

## **Gildersleeve Wheeler Education Fund Grant Programs**

### **Introduction**

The Gildersleeve Wheeler Education Fund (“GWEF”) is a non-profit organization designed to promote the excellence of public education in Portland by supporting the Portland School District in the following ways:

1. financially supporting on a direct contribution basis worthy educational projects and enhancement programs in betterment of the Portland School System,
2. financially supporting on a direct contribution basis enhanced access to technological equipment, education, and training, and
3. working in close collaboration with the Portland School System administrators to assess, identify, evaluate, coordinate and implement innovative ways to enhance educational opportunities for all of the students attending Portland public schools.

Under no circumstances will GWEF make expenditures for educational purposes that are, by law, required to be appropriated by the Town of Portland.

### **Grant Programs**

The GWEF is making grants available to the Portland School District (the “Grantee”) to be used by the Grantee for the benefit of students in the Portland public school system.

#### **1. Teacher Mini-Grants**

Teacher mini-grants will be awarded to a maximum of \$5,000 for each teacher mini-grant. Each teacher mini-grant will be awarded to the Portland School District to enable the Portland School District to advance funds to be spent, or to reimburse for funds spent for approved GWEF grants, by a teacher for projects, programs, equipment, and supplies used in the classroom that meet the following criteria:

- Support the current curriculum
- Directly influence the students’ learning experience
- Demonstrate educational merit
- Have goals and outcomes that are realistic and clearly defined
- Are creative and innovative
- Have a realistic and itemized budget

The Portland School District shall apply for a teacher mini-grant for a teacher at the request of the teacher and both the Portland School District and the teacher shall sign the Grant Program Application.

## **2. Professional-in-Residence Grants**

Professional-in-residence grants will be awarded to a maximum of \$5,000 per professional-in-residence. The professional-in-residence grant will be awarded to the Portland School District to enable the Portland School District to cover the professional-in-residence's contracted services and any special materials needed by the professional-in-residence to provide his or her services to students and/or teachers. Funds will not be granted for materials normally supplied by the Portland School District or for substitute teachers.

The criteria for selecting a professional-in-residence are:

- The professional-in-residence must not be a current employee of the Portland School District.
- The professional-in-residence must be a recognized professional with expertise in a specific subject area (e.g., science, art) and should demonstrate the use of innovative, effective instructional strategies and techniques.
- The professional-in-residence's subject area must be a natural extension of the school curriculum.
- The proposed program necessitating a professional-in-residence must be comprehensive. It should involve the professional-in-residence working with one or more grade levels at regular intervals over an extended period of time.
- As part of this comprehensive program, the professional-in-residence must be engaged where appropriate in:
  - Training teachers in both the content area and instructional strategies
  - Developing substantive curriculum enhancements that can be used in a demonstrable activity or project

The Portland School District shall apply for a professional-in-residence grant at the request of any certified educator currently employed by the Portland School District, but preference will be given to requests made by teams of teachers, curriculum leaders, grade level department chairpersons, and/or school administrators. The Grant Program Application shall be signed by both the Portland School District and the certified educator or other person or persons requesting that the Portland School District apply for the grant.

## **3. Technology Grant**

A grant in this category will be awarded to the Portland School District to implement new technological advancements and support for those advancements that will add to and otherwise enrich students' educational experience. Applications for computer hardware or software that would otherwise be purchased using Board of Education budgeted funds will not be accepted.

GWEF will use the following criteria when reviewing applications:

- The request can be for the replacement, continued support or the initiation of technological advancements otherwise not normally budgeted for by the Board of Education.
- The request promotes a problem-solving approach to learning, involving inquiry and/or investigation.
- The request promotes higher-level reasoning, abstract and/or critical thinking skills.
- The request initiates a project that promotes creative expression.
- The request ultimately leads to self-directed learning and study skills.
- The request ultimately leads to the development of curriculum advancement.

In addition, preference will be given to those proposals that can potentially be continued or repeated in future years without additional GWEF funding.

#### **4. Enrichment Grants**

The existence of this grant recognizes that there are students with extraordinary abilities or talents and those with the potential to exhibit outstanding abilities or talents (given the appropriate support or enrichment experiences), who have affective and educational needs that require appropriate instructional strategies, depth and breadth of content, pace of instruction, and interaction with their intellectual peers to maximize their potential.

Likewise, enrichment encompasses a repertoire of practices, pedagogy, and innovations that teachers can draw upon to fit the content, context, and learner. This can encompass a continuum of services that can be utilized to meet the needs of all students, recognizing individual differences and the strengths of all children, while embodying the best of educational practices and pedagogy.

