Purpose:

The National Education Association (NEA) Center for Great Public Schools announces the availability of State and Local Partnership grant funds for Affiliates to develop and promote policy and practice that define a quality education profession; incubate sound practice and gather key learning that benefits student learning; and define national, state and district policy that supports the advancement of Great Public Schools.

The purpose of this funding is to work with State and Local Affiliates on initiatives and partnerships to change and further policy and practice that respect, grow and improve the education professions and put educators and unions in the lead for promoting and protecting quality educational practices and quality educators.

Grants topics focus on several key education profession levers which can serve as fundamental change catalysts in an educator’s career practice and support the role of the union/educators in leadership. These key areas include:

1) **Family/Community Partnerships**: These grants are designed to foster comprehensive school reform by developing, implementing, or supporting programs that engage communities of color or at-risk communities in improving the educational attainment of children of color or underserved youth in economically-deprived communities.

2) **Leading the Education Professions**: The focus of these grants is to support Affiliate engagement in a full range of programs and activities that are designed to improve student learning by supporting, developing, and nurturing high quality teaching practice.

3) **Actionable Research, Policy, and Practice for Great Public Schools**: These grants fund state- and local-level efforts to shape or strengthen the critical factors necessary to achieve Great Public Schools and empower all of our members to lead their profession. Successful proposals will align with the GPS Indicators Framework and will yield actionable lessons from which all affiliates can benefit.

4) **Using Research to Inform Advocacy and Practice**: These $5,000 grants are designed to enhance state affiliate capacity by providing full access to the materials produced by the Great Lakes Center for Education Research and Practice (GLC). Successful proposals will demonstrate a need for GLC materials and outline ways that they would be used to advance the affiliate’s programming and advocacy work.

In addition to the criteria listed for each of the following grant programs, all grantees will be expected to meet the grant guidelines described herein as well as to participate in a grant reporting and evaluation process during and at the close of the funding cycle (with continued funding contingent upon satisfactory progress reporting).

State and local affiliates may apply for State & Local Partnership grants through the NEA website. In order to be considered, each grant proposal should include both narrative and budgetary information (with budget data tied directly to the proposed activities). **Typically funded grant requests range from $3,000 to $25,000 over a 1-year period.**

For additional information about State & Local Partnership grants, please email **CGPS-PF@nea.org**.
1) **Family/Community Partnerships**

*Family/Community Partnership* grants are designed to foster comprehensive school reform by developing, implementing, or supporting programs that engage communities of color or economically at-risk communities in improving the educational attainment of children of color or underserved youth in economically-deprived communities. Funds may be used for a variety of activities such as:

- Developing community schools
- Professional development activities for educators that support new and innovative ways of engaging families of at-risk students
- Developing leaders’ skills in engaging in community/school partnerships

**Criteria:**

- Provide a focus on educators working in communities from ethnically diverse groups or economically depressed areas
- Present a specific, feasible plan of action to accomplish well-defined objectives and measurable results with a sustainability component
- Evaluation plan

Department: Teacher Quality (TQ)
Email Contact: CGPS-PF@nea.org
2) **Leading the Education Professions**

Teacher Quality’s *Leading the Education Professions* grants are available for state and local affiliates engaged in a full range of programs and activities that are designed to improve student learning by supporting, developing, and nurturing high quality teaching practice.

Any grant applications that meet this overall objective will be considered, but special preference is offered to grant applications addressing the following issues:

**A. Entry to the Teaching Profession**

The first step in transforming our professions is to strengthen and maintain strong and uniform standards for preparation and admission regardless of preparation pathway. A strengthened profession demands a serious commitment to ensuring that every teacher walks into the classroom fully prepared to teach from day one. The Entry to the Teaching Profession Grants encourage partnerships between affiliates and teacher preparation programs to ensure that every candidate enters teaching “Profession-Ready” with the skills and knowledge for success from the start.

Grant programs could include:

- Supporting teaching candidates in meeting licensure requirements such as state teacher tests and new classroom based teacher performance assessments;
- Recruiting and preparing ethnic minority teacher candidates;
- Training and supporting practicing teachers to serve as clinical faculty and/or cooperating teachers for teacher candidates; and
- Supporting new or existing teacher residency programs designed to give prospective teachers in-depth and extended clinical practice.

Department: Teacher Quality (TQ)
Email Contact: CGPS-PF@nea.org

**B. New Teacher Support and Induction**

Enhancing the Association’s role in providing new teachers with the resources and support for success is a key goal of the NEA. New teachers, both members and prospective members, should get union-supported and/or union-led mentoring and other types of support to assist them in meeting the highest standards of teaching practice. Grant applications that focus on training and supporting accomplished teachers to help new teachers succeed with teacher evaluation, student learning objectives, classroom management, and cultural competence will be given special preference.

Department: Teacher Quality (TQ)
Email Contact: CGPS-PF@nea.org

**C. Teachers Ensuring Great Teaching: Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) Programs**

The teaching profession should focus on supporting teachers, providing them with career options and helping teachers improve throughout their careers. Learning how to teach does not stop at the beginning of a teaching career. The Center for Great Public Schools will make grants available to state and local
affiliates to support the development and implementation of Peer Assistance and Review programs. These small grants are specifically designed for affiliates to pilot or develop plans for a Peer Assistance and Review Program. Preference will be given to applications that demonstrate a proven record of effective labor/management collaboration.

