

## ***FAQs***

(Frequently Asked Questions)

### ***How do you participate in the Great Minds (GM) program?***

All participants must have a completed application on file before formal approval may be given. The application form is available in the office of building administrators, at the GM office or on the school district Web site. The form is simple and short.

### ***What types of programs get selected?***

Program characteristics that are a priority are identified in the following list:

#### ***GM Program Selection Criteria***

1. To what extent does the project support instruction through demonstrated connection to benchmarks and standards?
2. Does the project include elements that expand impact of the project to a larger plane than curriculum, i.e., character education (responsibility, life skills, etc.)?
3. Are the requested resources available locally on an economical basis? If not, is the request for funding out of proportion with the potential learning value it may provide?
4. Does the request include elements that are clearly motivational in increasing student learning?
5. Is the project well designed and does it include logical, thoughtful and creative preparation and follow-up activities? (*The Foundation places a high priority on supporting projects that are truly part of the learning process instead of being an isolated "event."*)
6. Is the project integrated to the extent that it has the potential for increased learning in more than one subject area?
7. Does the project support quality-learning theory through "being there, hands-on, brain compatible, etc.?"
8. Will the stated activities lead logically to the learning goals identified?
9. Is the request financially reasonable considering that we have a responsibility to share the resources among all attendance centers?

10. Starting with the 08-09 year, Great Minds has funds to encourage home involvement with the school. Could funds for your project connect the home with the building?

***Does the program fund equipment purchases?***

No, the Foundation, through the Classrooms for the Future program, has already made a significant investment in equipment for the district. The focus of the GM program is clearly on experiences and services for students.

***Is there a maximum amount that we may request?***

Recent practice shows that Great Minds grants are most often for as little as \$50 or for as much as \$700. Small requests we may opt to fund fully. Large requests, which could involve transportation to major cultural centers such as Chicago or Des Moines, may require significant partnering with other sources. Such sources often include building PTAs, building budgets, or other grants or funders. By the way, we recommend that applicants e-mail the program director prior to the official application, so that the viability of both the idea and the funding can be explored before effort is put on paper.

***What will be the responsibility of the individual school?***

Any project GM supports must be woven into the curriculum you are offering. We expect activities both to prepare students for the experience and to reinforce the education after the event. You will be expected to complete a brief evaluation of the activity in a timely manner. That evaluation is found on the district Web site. Look for Funders at left, then click on Davenport Schools Foundation and look for evaluation.

***What is the source of the funding for the GM program?***

All funds come from corporate and private donations. No general fund monies from the school district are used to support the program.

***What is the track record of the GM program?***

In recent years, we tend to approve about 80 projects at an expense to Great Minds of \$20,000, impacting over 9,000 students each year. Evaluations have been highly complimentary. Feedback through student work shows that the students value the experiences. Teachers and administrators let us know that our support makes great ideas possible for students.

***How long does it take to get a program approved?***

Most programs are reviewed and approved/denied within a day or so after receiving them in the GM office. More detailed programs or those with fairly high price tags may take a little longer as more research and consideration is often required. An e-mail to the office can usually get a quick update on the approval process if time is a critical factor.

***May we ask for funding more than one year if we want to duplicate an especially successful program?***

While GM is not intended to supplant funding for ongoing programs, those activities that provided a uniquely valuable experience for students will be considered for repeat funding. It should be noted that the foundation of the program is to encourage new,

interesting, and motivational learning experiences for students. Assuming the responsibility for program replication has a tendency to impede that goal. After a second year, we assume that the building will want to assume responsibility for the project.

***Who is in charge of the GM program?***

Gene Conrad, retired educator, is the program director. He, along with the input from the Foundation Board, Norm Bower (Development Director) and a GM Advisory Board, manage the work of the program. Any specific inquiries should be addressed to Gene Conrad at 563-336-5028. His e-mail is: [conradg@davenportschools.org](mailto:conradg@davenportschools.org).

The mailing address is Great Minds, ASC, 1606 Brady St., Davenport, IA 52803.

***Other?***

If you have questions that have not been answered here, please call the office and speak with Gene. Further, if a team of teachers has specific questions about a project or would like planning assistance, they should call.