

The Ed. Foundation

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

September 2024

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ORGANIZATION

What is The Ed. Foundation's mission?

The Ed. Foundation of Port Washington is an independent, nonprofit, community-based organization, created to support initiatives that are beyond basic educational needs and to enhance and expand educational opportunities for all students in the Port Washington public school district.

What is The Ed. Foundation's relationship to the school district?

As an independent, community-based organization, The Ed. Foundation partners with District educators and administrators to foster educational excellence, educator enthusiasm and student achievement. To ensure that funding is delivered most impactfully and responsibly, The Ed. Foundation works with administrators to confirm that projects are both feasible and supported by the District. Every grant application must be approved by all participating school principals. If a project will impact any school district facility, grounds or technology, the approval of appropriate district administrators is also required.

What is Membership and when should I renew it?

Becoming a member of The Ed. Foundation signals your support for our District's students and schools. Any donation, in any amount, qualifies donors for membership to The Ed. Foundation, from Friends of The Ed. Foundation (under \$100) to Platinum Sponsors (\$5,000+). Membership extends through the school year and must be renewed every September. Members of The Ed. Foundation at all levels receive regular updates about the exciting and enriching experiences delivered in our schools, enjoy discounted pricing for The Ed. Foundation's events, and are recognized on The Ed. Foundation's website and event materials. [Join or renew your membership](#) today.

How can I be involved in The Ed. Foundation? Do I need to donate money to be involved?

There are many ways to get involved in The Ed. Foundation, not only through financial donations, but also by contributing your time, skills and energy. Participation on The Ed. Foundation's Executive and Advisory Boards does not require a financial contribution. Non-Board members are always welcome to participate on The Ed. Foundation's Event Planning committee. To learn more about opportunities for involvement, contact The Ed. Foundation President, Lauren Edwards (lauren@theedfoundation.org).

Who makes up The Ed. Foundation's Board?

The Ed. Foundation's Executive and Advisory Board members represent a diverse mix of individuals from across the PW community. Board members include parents and grandparents of District students and graduates, engaged Schreiber alumni and other invested community members, including some who are not related to District students. They represent a wide range of professional interests and expertise. All share a passion for public education and a commitment to enhancing the student experience in all PW schools. Participation on The Ed. Foundation's Executive and Advisory Boards does not require financial contribution, but most Board members choose to support the organization.

GRANTS

I am a community member. How do I get a grant from The Ed. Foundation? What if I don't have a staff sponsor for my idea?

All members of the PW school community—including community members working as individuals or with other community organizations—are encouraged to pursue Ed. Foundation grants that will enrich the student experience in any of our District's schools. For a grant proposal to be considered, it must be approved by the principal of the building in which it will be delivered. Grant proposals are typically submitted in partnership with District educators or administrators, ensuring the proposed programs have the support necessary for their enthusiastic, successful delivery. If a community member does not have staff partnership, they should discuss the proposal with their building principal and The Ed. Foundation's leadership before submitting a grant application.

When is the deadline to apply for a grant and, if accepted, when do grant recipients receive the funding?

The Ed. Foundation's grant application is typically released in mid-January and is due mid-March, with applicants notified of decisions by mid-May. Under extenuating circumstances and with the agreement of The Ed. Foundation's leadership, off-cycle grant applications may be submitted outside that window during the school year. Grant recipients receive their funding in a timely fashion and are guided through the funding request process by The Ed. Foundation's VP of Grants. For more information about the grant application process, contact The Ed. Foundation's VP of Grants, [Valerie Taylor](#).

GRANTS (CONT'D.)

What types of grants does The Ed. Foundation fund?

The Ed. Foundation funds programs and materials that directly enrich the PW student experience and curriculum ([see complete lists of current and past awarded grants](#)).

What are The Ed. Foundation's criteria for accepting a grant proposal?

Proposed projects must show:

- Evidence of an innovative, well-conceived, feasible project that enhances curriculum
- Demonstrable impact to the student experience
- Careful budgeting that maximizes all resources

The most successful applications:

- Provide thorough, specific responses to all application questions, and include detailed budgets.
- Impact the greatest number of students possible in a considered, cost-effective way.
- Showcase innovation, while building on existing curriculum.
- Bridge different subject areas and/or are otherwise collaborative, among educators, schools, or with other community partners.
- Are closely aligned to the District's vision, mission and Portrait of a Graduate, with potential to be sustained and adopted into district programming.
- Articulate why continued or additional funding is needed, if the project is already in use.

[Learn more](#) about the grant application process.

What are some of the reasons why The Ed. Foundation might deny a grant proposal?

The Ed. Foundation is unlikely to fund grants that:

- Are not tied into curriculum (e.g., playground equipment or capital improvements).
- The school district would be expected to fund to meet basic educational requirements (e.g., textbooks or basic school supplies).
- Do not directly engage students in a learning experience (e.g., professional development for district-funded programs).

How does The Ed. Foundation decide which grants get renewed?

The Ed. Foundation respects the time spent on every proposal. A committee of The Ed. Foundation's board members of varied backgrounds and experience evaluates each application on its own merits, including those for previously-approved projects. For grants seeking renewal, the Committee will consider the project's prior delivery and performance, whether it is growing or continuing to deliver on its objectives, and how it aligns with evolving student needs and curriculum.

Does The Ed. Foundation fund large projects?

