



GRO-o-gram November-December 2005

The Grants and Research Office is a collaborative project that serves the 24 member districts of Intermediate Districts 287 and 916. Until recently, our services were reserved for our member districts. Now we are offering individual membership options (see #1 below) to individuals and schools outside our suburban districts. If you have friends/colleagues that work in schools outside our member districts and may be interested in our services, please forward this GRO-o-gram.

We've worked to re-design the GRO-o-gram so it is user friendly and helpful. You do not need to read the entire e-news we send out! Just scroll through the index and then to selected text to read topics of interest. We summarize updates and announcements with hot-links added, when possible, so you can quickly get more information. If you or others have questions regarding GRO membership options, please e-mail us at info@grantsandresearchhelp.us

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1. NEW GRO MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS

Now you don't have to be a staff person in a member district of Intermediate Districts 287 or 916 to access the services and enjoy the benefits of the Grants and Research Office. The Grants and Research Office is excited to offer two new individual categories of membership:

Individual Basic is \$30 and includes:

- Web-based Services and Resources
- Customized Grant Searches
- Membership Gift

Individual Comprehensive is \$60 and includes:

- Web-based Services and Resources
- Grant Consultation
- Comprehensive Monthly Online Newsletter
- Discounts to Workshops and Other Events
- Membership Gift

If you join anytime within an academic year, your membership benefits extend throughout the next academic year.

To join, send the membership fee and your name, school/district, address, phone number and e-mail to Linda Ebert at the Grants and Research Office, Intermediate District 287, 1820 Xenium Lane N., Plymouth, MN 55441. *Your membership will be activated with access information that will be sent with your membership gift.*

If you are not sure whether you are a member, please check our member district list at: <http://www.grantsandresearchhelp.us/html/about.htm> If you work in one of our 24 member districts, you can request a password on-line and gain full access to the GRO web site.

2. GRO WEB SITE UPDATE: NEW MN FOUNDATION PROFILES

The Minnesota foundation section of the GRO web site has been redesigned and updated for your use. We hope that our profiles of 20 major Minnesota foundations will spark your interest in contacting and developing a relationship with one or more of these potential funders that have offices right in your community. Minnesota has many corporate and private foundations that are interested in funding education. Check out the MN foundations at: <http://www.grantsandresearchhelp.us/grants/html/foundation.htm>

3. GRANT SEARCH HELP REQUEST FORM

Do you have a program or project for which you need funds? If you are a GRO member, we can provide you with a prospective grant list and link you to funders. Besides identifying community and regional foundations, we can also search a national database for grant prospects. Just fill out our short **grant search help request form** available on our web site. Describe your project and the difference you'd like it to make, and we'll send you some grant funder ideas and creative ways to find community support.

4. DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION FOR ALL (DIAL) PROJECT

For information on the GRO Differentiated Instruction for All (DIAL) Project go to <http://www.grantsandresearchhelp.us/research/html/differentiated.htm>

Check out the best DIAL resources recently added to the GRO DIAL Project web page located at <http://www.grantsandresearchhelp.us/research/html/differentiated.htm>

5. SPECIAL EDUCATION MINI GRANTS APPLICATION 1-16-06

The Minnesota Department of Education is making available grant funds for the purpose of implementing action research in providing special education services in a classroom setting. Grants will be awarded in the following categories:

1. Autism Spectrum Disorder
2. Transition
3. Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (as it relates to Special Education)
4. Other Innovative Action Research Strategies (i.e., Early Intervening Services, Competency Development, etc.)

It is anticipated that between 12 and 20 grants will be awarded for a maximum of up to \$40,000 each. Priority will be given to projects that clearly respond to one of the State Performance Plan indicators. Deadline for submission of applications for this competitive grant award is January 16, 2006. If you have questions, please contact JulAnn Meech at julann.meech@state.mn.us or call 651-582-8611.

To learn more about the mini grants and to obtain the application packet go to: http://education.state.mn.us/mde/Learning_Support/Special_Education/Grant_Opportunities/index.html

6. GRANT TIP: WRITING COVER LETTERS

The cover letter serves as your introduction and should always accompany a proposal. Before writing your cover letter, review the guidelines of the foundation, their mission, goals, values and preferred strategies. The history of a foundation and the funders “focus” can provide you with valuable words and phrases to use in your cover letter. In the first or second paragraph of your letter **briefly describe how your project will help achieve the foundation’s mission, goals, values and preferred strategies.**

When writing a cover letter remember to:

- Include the funder's name, title, and address
- Direct it to the individual responsible for the funding program
- Provide a brief overview of your school and your project
- Include the reason for the funding request
- Include the amount requested
- Do not exceed two pages (one page is recommended)
- Include the name and phone number of the contact person
- The letter should be signed by a person who can speak with authority for your school

For more info on cover letters: <http://digitalcooperative.oclc.org/grants/coverletter.html>

7. GRANT FUNDER PROFILE: McKnight Youth Enrichment Grants Due 2-01-06

The McKnight Foundation provides grants to Twin Cities metro area organizations to support quality programs for school-age children and youth during the out-of-school time. Proposals are due by February 1, 2006, with decisions being made by April 2006.

Youth Enrichment grants focus on youth with limited access to enrichment opportunities and/or fill gaps (age, time, geographic) in existing programs. New program ideas for middle school youth are encouraged. They will consider annual requests of up to \$50,000 for year-round programming; \$30,000 for after school programs; and \$20,000 for summer programs.

For more information call the McKnight Foundation at **612-333-4220** or go to: <http://www.mcknight.org/grantsprograms/howtoapply.aspx> and look for the link to the guidelines for *Children & Families: Youth Enrichment during the Out-of-School Time*.

8. SCHOOL FUNDRAISING IDEA: DONOR ADVISED FUNDS of COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS

Large donors often find out about projects they can support through a staff person at their community foundation. Your school may be able to find a major donor to provide between \$1,000 to \$10,000 for a specific project by sending a two-page letter of inquiry to your local community foundation.

A good example is the **Connections Grant program** of the **Minneapolis Foundation** <http://www.minneapolisfoundation.org/grants/connections.htm> which now serves all Minnesota Communities.

Connections Grantmaking provides an opportunity for Twin Cities metro area nonprofits to connect with other funding sources through The Minneapolis Foundation. Connections Grants support systems change work or programs/projects that are smaller in focus, one time only, time sensitive, or a new/unique opportunity. Hundreds of donors have established charitable funds at The Minneapolis Foundation. Their charitable interests are broad and diverse and span beyond the focus of our Community Grantmaking. Donors often rely on the expertise of Foundation staff to identify nonprofit organizations and programs that match their interests.

Minnesota nonprofits wishing to connect with other funding opportunities besides Community Grants or RFPs through The Minneapolis Foundation are encouraged to submit a Letter of Inquiry. Preference is given to requests for funding that address a special need or project with clear and measurable results. Letters of Inquiry should be no more than two pages and must answer all of the questions on the web site (see link above). Letters of Inquiry are reviewed and referred to potential donors on an on-going basis. Your request remains active for one year. Please limit your submission to one Letter of Inquiry per year. You will only be notified if a grant has been approved. For more information, contact Bob Hybben at (612) 672-3863 or rhybben@mplsfoundation.org.

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Send comments, suggestions, and ideas to: rmhefte@district287.org