



Grants: You Can Do It!

Agenda for Presentation


- Overall School System Perspective on Grant Writing – Fran Zilonis, Director, School Library Teacher Program, Simmons
- Integrating Grant Writing into the School Curriculum – Deborah Lang Froggatt, Director, Boston Arts Academy/Fenway High School Library
- Grant Writing from the Reviewer's Perspective – Marlene Heroux, MBLC Reference Information Systems Specialist

Agenda for Presentation

- Implementing and Reporting on a Grant – April Graziano, Coordinator of Elementary and Secondary Education Programs, Holyoke Community College
- Question and Answer Session

Audience Questions

- How many of you have written a grant?
- How many of you have received a grant?



Overall School System Perspective on Grant Writing

Mary Frances Zilonis, Ed. D.

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Planning

- Does your school system have an organized effort for fundraising and grant writing?
- If it does, you will then need to comply with school department policy
 - You will need to work with your supervisor/principal
 - Ask your supervisor for permission to write a grant
 - Provide him/her with documentation about the grant you are interested in

Is there support?

- Talk to your supervisor/principal
 - Is your supervisor in favor of the grant proposal and grant proposal idea?
 - Will he or she support this grant writing idea?
 - Does he or she want to participate with the grant writing group?
 - Does the supervisor have a particular person in the school or school system that he or she would like to see participate in the grant writing group?

Is there support?

- Who can you call on to serve on a grant writing team to work with you?
- Who will really work on it?
- Have one person write it (probably you).
- Have the group review and edit based on the ideas of the group.

Working with the Writing Group

- Get this writing group together to explore developing a grant.
- Send the RFP out to them before the meeting so that they can prepare for the meeting.
- Share insights on the information contained in the RFP.
- The organization's strategic plan will also be helpful.

Writing the Grant

- Successful grants need to have the people involved in writing them doing the work on them once they have been received.
- It is essential that the people who will be included in the work be involved in writing the proposal.

Writing the Grant

- There will be no buy-in from the teachers in the school if you get the grant and they were not involved.

Strategic or Long-term Plan

- Does your school library or school district have a strategic or long-term plan?
 - Grant writing efforts should flow from this plan.

Grant writing strategy

- Have a clear vision of what you want for your program, then look for funding sources.
- Let your vision drive the funds.
- Don't let the funds drive your vision.

Grant writing strategy

- Look for a match between what the funder wants to fund and what you want funded.

Alternatives to Grant Writing

- Before you begin grant writing:
 - Think about fundraising: PTO can be helpful
 - Think about partnerships
 - You need to be asking, “How can I get the ‘stuff’ I need?”
 - You may be able to get what you want through other means.
 - Some ideas may be better targeted under fundraising or PTO.

The RFP – Request for Proposals

- The RFP generally contains directions from the funder.
- There is usually a program description included in the RFP which lets you know the type of program they want to fund.
- Carefully follow the outline in the RFP when you are preparing the proposal.
- Adapt your ideas so that they fit what the funder wants to fund.

Look at a possible RFP and your organization

- Are you capable of implementing it?
- Are the resources available, especially the personnel?
- Do you have the time to devote to it?
- Are you eligible?
- Are you interested?
- Is your school or school system interested?
- Will this help you achieve your goals?
- Is it feasible?

Sources of First Time Grants

- Look at LSTA mini-grants from MBLC
- Does your district have a school foundation that gives grants?
 - Wellesley Education Foundation
 - Newton Schools Foundation
- Is there a Shaw's Supermarket in your community?
- Many organizations will not give money directly to the school department, must have a foundation to receive and handle funds.
[501(C)(3)]
 - Does your community have an educational foundation that works with the school department?

Simple format to keep in mind --

- What are you going to do?
- How are you going to do it?
- How are you going to spend the money?

Clarity

- Not only do you need to be able to see what you want (vision), you have to be able to clearly describe it.
- Others need to be able to see what it is you are talking about – through your description, they need to be able to see it, too.

Grant writing

- should be an activity to improve programs,
- not just to get money.
- Grant writing begins important dialogue between members of a school community.

Make Time

- Take the calendar of the RFP and work backwards.
- If you need School Committee approval for the grant proposal, figure out that deadline and put it into your calendar.
- Organize your schedule for grant writing -- schedule time to write.
 - Develop a work plan for writing the proposal.
 - Schedule specific work time into your calendar.



Grant Writing Realities

- Most people do not get the first grant proposal that they write.
- Writing a grant is one of the only ways to learn how to write a grant.
- Reviewing grants is another way to learn how to write grants.
- It is just like learning how to use a computer, ride a bicycle, or drive a car.
- You have to do it!

Grant writing is

- A learned activity!
- You are not born with the ability to write grants--you learn how.
- Develop an idea based on your strategic plan and begin!

Start

- Start small.
- Start with something you know well and are comfortable with.
- Start in your own community.
- You can do it!