
How to Innovate and Get Funding to Do It

Georgia Charter Schools Association Conference

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Warm Up (2 minutes)

- Jot down your thoughts about the following items:
 - Define innovation (in your own words).
 - Write down a major problem you are facing in your school/classroom/organization.
 - If you had a magic wand, how would you address that problem?



Presentation Roadmap

1. Warm Up
2. About the Innovation Fund
3. What is Innovation?
4. Current Grant Opportunities
5. Innovation Fund Spotlight: Charles R. Drew Charter School
6. Questions



Innovation Fund Mission

The Innovation Fund strives to dramatically advance student achievement by:

- **Investing** in schools and districts that are developing, piloting, implementing, and scaling programs that take a radical approach to education, and
- **Evaluating** these programs' effectiveness in order to **strategically scale** programs and practices that advance student achievement.

The grant has . . . enabled us to really individualize education for each student. It set us up like a springboard to be able to meet our students' needs where they are. **The grant provided much more than money; it provided an opportunity.**

- *Innovation Fund Grantee*



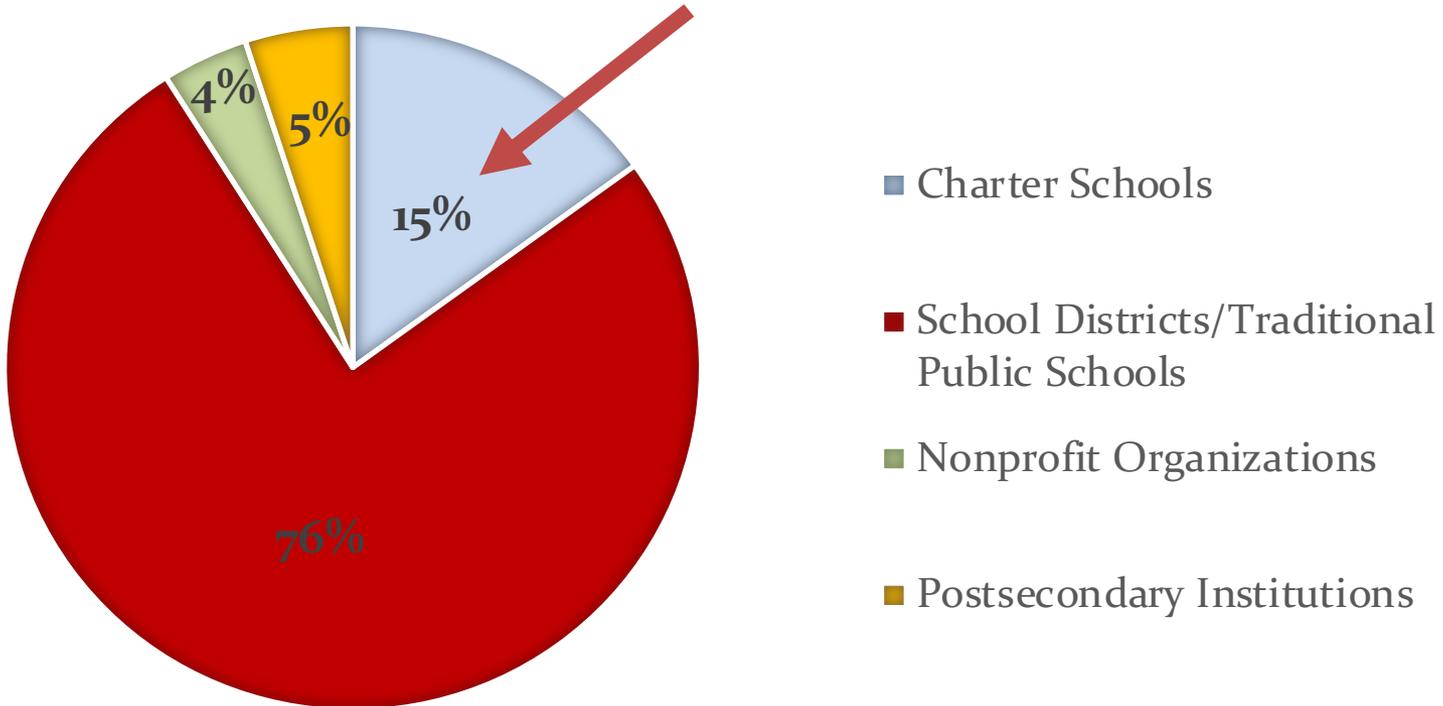
Innovation Fund History & Footprint

- Began as part of Georgia's Race to the Top (RT3) plan
- Has received state funding since FY15
- Since 2011, the Innovation Fund has invested over **\$38 million** in grants to school districts, nonprofit organizations, charter schools, and institutions of higher education.



