Connecticut's

VOICE 4 CHANGE

Giving Students a Say in Education Funding

CSDE

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

November 2021

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S

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TODAY'S AGENDA

- Voice4Change Overview
- Timeline
- Funding Guidance
- Proposal Application Walkthrough
- How to Create a Successful Proposal
- Q&A

Overview:

VOICE 4 CHANGE is...

- First-of-its-kind
- Investing more than $1.5 million in **you**
- Modeling civic engagement

HOW?

- You will craft a proposal for spending $20,000 in your school
- We make sure it follows the guidelines
- You campaign for your proposal
- You and your peers vote on March 11, 2022

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Timeline:

- **November 29, 2021:** Voice4Change application opens
- **January 9, 2022, 11:59 p.m.:** Voice4Change application closes
- **January 2022:** CSDE announces and informs eligible proposals
- **January–March 2022:** Campaign within your high school to gather votes, supported by additional CSDE webinars on effective campaigning (dates TBD)
- **March 11, 2022:** Voice4Change Friday – high school students across Connecticut vote on proposals
- **Mid-March 2022:** CSDE announces Voice4Change winners
- **March 2022–onwards:** CSDE works with districts and students to disperse funds and fulfill winning proposals

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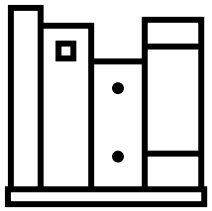
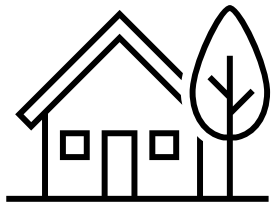
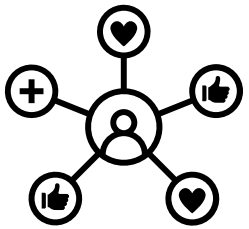
Funding Guidance – CSDE Spending Priorities



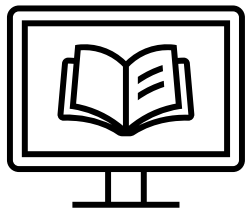
Learning Acceleration, Academic Renewal, & Student Enrichment



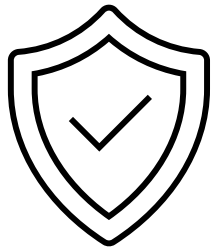
Family & Community Connections



Social, Emotional, and Mental Health of the Students & School Staff



Strategic Use of Technology, Staff Development, and the Digital Divide



Building Safe & Healthy Schools

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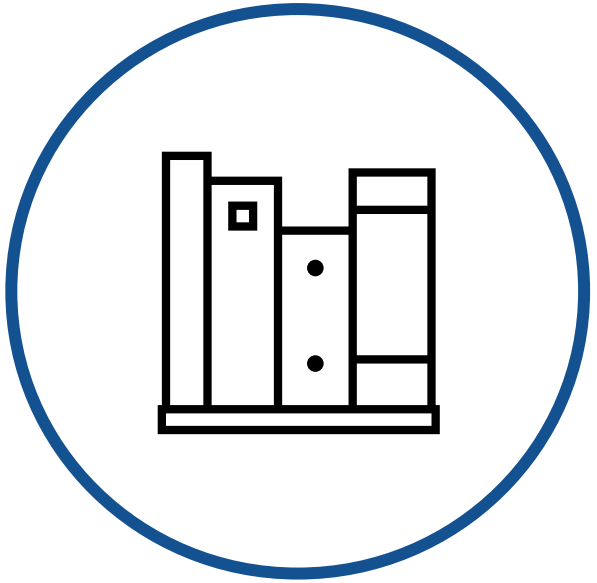
1) Learning Acceleration, Academic Renewal, and Student Enrichment

What we mean:

Anything that focuses on the academic supports that students need to thrive and become well-rounded, engaged citizens.



Examples:

- Academic supports
- Educational field trips

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2) Family and Community Connections

What we mean:

Anything that focuses on investing in strengthening or forming new school-family-community partnerships.

Examples:

- Community service days
- Mentoring program
- Afterschool programming

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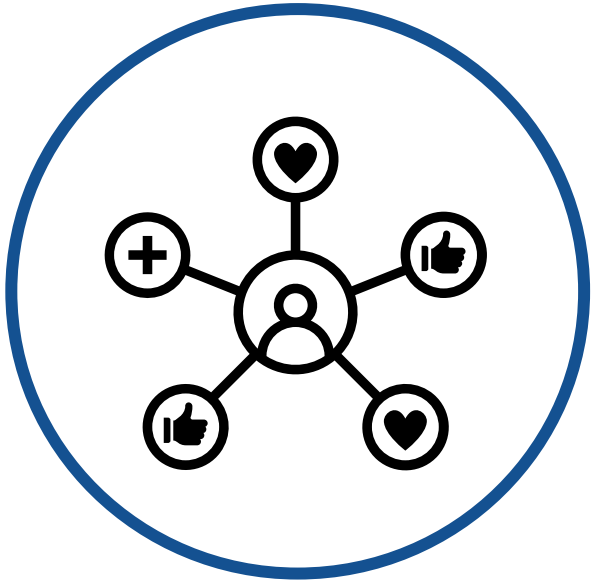
3) Social, Emotional, and Mental Health of the Students and School Staff

What we mean:

Anything that focuses on supporting students and school staff to re-engage with their school communities as we've returned to in-person learning.



Examples:

- Student art projects
- Safe space/lounge
- Teambuilding workshops

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4) Strategic Use of Technology, Staff Development, and the Digital Divide

What we mean:

Anything that focuses on the importance of in-person learning balanced with the strategic use of technology to expand learning opportunities.

Examples:

- Library subscriptions
- WiFi improvements
- New equipment

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5) Building Safe and Healthy Schools

What we mean:

Anything that focuses on allocating resources to support the physical health and safety of students and school staff.

Examples:

- Reimagined outdoor spaces
- School community garden

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How to create a winning proposal

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PROPOSAL APPLICATION WALKTHROUGH

- Main point-of-contact
- Group members (if applicable)
- Proposal title
- Description of your proposal
- WHY your proposal?
- Alignment with 1+ Funding Guidance priority
- Anticipated cost and budget breakdown

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How to create a winning proposal

1. Identify the problem or challenge you want to solve
2. Do your research
3. Brainstorm all potential solutions
4. Evaluate each solution with the help of others
5. Decide on your winning proposal
6. Tell your story!

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL POLICY WRITING

- Write in complete sentences, and utilize paragraphs to organize similar ideas together.

- We aren't evaluating grammar, but proofread your application for typos to make sure it is as clear as possible.

- Be mindful of the recommended response length.

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NEXT STEPS

1. Get started crafting your proposal
2. Ask others for their input along the way
3. Submit your proposal application by January 9, 2022, 11:59 P.M.

Questions?

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Get involved. Be heard. Use your

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https://ct.gov/voice4change

Check out the CSDE Voice4Change website for more information!

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You may direct questions to SDE.ARPESSER@ct.gov.