



Innovative Learning Grants

Grant Guidelines

For programs to be implemented in the 2025-2026 school year

Grant Application Deadline: February 21, 2025

What is the Council Rock Education Foundation (CREF)?

The Council Rock Education Foundation is a non-profit organization. The Board of Directors consists of business professionals, community members, and school district personnel. The Superintendent of School and a representative of the School Board are voting members of CREF.

Mission

CREF's mission is to enhance and elevate educational opportunities for all students of the Council Rock School District through community engagement and philanthropic support.

Vision

Our vision is to inspire all students of the Council Rock School District to reach their fullest potential and develop a love of lifelong learning.

Goal

The goal of CREF is to cultivate a culture of curiosity and engagement where both students and teachers are empowered to think differently and bring their ideas to life. When afforded the necessary tools, through philanthropic support, educators have the resources to experiment and innovate.

What is an Innovative Learning Grant?

CREF is pleased to provide grant funds to teachers and staff of the Council Rock School District through the **Innovative Learning Grants Program**. The Foundation Board will award grants for projects that enhance and elevate the district's curriculum and public education above the annual district budget.

CREF resources are distributed to support programs for the benefit of the students in the Council Rock School District. The Foundation recognizes that teachers, educators, and district supporters are valuable partners in developing engaging and challenging programs or projects that enhance the district's curriculum. CREF created the Innovative Learning Grants program to fund these projects. **Innovative Learning Grants are projects/programs that implement a new insight, idea, or accessibility. The project may benefit a single classroom, involve several grade levels or departments, impact an entire school, or benefit the entire district.**

Program Areas and Recently Funded Projects/Programs

The Council Rock Education Foundation considers projects/programs in all curricular areas of the Council Rock School District. CREF will award grants for projects/programs that enhance and elevate the district's curriculum. Below are examples of CREF funded initiatives:

STEAM:

Science: *Family Science Night, NASA Space Station Project, Robotics Academy, Exploring the World Through VR, Embryology Project, Outdoor Classroom, NASA/GLOBE Outdoor STEM Weather and Climate Citizen Science, GreenHouse Project, and Fabricating the Future of STEAM*

Technology: *Coding Clubs, Interactive Display Using Hummingbird, 3D Print Maker, Awesome Autoclaves, Tello Drones, STEAM-Rolling with Sphero*

Engineering: *Rock Rovers NASA Project, Egyptians and Engineering, Laser Logo Project, and WhatSUPcycling?*

Arts and Humanities (visual arts, music, theater, and dance): *Ukulele Buddy, Sewing up Success, Multimedia Image Creator, and Side-by-Side Music Mentorship Program*

Math: *21st Century Math*

Social Studies (civics and government, economics, geography, history, and student interpersonal skills): *Effective Environment...Where History Comes Alive, Historical Literacy Project, Children's Government Books, and Council Rock SMG Leadership Summit*

Language Arts (reading, writing, speaking, and listening): *Reading Around the World, VOX Books for All Students, WES Wordsmith, CR Seal of Biliteracy, and One Book, One 7th Grade*

Special Education: *Green Team Autism Club, Kids with Heart, Inclusive Practices, ACHIEVE Coffee Cart, the Friendship Bracelet project, Switch On, and Building Independence Through Work Experience*

Health and Wellness: *Bike Safety, District Suicide Prevention Program QPR, Sensory Zone, Using Children's Literature to Support Social and Emotional Learning, CALM (Confident Active Learner Minds), and Stop the Bleed*

Innovative Learning Grants - Guidelines

Submission Deadline: February 21, 2025

CREF provides grant funds through the **Innovative Learning Grants Program**. The Foundation Board will award grants for projects/programs that enhance and elevate the Council Rock School District's curriculum above the annual district budget. This is a competitive grant process. Not all grants submitted will be funded.

Who can apply?

- All Council Rock School District Staff
- Non-Profit Community Organizations within the boundaries of the CRSD whose beneficiaries of the proposal are CRSD students (including but not limited to PTO/PTA/Home and School Associations).

How much can I request?

- Single Teacher/Classroom Grant
 - Funding a project/program at a single CRSD school
 - Maximum of \$6,000 per grant
- District Wide/Collaborative Grants
 - Funding a project/program throughout multiple CRSD schools
 - Funding a project for all CRSD schools
 - Maximum of \$10,000 per grant
- CRSD Alumni Directed Grant
 - Funding projects/programs with a focus on Social Studies which includes civics and government, economics, geography, history, and student interpersonal skills
 - Maximum: up to \$5,000 in total for 2025

Budget:

- All funds are designated for projects planned for the 2025-2026 school year and must be expended between July 1, 2025 and June 1, 2026.
- All use of funds must comply with CRSD Purchasing Guidelines. You will need to itemize all costs associated with the grant request.
- Please note the pricing of the quote should be valid until purchase (typically Fall of 2025)
- If you are purchasing a product with a unit cost greater than \$1,000.00, please provide documentation of at least three (3) quotes. Requisitions that do not have this information attached will be rejected. If it is impossible to get quotes because only one vendor provides the product, please document it in the notes of the requisition.

- If you are purchasing an item that is on one of the bid lists, please ensure that the bid number and item number are noted somewhere on the requisition form. If it is not included, the requisition will be rejected.
- The Foundation will not cover any costs that exceed the amount granted. Check with vendors to disclose expected cost increases and include those in the budget.
- Budget should not include taxes (CRSD/CREF are tax exempt organizations), or funding for transportation, lodging, and meals.

