



THE ASSOCIATION FOR MIDDLE LEVEL EDUCATION

2017 Institute for Middle Level Leadership

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Funding Your Leadership Institute Experience

1. What are your goals for professional learning?

In *Standards for Professional Learning*, Learning Forward states the purpose of professional learning is to improve educator practice and student results. *If* we have middle level educators who:

- Understand their curricular content, instructional strategies and assessments
- Constantly seek to build their capacity to teach
- Collaboratively reflect on their successes and current challenges
- Always align what happens in their district, school, or classroom to student results *then* middle grades education will achieve the goal of preparing all students to be college and career ready.

2. How can you connect the what, why, and how of your professional learning proposal to get funding?

Your potential funders will look for how your request for professional learning fits into their strategic plans. Be clear on how the professional learning you are requesting fits into other plans for your classroom, school, or district; consider how you might use data to show the need for approving your request.

If you are seeking funding support, those you are asking will need:

- To hear what you need, why you need it, and how participation in the leadership institute will accomplish your goal.
- To know how your request aligns with *their* vision or mission.
- To sense that you know about them: what is it that connects what the grantor has to what you need?

3. What are some good funding sources for your Institute for Middle Level Leadership?

Once you clarify the purpose and make the connection, identify good funding sources. A great deal of time and energy goes into requesting resources, so choosing the “right” sources is like having a focused marketing plan in the business world.

- **Look at your local school system.**
 - Educate your local school system/central office personnel about your school’s professional learning plan; explain the link between your strategic plan and theirs.
 - Connect your professional learning plan to sustainable change for positive student achievement.
 - If the budget has been exhausted when you request resources, be sure to ask about the calendar cycle of planning and expenditures and plan now for meeting next year’s deadlines.
- **Start with your educational partners.**
 - Local foundations often have a regional focus and many have education outreach goals.
 - Brainstorm about how to improve your school with your PTA/PTO and every group that meets.
 - In every conversation, directly connect your proposal to building student capacity.

- **Check with your professional associations and personal affiliations.**
 - Explore grant opportunities from the organizations with which you interact or participate.
 - Check affiliate websites for educational committees.
 - Civic organizations, chambers of commerce, or a business leaders group may have education as a part of their mission. Invite a business leader to partner with your school improvement team.
- **State categorical aid: targeted financial support.**
 - Generally, categorical aid is meant to provide services for students with special needs, to improve instruction and curriculum, or to support social and health programs. Some categorical funds are distributed to schools and school districts based on the number of students eligible for a program or the total number of students.
 - Others are grant programs, some of which go to local schools automatically, go to schools that qualify, or reimburse districts for specific costs, such as home-to-school transportation. Investigate how your district and state advocate for middle level education. Perhaps you can make a connection between your professional learning proposal and the need for sustainability, improved teacher capacity, and increased student achievement.

4. Is it possible to secure federal funding through the Department of Education?

Information can be found at <http://www2.ed.gov/fund/landing.jhtml>

Department of Education Grant Opportunities: <http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/find/edlite-forecast.html?src=ft>

- **Title I.**
 - To ensure all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on state academic achievement standards and state academic assessments.
 - If the schools who are “feeders” to your school are Title I schools, you may want to consider how resources may be allocated to support vertical alignment to the middle grades.
 - Title I, Part A ARRA funds generally may be used only to support professional development for teachers, principals, and other staff in Title I schools.
 - Title I, Part A ARRA funds (as well as funds from the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act (Title IV, Part A of the ESEA) may be used to fund activities designed to:
 - Improve school climate in a Title I school operating a school wide program.
 - Help staff address bullying, harassment, etc.
 - Build the capacity of school personnel in Title I schools to work effectively with families
- **School Improvement Grant 1003(g) and 1003(a).**
 - State Educational Agencies (SEAs) use SIG grants to make competitive subgrants to local educational agencies (LEAs) that demonstrate the greatest need and the strongest commitment to provide resources to raise achievement in their lowest-performing schools.
- **21st Century Learning Center Grants.**
 - Support the creation of community learning centers that provide academic enrichment opportunities during non-school hours
 - Help students meet state and local student standards in core academic subjects.
 - Offer students enrichment activities that can complement their regular academic programs.
 - Offer literacy and other educational services to the families of participating children.
 - Information can be found at: <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/21stcclc/index.html>

- **Improving Teacher Quality State Grants.**
 - Increase academic achievement by improving teacher and principal quality.
 - Increasing the number of highly qualified teachers in classrooms;
 - Increasing the number of highly qualified principals and assistant principals in schools; and
 - Increasing the effectiveness of teachers and principals by holding LEAs and schools accountable for improvements in student academic achievement.

- **Career and Technical Education (CTE).**
 - Develop, improve, or expand the use of technology in career and technical education.
 - Offer professional development programs at the secondary and postsecondary levels.
 - Integrate academics with career and technical education.
 - Provide preparation for non-traditional fields in current and emerging professions.
 - Support partnerships among local educational agencies, institutions of higher education, adult education providers, and other entities to enable students to achieve state academic standards, and career and technical skills, or complete career and technical programs of study.

- **Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF).**
 - Provide funds to improve student achievement through increased teacher and leader effectiveness

- **Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP).**
 - Provides funds to rural districts to meet federal education requirements

- **IDEA Part D National Programs.**
 - Offer competitive grants (including State Personnel Development and Personnel Preparation) to states to help support special educators and to train them in the use of evidence-based strategies.

Reach Every Student. Grow Professionally. Create Great Schools.



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