

Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation

The Berkshire Hills Fund for Excellence

Grant Guidelines

The Berkshire Hills Fund for Excellence (BHFE) is an endowed fund whose purpose is to enhance and enrich the educational experience of the students and teachers in the Berkshire Hills Regional School District (BHRSD). BHFE wants to help students obtain the highest level of achievement and enhance their capacity to achieve excellence both in school and in the community.

BHFE is seeking proposals for grants from students, teachers, administrators, staff, parents, nonprofits and members of the community of the Berkshire Hills Regional School District for projects that will fulfill the purposes of the Fund.

Eligibility

Grants from the Fund will not replace public dollars for the school district. BHFE seeks primarily to help cover the direct costs of projects (not salaries). Priority will be given to proposals that rely on volunteer efforts and that show additional means of support.

Possible projects include, but are certainly not limited to: independent study; new programs; extra-curricular activities; individual creative projects, in or outside the classroom, visiting speakers, artists in residence, scientific, athletic, or technical equipment, library resources, class field trips.

Applications for individual projects must show that there will be a resulting impact on the school community. The individual applicant must address what steps he/she will take to carry this out. Grants awarded will generally range from \$250 to \$1,000 for the first several years as BHFE builds its endowment.

Preference is given to new projects. The Committee has a priority to encourage innovation rather than to provide on-going support.

The Superintendent of Schools will confirm that applications are consistent with the school district mission. The Superintendent will then forward all applications to the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation staff which will review for appropriateness, format, and to assure the tax-exempt status of the project. Once these administrative steps have been completed, the fund committee will rank applications and allocate available funds to approved applications. Their recommendations will be reviewed by Berkshire Taconic's board of directors. Applicants will be informed of grant decisions within six weeks of the deadline date.

Berkshire Taconic does not support organizations that, in their constitution, by-laws, or practice, discriminate against a person or group on the basis of age, race, national origin, ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation, political affiliation or religious belief.

Review Criteria

Applications will be reviewed using the following criteria:

- **Excellence:** How worthy is the project or service? Is it the right time for the project? Does it involve qualified individuals/groups?
- **Impact:** What is the potential impact of the project or service on the BHRSD community?
- **Ability:** Can the applicant complete the project?

Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation

271 Main Street, Suite 3, Great Barrington, MA 01230-1972

T: 413.528.8039 F: 413.528.8158 info@berkshiretaconic.org www.berkshiretaconic.org

How to Apply

Complete the grant application form and attach a one page grant description. The grant description may be expanded to a second page, if necessary. The grant description must answer each question asked. Keep your application short and simple. Include any additional documentation that you feel would help in evaluating the project.

Your proposal should include an itemized budget for the project and a statement regarding additional sources of funding, if any. If this is not a new project, please indicate how it has been funded in prior years and why support from this fund is needed.

Your application must be signed by the relevant school principal, confirming that the request is consistent with the Berkshire Hills School District mission and that there are not other resources available for the amount requested from the Berkshire Hills Fund for Excellence.

For consideration for the next round of funding, completed proposals must be received by the Superintendent's office **by 5 p.m., April 12th**.

Questions

Please contact Maeve O'Dea, program director at 413.528.8039 or by email maeve@berkshiretaconic.org.

Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation

Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation builds stronger, more vibrant communities and improves the quality of life for all residents of Berkshire County, MA; Columbia County and northeast Dutchess County, NY; and northwest Litchfield County, CT. Since 1987, we have been an agent for positive change in the region we serve. In education, health care, basic human services, transportation, the arts, youth and senior programs—our grants touch all aspects of life and every person in the Berkshire Taconic region. Each year, we help thousands of donors achieve their philanthropic goals and hundreds of nonprofits carry on their good work. Berkshire Taconic is a 501 (c)(3) charitable organization and is proud to serve as steward for this fund.

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Completed proposals must be received by the Superintendent's office **by 5 p.m., April 12th**.

Applicant(s) Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Relationship of Applicant(s) to BHRSD (e.g. Student, Teacher, Parent, Community Member, etc.):

Title of Project: _____

I. Brief Description of Project:

Number of Students who will be Impacted: _____ Grade Level(s) _____

II. Budget Information:

a. Total Cost of Project: _____

b. Amount Requested from *Berkshire Hills Fund for Excellence*: _____

c. Amount you Expect to Raise from Other Sources: _____

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What do you Intend to Accomplish with the Project and How do you Intend to Accomplish it?:

What Positive Results can BHRSD Expect as a Result of this Project?:

What Support do you have for this Project? Name Faculty Members, Students, School or Community Organizations Supporting your Project:

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What is the Timetable for Completion of the Project?:

Describe how the Project will Improve or Sustain Educational Excellence while Supporting the Mission and Core Values of the District:

Provide Financial Details Regarding the Project:

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Itemized Project Budget:

If this is not a new project, please indicate how it has been funded in prior years and why support from this fund is needed. List all costs associated with the project – e.g. materials, professional fees, travel, rentals, etc., as well as other sources of financial support, and any additional documentation you feel would help in evaluating the proposal.

Expense Description	Estimated Cost	Amount Requested from Fund	Source of Funds to Pay Balance of Cost
TOTAL			

NOTE: Remember to calculate shipping and handling costs for items to be purchased from vendors. Please include estimates/price lists, where possible.

Applicant Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____ Title: _____

Signature of Principal(s) of the Relevant School(s) Confirming that the Request is Consistent with the Berkshire Hills School District Mission and that there are not Other Resources Available for the Amount Requested from the *Berkshire Hills Fund for Excellence*.

Signature of Superintendent: _____ Date: _____

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