



**PLUM CREEK FOUNDATION
MONTANA GREAT CLASSROOM AWARDS**

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Plum Creek Foundation’s Montana Great Classroom Awards program is designed to provide public, K-12 teachers with additional resources to enhance the learning environment in their classrooms and help enrich the educational experiences of students across western Montana. Awards will emphasize hands-on education, and projects that provide innovative learning experiences will be encouraged.

Program Goals

- Support classroom and outside-the-classroom projects that enhance learning opportunities.
- Promote student engagement by providing innovative educational experiences that get kids excited about learning.
- Expand learning opportunities beyond the core curriculum.
- Provide classroom learning environment enhancements that are beyond the reach of normal school budgets.
- Support teacher innovation.

Please note that this program is not intended to supply new technology such as iPads and laptops to every student in the classroom. New technology should play a supporting role in your project, not a starring role, and should add a new and innovative aspect to the curriculum. Simply transferring the current curriculum to new technology does not meet the intended goals of the program.

Applicant Qualifications

Classroom teachers from public, K-12 schools in western Montana counties are encouraged to apply. Eligible counties include:

Flathead	Mineral
Granite	Missoula
Lake	Powell
Lewis & Clark	Ravalli
Lincoln	Sanders

Teachers may apply for projects that are directly related to classes taught as part of the school’s current curriculum. Administrators, support personnel, students, parents and community members may not submit a grant as the primary applicant but are encouraged to support and/or endorse specific projects.

Applicants may apply as an individual or as part of a group.

Teachers may submit only one application per school year. There is no limit to the number of applications that may be submitted by a school or school district. Each applicant's school principal or superintendent must approve the application before any request will be considered.

Grant Information

As a guideline, most grant awards will be in the \$2,000–\$5,000 range. The maximum grant amount is \$8,000.

Project Requirements:

- Projects must directly benefit student learning experiences.
- Projects must be new and not ongoing or past programs for which funding is no longer available.
- Projects must not require additional, non-secured funding to be completed.
- Consecutive year funding for the same project will not be considered.

Grant funds may be used for:

- the purchase of permanent classroom equipment or technology (e.g., software, computers, microscopes, calculators) in connection with a specific project
- equipment or supplies needed for classroom or outside the classroom experiments
- materials, books or supplies for projects outside the core curriculum
- field trips that enhance learning opportunities
- fine arts supplies or programming
- pre-packaged learning programs that address specific subjects (e.g., DVD programs, software)
- guest lecturer or visiting specialist/educator costs

Note: this is not an exhaustive list. Please be creative! If you have questions about whether your project would qualify for funding consideration, please contact Renee Erickson at 406-892-6227 or email renee.erickson@plumcreek.com.

Grants will NOT be made for the following:

- projects not sponsored by a K-12 public school
- costs associated with professional development, such as workshop or registration fees
- personnel or consultant costs
- student recognition or other awards
- playground, athletic or other non-academic equipment
- scholarships
- capital campaigns
- general operating support or materials that are part of the normal school budget
- travel expenses for longer trips (other than field trips)
- before- and after-school programs

Plum Creek Foundation

Projects which are ineligible for the Montana Great Classroom Awards program may be eligible for funding through the Plum Creek Foundation, which funds other types of grants related to education. Please visit our website at www.plumcreek.com for more information about the Plum Creek Foundation or contact Kirsten Smith at (206) 467-3664 or email foundation@plumcreek.com. *Please note that projects which are eligible for funding under the Montana Great Classroom Awards program will **not** be considered for funding through the Plum Creek Foundation grants program.*

Award Distribution

Awards must be used within six months of disbursement or the funds will revert back to the Montana Great Classroom Awards program. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis and must be approved by the Plum Creek Foundation in writing prior to the six month deadline.

All grant award payments are made to the applicant's school or school district. Funds may not be used for any purpose other than what was described in the original application. Any exceptions must be approved by the Plum Creek Foundation in writing. If a grant recipient leaves a school during the grant period, the grant funds and any items purchased with the funds remain the property of the applicant's original school or school district.

Selection Process

The Montana Great Classroom Awards application deadline dates are June 1 and December 1. Applications that are postmarked on the deadline date will be accepted. If the deadline date falls on a weekend or a holiday, the postmark deadline is the following business day. Grant awards will be announced each February and August.

Applications will be reviewed by a committee of Plum Creek Foundation Trustees and volunteers from the education community. Award decisions will be made based on one or more of the following criteria:

- The project provides innovation within the school curriculum.
- The project enhances student engagement in learning.
- The project maximizes the number of students involved.
- Educational objectives are clear and appropriate for the intended audience.
- Teaching methods to be used in attaining the stated objectives are likely to be effective.
- Project results can be shared with other educators, classrooms, or grade levels.
- The project can continue beyond the initial grant period.

Project Evaluation

Each grant recipient will be asked to submit a written evaluation of his or her project, including project findings and an assessment of the original project goals within 60 days of completion of the project.

Program Funding

The Plum Creek Foundation will issue Montana Great Classroom Awards grants of up to \$200,000 per year. All grant awards must meet the qualifying standards as outlined in this document. The Montana Great Classroom Awards program was established by the Plum Creek Foundation in 2010. The program will run through 2020, at which time it will be reassessed to determine future support.

More Information

For additional information about the Plum Creek Foundation's Montana Great Classroom Awards program, please contact:

Renee Erickson

Montana Great Classroom Awards

Plum Creek

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