The Ed. Foundation funds projects of all sizes, from smaller grants that enhance existing programs in individual buildings to larger gifts for new, districtwide programs. The Ed. Foundation accepts earmarked donations for large projects, such as DOTv and Schreiber's recently-approved greenhouse. When possible, The Ed. Foundation may partner with other organizations to provide funding for larger, more costly projects.

How many grants does The Ed. Foundation fund every year? How much funding does The Ed. Foundation provide to Port schools each year?

Grant funding is directly tied to The Ed. Foundation's capacity to fundraise; the more The Ed. Foundation is able to raise, the more it can give back to PW schools. For each of the past few years, The Ed. Foundation has been proud to donate more than \$150,000 back into PW schools, funding 50-60 individual grants across all seven schools.

Is there a limit to how many grants The Ed. Foundation will fund—or how many grants a single applicant can receive—each year?

There is no limit to the number of grants that can be made each year. The number of projects funded each year depends on how many deserving applications are submitted and the financial commitments they require. Similarly, there is no limit to the number of grants an applicant can be awarded in any one year, or over the course of many years.

How does The Ed. Foundation know if grants are successful?

Every Ed. Foundation grant is assigned a grant liaison—typically one of The Ed. Foundation's Board or Advisory Board members—to monitor program progress and delivery. Liaisons observe the grants in action, speak with grant recipients throughout the process, and report back on grant delivery to The Ed. Foundation's leadership team. Additionally, grant recipients are required to fill out a grant evaluation upon completing their projects, addressing grant implementation, participant engagement, performance against desired outcomes and perceived impact.

GRANTS (CONT'D.)

Why do some schools or Houses receive grants that others do not?

While many programs could benefit all District students on a grade level or in a particular subject area, The Ed. Foundation can only consider those grants for which applications are made. The Ed. Foundation evaluates each application on its own merits without consideration for parity among the schools, Houses (at Weber) or subject areas. For example, if educators in one PW elementary school wish to deliver a project, but those in other schools do not, The Ed. Foundation can only consider the one application submitted.

When an application is submitted for a readily scalable program that would have clear benefits for students across schools or levels, The Ed. Foundation's leadership discusses the proposal's potential for expansion with District administrators. Ultimately, The Ed. Foundation must consider every grant proposal on its own merits and will not deny any group of students a worthy, enriching experience simply because the project was not championed across other schools or Houses.

How come I never found out about a grant that happened in my child's classroom?

The Ed. Foundation relies on grant recipients to notify families when a grant will be delivered in their child's school or classroom. We encourage grant recipients to secure all necessary permissions for student participation, widely promote their Ed. Foundation grants, and share the wonderful experiences they are delivering with The Ed. Foundation's support. Check out @theedfoundationpw on Instagram and Facebook to see our grants in action.

Why does The Ed. Foundation fund some classroom supplies? Why doesn't the District pay for all supplies?

The Ed. Foundation funds supplies and materials that go beyond those needed to satisfy basic learning requirements. Such supplies might include cutting-edge scientific equipment or advanced art materials that create best-in-class learning opportunities. The Ed. Foundation does not fund classroom necessities or individual supplies, such as pencils, paper, binders or backpacks.

The District's annual school budget must maintain high quality teaching and learning in accordance with NYS standards, the District's strategic plan, and its Portrait of a Graduate, all while respecting the impact to taxpayers in our community. The Ed. Foundation exists to support student enrichment and achievement beyond what can be captured in the District budget, which must balance the pursuit of excellence with the increasing costs of doing business.

How do I sponsor a grant?

Grant sponsorship requires a minimum donation of \$1,000. Sponsors may select the grants they wish to fund and will be listed in The Ed. Foundation's annual grant brochure if they wish. [Learn more](#) about grant sponsorship.

FINANCE

How do I donate to The Ed. Foundation?

It's easy to [donate to The Ed. Foundation online](#). No donation is too small or too large. Your support at any level goes a long way and is very much appreciated. The Ed. Foundation accepts payment by credit/debit card, ACH/bank account, personal check or donor advised funds. If you would like to make an earmarked, institutional or legacy gift, or to donate by personal check or donor advised fund, please contact The Ed. Foundation's VP of Membership, [Robin McDermott](#).

How is the The Ed. Foundation's mission different from that of my HSA/PTA? To which organization should I donate?

Like our District's HSAs and PTA, The Ed. Foundation is an independent, not-for-profit community organization. We share a commitment to creating the best learning environment and experience for PW students. The Ed. Foundation's mission is focused on initiatives that go beyond basic educational requirements and create access to enriching, curriculum-enhancing opportunities for students across all schools and levels in our District. Unlike The Ed. Foundation, the HSAs/PTA are focused squarely on their own school communities. Their missions extend to strengthening home-school partnerships, building spirited, engaged family communities, and supporting school staff in ways that do not need to be tied to curriculum. The Ed. Foundation often funds academically-enriching grants proposed by the HSAs/PTA in partnership with their school staff and administration.

Philanthropic giving is deeply personal. Our hope is that donors see the unique value that The Ed. Foundation and the HSAs/PTA create for our schools and contribute to both at whatever levels they are able.

Where does The Ed. Foundation's money come from?

Since its founding in 2001, The Ed. Foundation has actively raised funds to award grants that enhance and expand educational opportunities for all students in PW public schools. The Ed. Foundation actively seeks private donations, grants and other sources of funding to support selected programs and resources. With no paid staff and minimal administrative expenses, almost 100% of monies raised are donated to our District's schools.