
The Innovation Fund

Grant Opportunities for Your Charter School

Georgia Charter Schools Association Conference

March 14, 2017

Presentation Overview

1. Warm Up
2. About the Innovation Fund
3. Revisiting Innovation
4. Current Grant Opportunities
5. Questions



Warm Up (5 minutes)

- On a note card, 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?



Innovation Fund Mission

- The Innovation Fund strives to dramatically advance student achievement by **investing** in schools and districts that are planning, implementing, and scaling programs that take a radical approach to education
- **Evaluate** 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
- Began receiving state funding in Fiscal Year 2015
- Since 2011, GOSA has invested:
 - **\$31 million**
 - **78 grants** to
 - **50** school districts, nonprofit organizations, charter schools, and institutions of higher education



Innovation Fund Priority Areas

- **Blended Learning** – How are schools/districts designing blended learning experiences for all types of learners?
- **Birth to Age 8 Language and Literacy** – How are schools/districts moving students from being readers with a discrete set of strategies to active consumers and critical thinkers of written text?
- **Teacher and Leader Development** – How are schools/districts preparing and supporting teachers and leaders to be highly effective with all types of students?
- **Applied Learning with a Focus on STEAM Education** – How are schools/districts moving from providing students with fun, engaging projects to building a robust, rigorous, and integrated STEAM curriculum.

