



## Guidelines for APSF Innovation Grant Program

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### **About**

The Aurora Public Schools Foundation (APSF) Innovation Grant Program is designed to encourage, facilitate, recognize and reward innovative and creative instructional approaches, and district programs that will enrich and enhance student opportunity. This program supports employees by providing funds that allow them to employ new ideas for engaging students, technology that enhances student learning, and projects that promote, expand, or enrich student opportunities in a manner consistent with the Foundation's [mission](#) and the [strategic priorities](#) of the Aurora Public Schools. APSF can provide seed money for pilot programs or projects that will be on-going, but cannot guarantee repeat funding.

### **Submission**

APS employees can apply through [this application link](#). Incomplete applications will not be considered. APSF will accept one application per program per school year, and only one application per employee per school year.

### **Deadlines & Notification**

Grant applications will be received and evaluated on a rolling basis. There is no formal grant application deadline. Applicants will be notified via email within 30-60 days of application receipt.

### **Approval Process**

The APSF Board of Directors Community Engagement Committee will review all applications along with a staff person from APSF. For each grant application submitted, the committee will make a recommendation for funding, and these recommendations will be sent to the APSF staff for review and final approval. (See assessment criteria at the end of this document.)

Additionally, grants are required to have endorsement of APS leadership, in the tiers listed below.

- **Grant requests between \$1- \$1,000** – require endorsement of Principal or Department Manager
- **Grant requests between \$1,001 - \$5,000** – require endorsement of Principal or Department Manager AND Division's Chief Officer
- **Grant requests from \$5,001 - \$7500** – require endorsement of Principal or Department Manager AND Division's Chief Officer AND Superintendent's Office

### **Notification**

Applicants will be notified via email within 30-60 days of complete application receipt.



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### ***Award of Funds***

The number of awards, and the amount of the awards will depend on funds available from APSF and the discretion of the Board of Directors.

Grant funds will be paid directly to the district. Grants of \$5,000 and above will be managed in partnership with the APS Grants Dept to comply with [APS District Policy DD](#) - Funding Proposals, Grants and Special Projects. Grants of \$1 - \$4,999 will be paid to a school or department's fund 23 account. The grantee must provide this account number in their online application.

### ***Evaluation and Review***

Grant recipients are required to complete their grant within one year of its approval. ***All grant recipients will be required to submit an evaluation within six weeks of project completion.***

### ***Grant Assessment Criteria Outlined***

<b>Background</b>	Grant Name
	Requested By
	Submission Date
	Desired Date of Project Initiation
	Requested Budget
<b>Engage</b>	Grade(s)
	Estimated # of Students Impacted
	Cost per student (\$ calc)
<b>Enrich Inspire Create</b>	Rate 1-4 (using key)
	Rate 1-4 (using key)
	Rate 1-4 (using key)
<b>APS Strategic Objective</b>	Rate 1-4 (using key)
<b>Impact Statement</b>	Briefly, what is the expected impact of this initiative?



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<b>Expected Deliverable to APSF</b>	<p>Briefly, what will be delivered to APSF to report back on the experience? And by when?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Photos of the project in process and once complete.</li> <li>- If there is an opportunity for an APSF staff member to observe the project in process, the APS grantee should reach out to APSF in a timely manner (as soon as they know) to invite them to attend.</li> <li>- APSF will check in with grantee after 4 months, and 8 months of granted award, to check the status of the project - will be a virtual check-in or site visit</li> <li>- After the 12 month period is over, grantee should submit final review of project, along with photos, to APSF staff, through a provided google form link.</li> <li>- Grantees will be given all report questions ahead of time, so they know what they will be reporting back on at the end of one year - report will be available on website, too.</li> </ul>
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As a general rule of thumb, APSF will seek to fund grants that engage, enrich, inspire and/or create possibilities. A grant request must hit on at least two of these criteria to be considered.

### **ENRICH: To what extent does it enrich current programming?**

- 4 = Clearly enriches current student programming
- 3 = Somewhat enriches current student programming
- 2 = Weak linkage to enriching current student programming
- 1= Does not enrich current student programming

### **INSPIRE: To what extent does it inspire innovation?**

- 4 = Clearly inspires innovation
- 3 = Somewhat inspires innovation
- 2 = Weak linkage to inspires innovation
- 1= Does not inspire innovation

### **CREATE: To what extent does it create possibilities/opportunities for students that they would not otherwise have access to?**

- 4 = Would definitely not be achieved without support from APSF
- 3 = Unlikely to occur without support from APSF, but could potentially find funding through other sources
- 2 = Likely could get district/additional funding
- 1 = Will definitely occur regardless of whether APSF chooses to fund it

### **Additionally, to what extent does this align with the stated APS Strategic Objective:**

- 4 = Clearly aligns with the stated APS Strategic Objective
- 3 = Somewhat aligns with the stated APS Strategic Objective
- 2 = Weak alignment with the stated APS Strategic Objective
- 1 = No alignment with the stated APS Strategic Objective



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### ***Potential Funding Examples (what grants could support):***

- Enrichment experiences and materials
- School/classroom garden/outdoor spaces to teach about the environment and sustainability
- Cutting-edge equipment and technology that enhances learning for different student accommodations
- Projects that help to develop student leaders
- Projects and ideas that offer career and skills exploration and work-based learning opportunities
- Educational tools that enhance Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

*Example: Regulation through Mindful Movement Program has undergone expansion, extending its reach from Altura Elementary to Crawford Elementary. This expansion has allowed us to significantly increase our impact by growing from serving 475 students at Altura Elementary to now benefiting a total of 925 students at Crawford Elementary and Altura. Funds helped secure equipment for the Mindful room, as well as training.*

### ***Funding Limitations (what grants cannot support):***

- Faculty/staff salaries and benefits
- Professional Development
- Support of individual school PTOs
- Support of sports teams and equipment
- General capital improvements
- Building and grounds operations and maintenance
- Ongoing transportation expenses
- Routine purchases of equipment and supplies
- Administrative and clerical support
- Support of current curriculum, programs, and projects