Pre-Application Checklist

Welcome to the Lowe's® Toolbox for Education® grant application process! To confirm you are eligible to apply, please be sure to read through the FAQs.

A successful application will require you and your group to provide detailed information about both your group and your proposed project. This checklist is meant as a guide. Work together with your group leadership to collect the necessary information and check off each section on this list as it is completed. Once you have gathered the information listed below, you will be ready to file your grant application. Please note that if you have been awarded a Lowe's Toolbox for Education grant in the past you are not eligible to apply again until a full year after the grant is awarded.

Remember, there are typically two application deadlines: one in the fall and one in the spring. Choose a deadline that is reasonable for your group to meet. Please note that the application will be available online only and consists of a sign-in screen followed by three data entry screens. The email address for the project contact person will be the email address used for all correspondence relating to your application and **should be valid for at least one year**. You will have 25 minutes to complete the application. Please note that there is no capability to add attachments to your application. Please be sure to disable your pop-up blocker to allow pop-up messages during the application process.

In order to submit an application your school must be in our database. Click on the "apply now" button and by going through the first step of the application: Verifying Your Contact Information, you will be able to confirm this. Contact us at schools@toolboxforeducation.com to add your school to our database. It may take as long as 24 hours to have your school added before an application can be submitted. If you wait until the last day to submit an application, your school may not be added to the database in time to submit the application before the deadline.

Using the Project Details section of this checklist as a guide, create a new Word document with your group's application data. We highly recommend you take this step to allow for easy editing and to avoid being "timed out" of the online application on your computer.

If you notice that a mistake has been made in your application, you must correct the information and resubmit your application. Customer service representatives are unable to make changes to your application to protect the integrity of the information you have submitted. The most recent application will override the original one.

Once your application has been submitted, you will receive an email sent to the email address used to sign into the application process to confirm that the application has been received. Without this confirmation, your application may not have been received. Once a decision has been made, the final status of your application will be emailed to the project contact person. Be sure that the email address you use will be valid for up to one year from the time that you submit your application. Also, please add

info@toolboxforeducation.com to your contacts/accepted email address list to be sure you receive these emails and they do not get caught in your spam filter.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at 1-800-644-3561 x7 or info@toolboxforeducation.com. Good luck!

Verify your Contact Information
This section of the grant application will prompt you to search by your email address to locate your School in our database.

> • If your email address is recognized, you will then be asked to verify your contact information (Name, Title, Email, Home Address, and Phone Number). If your contact information is incorrect, you may edit it on this screen.

OR

> • If your email address is not on file, you will be asked to find your School in our database, using your School's zip code.

If you cannot find your school in our database, please email schools@toolboxforeducation.com or call us at **1-800-644-3561 x7** and we will help you get started.

The following is the School information we will need in order to add you to the database:
> 1. School Name (i.e. Abraham Lincoln Elementary)
> 2. School Address
> 3. School Phone Number
> 4. Grade Levels
> 5. Public or Private (Please note only Public schools are eligible to apply
> at this time.)

Click the Next Step button in the bottom right hand corner to advance to the next screen of the online application.

Verify your School and Group Information
The following is the School information you will need to confirm:
> School Name (i.e. Abraham Lincoln Elementary)
> School Address
> School Phone Number

If your school information needs updating or is incorrect, please contact us at schools@toolboxforeducation.com or **1-800-644- 3561 x7. You are not able to edit this screen.**

You will also need to provide the following information about your School and your group:
- Principal's Title & Name (i.e. Dr. John Smith)
- School's lowest and highest grades (i.e. Kindergarten and Grade 8)
- Type of School (i.e. Private, Public, etc - Please note only Public schools are eligible to apply.)
- Number of Students in your School
- School Ethnicity: This question will require you to input **percentage** amounts (not actual numbers) for the ethnicity of your School's students. Please do not use decimals or percent signs. The numbers you enter must add up to 100%. (I.e. 30 Caucasian, 60 Asian and 10 Hispanic.)

- Percentage of Subsidized Lunches: The percentage of the school's students who receive free lunch or reduced lunch. Please do not use decimals or percent signs.
- County: The county where your school is located
- Store Locator Number/Distance to closest Lowe's Store: Visit Lowes.com and in the top center of the homepage, click "Find a Store." Enter your zip code and a list of stores will populate the screen. Choose the store that is closest to you and click "show details" - the Store Locator Number is next to the zip code of the store. Make a note of that number. The distance in miles is on the right.
- School's Website – if applicable (i.e. abrahamlincolnelementary.com)
- Parent Group Acronym (i.e. PTO, PTA, HSA or other)
- Net amount of money your group raised last year or in a typical year: The grant application will have a drop down menu with amounts like: less than $5,000, $5001 - $15,000, etc.
- Legal Structure of your Group – there will be two options for answering this question.

Option 1 - Award Check will be made out to your parent organization:
The documentation you will need is: Letter of Determination from the
IRS which includes your group's EIN and date of the Letter of Determination

OR

Option 2 - Award Check will be made out to your school - You are applying under your school's non-profit status. The documentation you will need is: your school's EIN.

(Please note: In previous grant cycles, this question has led to the most confusion and post-award troubles. Please read below carefully.)

