

Grants for Great Ideas Guidelines & Overview 2026-2027

STEM ELA Arts Character

Foundation for Seminole County Public Schools

What is Grants for Great Ideas?

GFGI turns teacher ideas into funded classroom action — and has been doing so since 1989.

The Program

A program of The Foundation for Seminole County Public Schools to give teachers the resources to bring great ideas to life each year.

Funding History

Since 1989, the Foundation has awarded teacher grants across Seminole County.

Over the past 5 years, we've funded nearly 250 projects for a total of $335K.

Teacher Focus

Teachers apply each year to put their great ideas into action to turn their vision into funded, hands-on classroom experiences.

Student Impact

Projects go beyond normal classroom instruction to enhance student achievement in meaningful, measurable ways.

Application Deadlines & General Information

Three grant cycles offer flexible entry points – with awards up to $2,500 for school-wide projects.

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Up to $1,000
Single classroom grants

Up to $2,500
Grade-level or
school-wide projects

SUBJECT AREAS

- ELA
- STEM
- The Arts
- Character Development

Grant Cycle Deadlines

Grant Cycle I
Sunday, September 13, 2026
Application deadline

Grant Cycle II
Sunday, October 18, 2026
Application deadline

Grant Cycle III
Monday, November 30, 2026
Application deadline



What is the Character category?

New category introduced in 2025 in response to SCPS teacher and school feedback.

This category focuses on the whole student and looks to advance student achievement through resiliency, citizenship, character, and life skill development.

Project Goals may include:

Increase Positive Classroom Behavior

Build habits, routines, and social-emotional skills that create a more supportive learning environment for every student.

Increase Attendance

Foster student engagement and belonging so that showing up to school every day feels meaningful and worthwhile.

Reduce Student Discipline Referrals

Develop resiliency and conflict-resolution skills that help students make better choices and stay in the classroom.



Who Can Apply for GFGI?

If you work with SCPS students, you are eligible to apply.

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Educators & School Leaders

All SCPS educators, Assistant Principals, and Principals are eligible to apply for GFGI grants.

Virtual & Special Programs

Seminole County Virtual School, VPK programs, and special centers are all included.

All SCPS Schools

All SCPS elementary, middle, and high schools are eligible to participate in the program.

Key Requirement

All projects and funds must directly impact SCPS students – reporting on this is essential.

MUST DIRECTLY IMPACT SCPS STUDENTS!

GFGI Requirements – What the Review Committee Needs

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Strong applications address school goals, meet Florida standards, and show measurable, creative impact.

Address School & District Goals

Your project must align with your school's improvement plan and district-wide priorities.

Meet Florida Education Standards

Activities and materials must comply with current Florida state education standards.

Include Measurable Outcomes

Define clear, trackable success metrics tied to student or teacher growth.

Be Hands-On and Creative

Projects should go beyond routine instruction to bring innovation and active engagement.

Demonstrate Change in Knowledge, Skills & Behavior

Show how students' knowledge, skills, attitudes, and/or behavior will improve.

GFGI Requirements: Measurable Outcomes

Every project must track outcomes – this data is how the Foundation reports impact to donors.

- All projects must have measurable outcomes and actively track them
- Must track number of students and teachers who participate
- Include learning goals and a standardized measurement tool
- Data collection examples: test scores, student grades, pre- and post-surveys, teacher-administered skills tests such as iReady
- Final reports provide required data to report to program donors



How It Works

Step 1

Define Outcomes

Set learning goals and choose a standardized measurement tool

Step 2

Collect Data

Track participation, test scores, surveys, and skills assessments

Step 3

Report Impact

Submit final report providing required data to the Foundation for donors

Tracking & Measuring Outcomes is easier than you think!

Collecting the required reporting to track measurable outcomes associated with your project.

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STEM Projects

Utilize student test scores or grades

Monitor academic performance over grant period comparing i-Ready scores, skills related tests or overall grades

Implement pre- and/or post-surveys

Capture baseline and post-project change to track student shifts in interest in STEM Careers, STEM majors/learning, and participating in STEM-related activities outside of coursework

ELA Projects

Utilize student test scores or grades

Monitor academic performance over grant period comparing i-Ready scores, skills related tests or overall grades

Implement pre- and/or post-surveys

Capture baseline and post-project change to track student shifts in attitude towards ELA, interest in pursuing more ELA related activities, or increased reading outside of school.

Arts Projects

Utilize student project or overall grades

Monitor student performance over grant period comparing skills related tests, projects, or overall course grade.

Implement pre- and/or post-surveys

Capture baseline and post-project change to track student shifts in interest in continued learning about the arts, or in pursuing artistic endeavors, careers, or majors.

Character Projects

Utilize student or school data

Monitor student performance over grant period comparing skills related tests, attendance or discipline referrals.

Implement pre- and/or post-surveys

Capture baseline and post-project change to track student shifts in attitude and behaviors in the areas of resiliency, citizenship, character, and life skill development.

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School, District & State Approval

Before submitting, confirm your school leadership is on board and your project meets all compliance standards.

