



NEA GREAT PUBLIC SCHOOLS FUND GRANT GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION

NEA State and Local Affiliates, either individually or as partnerships between multiple Affiliates, may apply for NEA Great Public Schools Fund Grants (“GPS Fund Grants” or “Grants”) to advance the goal of great public schools for every student. Grants will be awarded to Affiliates who demonstrate capacity and competency through initiatives and partnerships to generate and advance student-centered policies and professional practice programs.

The goals of the GPS Fund are:

1. To generate and develop innovative ideas designed to promote sound practice;
2. To capture key learnings that promote student success;
3. To develop and deliver supports by members for members that promote professional excellence;
4. To establish new organizational partnerships toward improving professional practice and aligning it with organizational priorities; and
5. To cultivate sustainable programs to be reproduced and amplified by other Affiliates to make meaningful change in public education for educators and students.

It is the intention of GPS Fund Grants to supplement and seed innovation within Affiliate professional quality work, not replace existing professional practice budgets. Additionally, Affiliates are expected to develop partnerships and dedicate human, in-kind, and financial resources to sustain successful Grant-funded programs and activities beyond the term of the grant.

GPS Fund Grant Restrictions

Grants may not be used to fund the following:

- Indirect expenses
- Public relations activities

- Legislative programs
- Political campaigns
- Capital improvements or large equipment purchases
- Programs or activities covered by other NEA Grants or funded with other NEA monies
- Hiring of permanent staff positions, unless there is a commitment from the applicant to support the position(s) in their program budget after the grant term ends. **Hiring a full-time or part-time term-limited position to manage a Grant is an allowable Grant expense.*

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING GRANT APPLICATIONS

In awarding Grants, primary consideration will be given to the following criteria:

1. Potential of the proposed program or activities to positively impact student success, especially in schools with the greatest need;
2. Ability to expand the capacity of the Affiliate to lead student-centered programs with union-led efforts;
3. Strength of partnerships involved (excludes contractors and consultants) and degree of collaboration and commitment to the successful outcome of the project by all partners;
4. Affiliate(s) capacity and readiness to implement the proposed activities, such as:
 - a. Prioritized leadership and governance support committed to the success of the project;
 - b. Alignment to Affiliate’s mission, vision, and growth and strength strategy; and
 - c. Integration into organizational structure and Affiliate ownership of grant-funded program(s) and intellectual property.
5. Sustainability of or potential for expansion of the program beyond the term of the Grant (with an emphasis on feasibility of such plans);
6. Potential for extending the program or its findings to other NEA State and/or Local Affiliates;
7. Alignment to the [NEA Leadership Competency](#) “Leading Our Professions” Level Two (mobilizing and power building) and/or Level Three (agenda driving) progressions for themes:
 - a. Supports professional excellence and builds capacity for continual improvement and learning to ensure the success of all students; and
 - b. Recognizes and promotes the Association’s role in improving the learning of all students.

8. Degree of innovation for the Affiliate(s) and presentation of new ways to engage members in addressing a professional quality need or issue identified by the Affiliate(s) membership;
9. Consideration for the ability to obtain in-kind, matching, or external funding from additional sources to support the Grant proposal and its continuation; and
10. Inclusion of specific plans for leadership development, engagement, and organizing of members, and/or non-member recruitment, in the proposed professional excellence programs and activities.

APPLICATION PROCESS

I. PLANNING GRANTS:

1. Submission of a Planning Grant application begins the process. The deadline for submission of a Planning Grant application is no later than September 15th of each year.
2. Planning Grant awards will be made by the Oversight Committee and decisions will be communicated no later than October 15th of each year. Concerns related to the decisions of the Oversight Committee should be directed to the Oversight Committee Chair.
3. Any chartered state or local NEA Affiliates as defined in the NEA Bylaws (Section 8) may apply for a Planning Grant. Applications submitted by or on behalf of individuals, external organizations, or non-Active NEA membership categories not contributing to the Special Fund (see Section 2.7, NEA Bylaws) will not be considered.