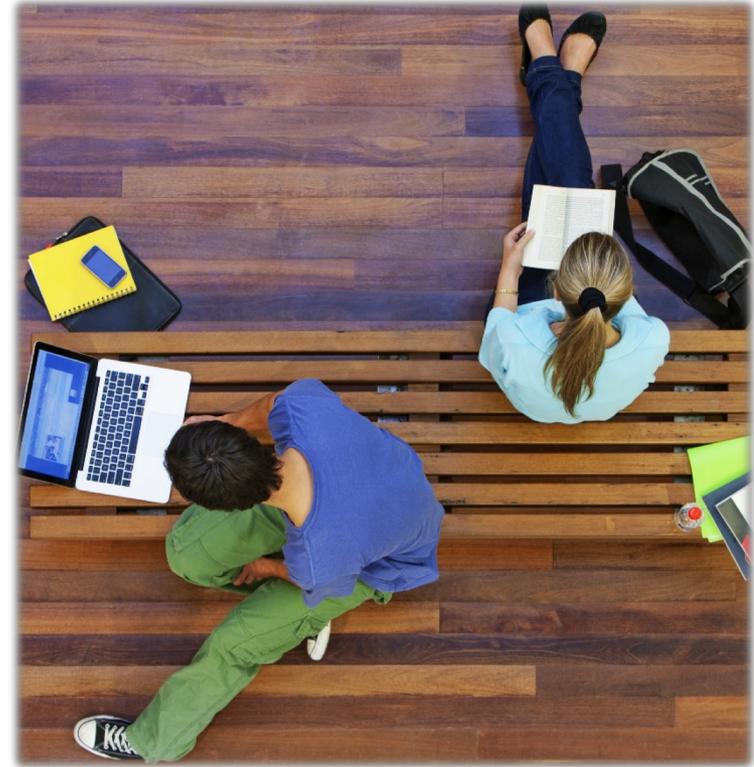
The Innovation Fund & Charter Schools

INNOVATION FUND GRANTS AWARDED BY ORGANIZATION TYPE



The Innovation Fund & Charter Schools

- **Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School:** New Teacher Residency Project/CREATE
- **Bishop Hall Charter High School:** Blended Learning Model for At Risk Students
- **The Museum School:** Museum in a Box
- **Charles R. Drew Charter School:** STEAM Beyond Borders



So, What is *Innovation* Anyway?



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Innovation

Innovative Programs:

- Target the **root cause(s)** of **challenging and complex problems**
- Are developed **for and with** students, teachers, and leaders
- Utilize **breakthrough, never-before-seen or rarely-before-seen approaches** to education
- **Disrupt** existing structures and systems
- Have the potential to **transform** school permanently



Problem vs. Root Cause

- **Problem**: the issue or challenge that a group of students, teachers or leaders is facing (*ex: high drop out rate, low reading achievement, high teacher turnover*)
- **Root Cause**: the circumstances or event(s), supported by qualitative and quantitative data, that have created the problem (*ex: students are not engaged in school, poor reading instruction, poor school culture*)



Problem vs. Root Cause

THE CASE OF THE RUNNER: PART I

Georgia, who just started running, has to go to the doctor because for the past few weeks, she has been getting a headache after she runs. The doctor asks her a few basic questions and then prescribes her headache medication for 30 days. For the next 30 days, she feels completely normal after she runs. A few days after the prescription runs out, she begins to have headaches after she runs again.



Problem v. Root Cause

- In this scenario, what is the problem?

Georgia is getting headaches after she runs

- What is the root cause?

????

- What was the solution?

Headache/pain medication

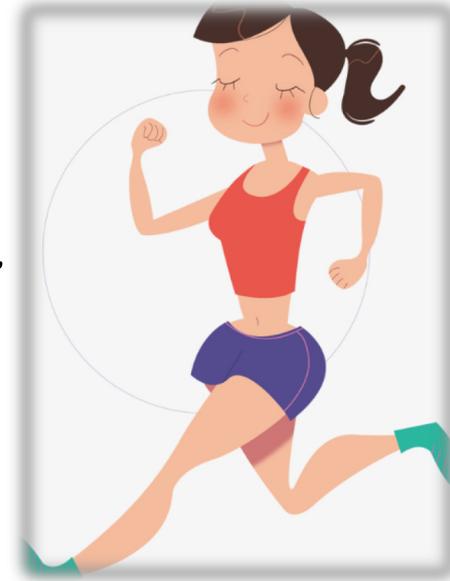
- What was the outcome?