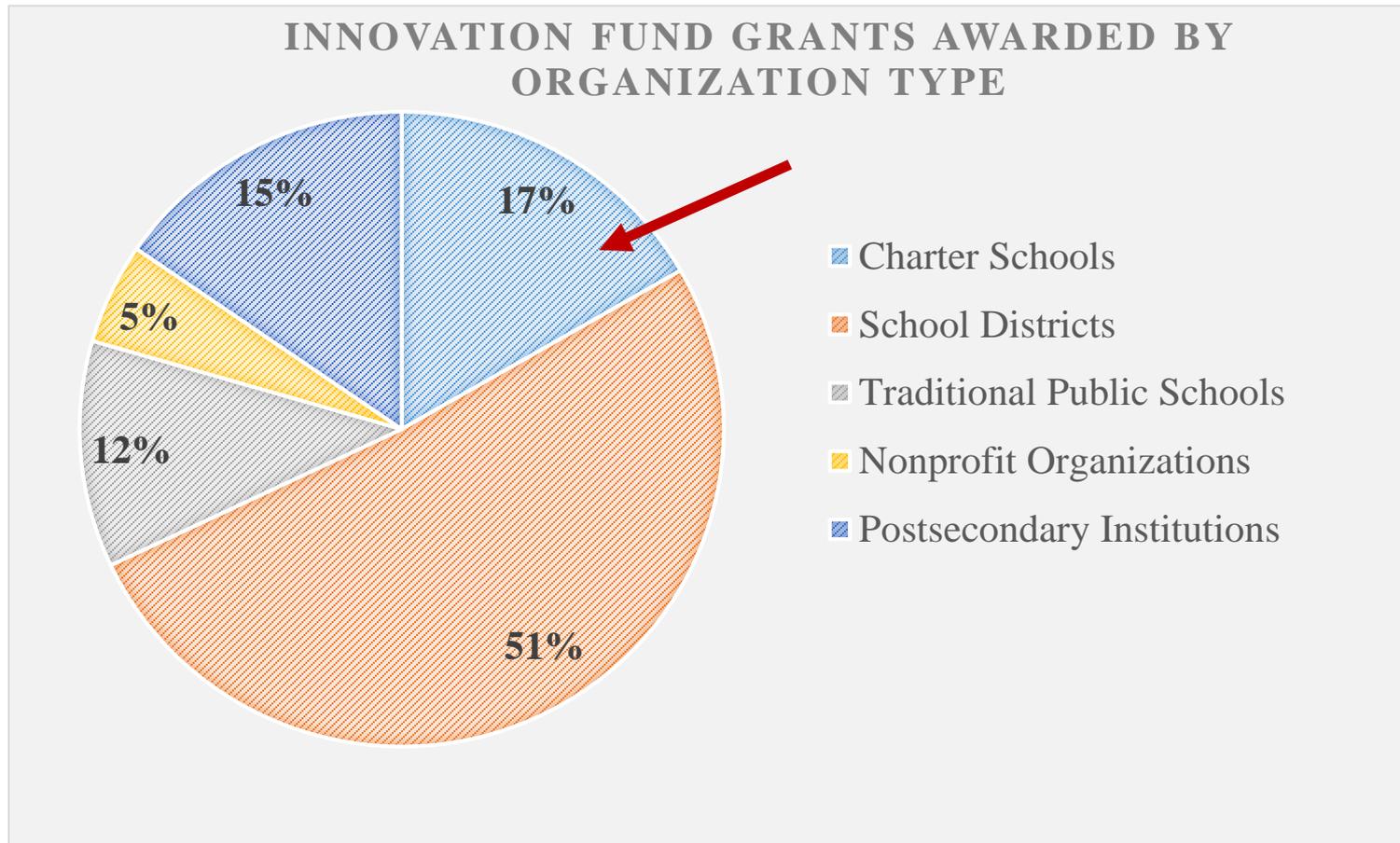
Previous Grant Opportunities

Planning Grant (\$10,000): for organizations seeking to plan a program related to one or more of the Innovation Fund priority areas,

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

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

The Innovation Fund & Charter Schools



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
- **Charles R. Drew Charter School:** 21st Century Learning in the Making
- **The Museum School:** Museum in a Box



Revisiting Innovation

- In the Warm Up activity, how did you define *innovation*?



So, What is Innovation?

- **Innovation**: An intervention that ameliorates or eliminates the ***root cause of a problem*** in a way that has never been seen before (*ex: program where students can earn money and receive hands-on training for a career*)
- **Problem**: the issue or challenge that a group of students, teachers or leaders is facing (*ex: high drop out rate*)
- **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*)

Levels of Innovation

Level of Innovation	Mindset	Outcome	Example
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.
Level 3: Continuous Improver	Dissatisfied with the status quo – “Good enough is not good enough”	Incremental changes to teaching, learning, and school models are proposed and implemented	A school district starts a new after school program for homeless students, designed to help them improve their life skills and stay in school.
Level 2: Problem Preventer	Mindful and prepared of potential challenges – “Not on my watch.”	Challenges are managed and mitigated.	A district starts an incentive program designed to improve homeless students’ attendance.
Level 1: Problem Solver	Practical, competent – “I can do this.”	Challenges are resolved.	A district makes sure it provides efficient transportation for all homeless students.

