

## Questions Considered During the BEF Grant Review Process

*This document is intended to give you, the grant applicant, insight into how the BEF grant committee discusses and decides on grants. In bold are the questions the committee asks as we consider an application. In italics are insights to help you draft the most complete application possible.*

*If you have any questions or would like clarification, please contact Executive Director, Alison Hendry.*

### **1. Is the grant application complete? Did it include a detailed, itemized budget? Did it meet the deadline?**

- *Complete applications include all requested information and are detailed enough for the grant committee to fully understand the request. Our goal with this requirement is to make the process smooth and predictable for all, as opposed to having to delay applications while we seek out additional information.*
- *A detailed, itemized budget will breakdown the costs for the project.*
  - *Here is a sample budget that has been itemized:*
    - *Total cost for Salmon in the Classroom: \$948*  
*Chiller: \$700*  
*55 Gallon Tank: \$170*  
*Glass Lid for Tank: \$60*  
*Air Pump: \$18*  
*The total cost of the items needed is \$1,700. A local business is donating the remainder of the necessary items.*
  - *Here is a sample budget that has not been itemized:*
    - *Salmon in the Classroom Project Total Cost \$1,700.*  
*Amount requested for supplies not provided by a local business: \$948*
- *The BEF considers grants from September – January, and then March – April. All grants submitted by the first of the month will be considered that month. Grants submitted after the first will be considered the following month. Grants are generally reviewed in the second week of each month.*
- *The BEF reserves the right to consider some applications that are turned in after the first of the month, but these instances will be rare.*
- *Grants for events that have already taken place will not be considered.*

### **2. Is the requestor a BPS staff member? Does this grant serve BPS students only?**

- *Grants must be written by BPS staff members. They cannot be written by, for example, students, the PTA or volunteers. It is fine for a staff member to partner with a non-staff member on the application, but the application must be submitted by a BPS staff member.*
- *Per the BEF by-laws, funds granted by the BEF can only benefit BPS students.*

### **3. Is the grant asking for something that is essential to education, or is it enrichment? If enrichment, is a strong case made that the project can achieve the desired outcome?**

- *BEF grants only fund enrichment activities.*

- *We want to ensure that BEF funds are given to those project most likely to make an impact on student learning and experiences, therefore we will prioritize grants that make a strong case for their potential outcomes.*

**4. Has this type of grant been reviewed before? What was the outcome? Is this showing a pattern of requests across the district? Should this be a Foundation grant? Have we highlighted this pattern to the district? Should this be a district expense?**

- *We try our best to be consistent in our distribution of funds. We are in a unique position to recognizing trends across the district. If we see that something is being requested by teachers in multiple buildings, we will open a dialogue with BPS to see if the BEF is still the best place to fund this request.*

**5. Is this grant better served through PTAs or other entities?**

- *Some requests make more sense for the PTAs to fund, or for the PTAs to partner with the BEF to fund.*
  - *Here are a few examples of partnership opportunities:*
    - *Family learning night: BEF funds the educational portions of the evening and the PTA funds decorations, food and childcare.*
    - *3D Printer: BEF funds the printer, the PTA funds the filament.*
    - *Instruments: The BEF funds one and the Boosters fund the other*
    - *Music Camp: The BEF funds the cost of clinicians and the Boosters fund a team building activity.*
  - *Example of things that might make better sense for the PTA to fund include school entry beautification, water bottle filling stations, and benches or other furniture purchases.*
- *We also require that every BEF grant applicant has asked other sources for funding in addition to the BEF. It's ok if the answer to this request was no. We don't require that you have secured funding from other sources, but we do require you to ask.*

**6. Are the short and long term impacts of this grant clearly stated? Are they obtainable? How many students are impacted by the grant?**

- *We want to make sure that we understand the impact that every grant will have on the students attending BPS. For this understanding, we rely upon the application to fully explain not only the "what" and "why" of the grant application, but also how this will make a difference for students both now and in the future.*
- *BEF grants aim to impact the learning of as many BPS students as possible each year. While grants to groups of any size will be considered, we will prioritize those that impact greater numbers of students. As you consider writing a grant, think through your needs. As an example, it might make better sense to apply for the kits needed to start a group or club in multiple schools, rather than applying for a grant to allow just one group of students to attend a finals competition.*

**7. What is the "life" of the materials being requested? Will this grant require additional grants moving forward?**

- *The BEF will prioritize grants for items that can be used multiple times over those that can only be used once, unless there is a clearly explained lasting impact for the one-time items or activities.*
- *If funding is needed moving forward, we would ask that a future plan be sketched out in the application. Examples include:*
  - *A request for a 3D printer would explain how filament would be purchased in the future.*

- *A request for an annual project would explain how you will fund the project in years 2 and 3.*
- *A request for subscription based software would explain who will pay for the subscription in the future.*

**8. Does this grant honor a special "focus?" How?**

- *There have been times when the BEF has identified a special focus for funds. Grants that honor this focus might be prioritized over others. If a focus area has been identified, it will be shared with the BPS community.*

**9. Does this grant make an exceptional educational experience possible? If so, how?**

- *We are looking to see that a strong case has been made that your grant will enhance and enrich education, and offer and extend opportunities for BPS students. The grant committee is made up of community members who are passionate about education, but have varying amounts of experience in the education sector. After you write your grant, take a step back and read it from the perspective of someone who does not already know about your project. Does it still make sense, or are there details missing that might make the application more clear?*

**10. Did the applicant ask for funds from other sources?**

- *The BEF is committed to partnering with BPS as well as the many other organizations that support BPS. We ask that before submitting a grant application, you have, at a minimum, asked these other sources for funding. If you're told NO, that's ok. It will not hurt your chances of receiving a grant. We simply ask that you affirm that you have asked for funding. Below are several examples of who you should ask for funding prior to or in concert with approaching the BEF:*

- *Your Principal*
- *Your department chair*
- *Your PTA*
- *Any relevant booster groups*

*As part of the application, you will be asked to affirm that you have asked these groups for funding, and you will have the opportunity to tell us what the responses were.*

**11. There are categories of items that the BEF does not fund. These categories include:**

- Consumables of any kind (examples: food, supplies that will be needed on a consistent basis, decorations)
- Refreshments
- Travel expenses for BPS staff (we will fund travel expenses if they are part of the cost of bringing in outside experts)
- Professional development
- iPads, laptops, Chromebooks or other technology that is considered "standard equipment"
- Furniture of any kind
- Uniforms, costumes, or apparel
- Subscription software will be funded only a.) as part of a pilot project, b.) as part of a one-time only experience, or c.) if there is a clear plan for how the program will be funded in the future.

*When you fill out the grant application, you will be asked to mark a check box saying that you understand what BEF grants do not fund.*