As soon as the headache medication was gone, the problem resumed

Problem v. Root Cause

THE CASE OF THE RUNNER: PART II

*“Darn!” Georgia thinks as she schedules another doctor’s appointment, “I am still getting headaches after I run!” When she returns to the doctor’s office, she asks her additional questions about her diet and running routine. This conversation reveals that she is so busy at work that she often forgets to hydrate throughout the day. The doctor discovers that her water intake is only a third of what it should be for a runner. The doctor suggests that Georgia try to drink at least three-quarters of her recommended daily water intake by the time she runs in the evening. Despite the fact that she is **really** busy at work, she makes sure to drink the recommended water intake by the time she runs. Within a week, she is back to running, headache-free.*



Problem v. Root Cause

- In this scenario, what is the problem?

Georgia is getting headaches after she runs

- What is the root cause?

Dehydration

- What was the solution?

Hydration

- What was the outcome?

She started hydrating and her headaches went away.



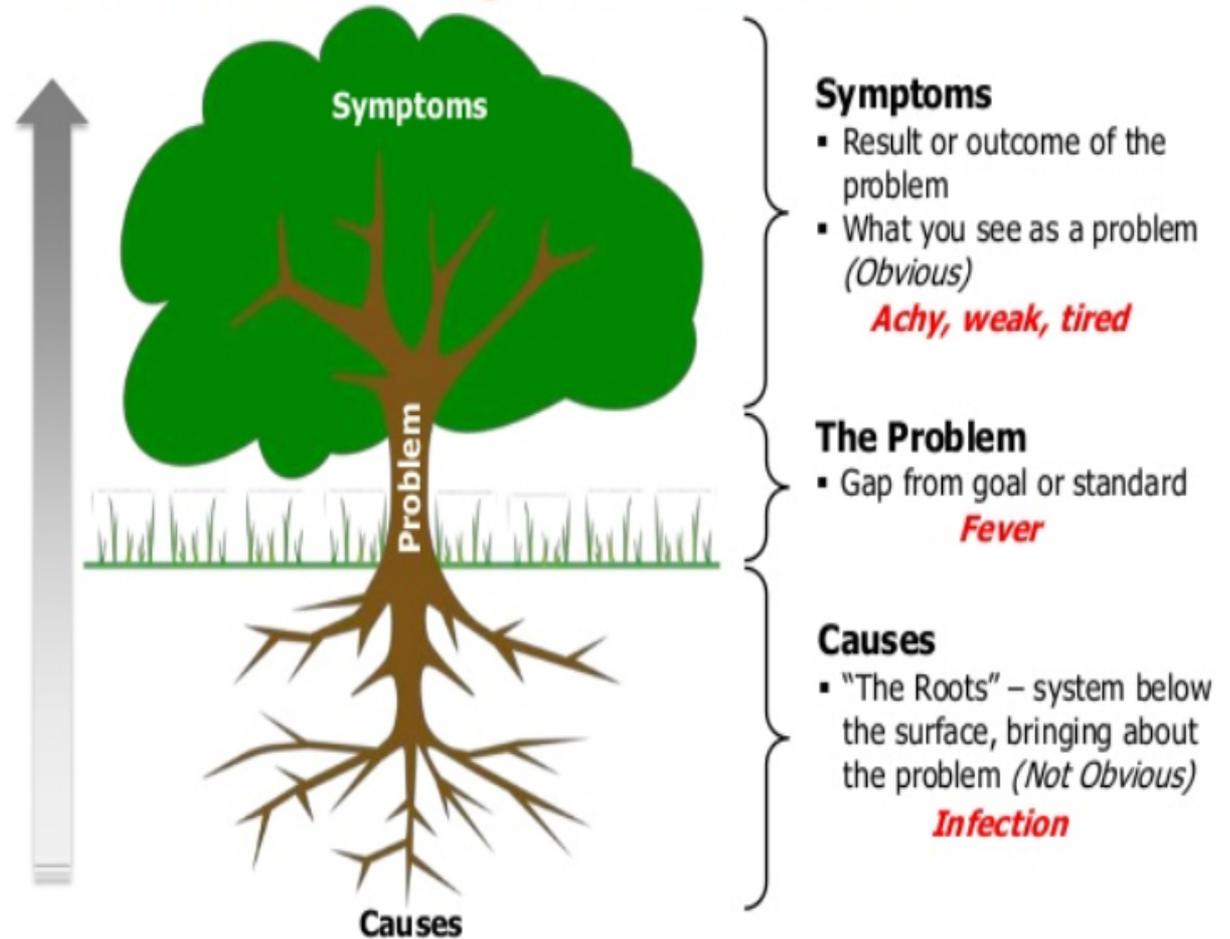
Levels of Innovation

Level of Innovation	Mindset	Outcome	Example
Level 1: Problem Solver	Practical, competent/Can identify the problem	Challenges are resolved in the short term/“Quick fix”	A district makes sure it provides efficient transportation for all homeless students.
Level 2: Problem Preventer	Mindful and prepared of potential challenges/Can identify the problem	Challenges are managed and mitigated in the short term.	A district starts an incentive program designed to improve homeless students’ attendance.
Level 3: Continuous Improver	Dissatisfied with the status quo/Can identify some root causes of the problem	Incremental changes to teaching, learning, and school models are proposed and implemented.	A school district adds internships to its program to help homeless students improve their life skills and stay in school.
Level 4: Creator of New Future	Visionary, fully engaged, and entrepreneurial – “Where must we be in ten years?”	Breakthrough approaches to teaching and learning, never-before-seen approaches to school.	A school district creates a mobile school to serve transient homeless students.



Levels of Innovation

Understanding Root Causes



Level of Innovation

Level 1: Problem Solver

Level 2: Problem Preventer

Level 3: Continuous Improver

Level 4: Creator of New Future



Types of Innovation

Incremental Innovation	Radical Innovation
New to your school/district	New to the world
Gradual improvement in teaching, learning, culture, etc.	Dramatic improvement in teaching, learning, culture, etc.
Capitalizes on existing human capital and resources	Requires new human capital and resources
Operates within existing structures and systems	Disrupts existing structures and systems