II. GPS FUND GRANT:

1. Affiliates that are awarded Planning Grants are eligible to submit a full GPS Fund application no later than February 1st.
2. GPS Fund Grant award decisions will be communicated no later than April 1st of each year.
3. NEA reserves the right to determine the final Grant awards based on:
 - i. Compliance with Fund guidelines;
 - ii. Previous performance of other Grant or program awards;
 - iii. Evaluation of Grant budget expenses;
 - iv. NEA's organizational priorities;
 - v. Distribution of Grant awards across Affiliates; and
 - vi. Available funds.
4. GPS Fund Grant applicants may request NEA consultation in preparing their proposals.

5. Staff in the Center for Professional Excellence and Student Learning may review the submitted GPS Fund Grant applications, consulting as necessary with other appropriate NEA Centers and Departments to provide a comprehensive assessment of the proposed work and to ensure Grants do not overlap in unintended ways with other NEA grant programs.
6. Following the initial Grant proposal review, staff may request of an applicant:
 - a. Additional information to clarify or support a proposal;
 - b. Recommendations or verification of partner support and involvement;
 - c. Evaluation/assessment of previous or existing Grants to ensure they are in compliance with their intended goals and purpose; and
 - d. For State Affiliates, evidence of compliance with NEA/NCSEA Financial and Operational Standards.
7. All eligible GPS Fund applications, along with recommendations from the Center for Professional Excellence and Student Learning and any supporting documentation, will be submitted to the Oversight Committee for review and consideration.
8. The Oversight Committee consists of the NEA Vice President; the NEA Secretary Treasurer; the Presidents of the National Council of State Education Associations, the National Council of Urban Education Associations, the National Council of Education Support Professionals, and the National Council of Higher Education; one NEA Director elected by the Board, the NEA Senior Director of the Center for Professional Excellence and Student Learning, and one staff content expert.
9. GPS Fund Grants totaling less than \$50,000 (over the term of the proposal) are not eligible for Grant awards. The targeted funding range is \$50,000 to \$150,000 per year, with a maximum of \$250,000 annually unless otherwise approved by the NEA Executive Committee. GPS Fund Grant applications must be for a period of one to three years, and funding will only be provided contingent upon review and approval of progress reports every six months during the life of the grant.
10. If the recommendation of the Oversight Committee is to fund the GPS Fund application, then that recommendation, with appropriate supporting information, will be forwarded to the NEA President and the NEA Executive Director for action. The NEA President and the NEA Executive Director may approve the recommendation of the Oversight Committee, may reduce the amount of assistance recommended by the Oversight Committee, or may reject the application for a GPS

Fund Grant. If the Affiliate is not satisfied with the action taken by the NEA President and the NEA Executive Director on its application for a GPS Fund Grant, it may appeal to the NEA Executive Committee. The NEA Executive Committee may take such action as it deems appropriate, and the action taken by the NEA Executive Committee will be final.

ADMINISTRATION OF FUNDS

At the end of each membership year, any unexpended monies will remain in the NEA GPS Grant Fund.

REQUIREMENTS FOR REPORTING AND NETWORKING

The NEA President will make an annual report to the NEA Board of Directors and the Representative Assembly regarding the operation of the Grant program, including a financial statement.

Grantees are expected to share programs and resources developed as a result of the GPS Fund Grant program with other Affiliates. In addition, grantees are expected to network with other grantees and affiliates to share their programs, products, and learnings in order to increase the capacity of NEA and its Affiliates.

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 in order to adhere to the NEA's Financial Standards as established by the Center for Business Operations. Grantees are required to complete the interim and final evaluation reports as applicable, with a summary of program activities and success, and to provide financial accounting during the life of the Grant.

Grantees are to keep accurate and separate records to document Grant expenditures. NEA reserves the right to review or audit applicable expenses of the Grant. Unexpended Grant funds remaining at the end of the Grant term are expected to be returned to NEA.