Types of Innovation

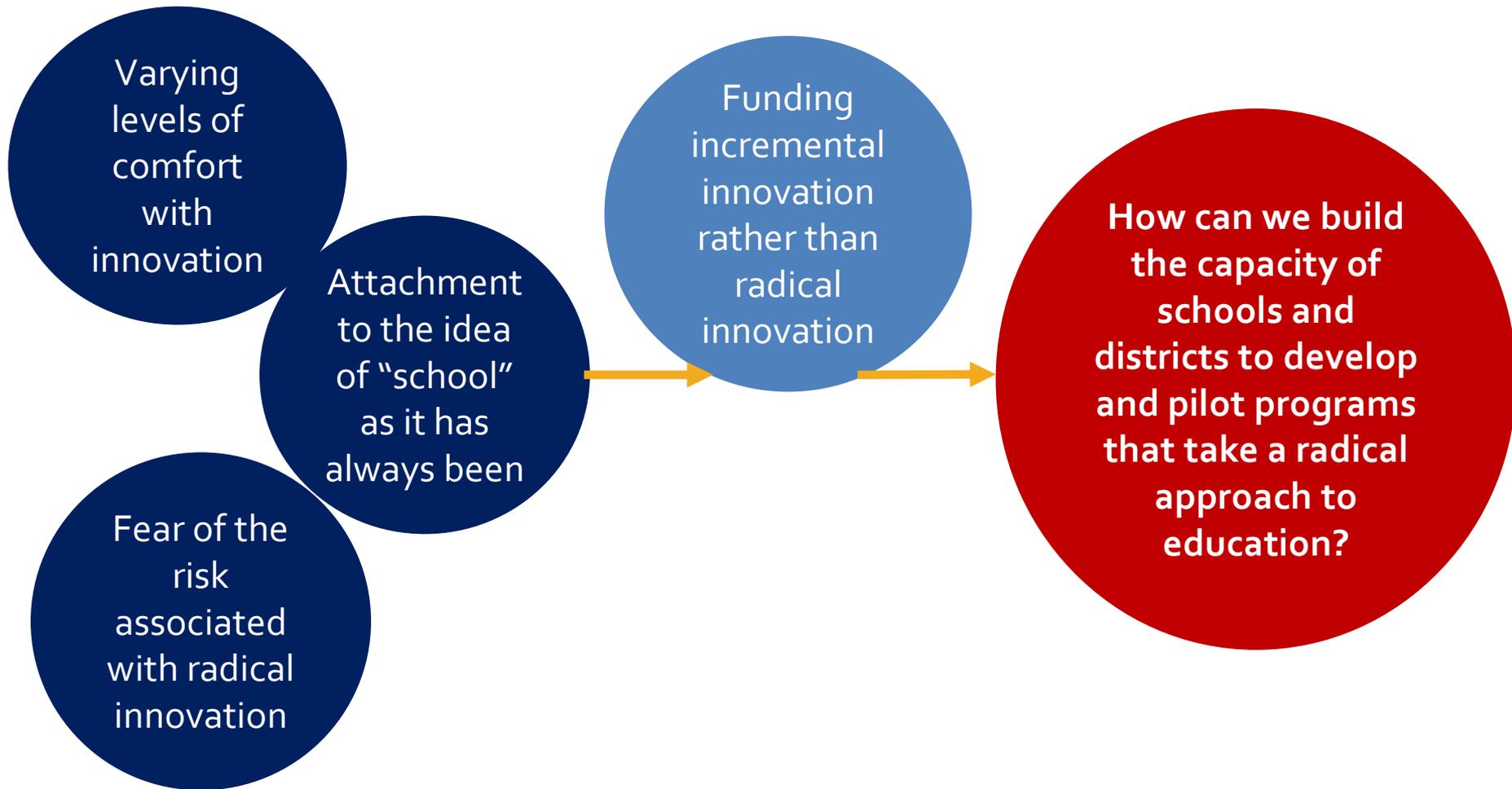
Definitions of Radical Innovation	Definitions of Incremental Innovation
New-to-the-world	New-to-the-company
Delivers a step-change in performance improvement	Delivers gradual performance improvement
Requires new competencies, skills or expertise	Utilises existing competencies and processes
Destroys existing organisational competencies	Enhances existing organisational competencies
High risk	Low risk
Requires a change in business model	Operates within the existing business model
Radical innovation that delivers sustainable development necessitates social and systemic change	Perpetuates existing social practices
Challenges the rules of the status quo and thus leads to the identification of systemic resistance to change	Does not challenge the systemic status quo, and therefore may be adopted with little resistance

