided by the grantee to the board of directors of the Bethel Park Educational Foundation within a year of funding.

Bethel Park Educational Foundation's supports four categories for funding requests:

1. Innovation Grants

Innovation implies transformation from the status quo. In education, innovation is often coupled with the integration of curriculum. Science (the scientific method, divergent thinking), technology (advanced tools and resources), engineering (design thinking), art (creative expression of ideas), and mathematics (convergent thinking, problem-solving) are **the five "S.T.E.A.M." disciplines** often associated with innovation. Innovation (or S.T.E.A.M.-related) grants are awarded to students, teachers, and to schools to foster S.T.E.A.M.-related experiences. Innovation Grant proposals must detail a project or experience that involves S.T.E.A.M. principles: (1) the scientific method or divergent thinking, (2) technology-related tools or resources, (3) design thinking, (4) creative expression of ideas, and (5) problem-solving. Successful projects will be measured on the ability to apply the S.T.E.A.M. principles and do the following:

- engage students in collaborative interactions;
- develop interdependence skills and teamwork;
- builds resiliency and persistence;
- propose/include the possibility of replication in other schools or with other teachers, and
- evaluate the successful achievement of the stated objectives.



2. Teacher Grants

The Teacher Grants seek proposals to **explore new teaching methods or to create experiences that stimulate student learning**. Successful grant proposals will augment and/or enhance existing curriculum or programs rather than supplant and/or contradict them. As such, a metric of grant consideration will include the compatibility of the project with the goals and objectives of the Bethel Park School District. Individual Teacher Grant applications will be evaluated for their ability to do the following:



- encourage, uplift, edify, and challenge students;
- provide distinctive educational opportunities;
- aligns with (or appropriately supplements) existing programs or curriculum;
- propose/include the possibility of replication in other schools or with other teachers, and
- evaluate the successful achievement of the stated objectives.

3. School Grants

School improvement means making schools better places for learning. The School Grants are open to any Bethel Park school or district affiliates, which includes our special services schools or technical schools, looking for support to implement a school improvement initiative. The Foundation seeks proposals from a school to do all the following:

- implement comprehensive school improvement programs that are based on reliable research and effective program practices;
- promote or improve student achievement;
- involve parents / caregivers or community in the proposal;
- consider how this program is replicable in other schools, and
- provide a system to evaluate the successful achievement of the proposal's objectives.



4. Student Grants

Enhancing and encouraging excellence in education for the student is the absolute focal point of the BPEF. There is no ceiling to the creativity and innovation of the student mind. **In that spirit, Student Grants support excellence in education and envision the student as a life-long learner---intellectually, physically, and artistically.** As such, grants may be awarded to any student at any grade level in any discipline of study. Additionally, grants will be considered for all physical endeavors and all forms of the arts. *Proposals for scholarships or international travel programs are not accepted.* Individual Student Grant applications will be evaluated for their ability to do all the following:



- provide a distinctive educational, physical, or artistic endeavor that is not already available in the school or accessible to the student;
- encourage or nurture excellence;
- include a means of sharing the experience with other students, schools, or the community, and
- include a means to evaluate the successful achievement of the stated objectives.