



## Excel and Impact Grants: Frequently Asked Questions

Welcome to our *Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page*. Please review the grant guidelines below carefully for information on grant award changes, application requirements and restrictions.

### How do I apply?

Grant requests are accepted each fall and we announce the program on our website, [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). The 2021 application deadline is Wednesday, October 21, 2021. Winning grants are announced between November 15 - December 15.

### Who is eligible to apply for an Excel Grant?

All employees (full- and part-time) of Highline Public Schools are eligible to apply an Excel Grant.

### How many Excel Grants are awarded?

The number varies each year. The application process is competitive and like many other foundations we receive more worthy applications than we can fund.

### If I am applying for a grant, do I need to fill out the district grant form?

No. The Foundation will submit a grant form for all awarded grants. You do not need to submit for them individually with your application.

### If I received an Excel Grant from Highline Schools Foundation in the past, can I apply for another grant?

Yes. As long as you have submitted the required reports for a previous grant(s), you may apply for an Excel Grant again. However, Excel grants are not meant to fund programs year after year. Excel Grants are meant as seed funds to help start new programs. If you have been awarded funds for the same program more than two years, you are unlikely to receive funds for that same program.

**Can computers, software and field trips be included in Excel Grant applications?** To help you with your budgeting, we asked the district's Technology and Transportation departments to put together some budgeting information. If your grant includes technology or transportation, please follow the links below for help on completing the budgeting section of your application. [HSF Excel Grant Procedures](#)

- **IT Equipment:** [\[click here to view all the documents for purchasing Computers, Chromebooks, etc.\]](#) All IT equipment will be ordered through the IT Department. All IT equipment purchased with grant funds will be owned by the district and will be tagged. IT Equipment could follow you if you transfer to another school within the district **and** if the program supported is not remaining at your current school. All purchased items will remain property of Highline Public Schools if you leave.
- **Transportation:** Transportation costs can be estimated Bus Driver time is billed at \$32/hour. One (1) hour is automatically added to actual trip for pre/post trip time. Mileage is calculated from bus garage to school - school to destination - destination to school - school to bus garage. You can use Google Maps or Mapquest to estimate the mileage. The bus garage is located at 17910 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue South, Burien, WA 98148.

### Are there types of projects that are more likely to be funded?

No. Each year is different and unique. The Foundation is interested in supporting teachers and staff in

their efforts to provide engaging learning opportunities outside of the standard curriculum – this might be bringing an author in to talk to students, planting trees, taking students to the University of Washington for the Engineering Discovery Days, visiting a college campus, or building Quadcopters or burglar alarms out of potatoes. The one thing in common of **ALL** funded programs is that they tie to Highline Public School's strategic plan. The Foundation has listed five of the successful grant programs from last year on its website to give examples of what we are looking for in proposals.

**My grant project is going to involve some after-school planning time. In my grant budget can I include stipends for the teachers who will be helping?**

No. Professional development, compensation for substitute teachers, and salaries or stipends for additional staffing will not be funded and should be *excluded* from your budget summary. Applications that include these expenses will be returned to the submitter and will not be considered without having those items removed.

**How are the grant winners decided?**

Grants are chosen in a blind evaluation process with Foundation board members as reviewers. The Foundation funds projects that augment and enrich the curriculum and do not supplant programs traditionally funded by district, state or federal budgets.

**When we will be notified?**

Announcements and notifications of winning grants will be made by December 15.

**If my grant application is selected, how do I receive my grant check?**

Individuals or schools do not receive a physical check. Instead, once the Excel Grant Committee has presented the awards at the individual schools, all principals and budget managers (bookkeepers, office managers, etc.) will be provided with the approved budgets for their schools. Budget managers will work with grantees to help make the approved purchases of supplies and equipment. Detailed information about the process will be provided to grant recipients and school budget managers when the grants are awarded.

**What programs or activities will the Foundation NOT fund through an Excel Grant?**

- Teacher salary or release time (subs)
- Teacher education/training/dues
- Snacks or meals for field trips (including pizza)
- Computer-related items not supported by HPS technical support
- Basic items that could be funded through building or department budgets

**What happens to equipment or supplies purchased with an Excel Grant if I leave Highline?**

All equipment and supplies purchased with grant funds are owned by the district. Equipment and supplies could follow you if you transfer to another school or location within the district and if the program is not continuing at your current school/location. All purchased materials will remain the property of the district if you leave Highline Public Schools.

**What is expected in the final report?**

Your final report will include both financial and program information and should include a narrative account of what was accomplished by the grant, including a description of progress made toward achieving the goals of the grant, results of measurable goals, and assurance that the activities under the grant have been conducted in conformity with the terms of the grant. **We use your stories to help us secure funding for next year**, so please be as excited and emotional as you were on your application! We will post stories and photos on our [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) – and we invite you to share these with your friends, coworkers and school families.

### **What happens if I learn that the program will cost more after I receive funding?**

The Foundation awards out 100% of its Excel and Impact grant budget. If you discover that there are additional or unanticipated costs, you will need to find other non-foundation funding to cover those expenses. This includes sales tax and shipping on items purchased. Please take time to put together a complete budget with your application.

### **Why is the deadline for the final report on May 1?**

The last few months of the school year go fast for everyone and trying to collect final reports from all the grant recipients takes time. We understand that reports are the least fun part of grants – but it is a very necessary piece in the circle of non-profit life. The IRS requires disclosure requirements for charitable organizations and one of the things we must do is show how we've spent donor money. Your report is a large piece of that process. If May 1 is too early for you to turn in your final report, you are welcome to ask for an extension.

### **Things to consider before you submit your application:**

- Submit your application on time and online. The application is due October 18. There are no extension granted.
- **Give your idea full credit for the number of students impacted by your grant request and the longevity of your program or project.** Note how your project may directly or indirectly affect other students in the school. For example, a science project may also impact literacy and arts, or health and enrichment, multiple schools or classrooms and grade levels.
- **Keep your audience in mind.** Remember that grant reviewers are not educators so try to use laypersons' language or explain "edu-speak". **Please do not use acronyms.**
- **Communicate your enthusiasm for the idea!** Get the review committee excited about your project. It is important to include as much detail as possible in your request; and a well-defined budget is essential to the review committee.
- **Request only the appropriate amount of funding needed.** An Excel Grant is an award of \$50 to \$2,500 for a specific project. Do not automatically request the maximum amount. Also, list any additional or alternate sources of funding that have been pursued.
- Individual teachers may apply for multiple grants, but **only one grant per project/program will be funded.** (Each grant application needs to be submitted separately.)
- Your application should have the **knowledge and support** of the Principal of each school involved.
- Your application should include evaluation criteria that shows how your program or project will impact **student success**.

### **Common reasons that grants do not get funded:**

- Incomplete or late application
- Lack of a definite project or detailed budget
- Request for items covered by HPS budget
- Final project report for previous grant not submitted
- Program not understood when reviewed by Foundation board members
- Lack of measurable evaluation criteria
- Grant does not tie to Highline Public School's Strategic Plan

Please contact us with any questions about the process or if you need assistance with the application.

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