

What's the difference between donor-designated grants and any other grant?

Donor-designated grant money is used only for the donor's specific wishes. It might be an organic garden or classroom computers – that's up to the donor. The money "passes through" SBEF to fund the specified project. Other grants are funded by money raised at our events or unrestricted donations. Each year, we accept grant applications submitted by district and school staff or volunteers. A Board committee looks carefully at all applications

How do you determine where SBEF's grant money goes?

A Foundation Board committee reviews the applications to determine how the money can best be used – the most bang for the buck, so to speak. Donations fund innovative programs in three different ways.

SEED MONEY – In some instances, SBEF has provided start-up money for important district-wide initiatives. Examples: SpringBoard Mentoring Program, Good Neighbor Program, Altharetta Yeargin Art Museum

DISTRICT-WIDE GRANTS – District departments ask the Foundation to help support specific and far-reaching programs. Examples: ArtsPartner field trips for grades 1-8, transportation to summer STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) camps

CAMPUS GRANTS – These grants fund diverse education-enhancing programs. Examples: cross-age tutoring, summer library hours for the community, sensory-based motor labs

SBEF has been called the research and development arm of the district because our grants fund classroom or grade-level programs that are often expanded across the district.

How do you select scholarship recipients?

We look at each student's holistic achievement: personal qualities, school and community involvement, family life and academics, for instance. Most scholarships are merit-based or need-based. We look at the whole child. Recipients are honored at our Bright Stars of Spring Branch event in May. As each scholarship is awarded, we hear a brief story about the graduate. These stories are confirmation that our approach works.

How do you use your endowment money?

While the principal of the Fund for the Future endowment is invested, earned interest is already augmenting grants and scholarships. The money will support programs for generations to come.

Why should I support SBEF?

Many of the district's stakeholders choose to make donations through SBEF to finance beneficial education expenditures for which other funding is not available. Private funding, through the Foundation, remains in the district and helps enhance quality of education. SBEF raises funds only for SBISD.

The state's school finance model has dramatically impacted SBISD as a "property wealthy" district subject to recapture. In fact, the district sends away more of our locally-generated tax dollars to the state than it receives in state aid. Learn more at <http://shapingspringbranch.blogspot.com/>.

What are the district's demographics?

The perception is that our district is a wealthy one, but our student demographics may surprise you: 56% are economically disadvantaged; 55% are academically at risk; 33% have limited English. SBISD covers 44 square miles. It's a very diverse area.

We depend on thousands of donors and hundreds of volunteers from the community. Among the volunteers, some have children in school and others have children who have graduated. We volunteer because we want to help children across the district and make our schools better. Some of our schools don't have strong PTAs or a lot of parental involvement; that's one area where SBEF plays a vital role.

FAQ



Frequently Asked Questions



Spring Branch Education Foundation believes in student success.

As the nonprofit organization that partners with Spring Branch ISD, we fund programs that enrich education for every child on every campus. Led by a volunteer board of community leaders, we raise funds through donations and community events. Thanks to a generous community, we give scholarships to a growing number of seniors each year, and we award grants as diverse as mentoring programs, classroom libraries, technology and more.

Our board and volunteers believe in quality, public education for EVERY child; and we believe strong schools build strong communities.

Organized in 1993, we now routinely donate more than \$1 million each year to the district. You can help. Together, we are Making Our Schools Better.

Our Mission

Spring Branch Education Foundation is committed to supporting our students and educators. We partner with the district and community to fund programs that enhance education and prepare our students for the future.

Our Vision

In partnership with our district and community, enable all students to achieve post-secondary education and reach their full potential.

Our Challenge

Our local taxpayers pay additional taxes attributable to increases in property valuations. However, the additional tax dollars do not remain in Spring Branch Independent School District under the current State of Texas public education funding formula. Unfortunately, the formula has been confirmed as constitutional by the Texas Supreme Court. See www.springbranchisd.com for important additional information about the severe funding problem facing our school district.

Our Solution

Private funding, through the Foundation, remains in the district and helps enhance quality of education. **SBEF raises funds only for SBISD.** The Foundation donates more than \$1 million each year to the district, reaching students on every campus through grants and scholarships.

Leaders in the Field



SBEF is nationally recognized for managing funds to enhance student learning. In 2016, Caruthers Institute ranked SBEF 42nd in the nation among K-12 education foundations and in the top 10 of its division of foundations with \$1 million to \$1,999,999 in revenues. Caruthers Institute considers SBEF a wise investment – and so do our donors.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:



What's the difference between the Foundation and a PTA? Does SBEF divert funds from a PTA?

We work closely with the district's PTAs and do not divert money from them. Rather, we strengthen schools by providing an avenue to fund programs that are not included in a PTA's budget. Your donations, through SBEF, can be designated for a specific program on any campus. Gifts are tax-deductible, and donors receive district-wide recognition.

If I want to support a program at my child's school, why shouldn't I write a check to the school?

When a donation is made, other than for a campus fund-raising project, payment should be made to Spring Branch Education Foundation, the charitable organization through which donations to the district are channeled. SBEF has routine procedures in place to recognize and provide correct documentation to support tax-deductible donations. At your direction, a donation will be 100 percent used to support a specific campus activity.