



**READ THIS BEFORE YOU START THE *STRATEGIC IMPACT GRANT APPLICATION!***

The Berkeley Public Schools Fund has significantly redesigned both the content and the process surrounding our Strategic Impact grants. **Please read this Overview document carefully.**

Starting in the 2021-22 school year, Strategic Impact Grants will be chosen based on an increased focus on serving the students and families in BUSD who are furthest from opportunity: the historically or currently marginalized, or those who are living with multiple “headwinds.”

Strategic Impact Grant Proposals will be evaluated against how aligned they are the 4 areas described below.

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SI grant proposals will be scored in the following 4 areas:

***I. Priority Areas***

Keeping equity at the forefront, Strategic Impact grant proposals will be considered in the following 5 priority areas:

- A. Emotional Health & Wellness.**
- B. Equitable Family Engagement**
- C. Digital Equity**
- D. Positive Racial Identity Development**
- E. Focused Academic Intervention & Supports**

Note that Priority Area A (Emotional Health & Wellness) was designed with a broad reach in mind, given that so many students across demographic groups have suffered emotionally this past year.

Priority Areas B-E below are intended for more focused audiences, specifically under-resourced students who remain furthest from opportunities.

## **II. Equity-centered Practices**

The Strategic Impact grant program prioritizes equity in all aspects of project design and implementation. We will pay attention not only to who the intended audience is but also who is designing and leading the project. We are also interested in how aligned the “what” of your chosen curriculum/content and the “how” of your intended delivery methods/pedagogy match the needs or culture of your intended audience.

## **III. Systems Change**

The Strategic Impact grant program seeks to identify and grow promising projects and practices in order to maximize positive impact on students. As such, we are increasingly interested in supporting projects that are, or are committed to becoming, multi-site or district-wide. Single school or single program proposals should include ideas for growth and cross-site collaboration.

## **IV. Project Learning**

The Schools Fund is equally interested in supporting projects that are committed to learning through program evaluation so that students are increasingly better served. We recognize that such learning takes time, resources, and concerted effort, and we will prioritize projects that are serious about doing *and sharing* this reflective work.

We believe there are many valid ways to know if a project “is working,” including qualitative measurement - interviews, quotes, and anecdotes - and quantitative statistics, charts or graphs. Further, powerful learning can occur both during the project and at project’s end. It’s especially powerful when project players set aside time to review data together and chart an improved path forward.

The Schools Fund also recognizes that project learning must occur in ways that are responsible and safe for students and their privacy. Once approved, grantees will work with the Schools Fund to ensure that evaluation activities comply with BUSD data protocols.

## **A More Engaged Stance**

The Schools Fund will be taking a more engaged stance with regards to Strategic Impact grants moving forward, offering more touch points with and more support for grantees than in years past. This will include:

- **Office Hours (Optional).** Applicants may choose to drop in to the Schools Fund’s (virtual) Office Hours to access additional thought partnership about any aspect of their

proposal. We are happy to help you think through a systems change model for your project, or support the design of thoughtful evaluation activities.

- **Initial Learning Conversation.** All applicants should expect to engage in a “Learning Conversation” with Schools Fund staff after their proposal has been submitted. This allows us to ask questions and ensure that what is shared with our Grants Committee is as complete and powerful as possible.
- **Mid-project Learning Conversation.** If funded, all grantees will have a second “Learning Conversation” half-way through the project’s timeline to reflect on work done so far and think through the course ahead.