FAQ for HEF Grant Applications

★ **What types of programs do you fund?**
- HEF funds programs that align with our mission to enrich the educational experience by providing teachers with the resources they need to do their best teaching and students with the opportunities and support to achieve their potential.

★ **Is my project eligible for funding?**
- Your project must benefit Hays CISD students and be aligned with our mission to enrich, maintain and expand programs needed to meet the District's stated mission and promote excellence in education.

★ **Who can apply for these grants?**
- If you are involved in the education of our students, then you qualify! This includes Principals, Teachers, Directors, Coaches, and Administrative Department staff.

★ **How much can I ask for in my grant application?**
- Innovative Teaching Grants: Funding of up to $500
- Collaborative Grants: Funding of up to $5,000
- Professional Development Grant: Funding is determined on a case by case basis.
- Big and Bold Grants: Funding amount that may be requested is not capped. Amount of grant awarded is at the discretion of the Hays Education Foundation Board.
- 100% Hays Student Grants: Funding amount that may be requested is not capped. Amount of grant awarded is at the discretion of the Hays Education Foundation Board.

★ **How and when do I submit an application?**
- Visit our **website** for the online applications and due dates.

★ **How do you decide which grants to fund?**
- Awards are determined using a rigorous and BLIND review process.
  - While all applications require identifiable information, that information is used solely for office purposes.
  - When being reviewed, applications are evaluated without identifiable information, including name or campus information. This best practice is important to the Foundation because it helps ensure fairness in that it ensures decisions are made based on the content or the quality of the work itself.
  - This is why, on the applications, we ask that you **do not include identifiable information in your answers to question prompts.**

★ **Who decides which grants get funded?**
- Ultimately, awards and amounts are determined by vote of the Education Foundation Board members. However, applications first go through a rigorous review process:
  - In order to ensure that the items are in compliance and alignment with Hays CISD policies, HCISD Departments conduct the first reviews.

- - ■ Finance Department reviews each application to determine whether the expense can and should be covered by Hays CISD, rather than the HEF.
    - ■ I.T. Department reviews applications to ensure that there are no issues with technology compatibility or district regulations.
    - ■ Curriculum & Instruction Department, Fine Arts and CTE departments review and score based on the application's alignment to HCISD curriculum priorities.
  - ○ Volunteer evaluators review and score applications based on a set of criteria.
  - ○ HEF Grant Committee, comprised solely of HEF Board members, take all scoring into consideration and provides the HEF Board with funding recommendations.

★ **What criteria is considered in the evaluation?**
  - In order to ensure that funds awarded provide a strong and meaningful return on investment to HCISD, criteria areas include:
    - ○ The proposals alignment with and support for the HEF mission, HEF funding priorities, and HCISD curriculum priorities,
      - ■ HEF Funding priorities include funding HCISD priorities for which there is not another source of funding or a lack of funds.
    - ○ Quality and quantity of impact on student learning,
    - ○ Impact in supporting initiatives that improve attendance or raise participation in co-curricular and extracurricular activities, and
    - ○ Quality of professional development and degree of benefit to HCISD from applicant's attendance.

★ **There are several kinds of grants. Which grant should I apply for?**
  - Visit our **website** for specifics about each grant.

★ **Can more than one campus be included in a collaborative grant application?**
  - Yes. Collaborative grants are designed to provide resources that impact a Hays CISD program, an entire campus, an academic department or a grade level and that have the potential to significantly impact student achievement. Applications will be accepted that involve a campus, a group of teachers or administrators at a campus, a group of teachers or administrators from different campuses, or a district administrator.

★ **Can I or my campus apply for more than one grant during a grant cycle?**
  - Yes.

★ **If I won a HEF grant award, can I submit an application in a future grant cycle?**
  - Absolutely. Just make sure you submit your report for your previous award because **grant winners who fail to submit their grant reports are not eligible to be awarded funding for the following cycle**.

★ **When will I be notified if I will receive a grant award and receive funds?**
  - Yes! All applicants will be notified as to whether they received an award or not. Follow us on social media to know when the Grant

Patrol will be delivering awards!

★ **Can I request feedback if I do not receive a grant award?**
  ● Yes. Applicants who were not awarded funds will be invited to contact the Foundation for feedback. You can also request feedback by emailing haysef@haysef.com.