Types of Innovation

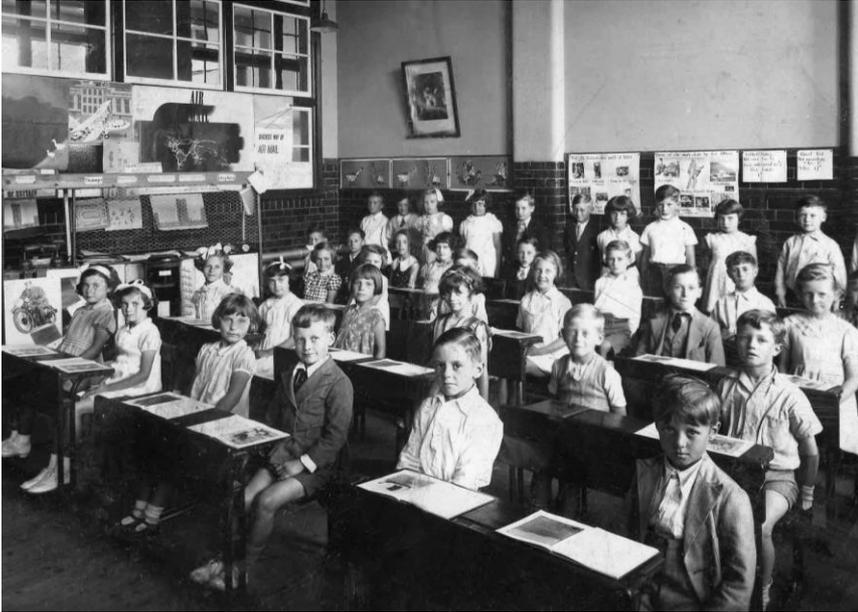
Volkswagen Beetle vs. Self Driving Car



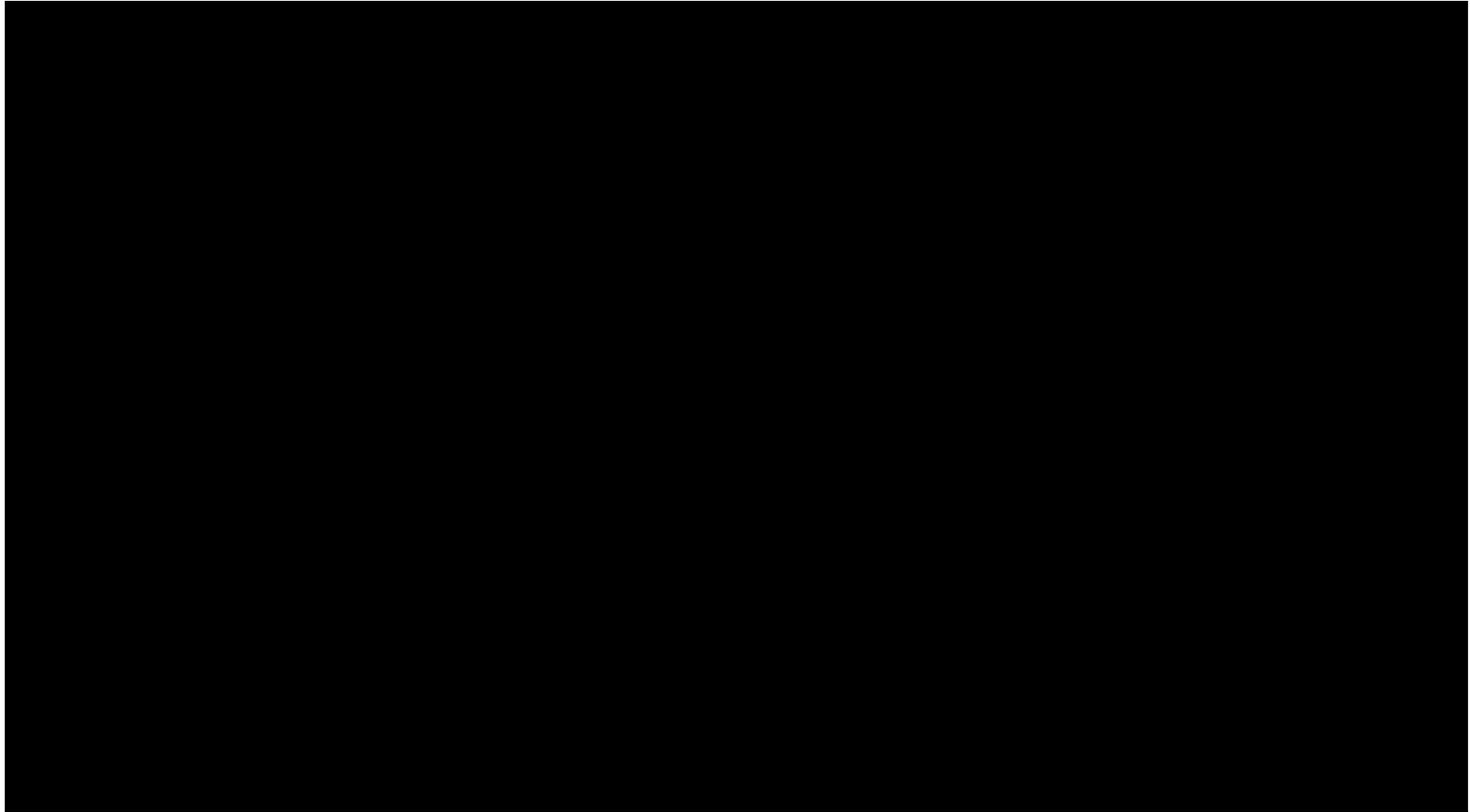
Challenges



How do we get from here?



To here?



The Innovation Fund Accelerator Pilot

- Series of workshops designed to help schools and districts on the edge of a breakthrough idea refine and, potentially, pilot their program
- Six sessions over seven months
 - What is Innovation?
 - So, What's the Problem?
 - Revisiting Innovation
 - Grow Your Idea
 - Plan for Action: Prototype It!
 - Wrapping it Up
- Assignments completed between sessions
- Strong pilot programs will receive grant funding to implement and evaluate their programs



Current Grant Opportunities: Innovation Fund Tiny Grants

- \$1,000 to \$10,000 grant to support activities that **directly engage students**
- Applications accepted on a rolling basis (next review will occur June 1st)
- Looking for Level 2 and 3 innovations
- Priority areas include:
 - Birth to Age 8 Language and Literacy
 - STEAM Applied Learning
 - Blended Learning



Innovation in Teaching Competition

- Promotes excellence in the classroom by recognizing and rewarding Georgia's most effective educators
- Makes examples of their practices to Georgia's teachers and leaders on Georgia Public Broadcasting's site
- Since 2013, the Innovation in Teaching Competition has recognized 36 educators from across Georgia



Know an Innovative Teacher?

Why Recommend a Teacher?

- Each winning teacher receives a \$3,000 stipend and his/her school receives a \$4,000 grant
- Georgia Public Broadcasting films each winning educator teaching his/her unit to his/her student
- 17% (6/36) of previous winners have been from charter schools

The Application Process

- GOSA begins accepting recommendations in late summer/early fall
- Invited teachers go through a two phase application process