Funds not expended will be returned to CREF and will be reallocated by the CREF Grant Committee and Board of Directors.

Can Grant Funds be used to purchase technology/equipment?

- Technology/equipment purchases are considered only if the utilization is integral to innovative instructional strategies.
- The technology/equipment must be clearly described in the grant narrative.
- The technology/equipment must be accurately listed and have accurate costs listed in the budget.
- All proposed technology/equipment purchases must be submitted to the IT Director for signed approval before submitting the application for funding.

Can an outside presenter be a part of the project/program?

- Projects that require outside presenters or personnel must include resumes and/or organizational information about the presenters.

Why are the principal's signature, curriculum coordinator's signature, IT Director (if applicable), and Business Director (if applicable) required on the grant application?

- **Principal** *REQUIRED BY ALL APPLICANTS
 - Ensures the project/program is in alignment with district/school priorities
 - Ensures that supporting and sustaining resources will be available for the project/program.
 - Project/program poses no conflict with the school's established curriculum.
 - The project/program is cost effective, since portions of the required resources may already be available through the district's general fund or through other organizations such as the PTO.
- **Curriculum Coordinator** *REQUIRED BY ALL APPLICANTS
 - Ensures that the project is in line with CRSD's current and planned curriculum objectives for the district.

- **IT Director** (REQUIRED IF APPLICANT SEEKS TECHNOLOGY/EQUIPMENT)
 - Ensures compatibility of project/program equipment, applications, software, etc.
- **Business Director** (REQUIRED IF APPLICANT SEEKS ANY CHANGES TO FACILITIES)
 - Ensures feasibility of any projects/programs that alter CRSD facilities or require special equipment.

Reporting and Award Requirements

- Grantees are required to submit a brief interim report mid-year as a check-in.
- Grantees are required to submit final reports
 - Will be used in CREF's end-of-year report
 - Final reports will be provided through a Google docs form
 - Reports will be due June 23, 2026
- Grantees will be asked to showcase grants throughout the year by sharing their project/program with others including CREF Board
- Grantees will credit CREF when talking about or showcasing the project/program throughout the lifetime of the grant.

Submitting the Application and Application Requirements

- All required portions of the Grant Application must be completed upon final submission.
- The application must be submitted online no later than midnight on February 21, 2025. Neither applications nor application materials will be accepted after that time. No extensions beyond the deadline will be granted for the 2025 Grant Cycle.
- All school personnel applications must be signed and dated by both the applicant(s), building principal, curriculum coordinator, IT Director (if applicable), and Business Director (if applicable) in order to be considered.
- If applying for a collaborative or district wide grant, each building principal must sign the application.
- If applicant(s) is/are not Council Rock staff member, contact CREF's executive director at office@creducationfoundation.org if more information is needed about obtaining signatures.

Review Criteria

Please note that this is a competitive grant process, not all grants submitted will be funded.

Applicants are reminded to provide a thorough narrative that clearly describes their project/program and answers all questions. Incomplete grant narratives will not be funded.

Proposals are scored on their ability to demonstrate the following:

- Aligns with the CRSD Curriculum
- Aligns with the Mission and Vision of the Council Rock Education Foundation.
- Evidence-Based Practices
- Equity and Inclusivity
- Compliance and Accountability

Innovation:

- The project implements a new insight, idea, or accessibility to the CRSD curriculum.
- Can be a best practice learned about in continuing education classes and workshops.
- Can be a best practice used in other school districts.
- Can be a project used in other schools or classrooms in the CRSD.
- It must have a clear impact on the students of the CRSD.

Demonstration of Need:

- The project identifies a need for the students of the CRSD and has a strong rationale and significance that effectively addresses that specific need.

Feasibility:

- The project has a highly realistic plan with a timeline, budget expenditures, and highly achievable outcomes.

Scale and Sustainability:

- The project has the potential to scale beyond the initial audience to other classrooms or schools, and/or the project's impact can be sustained beyond the grant period.

Evaluation:

- There is a comprehensive plan for evaluating and assessing project outcomes with clear metrics.

Grant Program Timeline

- **October 1, 2024** - Online grants portal opens
- **November 13, 2024** - Optional virtual information session
- **January 23, 2025** - Optional virtual information session
- **February 21, 2025** - Deadline for submitting grant application
- **March/April 2025** - CREF Grants Committee meets to evaluate and select winning proposals to be presented to the CRSD administration and CREF Board for approval.
- **May 9, 2025** - Grantees notified

It is important for applicants to plan their projects far enough in advance to submit their completed application by the February 21, 2025 deadline. No late applications will be accepted.

- Schedule a brief meeting with your principal or administrator to review your proposal.
- Schedule a brief meeting with the CRSD Information Technology department to ensure compatibility of project/program equipment, applications, software, etc. if applicable.
- Schedule a brief meeting with the Business office to ensure feasibility of any projects/programs that alter CRSD facilities or require special equipment.
- Budget should not include taxes (CRSD/CREF are tax exempt organizations), or funding for transportation, lodging, and meals.
- Schedule ample time to meet and acquire necessary signatures from principals, curriculum coordinators, Director of IT, and Director of Business Administration.

- ★ All materials and equipment awarded through the Innovative Grant process become property of the Council Rock School District.
- ★ CREF reserves the right to any profits generated from future distribution or production of any CREF funded end project. This includes any proceeds from marketing a CREF funded product by CREF or the entity receiving funding.

Thank you for your interest in innovative educational projects/programs through the Council Rock Education Foundation! If you have any specific questions about the grant or Foundation, please contact CREF's Executive Director, at

office@creducationfoundation.org