

BEAR GRANTS: SUMMARY FOR PTA APPROVAL

Bushy Park Elementary PTA | Staff Innovation & Enrichment Mini-Grant Program

Decision requested: Approve the Bear Grants process as a first-year pilot so staff may request PTA funding for student-centered projects through a fair, documented review process.

Why Create the Bear Grants Program?

The program gives staff a simple way to propose ideas that improve learning, belonging, enrichment, inclusion, or school community. Funding supports approved projects—these are not personal gifts, bonuses, or unrestricted payments to employees.

Recommended Process

Step	What Happens
1. Apply	All regularly-assigned BPES staff may use one short application; PTA membership is not required.
2. Screen	Basic eligibility and completeness are confirmed.
3. Score	Committee members independently use the same 20-point rubric.
4. Verify	Administration confirms safety, feasibility, compatibility, and conformance with HCPSS requirements.
5. Approve	Committee recommends awards; PTA authorizes spending under its bylaws and financial procedures.
6. Purchase	PTA buys approved items directly when possible; reimbursements require prior approval and receipts.
7. Follow up	Recipients submit a brief impact report; PTA shares an annual summary with members.

Proposed First-Year Structure

Element	Recommendation
Application Eligibility	All regularly assigned staff may apply
Grant Levels	<u>Quick Grants</u> : Up to \$150 <u>Bear Cub Grant</u> : \$250 <u>Bear Grant</u> : \$750 <u>Big Bear Innovation Grant</u> : \$1,500
Grant Review Committee	PTA President; PTA Treasurer; Two (2) PTA Members; one (1) BPES Administrator (advisory role)
Scoring	Standardized 20-point rubric
First-Year Application Schedule	<u>Application Submissions</u> : January 15 - February 15 <u>Applications Reviewed</u> : February 16 - 28 <u>Awards Granted</u> : By March 1
Quick Grants	Optional year-round pool (up to \$150) with expedited review
Purchasing Structure	PTA direct-purchase preferred

Key Safeguards

- The student or school-community benefit of each project must be clear and aligned with the PTA's educational and charitable mission.
- The same eligibility rules and scoring criteria apply to every applicant.
- Reviewers disclose conflicts and abstain when appropriate; administration reviews project feasibility before funding.
- There will be no retroactive purchases, unrestricted cash, personal gifts, or primarily personal equipment.
- Durable items will generally remain at Bushy Park for student or program use.
- The PTA will conduct annual reviews of the Bear Grants program for equity and impact.

Suggested Motion

I move that the Bushy Park Elementary PTA approve the Bear Grants Staff Innovation & Enrichment Mini-Grant Program process as a first-year pilot, including the eligibility, application, review, conflict-of-interest, administrative feasibility, purchasing, ownership, and follow-up procedures presented, with program funding limited to the PTA-approved budget and all expenditures subject to the PTA's bylaws and financial procedures.