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Step 1

Leadership Approval

Ensure school leadership reviews and approves your project prior to submitting your application.

Step 2

District Compliance

Confirm your project aligns with SCPS district guidelines and the SCPS BEST EEMTR Chart.

Step 3

State Standards

Verify your project meets Florida education standards and review applicable SCPS Library Catalogs.

Key Reference Resources

- **SCPS Library Catalogs** for approved materials and curriculum resources
- **SCPS BEST EEMTR Chart** for district compliance and expenditure alignment



What Purchases Are Allowed with GFGI Funds?

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Funding covers a wide range of project-related purchases – from technology to field trips to recognition.

Ensure all purchases comply with district and state education standards, are project related, and add to the educational value of the project.
This is a non-exhaustive list of allowable purchases/expenses and should be used in conjunction with the unallowable expenses to guide your purchases.

- Technology and equipment directly related to the project's goals and not available through the district such as 3D printers, coding robots, tablets, specialized art tools, school garden equipment, etc.
- Consumable supplies like wiring, circuit boards, paint, brushes, workbooks, etc.
- Printing expenses for classroom resources and learning at home resources.
- Field trips costs (digital, in-house, or external) such as transportation, admission fees, etc.
- Performers/performances associated with and paid by an organization that are tied to a structured activity related to the project.
- SCPS approved virtual/online expenses that will enhance student learning such as Virtual Field Trips, ebooks, software/apps/technology accessible online.
- Approved classroom books and curriculum related to the project and its goals.
- Manipulatives materials that allow students to explore an idea in an active, hands-on approach.
- Costuming and other performance materials for school productions.
- Directly grant related rewards and recognition items such as trophies, trinkets, or certificates up to $500. ***NEW ALLOWABLE EXPENSE!***

What Purchases Are NOT Allowed with GFGI Funds?

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This list below outlines unallowable expenses:

- Books, curriculum, or any materials that DO NOT comply with district or state education standards.
- Sales tax. The teacher and school are responsible for ensuring funds are not spent on sales tax.
- Food or refreshments.
- More than $500 in project rewards and recognition items such as trophies, trinkets, or certificates.
- Rewards and Recognition unrelated to the project.
- Gift cards or certificates of any kind.
- Furniture including but not limited to bean bag chairs, shelving units, storage bins.
- Uniforms or clothing items. This does not include costuming for drama productions which is an allowable expense.
- Speaking fees paid to individuals such as authors, celebrities, and other professionals. This does not include performers/facilitators associated with and paid by an organization which is an allowable expense.
- Equipment, hardware, and software that can be funded by a school's budget.
- Equipment, hardware, and software unrelated to the project or does not provide educational value.
- Projects at non-SCPS schools or charter schools.
- Postage costs such as mailing of letters and/or packages by the students.
- Materials that will not remain property of the school for example later donated to the community, auctioned off, and/or sold as a fundraiser.

2026-2027 Timeline Reporting Schedule

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Mark your calendar to ensure you're compliant with grant requirements and eligible for future funding.

February 12, 2027

Complete the GFGI Progress Report Survey by this date.
This short survey is only meant to help FSCPS identify each project's status to ensure it is on track for success and offer support if needed.

February 26, 2027

All Cycle I, II, III grant awards must be spent by this date.

March 12, 2027

Deadline for Bookkeepers to return any unused funds to The Foundation.

April 9, 2027

All projects must be fully implemented by this date in order to gather required data (grades and measurable outcomes) from your students.

April 16, 2027

Final Evaluation AND Expenditure reports due. Reporting will be online and done in a similar format to the application.

Teachers who complete reports on time are entered to win gift cards!

Be Ready to Share Your Outcomes!

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Keep in mind each project must be prepared to answer these questions in their final report by category.

Every project must track the following:

- **Students Primarily Impacted** – Number of students who will be tracked/evaluated.
- **Teachers Impacted** – Number of teachers involved in the project.
- **Students Secondarily Impacted** – If other students benefitted from the project but were not evaluated.
- **One or More Outcomes** – Must track at least one of the required outcomes related to their category.

STEM OUTCOME OPTIONS

- Number of students who either maintained "C" or above or improved their overall grade in a related subject; maintained on-grade level score or improved their scores on a teacher administered skills test.
- Number of students with an increased interest in STEM careers
- Number of students with an increased interest in STEM careers.
- Number of students who have increased interest in STEM learning/majors.

ELA OUTCOME OPTIONS

- Number of students who either maintained "C" or above or improved their overall grade in a related subject; maintained on-grade level score or improved their scores on a teacher administered skills test.
- Number of students with an improved attitude toward reading and literacy.
- Number of students with an increased interest pursuing reading or literacy-based activities.
- Number of students who have increased the amount of time they read outside of school.

ARTS OUTCOME OPTIONS

- Number of students who maintained or increased their knowledge, skills, attitudes, and/or behavior.
- Number of students who received a passing grade on the grant related project.

