



Bridging the Gap Grants: *Supporting Equity-Based Education Projects*

The Redwood City Education Foundation (RCEF) invites proposals for Bridging the Gap Grants, a pilot program to address educational disparities in the Redwood City School District (RCSD).

Our mission is to enhance the academic performance of underserved K-8 public school students by providing equitable access to educational opportunities. We achieve this through financial support, advocacy, and community engagement.

Redwood City has significant diversity and socioeconomic disparities, impacting many students, especially English Learners, students of color, those with disabilities, and low-income students.

The Bridging the Gap Grants Initiative supports equity-based projects, empowering educators to meet their student's unique needs that would otherwise be out of reach. Grants of up to \$500 will be awarded for selected projects or required resources. Applications will be reviewed, and awards will be granted on a rolling basis.

Applicant Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for the Bridging the Gap Grants, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Must be a current educator in the Redwood City School District.
- Direct involvement with underserved student populations, including English learners, students of color, students with disabilities, and low-income students, is required.
- No specific requirements for years of service or subject area, but a commitment to equity in education is preferred.
- Applications that involve collaboration among multiple teachers will be given priority and will be eligible for increased funding.

Background

Educational inequity is a pressing challenge in Redwood City School District (RCSD), where 66% of students experience poverty, homelessness, foster care or are English learners (ELs), with levels varying by school. These disparities, combined with uneven PTO/PTA funding, limit many schools' ability to provide classroom support and enrichment, widening the equity gap. These disparities impact student performance in reading and math, with low-income students and ELs often below proficiency levels.

Students from families with limited English proficiency or minimal parental support face added barriers to specialized help, often falling behind in reading and math. This early achievement gap, if unaddressed, can limit long-term academic and life opportunities.

Bridging the Gap Grants aims to fund innovative projects that support underserved students and empower educators with the resources to implement impactful ideas that enhance engagement

and academic outcomes where they are needed most. In its first year, data from this initiative will help refine the grant's impact, guiding future RCEF strategies to address systemic educational inequities and foster a district-wide culture of equity and inclusivity.

Eligible Projects

Grant-funded projects can include:

- Implementing academic interventions
- Purchasing culturally relevant, specialized learning materials or supplies
- Creating inclusive classroom environments
- Offering enrichment activities that promote engagement and achievement
- Hosting guest speakers
- Providing field trip scholarships
- Developing parent engagement initiatives
- Translators for meetings or activities

Project Proposal Characteristics

We seek project proposals that:

- Are innovative and demonstrate a clear strategy for addressing educational disparities.
- Engage multiple stakeholders, including schools, parents, or other teachers.
- Provide measurable outcomes demonstrating the project's impact on student achievement and engagement.

Proposals that are less likely to be competitive will:

- Lack of clarity regarding the project rationale and approach.
- Fail to identify the target population and justify the focus on that group.
- Omit benchmarks for measuring success or impact.

Review & Selection Process

- RCEF's Programs Committee will review all proposals recommended for funding to the community foundation's board of directors.
- Applicants may receive an email and/or other communication from the foundation staff or board members as part of the proposal review process.
- Successful applicants will be informed within 30 days of submission.

Evaluation and Monitoring

Findings from the initiative's first year will refine the grantmaking process, ensuring future cycles of Bridging the Gap are more targeted, effective, and impactful. The data collected will also help shape RCEF's long-term strategy and advocacy efforts, particularly in addressing systemic inequities in education.

How to Apply for a Grant

Submit online at: <https://forms.gle/jyDpHyfapzqwEhcL7>

If you have any questions, please email us at info@rcef.org.

Thank you very much for your interest in responding to this application request and making our schools a better place. We look forward to reviewing your proposal.

Application Questions

1. Name - Provide the name of the person who would oversee this project.
2. Email - Provide the email of the person who would oversee this project.
3. Role - What is the title of the person who would oversee this project?
4. School Affiliation - What school would benefit from this project?
5. Amount Requested - What is the cost of this project?
6. Provide a brief description of your proposed project, including the main objectives, activities, duration, collaborators, and the demographic of students the project will serve.
7. How does your project address inequalities in your class or school? What impact do you hope to achieve, and how will this project promote equity and enhance student educational opportunities?
8. What are the expected outcomes of your project? How will students, the school, or the community be impacted? Be specific about the changes you anticipate.
9. How will you measure the success of your project? Describe the metrics or indicators you will use to assess its effectiveness in reducing inequalities or improving educational outcomes.
10. What is the most challenging aspect of this proposal that may affect your success, and how do you plan to address these challenges?
11. How do you want us to disburse the funds or reimburse you?
12. Do you commit to:
 - Sharing pictures of the project in action?
 - Providing an emailed update confirming the start of the project?
 - Submitting a paragraph summarizing outcomes and impact?