The Portland School District shall apply for an enrichment grant for the benefit of an individual student or group of students at the request of any certified educator or group of educators employed by the Portland school system. The Grant Program Application shall be signed by the Portland School District and the certified educator or group of educators, as applicable. The Portland School District shall apply for an enrichment grant for the benefit of an individual student or group of students at the request of an individual student or group of students, who have the guidance/mentorship of a certified educator employed by the Portland school system and need funds for a specific program. For example, the UCONN Mentor Connection has a substantial fee for its three-week program on the UCONN campus. Individuals must apply and be accepted into the program prior to requesting the Portland School District to apply for this grant. The Grant Program Application shall be signed by the Portland School District, the individual student or group of students, as applicable, and the certified educator.

Grants will be awarded to a maximum of \$5,000 per program. Programs for individuals or small groups are not to exceed \$5,000 per program.

**Criteria for students:**

***For individual students or small groups of students*** identified who have demonstrated or have the potential to demonstrate talent in a particular area:

- Program should meet the needs, interests, abilities and maturity level(s) of “talented” student(s).
- Program will provide opportunities for further development of identified talents, potential and demonstrated topics of passionate interest, or potential talents.
- Program should have a history of demonstrated success and the applicant should explain the program within the application.
- Program can be an out of district program, not currently funded by the district, such as but not limited to:
  - UCONN Mentor Connection
  - Center for Creative Youth – Wesleyan
  - Mentorships
  - Apprenticeships
  - Internships
  - Invention Convention
- Program may be provided by the district (such as the School for the Performing Arts) but may not be currently funded by the district.
- Student(s) should be encouraged to share their learning from the opportunity with other students in the district upon completion of the opportunity (opened to allow for variety in programs and creative ways of sharing).

***For a larger group of students*** for general enrichment or targeting total school improvement:

- Program will provide extensions above and beyond those in the regular curriculum, exposing students to new areas of potential interest.
- Programs/opportunities may develop skills in particular areas creating the potential for new areas of expertise, interest, and exploration among students.
- Program should provide a means and guidance for interested students to investigate through active and in-depth inquiry of topics of interest and skills developed.
- Program should encompass a range of differentiated enrichment experiences to fit the range of talents, interests, and student needs within a school.
- Program should be aligned with school wide goals, so enrichment is seen as part of school wide improvement.
- Ongoing assessment should be a component part of the program (student interests, grasp of concepts, growth, understanding of content, etc.)

## **We Encourage**

- ✓ Collaboration among teachers, departments, grade levels, and schools in developing projects
- ✓ Applicants to seek matching funds from PTO's or other sources
- ✓ Specificity and completeness in the grant application and budget. Well written, concise yet detailed project descriptions are appreciated
- ✓ We will reconsider grant applications that were not previously approved due to lack of funding

## **We Discourage**

- ✓ Repeat applications for projects already funded in prior years or that are widely duplicated through the school system unless the project is unique
- ✓ Typically, the GWEF does not fund the following:
  - Local transportation costs
  - Compensation for substitute teachers when release time is requested
  - Food that is not integral to the learning experience
  - Computer hardware or software unless part of Technology Grant program

## **Application and Grant Selection Process**

The grant application form will be available on the web for the Town of Portland at [www.Portlandct.org](http://www.Portlandct.org). Grant applications must be completed in full and signed by the applicant, then reviewed and signed by the school Principal. All applications will be forwarded to the Superintendent of Schools. The Board of Education will meet with the Superintendent to review applications and prioritize them. The Board of Education will forward all grant applications to the GWEF with their priority ranking. The GWEF may request applicants to give an oral presentation and provide details of the proposed program prior to awarding grants. Decisions will be voted on by the GWEF on or before June 1 and February 15. The successful applicants will be notified of the award within ten days at which time a Grant Award Agreement will be provided to confirm the terms and conditions of the award.

The Portland School District must notify, or cause the successful teacher applicants and/or student applicants, as applicable, to notify, the GWEF when the project is taking place so that Trustees may attend. The GWEF requests that any public information about a grant sponsored activity, either in school newsletters or newspaper publications, recognize the efforts of the GWEF.

The Portland School District and/or the successful teacher applicants and/or student applicants, as applicable, must submit a written evaluation or Final Report at the completion of the project.

**Administration**

If for some reason the Portland School District and/or the teacher applicants and/or student applicants, as applicable, are unable to administer the grant, the GWEF Chairperson must be contacted as soon as possible.

**Conflict of Interest**

Any potential actual or inferred conflict of interest by any of the Portland School District, teacher applicant, or student applicant, as applicable, must be disclosed at the time of application.

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