



# Challenge Scholars Dream Fund

## GRANT APPLICATION GUIDELINES

For Requests of \$10,001 or more



### 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. Due to the challenges that students and families are encountering as a result of COVID-19, the Dream Fund Committee is shifting its focus. **Accordingly, projects funded by the Dream Fund must address one of the following priorities:**

- **Increase equitable access to high quality teaching and learning as educational delivery is occurring virtually.** *We especially want to encourage creativity in this new educational setting to help students, families and teachers to prepare for and continue learning in new ways.*
- **Support family and community networks in finding creative ways to partner and give voice to how they want to be supported by and stay connected to schools, neighborhoods and community during these changing times.** *We especially want to give voice to parents and families in the planning, development, and implementation of new educational solutions (in/out of school environments).*

## ELIGIBILITY

Non-profit organizations with a 501(c)(3) status or 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.

## APPLICATION PROCESS

Three to six grants ranging from \$10,000 to \$50,000 will be considered per school year. Grant applications must be submitted electronically at <https://grantcentral.smartsimple.com>. A committee of Challenge Scholars students, parents, teachers/staff, and representatives from community-based organizations on the West Side will review your proposal. If the committee would like to recommend a grant, GRCF's Board of Trustees will then review the recommendation. The process will take approximately 2 months.

## 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.
- Project budget is required.
- When describing how funds will be used, include estimated costs of items to be purchased with grant funds.

## GRANT APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- **Project Information**
  - Project name
  - Project purpose
  - Amount Requested/Total Project Cost
  - Proposed Start Date/Proposed End Date
  
- **Project Narrative**
  - Which priority area (select one) does your project address?
  - Please provide further rationale on how this project will address the priority area selected above. Why is this approach the most effective? (200 words or less)
  - What is the goal of your project? Your goal should be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely. (50 words or less)
  - 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).
  - The Grand Rapids Community Foundation values partnership and collaboration among stakeholders as well as with individuals who are intended to benefit from programs or initiatives.
    - Please explain how you are connecting with other organizations in the community, schools, individuals and/or groups to achieve the goals of your project.
    - How will participants in the program inform, design, or lead the project?
  - 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? Please explain. (150 words or less)
  - The Grand Rapids Community Foundation is committed to creating a community that is diverse, inclusive, and racism-free. We expect our grantees to share in this commitment.
    - Describe what steps you are taking to create access and accommodate barriers for diverse populations to feel welcome and included at programs that you offer? (150 words or less)
  
- **Budget information**
  - Either upload a budget document or use the Budget Builder feature.
  - Indicate how funds being requested will be spent.

## QUESTIONS ABOUT THE DREAM FUND?

Contact Cris Kutzli, Challenge Scholars Director, at 616.454.4918 or [ckutzli@grfoundation.org](mailto:ckutzli@grfoundation.org).

## QUESTIONS REGARDING THE ONLINE APPLICATION?

Contact Keri Jaynes, Grants Manager, at 616.284.4911 or [grantcentral@grfoundation.org](mailto:grantcentral@grfoundation.org).