

# Maine Charter School Commission

## Fund Request Form

1. Completed form must be submitted via Epicenter.
2. Form must be submitted **three weeks** prior to the next Business Meeting date to be included on the agenda. Note: Business Meetings are typically held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month.

Name of Requestor	Lēza Packard
Organization/School	Ecology Learning Center
Phone	207-230-9275
Email	Leza.packard@ecologylearningcenter.org
Signature	<i>Lēza Packard</i>
Date	3.27.24
Total Amount Requested	\$10,000

### Please explain the proposed use of funds in detail:

The Ecology Learning Center proposes to use innovation grant funds from the Charter Commission for student-led arts initiatives. We will use the funds to pay for curriculum resources, arts materials, and staff time. The overarching goal for these expenditures is to build a strong base for an expanded arts curriculum and maximize our new Clifford Arts & Student Center.

Here are some of the innovative student-led arts initiatives:

- Performing Arts – One of our current students is writing a musical, and has requested to hold auditions this spring and earn course credit in the fall for December performances. We do not currently have staff capacity or expertise to support the student in the planning phase. We need funds now for someone to lay a strong foundation for the upcoming theater program, including create course objectives, determine necessary materials (costumes, scenery), and how to purchase, store and care for these materials for the long-term success of the performing arts program.
- Ceramics Studio – Students are excited to use our newly acquired 12 pottery wheels, 2 kilns, and glaze room! We do not currently have staff capacity or expertise to teach the class. Our visual arts teacher has basic skills with ceramics but would like to take professional development courses to rekindle skills. We would use funds now for the teacher to take courses, and for someone to lay the foundation for the ceramics program.

*The Commission **may** require that the school submit a report after the activity. Staff will let you know at the time of approval when and if a report will be needed. Thanks!*

- Culinary Arts – Students love working in the kitchen with the Chef to prepare school lunch. Many students have requested to work more than just 2 hours in the kitchen on 2 or 3 days throughout the school year. They would like to gain more skills than simply washing, chopping, and grating vegetables. We do not currently have staff capacity or expertise to design and schedule a culinary arts course. We would use funds now for someone to lay the foundation for a culinary arts program.

Our revenue hasn't yet caught up with our expenses to design new arts programs (performing arts, ceramics, culinary arts). By investing in an arts curriculum development consultant / interim director and associated materials, we can wisely plan for the future. This is a strategy to test out our model, and to design sustainable structures and staff positions for the Clifford Arts & Student Center.

#### **How will this proposal enhance the performance of charter schools?**

This proposal enhances the performance of our public charter school by diversifying our course offerings (adding theater, ceramics, and culinary arts), and providing specific professional development and organizing structures for the long-term sustainability of each arts course. This proposal is rooted in program design, including identifying performance standards, instructional approaches, differentiation strategies to meet the needs of all learners, and assessment tools. We encourage teachers to partner across disciplines. Therefore, strengthening our arts curriculum will bolster our overall school performance.

#### **Please explain how this relates to your professional development and operation of the school:**

This funding request relates to the professional development and operations of the Ecology Learning Center because it is requesting guidance and expertise in the content area that has been weakest in our curriculum to this point – the arts. We have only been able to hire part time arts teachers in three areas (painting/drawing, music, and woodworking), and we have offered no professional development training in the arts. We identify the need for more rigor and professional guidance in arts education at our school. The Clifford Arts & Student Center will only be as effective as the instructors are. Strong curriculum design and program design will result in an overall stronger school.

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**Fill in as Appropriate:**

Proposed Date of Activity	mid-April through mid-August 2024
Duration	4 months, ~ 10 hours per week
Location	Clifford Arts & Student Center, Unity
Number of Participants	4 (3 current arts teachers + 1 new teacher/coach)

Please provide a breakdown of the Total Amount Requested. If you have received a proposal from a provider you **must** attach a copy to this request.

Registration Fee	
Materials Fee – for arts materials recommended by	\$2,000
Venue Fee	
Other – salary for interim arts curriculum coach/consultant/director	\$7,000
Other – professional development workshops for current arts teachers	\$1,000
Total Cost	\$10,000

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