



District 29 Parent Teacher Organization Gifts Program Guidelines

Since 2015, the PTO has released an annual request for funding to district teachers, staff, students, and parents soliciting project applications for its Gifts program (previously the Ways & Means program). The Gifts program was created as a way for the PTO to provide educational enrichment opportunities and school enhancements outside of the current line item PTO or school budgets. To date, the PTO has funded projects totaling over \$107,000 – a direct investment in the district’s children and community.

2024-25 Academic Year Funding Priorities

For the 2024-25 academic year, the PTO will be prioritizing applications that fall into one of the following categories:

- Experiential education opportunities that put into action the district’s mission of “cultivating an inclusive learning community that engages hearts and minds, one child at a time.” Experiential education activities include, but are not limited to field trips, service learning projects, guest speakers and authors, project-based learning initiatives, etc.
- Enrichment activities or events that build a stronger District 29 community.
- Start-up “seed money” to pilot a new student club.

Eligibility

- Any teacher, staff, student, or parent in District 29 may submit an application. Student and parent applications must be co-sponsored by a District teacher or staff member.
- Proposed activities outlined in applications must be completed by the end of the 2024-25 academic year.
- Requests should fall outside of the current year’s PTO or school line item budgets.

Grant Application Process and Notification Timeline

New this year, the PTO will have two deadlines for applications: **November 1, 2024 and February 21, 2025**. Upon submission, each application will be vetted by district administration to determine if they can be (or are already) covered by the approved yearly budget. The vetted proposals will then be made available to all PTO members in order to solicit feedback. This feedback will be shared at the PTO Gifts Committee meeting, at which the Committee will review the proposals and funding will be determined. The PTO Gifts Committee is made up of district administrators, PTO Executive Board members, and a School Board member. Approved proposals will be announced by the following PTO meeting.

Questions

Have an idea for a project that could be funded through the PTO Gifts program? Please reach out to Sunset Ridge Principal Dr. Sukenik (sukeniki@srd29.org) or Middlefork Principal, Mrs. Kiedaisch (kiedaischj@srd29.org). General questions about the Gifts program or application process? Please reach out to Sarah Cohn at president_elect@district29pto.org.