



# NISN FACILITIES PROGRAM

## Funding File for Operating Schools

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Most funding applications involve pulling general documents, adapting common case materials, and creating specific content for the opportunity. Being able to focus your time on the last item—information specific to a funding opportunity—gives you more time and focus for developing competitive proposals and helps reduce the stress and rush of meeting grant deadlines.

This is where a “Funding File” comes into play – this is a collection of documents and information that prepare you to easily gather standard attachments and commonly requested information. This should be in electronic/digital format (a hardcopy backup is fine), maintained over time, and well organized. The following checklist will help you create a solid Funding File. This checklist is for use by schools that have already opened. If your school has not launched, please see the checklist for pre-operational schools. If you use a fiscal sponsor or a school foundation/charity as part of grant seeking, complete the Funding File checklist for 501(c)(3)s as well.

To get the most out of the checklist, answer the status question for each item, repeat it at least annually, and schedule internal tasks, deadlines, and responsible parties for items needing follow-up. The priority column rates items with one being the highest priority and three being the lowest. The ratings reflect the likelihood that funders may ask for the item as an attachment or that the information is likely to be requested or helpful in preparing proposals. These numbers can serve as a guide for developing the Funding File over time. For the status column, suggested entries are:

- **On Hand:** You have it yourself. *Action:* Check annually to ensure item is current.
- **Available:** Your school has it, but it is not in a centralized grant file. *Action:* These should be added to your grant file, assuming they do not have privileged information.
- **No-GET:** Your school doesn’t have this, and it is something you would like to add in the next 12 months. *Action:* Schedule tasks and timelines to collect or develop.
- **No-Skip:** Your school doesn’t have this, and the item is not a priority to get during the next 12 months. *Action:* None, revisit categorization annually.
- **N/A:** Not an applicable or relevant item for your school. *Action:* None.

Being able to find information when you need it is another aspect of having a strong Funding File. While you are checking and collecting grant file items, it is a good opportunity to organize and standardize electronic (and possibly print) files. An example file structure is below.

- |                              |                 |
|------------------------------|-----------------|
| 📁 Financial                  | 📁 Personnel     |
| 📁 Operations                 | 📁 Programs      |
| 📁 Organization Establishment | 📁 Academic Data |
| 📁 Policies                   |                 |

### About this Document

This was produced as part of the NISN Facilities Training Program, an effort funded by the U.S. Department of Education Charter Schools Program (Award #U282T180018). Awarded to the NACA Inspired Schools Network (NISN), the program supports expansion of opportunities for Native American and other underserved students to attend high-performing, innovative, and culturally responsive charter schools. Work includes technical assistance to schools in three states and documentation and dissemination of information, resources, and tools for facilities needs assessment, planning, and funding.

## Funding File Checklist for Operational Schools

Date Completed:

Name(s) of Checklist Completer(s):

Priority	Status	Document
<b>School Establishment and Strategy</b>		
1		School purpose, mission, vision statements
1		Boilerplate language on history/establishment
1		Biography of school founder
2		Description of community engagement in school planning, including key counts (e.g., # of stakeholders, # of meetings, # of surveys)
2		School enrollment/growth plan
2		Map showing school location and service geography area
3		School strategic plan
<b>School Operations and Policies</b>		
1		Key dates for current and upcoming academic calendar (for planning proposed activities)
1		Certificate of liability insurance
1		School operating plan
2		Non-discrimination policy
2		Personnel policies
3		Procurement/purchasing policies
3		Travel policies/reimbursement levels
<b>School Facilities</b>		
1		School site and floor plans for capital project areas
1		Cost estimates for facilities projects relevant to grant seeking
1		Copy of property/building lease agreement or title of ownership
2		Facilities/capital improvement plan and/or facility master plan
2		Documented plans and budgets for major projects
2		School facilities maintenance plan
<b>Grant Seeking and Case Building</b>		
1		Copies of past grant proposals
1		Federal grants registration information (SAM.gov, Grants.gov)
1		School fact sheet/one-pager
1		List of recent awarded, pending, and declined grants, including amounts and submission dates
1		Proof of compliance/standing with state charity and business registration authorities (varies by state)
1		Electronic letterhead for school and digital signature for school leader
2		Copies of past grant reports for awarded proposals
2		List of top contributors for the past year (donors, grants, sponsors)

2		Testimonial letters/statements from families and students
2		Participation and outcome data for programs
2		General data for your school's area (e.g., Census Community Profile)
3		Research/data demonstrating inadequacy and/or gaps that conventional schools have in serving area/population
3		Community/population needs assessment
3		Description of grant accounting practices
3		Standardized school youth risk behavior/resilience survey data (reported to CDC in the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System)
3		Annual report for most recent completed school year
3		Grant policies (grant seeking, management and administration, sub-award and contractor management, grant accounting, record retention)
3		Support statements from high profile individuals and organizations
<b>Programming and Academics</b>		
1		Description of educational model (approach, values, philosophy)
1		Most recent student enrollment and demographic information
1		Most recent and historic state student testing/assessment data for school overall and by grade
1		Comparative recent and historic state student testing/assessment data for population served (could be area schools, statewide data for American Indian students, or other comparative population)
2		List of partners with short description of relationship (e.g., "Sports field use" or "Social service referral")
2		Photos of students, programs, campus, community events
3		Copies of curricula for grant-relevant programs
3		Copies of evaluation tools for any programs subject to grant-seeking
3		Memoranda of Understanding with key partners
<b>Leadership and Human Resources</b>		
1		Up-to-date resumes/bios from key staff
1		Current list of governing/school board members with contact information and professional affiliations
1		Up-to-date organization chart
2		Basic employee headcounts (number of part-time and fulltime staff, number of teachers, administrators, and support staff)
2		Demographics of staff and governing/school board
3		Job descriptions for key staff
3		Staff transcripts and licenses
<b>Financial Records and Projections</b>		
1		Last two years' financial statements
1		Organization budget for current year
1		Two most recent school/district IRS tax filings
1		Two most recent school/district financial audits
1		Current program budgets

2		Organization budget for next fiscal year
2		Description of grant accounting practices
3		Breakdown/description of personnel fringe costs
3		Year-end budget for most recently completed fiscal year
3		Breakdown and rate for indirect/overhead costs
3		Current financial statement