If you're not highly confident in your parent group's independent status and your ability to get a copy of the IRS determination letter, we highly recommend you choose Option 2 on this question and have the check made out to your school.

If you choose option 1, enter your parent group's EIN **AND** the date of the Letter of Determination from the IRS.

If you choose option 2, enter the school's EIN (Principal will have this information).

During the review process, IF YOU HAVE CHOSEN OPTION 1, you must provide a copy of the IRS Determination Letter that states your group is exempt from federal income tax as a group described in section 501c3 of the Internal Revenue Code. You can contact the IRS directly (1-877-829-5500) and they will be able to tell you if your group is currently exempt under section 501c3 of the Internal Revenue Code. **If you are not a 501c3 organization and stated that you are (Option 1), your application may be non-qualified.**

FYI - The Letter of Determination is **NOT** the same as your EIN – nine digit number. Your EIN is your Employer Identification Number, also known as a TIN – Tax Identification Number or FIN – Federal Tax Identification Number. This letter is also **NOT** the same as your Tax Exempt Number (the number the state assigns to your group).

Click the Next Step button in the bottom right hand corner to advance to the next screen of the online application. Or stop here if you are just verifying your school and contact information.

Project Details
This screen will request details about your proposed project including your contact person's information, the budget, and your plan for volunteers.

- Project Name
- School Display Name – If chosen, this is the formal school name that you would like used on the grant winner materials (i.e. Award letter and certificate)
- Contact Information - Project Contact Person and Information - select one person from your group to act as liaison for this grant application process. If your school is awarded a grant, this person will act as the point person for the grant selection committee and report post-grant success. If your group receives a grant, post grant success reporting will be required. Please see FAQ #20.
- You will need the following information about your grant contact person:
    1. Contact Name
    2. Contact's Phone Number
    3. Contact's Email Address – good for 1 year
- Project Short Description – Description of your proposed Project (250 characters or less, including spacing and punctuation– this is approx 50 words)
- Project Budget – We understand that your overall project may be made up of several smaller tasks/phases. Please only enter the budget of the specific project that the grant will be used toward (i.e. if it will cost $50,000 for a new reading garden, but the grant is going to be used for the landscaping of the garden, enter the amount that the total landscaping project will cost, rather than the amount of the total reading garden project.)
- Grant Amount - Amount of grant your group is applying for and will it cover all the costs for the project
- Raised Budget - Amount of money already raised for this Project
- Detailed Budget Figures – The answer to this question should address the two questions below as well as **include estimated cost for items** such as materials, labor, marketing and other costs (600 characters or less, including spacing and punctuation– this is approx 100 words) Without this information, the grant application is considered incomplete. Please see FAQ #5
    1. How will the group plan on obtaining the remaining funds if the grant will not fund the entire Project?
    2. Please list other fundraisers and/or grantors for this project.
- Project Schedule - Description of the proposed schedule for this Project from funding date through to completion. (600 characters or less, including spacing and punctuation – this is approx 100 words).
- Project Description - Detailed description of the Project (3000 characters or less, including spacing and punctuation – this is approx 500 words) - The answer to this question should address the two questions below.
    1. What is the mission of your Project?
    2. What will this Project mean for your School?
- Project Grant Reason - What makes your Project especially deserving of a Lowe's Toolbox for Education grant? Why does your School need help funding the Project?

(600 characters or less, including spacing and punctuation– this is approx 100 words)

- Project Volunteer Plan - Detailed description of your group's volunteer plan (600 characters or less, including spacing and punctuation– this is approx 100 words). The answer to this question should address the questions below.
    1. Who and how many people will you need as volunteers?
    2. How will you recruit them?
    3. Does your school host a chapter of SkillsUSA?
    4. If so, will any of those students be involved with the execution of this project?
- Does your school host a chapter of SkillsUSA? Click the box for yes/no.
- Is there an opportunity for Lowe's employees to help you with your Project? Click the checkbox for yes.
- Lowe's Help Description - How can Lowe's employees help you with your Project? Does your School already work with Lowe's? (1300 characters or less, including spacing and punctuation– this is approximately 250 words) Please see FAQ #12
- Are there any plans to close schools in your district or have any schools been closed within the last few years? If yes, click on the box and then explain the school closures.
- Will Publicize - Project Publicity: if selected, your group agrees to take advantage of a Grantee's tool kit to publicize the Project and Lowe's contributions. Click the checkbox for yes.
- Will Report - Follow-up Reporting: if selected your group agrees to submit follow-up reports regarding the fund usage and project results. Click the checkbox for yes. Please see FAQ #20
- Has School Approval - Project Approval: It is important the school administration is aware of your project. Click the checkbox if your School/Principal/District has approved your Project (pending funding) OR if approval is not required.

***Click the Submit Application** button in the bottom right hand corner of the screen to file your Lowe's Toolbox for Education grant application. A successful submission will receive a 'Thank You' page AND an email confirmation with a copy of your submitted application. If you do not receive an email confirmation within 24 hours, please contact us directly at 800-644-3561, x7. The email confirmation will be sent to the email address used to sign into the application process. **Please save this email confirmation because it confirms the application has been received and contains a copy of your submitted application.**