★ **If I do not use the funds by the deadline, can I roll them over to the next school year?**
  ● No. The grants that are awarded by the Foundation are grants for that fiscal cycle (school year) only. HEF financial policies require that all grant monies not expended by the deadline must be returned to the Foundation. As a registered nonprofit, this practice is an important factor in meeting our fiduciary duty to the Foundation and the District ("grant cycle rule").

★ **How much budget detail should I provide in the application?**
  ● Applicants are required to complete the budget detail spreadsheet provided by the Foundation. This form must be used and uploaded to Smarter Select where indicated.
  ● When listing items, applicants should consider if an item will be serving specific populations, such as:
    ○ Special Ed, GT, Dyslexia, Intervention, Bilingual/ESL, CTE, Athletics, Extra Curricular (Fine Arts, UIL, Afterschool clubs), Library, Nursing.
  ● The itemized list must include the cost and quantity of each item, total per item, and a total for all items. Website links are highly encouraged. **Applications containing incomplete or incorrect budget information will not be considered.**

★ **I'm requesting software/technology/licenses, do I need to get pre-approval from Hays CISD before submitting my grant application?**
  ● Yes, you will need to fill out a "Software Approval Request Form". You can find that form by following the steps listed below:
    ■ IT Portal Icon on your Hays CISD computer desktop
    ■ Click "Need Help? Report It" button
    ■ Under "Software Approval Request Form", click "New Ticket"
    ■ Questions: helpdesk@hayscisd.net or (512) 268-2141 ext. 44357

★ **I'm requesting a project or construction that may alter a building's interior, exterior, or the facility grounds that changes the district property from its original condition. Do I need to notify HCISD Maintenance and Operations (M&O)?**
  ● Yes, you will need to fill out a "Hays CISD Project and Construction Request Form". You can find that form here: Hays CISD Project and Request Form.
  ● Examples include gardens, sandboxes, walls, outdoor structures, etc.
  ● You will need to notate on the form that you are applying for an HEF grant to pay for the project.
  ● Please know that M&O review time is estimated at 2-3 weeks.

★ **I'm requesting funds for a professional development conference, what do I need to**

include?
- Provide as much detail as possible. However, you must include date(s), location, registration fee, registration deadline, amount, number of people attending, additional costs (lodging, travel, etc.).
- As mentioned above, applicants will be required to complete the budget detail spreadsheet provided by the Foundation.
- **If your project involves travel, please note the following district requirements:**
  - Applicants must not pre-pay for hotels
  - Hotel rate should be GSA, when possible
  - ALL travel requires the district pre- and post- out of district travel form to be completed and signed.
  - Out of state travel must be approved by Dr. Wright using the district Out of State Authorization Form.
  - For staff members traveling together, only 1 vehicle for every 4 travelers will be reimbursed.
  - Travelers must follow the district per diem guidelines for food.
  - <u>If traveling out of state, travelers will have to pay for all taxes.</u>

★ **What if I am seeking a grant for a professional development opportunity occurring outside of the grant cycle?**
- We strongly encourage you to plan in advance and apply for the PD grant during the grant cycle that takes place during the academic year or the summer following the academic year in which the PD event occurs.

★ **Do HEF professional development grants cover International professional development tours/excursions?**
- No. Grants awarded by the Hays Education Foundation may not be used for international travel or events, even if they do involve or provide professional development.

★ **Are there any limitations on how frequently I can receive a PD grant?**
- Yes, there are limitations. At least at this time, Foundation funds do not allow us to say 'yes' to everyone that applies for a PD grant. In order to give as many teachers as possible the opportunity to receive a PD grant, the Foundation will:
  - Give priority to teachers who have not yet received a PD grant, and
  - Limit funding of the same teachers for the same conference no sooner than every other year.

★ **Can I apply for a grant to attain my National Certification, Master's Degree, or college degree?**
- No. There is no reliable way for the Foundation to recoup funds should a teacher decide or need to leave HCISD. It is our understanding that HCISD does have such a program. Therefore, encourage you to contact the District.

★ **Will I receive the full amount asked for in the grant?**
- We do our best to fund the entire amount requested, but our grant budgets are based

on how much money we have raised and budgeted for that cycle as well as how many applications are received. We highly encourage you to submit both full and partial funding options.

★ **What are the reporting requirements?**

- 45 days after completing the project, grant recipients will be required to submit a grant report. A reminder and link will be included in your "Grant Winner" email. **<u>As mentioned previously, grant winners who fail to submit a grant report will not be eligible to receive funding for the following cycle.</u>**

★ **Who do I contact if I have questions or need help with the application?**

○ You can send an email to haysef@haysef.com.