Department: Teacher Quality (TQ)
Email Contact: CGPS-PF@nea.org

D. Teacher Leadership Grants

These grants are designed to support and sustain strategies and initiatives to foster union-led professional transformation by developing the skills, knowledge, and preparedness of accomplished educators, including association activists to take leadership in developing student-centered policies and practices related to teaching, learning, and the education professions. The purpose of the grant is to assist state and/or local affiliates in training, supporting and engaging prospective teacher leaders, and particularly accomplished teachers, in the areas of instructional, policy, and union leadership.

Department: Teacher Quality (TQ)
Email Contact: CGPS-PF@nea.org
3) **Actionable Research, Policy, and Practice for Great Public Schools**

**A. Accountability and Assessment Systems (A3) Grants**

The *Accountability and Assessment Systems Grants* are designed to help state and local affiliates:

- Design and advocate for authentic school performance indicators;
- Become actively involved in—or deepen involvement in—the development of innovative assessment systems;
- Prepare educators for and advocate for commonsense implementation of revised state accountability plans; and
- Effectively engage and partner with parents to help support implementation of new accountability and/or assessment systems.

A3 grant resources will be targeted to state affiliate and/or local affiliate applicants that have demonstrable capacity to sustain the activities contemplated in the grant award that includes member and partner engagement and capacity-building components.

In addition to describing how the proposed activities align with the GPS Indicators Framework, applicants also must describe how activities will be evaluated so that lessons learned can be shared with other affiliates.

Department: Education Policy and Practice (EPP)

Email Contact: [CGPS-PF@nea.org](mailto:CGPS-PF@nea.org)

**B. Education Support Professionals: Meeting the Needs of the Whole Student**

Students must be healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged to be academically successful. Evidence and research point to measurable positive impacts on student success based on the adoption of the whole student approach. Education Support Professionals (ESPs) meet the needs of the whole student by improving health and safety, supporting instruction, and addressing the multitude of conditions both inside and outside of school that affect learning. ESPs play a critical role in school and student success.

Grant proposals that advance policies and practices that support the whole student will be considered. Grant projects and programs must also promote the implementation of best practices that enhance the effectiveness and leadership of ESPs.

Grant proposals must be ESP-based and ESP member-led and demonstrate the effectiveness of ESPs in promoting student and school success within one or more of the five tenets of the whole student approach—Healthy, Safe, Engaged, Supported, and Challenged. NEA ESP members are divided into nine career families: Clerical Services, Custodial/Maintenance, Food Services, Health and Student Services, Paraprofessionals, Technical Services, Skilled Trades, Transportation, and Security. Grant proposals inclusive of all or multiple career families in K-12 and Higher Education are encouraged.

Suggested ESP whole student projects include:

- School Nutrition
- Farm to School
Health and Wellness
Bullying and Mental Health
School Safety and School Climate
Common Core State Standards
Paraeducator/Teacher Effectiveness and Team Building
ESP Leadership Development (including new/young leader development during the first three years of employment and under age 35)
  - Educating new teachers about how ESPs meet the needs of the whole student and help them succeed
  - Bridging the gap between ESPs and new educators (targeting education colleges/programs)
  - Building partnerships between ESPs and teachers to deliver professional development on how they can work together
  - Joint ESP and teacher training on working together and the whole-student, whole-school, whole-community approach
ESP Respect Campaign (PRIDE)
  - Building ESP communications structures for wider engagement
  - Family and community outreach and partnerships
  - Demonstrate how ESP educate the whole student
Professional Growth Continuum – supports a professional growth continuum (PGC) for ESPs that provides clear pathways of professional growth through professional development and other learning opportunities

Department: ESP Quality (ESPQ)
Email Contact: CGPS-PF@nea.org

C. Education Support Professionals: Anti-Privatization

Privatization continues to be a threat to all ESP career families in every part of the country. School districts are often motivated by the (frequently misguided) belief that outsourcing will save money, though in the long run it does not. ESP privatization is also part of a much broader assault on local communities, public schools and public educators.

These grants will support innovative projects that develop new proactive approaches against privatization, which can be used as models and replicated by other affiliates. Successful grant applications will:

- Build capacity to sustain these approaches beyond the end of the grant period;
- Build membership engagement and affiliate strength;
- Increase recognition of the critical role that ESP play in ensuring student success; and
- Create new coalitions and community support that will help inoculate school districts against ESP privatization.

Department: ESP Quality (ESPQ)
Email Contact: CGPS-PF@nea.org
4) Using Research to Inform Advocacy and Practice

The *Using Research to Inform Advocacy and Practice* grants are targeted at state affiliates that have limited capacity to conduct and review research on education issues. Affiliates who receive these $5,000 grants must use them to obtain full access to the materials produced by the Great Lakes Center for Education Research and Practice (GLC). GLC is a consortium of state affiliates who support and disseminate high-quality research and reviews of research, including the following products and opportunities:

- Policy and research briefs;
- Toolkits that accompany each brief and include an overview of the findings, sample blog posts and letters to the editor, and an FAQ that help affiliates immediately briefs in their work;
- Think Twice Reviews, in which leading scholars review and respond to reports produced by conservative think tanks;
- The Think Twice Weekly Report, an email digest that pulls together key releases and commentaries from the top think tanks and other education organizations; and
- Briefings from top education researchers during select Super Week GLC Board meetings (grantees do not receive seats on the GLC Board).

Examples of GLC products can be found at: [http://greatlakescenter.org/](http://greatlakescenter.org/).

Successful applicants for this grant program will be state affiliates who can demonstrate a need for GLC materials and specify how they will be used to inform and enhance existing or planned programs and/or state and local advocacy work.

Department: Research (RES)
Email Contact: CGPS-PF@nea.org