



Innovative Learning Grants Guidelines

Quick-Reference Guide for Applicants

For grants implemented in the 2027–2028 school year

APPLICATION DEADLINE: FEBRUARY 7, 2027

Read this guide before you start your application. It covers who can apply, how much you can request, what's required, and how proposals are scored.

About CREF

The Council Rock Education Foundation (CREF) is dedicated to securing funds to enhance and elevate innovative educational opportunities for all students of the Council Rock School District through community engagement and philanthropic support.

What Is an Innovative Learning Grant?

- Funds projects that introduce a new idea, insight, or approach and enhance the district's curriculum beyond the annual district budget
- The project/program does NOT have to be new to education. It can be already in place at other schools or districts. It can be one you learned about through continuing education, other educators, or professional development and resources.
- Can benefit a single classroom, span grade levels or departments, or serve an entire school, several schools, or the whole district
- All curricular areas are eligible to apply

What Grants Are NOT For

Please keep in mind that Innovative Learning Grants are NOT intended to:

- Replace basic classroom supplies the school or district should already provide
- Fund personal professional development or travel unrelated to direct student impact
- Have no clear, describable outcome for students
- Rely on recurring costs (subscriptions, consumables) without a plan for funding them beyond this grant

Who Can Apply?

- All Council Rock School District staff
- Community non-profits within CRSD boundaries whose projects benefit CRSD students

How Much Can I Request?

Grant Type	Use	Max Award
Single Teacher/Classroom	One project at a single CRSD classroom	\$6,000
District-Wide/Collaborative	Project spanning multiple classrooms, schools, or the entire CRSD	\$10,000
CRSD Alumni Directed	Social Studies focus: civics, government, economics, geography, or history	\$5,000 total for 2027-2028

Budget

- **Timing:** Funds must be spent between July 1, 2027 and June 1, 2028.
- **Itemize everything** and follow CRSD Purchasing Guidelines.
- **Quotes:** Purchases over \$1,000 need 3 quotes attached (or a note explaining why only one vendor exists) - missing quotes = rejected requisition.
- **Bid list items:** note the bid number and item number on the requisition, or it will be rejected.
- **No taxes** (CRSD/CREF are tax-exempt).
- **Transportation and food** will only be funded if essential to the project.
- **Stay in budget:** CREF won't cover costs beyond the amount granted — confirm pricing holds through your purchase date.
- **Unused funds** return to CREF for reallocation.

Technology & Equipment Purchases

- Only approved when essential to the project's success
- Must be clearly described in the narrative, with accurate costs in the budget
- Requires signed IT Director approval before you submit the application

Outside Presenters

If your project uses an outside presenter or organization, include their resume and/or organizational information with your application. All presenters and organizations must be approved in writing by CRSD.

Required Signatures

Signer	Required When	Confirms
Principal	Every application	Fits school priorities, no curriculum conflict, cost-effective
Curriculum Coordinator	Every application	Aligns with CRSD curriculum objectives
Director of Business Administration	Every application	All projects are feasible from the district level, and district leadership has reviewed and approved the project to move forward
IT Director	Requesting technology/equipment	Equipment, software, and apps are compatible with district systems

Applying: Checklist & Requirements

- ☐ Meet with your building principal and curriculum coordinator to discuss your project idea before completing the application.
- ☐ If your project includes technology or equipment, consult with the IT Director to confirm compatibility and obtain signed approval.
- ☐ Download the required signature and budget templates.
- ☐ Obtain all required signatures from the building principal(s), curriculum coordinator, and Director of Business Administration. Include signed IT Director approval for any technology or equipment requests.
- ☐ If your project includes an outside presenter, prepare their résumé or organizational information to attach to your application.
- ☐ If you are not a CRSD staff member, contact CREF's Executive Director for guidance on obtaining the required signatures.
- ☐ **Submit your completed application online by February 7, 2027.** Late applications will not be accepted, and extensions will not be granted.

How Proposals Are Scored

This is a competitive process and not all applications are funded. Write a thorough, complete narrative. Reviewers score proposals on:

- **Innovation:** a new idea/approach, an adapted best practice, or an expansion of an existing project with clear impact on CRSD students.
- **Demonstrated Need:** a strong rationale for why students will benefit.
- **Feasibility:** a realistic timeline, budget, and achievable outcomes.
- **Scale & Sustainability:** potential to grow beyond the initial group or continue past the grant period.
- **Evaluation:** a clear plan and metrics for assessing outcomes.
- **Alignment:** fits CRSD curriculum and CREF's mission/vision.

Program Timeline

Date	Milestone
Oct 1, 2026	Online grant portal opens
Oct 21, 2026	Optional virtual info session, 4:00 PM
Feb 7, 2027	Application deadline (11:59 PM) — no extensions
Mar–May 2027	CREF Grants Committee review; CRSD & CREF Board approval
May 31, 2027	Grantees notified

If You're Funded, You Agree to:

- ☐ Submit a mid-year check-in report via Google form by December 31, 2027
- ☐ Submit a final Grant Summary Report via Google form by June 30, 2028
- ☐ Provide photos and/or videos as requested
- ☐ Showcase your project to parents and the school community, options include: slide decks, photos, newsletters and social media (share posts to Council Rock Education Foundation)
- ☐ Attend the Grantee Reception and brief ceremony at the CRSD Board meeting in September 2027
- ☐ Acknowledge CREF as the funding source whenever you discuss, showcase, or communicate about the project
- ☐ Give CREF permission to share and publicize the grant
- ☐ Materials/equipment purchased are considered property of CRSD
- ☐ CREF retains rights to any profits from future distribution of a CREF-funded grant

Questions? Contact Beth Anne Dobosh, CREF Executive Director, office@CReducationFoundation.org or BethAnne.Dobosh@CRSD.org