



Sustainability Grant FAQs

Can my school district, ESD or community college be awarded a Sustainability Grant if we have an Education Employee Well-being (EEW) Grant from OEA Choice Trust?

If you currently have an Education Employee Well-being Grant through OEA Choice Trust, you cannot be awarded a Sustainability Grant until you have successfully completed the full Education Employee Well-being Grant period. If you aren't sure if you are a current grantee of the Trust, call Arien: 971-380-5927.

Can my district be awarded a Sustainability Grant even if we have not had the Education Employee Well-being Grant yet?

Yes. You do not have to be a past EEW grantee to get a Sustainability Grant. However, you must have an established Education Employee Well-being program. Please see the Sustainability Grant Application Overview or Sustainability Grant Application for a complete list of eligibility criteria.

Regarding the first eligibility item, what do you mean by “dedicate resources?” Do we need to have funds set aside to be eligible for a Sustainability Grant?

General funds can be a dedicated resource but are not required to be eligible. Dedicated resources can include people (wellness coordinator, wellness committee), local partners, staff time to hold meetings or lead activities and events, space for meetings or space for activities.

How recently should our organization have collected staff feedback?

Staff feedback needs to have been collected within the last 12 months. We understand that it takes time and effort to engage staff in providing feedback, but up-to-date information will help you tailor your Sustainability Grant to employees' current needs and interests.

Are all Sustainability Grant awards for \$5,000 or \$10,000 exactly?

No. Sustainability Grants can be awarded for up to \$5,000 or \$10,000. If your Sustainability Grant project does not require the maximum amount, you do not need to stretch your budget.

Organizations with 1-499 employees are eligible for up to \$5,000 and organizations with 500+ employees are eligible for \$10,000.

Can Sustainability Grant funds be used as a stipend for Education Employee Well-being program coordinators?

Up to 30% of your grant funds request can be used for extra duty pay or a wellness coordinator or wellness team member stipend IF this position is needed to implement the Sustainability Grant Action Plan. The extra duty pay or stipend will be given to the wellness coordinator or wellness team member with the understanding that they are responsible for implementing the Action Plan.

Can Sustainability Grant funds be used for professional development?

Yes, if the professional development or speaker directly addresses employee health and well-being. For example, funds may be used to bring in a speaker to present or lead a workshop about compassion fatigue or emotional resilience. Funds may also be used to send representatives of your wellness team to OEA Choice Trust's in-person events for education employees.

If you use Sustainability Grant funds for professional development, we encourage you to consider how the skills and information gained can be applied to your program to benefit all staff or change the culture of your workplace.

Can Sustainability Grant funds be used to update worksite fitness/wellness centers?

Yes. We understand that wellness equipment may need maintenance and items may need replacing. Funds can also be used to add new equipment.

Can Sustainability Grant funds be used to purchase ergonomic equipment?

No, ergonomic equipment cannot be purchased with grant funds.

Can Sustainability Grant funds be put toward addressing wellness for a specific department or building?

Yes. The Trust believes in employee well-being programs that serve ALL education employees, and we recognize that some staff can be harder to reach due to work schedules, part time hours, location, etc. If your proposal clearly explains why and how a segment of your employee workforce will be served by the Sustainability Grant, grant funds can be awarded. For example, funds can be used to engage Transportation Services, Nutrition Services, and/or Facilities staff specifically.

Can Sustainability Grant funds be used to renovate staff rooms?

- Grant funds can be put towards certain elements of staff room renovation to create a welcoming and relaxing space to promote social and emotional well-being:
 - Adding massage chairs
 - Adding hydration stations
 - Providing healthy snacks
 - Providing wellness or gratitude prompt cards
 - Providing music
 - Purchasing paint
 - Purchasing yoga mats or exercise equipment
 - Adding furniture that will make the space more comfortable or inviting
- Grant funds cannot be used for:
 - Installing sinks, plumbing or other structural changes
 - Purchasing utensils
- **Please note:** This is not an exhaustive list of how grant funds can and cannot be used for staff room renovations. If you have questions, contact Arien at arien@oeachoice.com.
- Suggested resource: [Kaiser Permanente Thriving School's Guide on Improving Staff Break Rooms](#).

If awarded, how soon would we have access to funds?

Applicants who are awarded in October will have access to funds in early November. Applicants who are awarded in February will have access to funds in early March.