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CAREER READINESS CONFERENCE

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CAREER READINESS CONFERENCE

Session #1
8:30—9:25

Funding the Future: A Practical Guide to Securing Grants for Career Readiness

Presenter: James Hissong, Kent ISD
Director of Grants and Strategic Partnerships

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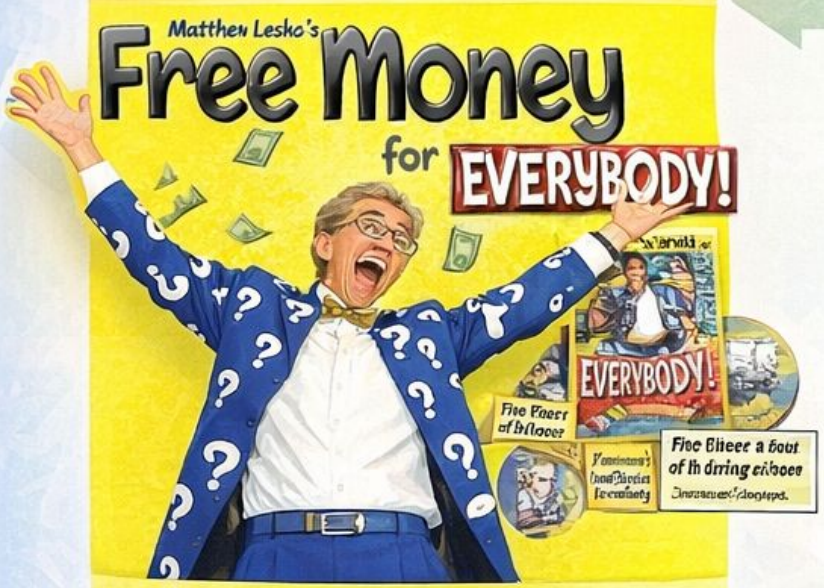
MYTH VS. REALITY

FREE MONEY



"There's unlimited money available."

Reality: Somewhere in the Middle

- ✓ Grants are competitive
- ✓ But strong proposals aligned with real community needs get funded
- ✓ Partnerships, data, and planning increase your chances;

Not free money... but not a cage match either.

FIERCE GRANT COMPETITION

"Everyone is fighting for the same dollars."

Who is Eligible for a Grant?

SCHOOLS

NONPROFITS

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

BUSINESSES?

Develop Your Grant Team

Programming

- Determines Best Use of Funds
- Leads Implementation
- Programmatic Reporting

Finance

- Responsible for Budgets
- Codes & Monitors Expenses/Revenue
- Financial Reporting

GRANT READINESS

Commonly Requested Documents:

- Mission, Vision, Values Statement
- Board of Directors
- Tax Exempt Status Letter
- Tax Documents - 990 / W9 Forms
- Organizational Budget
- Audited Financial Statements
- Past Performance Data / Reports
- Letters of Support

Grant Identification Tips
Kent ISD
Kent ISD
Grants Newsletter
State Grant
Resources
GRANTS.GOV
Grants.gov
Free Grant Websites
Paid Grant Tools

Kent ISD Grant Newsletter

(LINK)

State Grant Resources

MDE Grants Repository (Link)

MDE Memos (Link)

MI Funding Hub (Link)

Federal Grant Resources

Grants.Gov (Link)

Legislator Guides (Example: Rep. Scholten Resource)

MI Funding Hub (Link)

Free Grant Websites

DEMCO (Link)

CDW Education Funding (Link)

GuideStar (Link)

Paid Grant Subscriptions

Foundation Directory (Link)

GrantStation (Link)

Euna Grants (Link)

Evaluating Fit / Capacity

- Does the grant align with **District initiatives**?
  - Strategic Plan or Vision
  - Goals, values, and/or beliefs
- Do we have the **capacity** to effectively implement our proposed plan? (Programmatic and Fiscal)
- Can we **implement** the plan within the boundaries of the grant?

Grant Writing Tips

1) Write to the rubric
2) Assume the reviewers don't know you
3) Be specific, avoid flowery "grant speak"
4) Keep students first - Frame needs in terms of impact, not money
5) Don't wait until the last minute
6) AI is only as good as its source material and prompts

Grant Writing Resources

1) Free Grant Writing eBook (Link)
2) MI Funding Hub – Grant Basics Toolkit (Link)
3) Free Course - Introduction to Proposal Writing (Link)

Thank You