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT OUTCOME OPTIONS

- Decrease in number of students with 15+ absences compared to prior year.
- Decrease in number of students receiving at least one discipline referral or out of school suspension compared to prior year.
- Number of students who increased their grant related knowledge, skills, attitudes, and/or behavior.
- Number of students who received a passing grade on the grant related project.



Be Ready to Report on Expenditures

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Spend on time, report accurately, and work with your bookkeeper to ensure compliance and future eligibility.

Upon Award

Connect with your Bookkeeper upon award. Make a plan for spending the funds, allowable expenses, and all reporting expectations.

Your bookkeeper will be required to keep all receipts for at least a year in case they are ever needed for an audit

February 12, 2027

GFGI Progress Report Survey Deadline.

Touchbase with your Bookkeeper on spending beforehand to gain remaining balance and plan to spend those funds before the 2/26/27 spend deadline.

February 26, 2027

Project Spend Deadline. All Cycle I, II, III grant awards must be spent by this date.

Bookkeepers must return any unused funds to FSCPS by March 12, 2027.

March / April 2027

Work with your bookkeeper to secure a detailed report of all your expended funds and completed GFGI Expenditure Log Coversheet.

These will be uploaded as a part of your Final Evaluation Report.

April 16, 2027

Final Evaluation AND Expenditure reports due.

Your bookkeeper's completed GFGI Expenditure Log Coversheet and detailed report of all your expended funds required.

Because The Foundation has to report on the impact of all projects to our program funders, failure to submit your Final Evaluation and Expenditure Report by the required date may disqualify your school from funding for at least one year.

Grants for Great Ideas – Making An Impact

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Last year's results speak for themselves – GFGI transforms classrooms across SCPS.

- $73,700 Awarded
- 56 Projects
- 650 Teachers Impacted
- 4 Categories
- 32 Schools
- 27,600 Students Impacted

STUDENT IMPACT

- 90% of students maintained "C" or above or improved overall grade or scores in the related subjects.
- 59% of students increased interest in STEM careers outside of course work.
- 76% of students increased the amount of time spent reading outside of school.
- 87% of survey students maintained or increased interest in art interest in art topics and interest in pursuing artistic endeavors, careers, and majors.

SCHOOL IMPACT

- 98% of teachers agreed that the GFGI program and the project funding received improved their effectiveness as a teacher.
- 94% of teachers agreed that having programs like GFGI improve their job satisfaction and make teaching feel more sustainable.
- Comparing district data for the two elementary projects that address attendance, students with 15+ absences reduced by an average of 2.56%.
- Comparing district data for the six school-wide projects that addressed discipline, the number of students receiving at least ONE discipline referral reduced by 0.5%.

INCREASED ENGAGEMENT

An elementary Reading Coach shared how their ELA project increased student engagement and learning. "Because of your generosity, our students had opportunities to learn, grow, and build confidence in ways we simply could not have provided otherwise. I was able to see students take more risks, stay engaged, and start to believe in themselves as learners and that is something that will stay with them far beyond this project. Your support didn't just provide materials or resources. It made a real difference in our classrooms every single day."

SUPPORTING TEACHER NEEDS

A high school teacher shared, "I particularly appreciated the inclusion of the character category this year, as it encouraged our students to develop diverse skill sets beyond our standard academic priorities, such as empathy and project management. The overall grant process was seamless; both the application process and the reporting documentation were clear and highly effective in helping us track our goals and expenditures. This program significantly improves teacher effectiveness and makes teaching in the district feel more sustainable."



Making Your Project Stand Out

The strongest applications share four qualities — make sure yours checks every box.

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THOROUGH PLANS

Clearly articulate your goals, activities, and timeline so reviewers can see exactly how your project will unfold.

Not all reviewers have an education background so please explain any educational acronyms or jargon.

DETAILED BUDGETS

Try to specify your purchase plans as much as possible to show you've done your research to justify you need the amount requested.

Consider adding links to unique, subject specific, or technological purchases.

The more information the better to show reviewers how the funds will be used.

COLLABORATION AND SHARED RESOURCES

Partner with other teachers, when possible, to show broader reach and smarter use of funds.

Reviewers love to see teachers collaborate and share the resources/lessons learned when possible. This can be during your project or after.

LASTING IMPACT

If possible, show how the project will continue to benefit students beyond the grant period.

Reviewers love to see technology, materials, or lessons can be used beyond this school year.



Teachers just like you have taken the leap and found the process worth every step.

- "Applying for the GFGI grant was much easier than I expected. The application walked me through every step, and the impact on my students' excitement about science was immediate and remarkable."
- "This grant gave my students access to books and resources I never could have provided on my own. I would absolutely apply again. I encourage every teacher to give it a try."
- "The Foundation made it so straightforward. The grant allowed us to bring a live performance into our school that my students still talk about — the arts truly changed their perspective."

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Good Luck – We Can't Wait to See Your Great Ideas!

Your students are counting on your great ideas and The Foundation is here to help fund them.



Ready to Get Started?

Visit www.FoundationSCPS.org to Access:

- GFGI Application Template and Guide (Word doc)
- GFGI 2026-2027 Budget Form
- GFGI 2026-2027 Online Application

Questions?
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