

## Grant Writing Workshop

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*Naperville Community Unit School District 203  
Naperville, Illinois*

**T**he School, Family, Community Partnership (SFCP) teams in Naperville, IL never lack creative ideas for partnership activities and programs to support their schools. At times, however, they have found themselves without sufficient funding to implement those ideas. The District 203 Core Team, the leadership for partnerships in the district, addressed this need by hosting a Grant Writing Workshop.

The goal of the 90-minute Grant Writing Workshop, held in November 2003, was to provide SFCP teams with the necessary tools to write a grant and information for local and external sources of funding. While developing the list of potential funding sources, the Core Team Training Committee contacted several community organizations, such as the Rotary Club, Exchange Club, and Women's League, and obtained information on the programming areas they were particularly interested in funding and their requirements for grant proposals. The committee developed the workshop with the help of District 203 School Board member Suzyn Price, Director of Grants and Special Projects for North Central College. In addition, the Core Team met with the president of the Naperville Education Foundation (NEF) to solicit his input and identify how SFCP teams should apply for NEF grants.

All school-based SFCP chairs and building principals received invitations to the workshop. In turn, they extended the invitation to their school community through newsletters and announcements. Sixty people attended, including parents, school staff, and community members, representing more than half of the

schools in the district. Twenty individuals who showed interest but were unable to attend received the handouts from the workshop in the mail.

A collaborative team conducted the workshop. Ms. Price shared grant-writing expertise with participants through a comprehensive PowerPoint presentation on grant writing fundamentals, along with examples. A Core Team member presented sources for funding and provided a handout for participants. The Director of Community Relations detailed the district process for grant applications. An abbreviated version of one handout, "The Basic Components of the Grant Proposal," follows this narrative (see attached note).

The Grant Writing Workshop provided the necessary tools and information to empower SFCP team members to secure funding for their partnership activities and programs. On an exit survey for the workshop, a participant wrote, "This was very informative... I will be writing more grants in the future because I am so much better prepared now!" Indeed, grant writing activity has increased within the school district. The Naperville Education Foundation received 113 grant applications this year, 43 more than last year.

The District 203 Core Team plans to offer the workshop again in the fall, in conjunction with the annual School, Family, Community Partnerships Team Orientation.

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## The Basic Components of the Grant Proposal\*

### I. Introduction:

Who are you? What are your qualifications? What is your experience? The introduction should introduce the funder to you. You should connect with the funder's values and interests and assure them that you can help them achieve their goals. This should be no more than two paragraphs.

### II. Need Statement:

The statement of need presents the facts and evidence that support the need for the project and establish that you understand the problems and can reasonably address them. You want this section to be succinct, yet persuasive. You should include information about who has this need, with some specificity, including quantity (i.e., 27 second-grade students). How did this need come about? Is it a problem in the curriculum, a problem students bring with them, a space issue, a classroom size issue, etc.? This should be no more than two paragraphs.

### III. Project Description:

This section details the project—and how the project will address the need. It will include two parts.

#### a. Goals:

The Goals section offers a solution to the problem stated above. The goals section will state any desired outcomes or products from your project, in measurable terms. The Goals section should be no more than one, short paragraph.

#### b. Methods:

How your project will address the problem and reach the goals, detailing the specific activities of your project. The methods refer to how the project is expected to work and solve the stated problem. Methods should also include the qualifications of the project staff: background, experience, years teaching, etc. The Methods section should be three to four paragraphs, depending upon your project.

### IV. Evaluation:

The Evaluation section will outline how you, and the funder, know your project was successful. How do you know you solved the problem? This section will describe how you know you achieved your desired outcomes. This section can be fairly simple, especially if you are creating a product. But, if you are engaging a more in-depth project, detail those areas that determine success, which can include, for example, the number of participants, improvement in reading scores or other test scores, or number of hours participants spend in an activity.

### V. Budget:

The budget should detail expenses allowable by the grant source. Most budgets include costs in these major areas: supplies (books, paper, art supplies, etc.); conferences/meetings; travel (mileage); phone/fax; copying/printing; postage; other. You should group your expenditures in categories and detail what those items are, including some information about the nature of the expenditure.

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This is an abbreviated version of a handout provided to participants of the Grant Writing Workshop sponsored by the District 203 Core Team in Naperville, Illinois in November 2003. The content was intended for local school community members, and may be adapted to meet specific guidelines for other locales.