

The New Horizons 7th Grade Grant Program: Application and Guidelines

What impact could you make with \$1,000?

Student Voices: For the past seven years, the Florham Park Education Foundation (FPEF) has funded grant requests from teachers and administrators in an effort to enhance education in the school district. Past grants at Ridgedale Middle School have included compact scales for the science labs, a digital piano for the music program, 3-D printing pens for the art program, flexible seating and benches for the outdoor classroom.

Thanks to a generous gift from New Horizon Day Camp, the FPEF is now giving RMS students the opportunity to make meaningful change in their own community. *What would you do with a \$1,000 budget?* All enrolled 7th grade students are encouraged to submit their ideas for a funding project of up to \$1,000 that will improve student life at the middle school. All submissions will be reviewed by a panel of judges selected by the **FPEF** and one lucky winner will see their idea funded within the school.

What is the Florham Park Education Foundation (FPEF)?

The Florham Park Education Foundation (FPEF) is a group of community volunteers dedicated to enhancing education with the local school district. The FPEF achieves its goals through grant funding that allows teachers and administrators to procure classroom materials and resources that go beyond the annual district budget.

What is a grant?

In its simplest form, a grant is a gift given for a stated purpose with no requirement to pay the money back. In a typical grant program, many organizations will apply for a limited pool of funding. All applications are reviewed by a panel of stakeholders. Generally, the proposals that present the strongest case for support are chosen to receive funding. Grant-writing is an important skill for many career paths including public policy, research and development, and nonprofit work.

Grant Requirements:

All students who wish to participate must submit a written proposal. Grants submitted for consideration of the New Horizons 7th Grade Grant Program must meet the following requirements:

- Must make a meaningful impact on one aspect of student life at Ridgedale Middle School
- Must have a budget of \$1,000 or less
- Must have an implementation timeline of one year or less
- All grant proposals must be submitted by November 26, 2025

Let your imaginations soar: Items that can be utilized for your grant from the school include Drones, Robots, Digital Cameras, iPads, Sewing Machines, all PE equipment, all Recess equipment, Art Supplies (3D Pens, Paints, Clay), Musical Instruments, everything on campus!

Please note: All grant monies will be paid to an account at Ridgedale Middle School and no funds will be directly paid to the student grantee.

The Madison Area YMCA 7th Grade Grant Award: We are delighted to share that the Madison Area YMCA will award a \$500 scholarship to the student with the winning grant proposal. The scholarship will be presented during the 8th grade commencement and awards ceremony. The YMCA and FPEF believe in empowering our youth to affect change in their communities, and the FPEF is grateful for the YMCA's partnership on this scholarship. Please read the included information to learn more about the 7th Grade Initiative Program offered at the Madison Area YMCA. The program includes a FREE membership to the Madison Area YMCA as well as free or reduced rates for Teen Programs.

Grant Writing Guidelines:

This is an opportunity to put your persuasive writing skills to the test. You need to present a strong argument for your idea and convince the panel that your initiative will make a difference for students at RMS. All grant proposals need to be typed and segmented into five parts. Please use the bullet points listed below as your headers. All proposals must be submitted via Google Form by Wednesday, November 26, 2025.

- **Statement of Need:** This is where you will make your case for support. In 250 to 500 words, describe an existing need at RMS and explain in as much detail as possible how this proposed project can solve the problem.
- **Audience - Who Will Be Impacted by the Project:** (e.g. all students, one grade level, a particular academic program, arts or athletics) - Tell us which members of the RMS community will benefit from this change, and why it is important to that group. Will the positive effects extend to the greater school community?
- **Goals/Expected Outcomes:** What do you foresee as the effects of this project? How will the school community be changed? Will the impact be felt beyond those directly affected to the whole school community?
- **Budget:** In this section, we ask that you list specific materials and their costs to demonstrate that this project can be completed within the \$1,000 budget. Please provide item descriptions and their associated costs. Please list the retailer where you found the pricing and/or provide a screenshot of your cart with the items.
- **Timeline to Implement:** Please provide a brief timeline that explains how long the project will take to put into action. Keep in mind shipping times and school breaks.

Scoring Rubric:

The panel will use the following rubric to evaluate all proposals. We encourage all students to provide as many details as possible and support their argument with research when appropriate.

	Lacking Detail	Satisfactory	Exemplary
STATEMENT OF NEED 25 pts	Lacks a strong case for support	Provides details and presents a reasonable argument for support	Detailed plans as well as evidence to support a strong case
AUDIENCE 15 pts	Fails to identify who will be affected	Clearly identifies a target audience who will benefit	Clearly identifies those affected and explains a ripple effect for the full school community
GOALS/EXPECTED OUTCOMES 25 pts	Goals and objectives are not clearly described	Goals and objectives are clearly described	Goals and objectives are clearly described and student proposed a way to measure outcomes
BUDGET 10 pts	Budget is vague and item descriptions and values are missing	Budget is presented accurately, most items and costs are listed	Budget is presented accurately, ALL items and costs are listed
TIMELINE 10 pts	Timeline is absent or unrealistic	Timeline is presented and achievable	Detailed timeline with realistic expectations
PROPOSAL WRITTEN/ORAL PRESENTATION 15 pts	Format is not followed correctly	Format is mostly followed	Format is followed