Lower Risk	High Risk
Does not challenge the status quo and may be adopted with little resistance	Challenges the status quo and may lead to resistance or skepticism



Types of Innovation

Traditional Hotel



Incremental changes, doesn't challenge the status quo

vs. Airbnb

Disruptor, radical approach



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Example of Level 4 Innovation: Problem Solving Incubator (PSI) High School



So, Are You Ready to *Innovate?*



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Which Describes You?

- a) I know of a problem in my school/organization that I want to address, but I don't have any ideas about how to address it.
- b) I have an idea for a program, but I'm not sure if it is a Level 3 or 4 Innovation.
- c) I have a Level 3 or 4 Innovation. Give me the grant money!
- d) None of the above.



Annual* Grant Opportunities

Program	Award Amount
Accelerator Grant*	\$10K for workshops / Up to \$45K for pilot
Implementation Grant*	\$200K - \$700K
Scaling Grant*	\$200K - \$700K

**Availability and description of grant programs contingent upon funding and are subject to change.*

Available Grant Opportunities

Program	Award Amount
Community Partnership Grant (Open Now!)	\$35K - \$75K
Discover, Design, Develop (D3) Schools Project Grant*	\$8K for workshops / \$20K for pilot
Tiny Grant Program (Open Now!)	\$1K - \$7K

**Availability and description of grant programs contingent upon funding and are subject to change.*

The Innovation Fund Accelerator

Applications Typically Open in Summer

- Series of workshops designed to help schools and districts on the edge of a breakthrough idea refine and, potentially, pilot their programs
- Seven sessions over six months
- Assignments completed between sessions
- \$10,000 grant to participate
- Strong pilot programs receive \$45,000 to pilot and evaluate their programs



**Availability and description of grant programs contingent upon funding and are subject to change.*



Implementation & Scaling Grants

Applications Typically Open in Summer

Implementation Grant (\$200,000 - \$700,000) for organizations seeking to implement a new innovative program focused on one of the Innovation Fund priority areas.

Scaling Grant (\$200,000 - \$700,000) for organizations wishing to expand or replicate an existing successful program focused on one of the Innovation Fund priority areas.

**Availability and description of grant programs contingent upon funding and are subject to change.*

Community Partnership Grants

Applications Open Now



- Provide \$35,000 to \$75,000 over one to two years for eligible organizations to implement a program aligned with the priority areas
- Focused on strategic partnerships
- Available through the Innovation Fund Foundation
- Made possible with funds from the Qualified Education Donation Tax Credit
- Accepted on a rolling basis. Next applications due March 31st.