- Winners selected in early winter



Interested in Excellent Classroom Resources?

- Videos, full unit plans and supplementary materials are available at <http://www.gpb.org/innovation-in-teaching>.
- Site includes unit plans for all grade levels and a variety of instructional strategies (blended learning, project-based learning, STEAM, etc.)

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Innovation in Teaching Competition website. At the top left is the logo with the text "innovation in teaching competition" and the tagline "beyond the textbook". To the right are social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Email. Below the logo is a navigation bar with "Home" and "All Unit Plans" links. The main heading is "Innovation in Teaching Competition". Below this is a paragraph describing the competition's goals: recognizing and rewarding educators, making videos of winning teachers available, and providing unit plans and supplementary materials. To the right of the text is a "Browse by Content Area and Instructional Strategy" section with icons for STEAM, Social Studies, English Language Arts, College & Career Learning, Mathematics, Project-Based Learning, Science, and Blended Learning. Below this is a "Follow GOSA" section with Facebook and Twitter icons. The bottom section is "Browse by Grade Level" with a grid of hexagonal buttons for SPECIAL EDUCATION, K, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, MIDDLE SCHOOL, and HIGH SCHOOL.

Reflection

- Refer back to the Do Now 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?



Questions?



GOSA Contact Information

Rebecca Ellis

Program Manager, Innovation Fund

rellis@georgia.gov

404.596.3651

Jaclyn Colona

Innovation Fund Specialist

jaclyn.colona@georgia.gov

(404) 904-5514

Follow Us on Twitter and Facebook

https://twitter.com/GOSA_GA

<https://facebook.com/TheGovernorsOfficeOfStudentAchievement>