



Challenge Scholars Dream Fund

GRANT APPLICATION GUIDELINES

For Requests up to \$10,000



We believe that if students in West Side schools are:

motivated by their future and feel supported by caring adults, engaged in learning and achieving at or above grade level and ready, willing, and able to attend school every day **then they will be prepared for college or career training.**

The Challenge Scholars Dream Fund offers financial support to projects that help students feel motivated, be engaged in school and have great attendance. Based on feedback from students, community organizations, teachers and parents, a series of “accelerants” were identified as priority areas for funding. **Accordingly, projects funded by the Dream Fund must address at least one of the following:**

- Exposes students to new networks and opportunities
- Increases connections between stakeholder groups (students, teachers, parents, community organizations)
- Builds student voice and leadership capacity
- Creates safe spaces
- Maximizes experiential learning
- Cultivates Challenge Scholars identity
- Supports parent engagement and buy-in
- Celebrates and incentivizes positive outcomes
- Helps students understand and navigate steps to college and career
- Supports teacher or school district engagement and buy-in
- Builds trusting relationships and connections
- Honors culture

ELIGIBILITY

Individuals, non-profit organizations with a 501(c)(3) status, and staff from West Side schools (Sibley Elementary, Stocking Elementary, Harrison Park School, Westwood Middle School or Union High School) may apply for grants for programs that benefit Challenge Scholars on the West side of Grand Rapids.

Projects should be inclusive. Participation in projects must be open to individuals of any race, ethnicity, gender, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, age, national origin or disability. Applications from religious organizations for non-religious purposes will be considered.

Funded projects led by individuals who are not associated with a school or non-profit will need to consult with Program Officer Ben Oliver to review and select a payment option.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Grant applications must be submitted electronically using the online application form linked on the Challenge Scholars website: www.challengescholars.org.

HELPFUL HINTS FOR APPLYING

- Have a clear-cut, organized goal with clear benefits for Challenge Scholars or students attending Sibley, Stocking, Harrison Park, Westwood or Union.
- Be original, unique, well written and CREATIVE!
- Involve multiple stakeholders (i.e. students, and teachers, or parents and teachers) in planning and implementation.
- Clearly address at least one of the accelerants listed above.
- When describing how funds will be used, include estimated costs of items to be purchased with grant funds.

GRANT APPLICATION QUESTIONS

The grant application must be completed online through the link found at www.challengescholars.org, the application includes the following questions:

- **Contact information**
 - Primary contact person name, email address, and phone
 - Names of other individuals involved in planning or carrying out the project (if applicable)
 - If the project will take place in a school, list the school(s) involved. ****Principal approval is required for all school-based projects.****
- **Project Information**
 - Project name
 - What issue area or need area (from the list of Accelerants) does your project or program address?
 - What is the goal of your project? Your goal should be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely. (50 words or less)
 - Project start and end dates.
 - Describe your project as instructed below (300 words or less).
 - Provide a SPECIFIC and CONCISE description of the proposed project or program (who, what, where, when and how).
 - Include a project timeline
 - Specify how often the activity will take place, the location, length of each session, and on how many occasions the activity takes place (For example, an activity occurs twice each week for six hours per week, over a ten-week period).

Additional questions for requests between \$1,001 and \$10,000:

 - Which groups are involved in the project (students, parents, teacher/school staff, or community partners), and how are they involved? (50 words or less)
 - Imagine that your project is complete and that it was a smash-hit. How would you know it was successful? (200 words or less)
 - If this request receives funding, how might the project continue if/when you no longer receive funding from the Dream Fund? Or is this request for a one-time expense?
- **Budget information**
 - How much money do you need?
 - How do you plan to use the money?
 - Is there anything else we need to know about your proposal?

SELECTION AND PAYMENT PROCESS

A committee of Challenge Scholars students, parents, teachers/staff, and representatives from community-based organizations on the West Side will review it. We'll let you know if your project is receiving funding within 4-8 weeks.

If your project receives funding, GRCF staff will contact you to share details on how to access the dollars and the reporting (photos, written description of the project) that you'll need to submit after the project is completed.

QUESTIONS? NEED HELP?

Contact Ben Oliver at 616.284.4922 or boliver@grfoundation.org.