Qualified Education Donation Tax Credit

- Individuals and corporations can donate to the Innovation Fund Foundation, Inc. (IFF) and receive a dollar-for-dollar tax credit.
- Funds will provide grants to schools and districts, with priority points for schools on the turnaround eligible list and rural schools.
- For more information, visit www.iffga.org



Innovation Fund Foundation
Transforming the Educational Experience



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The Discover, Design, Develop (D3) Schools Project Grant

Series of learning sessions designed to help schools and districts develop a program or project that effectively targets their most urgent need.

- Seven sessions over six months
 - What's Your Current Reality?
 - So, What's the Problem?
 - Shifting Gears
 - How Do You Define School Success?
 - Redefining Your Schools Landscape
 - Working Together: The Partnership Approach
 - Shifting from Design to Development
- Field Trips and assignments are completed between sessions
- Strong pilot programs receive \$20,000 to pilot and evaluate their ideas

Applications Typically Open in Spring



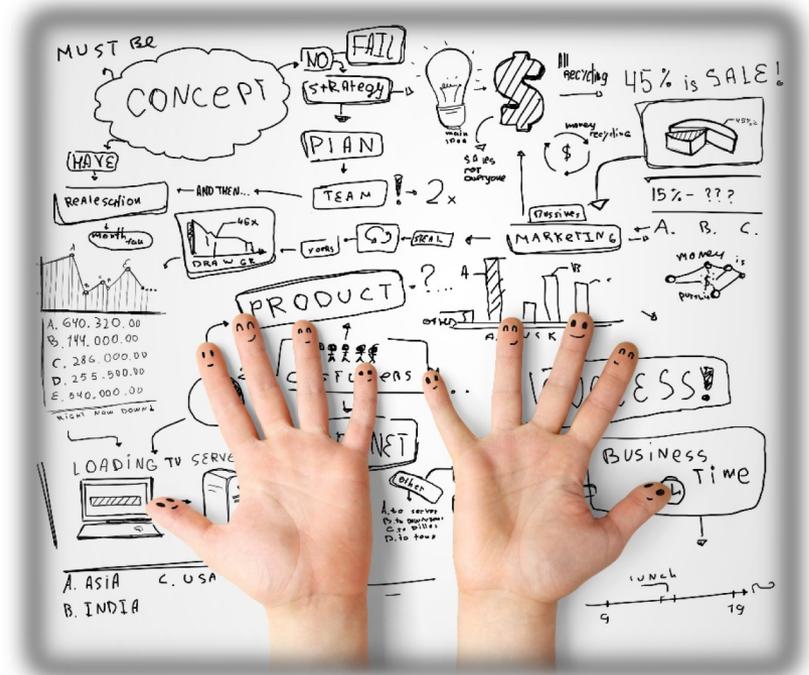
**Availability and description of grant programs contingent upon funding and are subject to change.*



Tiny Grants

Applications Open Now

- \$1,000 to \$7,000 grants to support activities that **directly engage** students (*ex: station rotation blended learning*)
- Must be a public school leader or teacher or a school district representative
- Applications accepted on a rolling basis (next review – May)



Tiny Grants: Past Awards Granted

Applied Learning with a Focus on STEAM Education

Hall County Schools, Martin Technology Academy of Math and Science, Digital Storytelling: Teachers use digital storytelling to help students become creators of digital content.

Birth to Age Eight Language and Literacy

Heard County Schools, Baby Braves: A childhood outreach program aimed at preparing zero to three-year-old children for pre-kindergarten.

Blended and Personalized Learning

Atlanta Public Schools, Benjamin E. Mays High School, Culturally Relevant Computing: A computer science summer program for students to enroll in the Georgia Virtual Computer Science Principles and participate in career exploration activities and college visits.



Innovation Fund Spotlight: Charles R. Drew Charter School

- **What** Innovation Fund grants have you received?
- **Discuss** the components of your latest Scaling Grant.
- **How** has the Innovation Fund pushed your thinking about what is truly innovative in education?
- **Describe** the Innovation Fund's evaluation requirements and discuss how it has helped program implementation.



Reflection

- Think back to the warm up activity.

Based on this session:

- Has your definition of innovation changed? If so, how?
- How might you go about addressing the problem you listed? Is your idea different now than what you originally wrote down? If so, how?
- Is there a grant opportunity that might be a good fit for your charter school?



Questions?



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