

**F. M. KIRBY FOUNDATION SOLICITATION EVALUATION FORM**

**DATE:** March 25, 2024  
**Program Area:** Education  
**Grant Type:** Board Grant

**REQUEST DATE:** February 8, 2024

**APPLICANT:**  
Peck School  
247 South Street  
Morristown, NJ 07960-7381

**CONTACT:** Mr. Andrew C. Delinsky, Head of School

**AMOUNT REQUESTED:** \$125,000

**BUDGETED AMOUNT:** \$125,000

**NATURE OF REQUEST:** Support of the Peck Fund and Support of the athletic fields renovation project

**GRANT HISTORY**

**SUPPORT:** 1962-2023

**# OF APPROVED GRANTS:** 59

**TOTAL DOLLARS:** \$2,504,100

**LAST GRANT DATE:** 03/31/2023

**LAST GRANT AMOUNT:** \$25,000

**FYE DATE:** 06/30

**AFS DATE:** 11/01/2023

<b>Year Approved</b>	<b>Approved Amount</b>	<b>Approval Date</b>	<b>Grant Purpose</b>
2023	\$25,000	03/31/2023	The Annual Giving Fund
2022	\$30,000	03/31/2022	The Annual Giving Fund
2021	\$30,000	01/29/2021	The Annual Giving Fund
2020	\$20,000	02/28/2020	The Annual Giving Fund
2019	\$20,000	02/28/2019	The Annual Giving Fund
2019	\$125,000	12/17/2019	Toward The Peck Promise: The Campaign for Excellence Elevated, specifically projects to be completed in the F.M. Kirby Family Lower School

**LAST SITE VISIT DATE:** N/A

**ENDORSEE:** S. Dillard Kirby

**APPLICANT:** Peck School, The

**FINANCIAL ANALYSIS COMMENTS:** The FY24 expense budget for the Peck School (Peck) projects a 6% increase over the prior year actuals. The FY24 revenue budget projects a \$226K surplus and a 5% increase over the prior year actuals. As per the audit, tuition revenue for FY23, net of financial aid of \$765K, was \$13.8M. Approximately 13% of the school's contribution revenue for FY23 was received from one donor. The FY23 audit shows unrestricted net assets totaling \$44.7M, \$9M of which is board designated for endowment. Peck's cash position is \$4.1M. Investments are valued at \$20.1M, with \$13.5M attributable to the endowment. Total endowment value is \$14.7M. Financial assets available for general expenditures within 12 months are \$25.4M. As per the FY23 audit, supporting services represented 22.1% of functional expenses. Peck held 2017 Series B and Series C bonds payable that converted to term loans in June 2020. Net bond payable is \$6M, and the school makes monthly principal and interest payments of \$29K for the two Series combined. FMKF last approved a grant to Peck in FY23. The amount accounted for 2% of annual giving revenue.

**ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION:** Founded in 1893, Peck is an independent, co-educational, K-8 day school in Morristown, NJ. The Peck Community, led by Head of School Andy Delinsky, "inspires students to learn rigorously, grow in character, and lead healthy, productive, and principled lives." Three pillars guide their mission: rigorous academics, character development, and 21st century skills. Peck students benefit from individualized attention with student teacher ratios of 6:1, small group advisories, and educational specialists dedicated to modern language, music, technology & innovation, sports, and other subjects. A study of Peck alumni from 2018-2022 showed that 72% of graduates attend(ed) competitive private day schools while 21% attend(ed) prestigious boarding schools and 7% attend(ed) top rated public schools. That same study revealed that Peck graduates have a 100% college matriculation rate, with 72% attending Ivy and Ivy League caliber schools.

**EMILY PRINCE COMMENTS:** In FY24, Peck is seeking a \$125K grant, of which \$25K would be allocated towards the 2023-24 Peck Fund and \$100K toward an athletic fields renovation project.

Peck has been a long-time beneficiary of FMFK's generous support, ranging from annual fund contributions, to endowing a Kirby Scholarship Fund, to naming the F. M. Kirby Family Lower School. Currently, tuition covers approximately 89% of the total cost of educating each student. Contributions to the Peck Fund help Peck to balance the school's operating budget, including academic programming, financial aid, and professional development for faculty and staff. One particularly meaningful opportunity that is close to FMKF is the fourth-grade community service partnership with grantee Interfaith Food Pantry. This year's fundraising goal is \$850K, an increase over last year's goal of \$825K, and will cover 8% of the operating budget. It is worth noting that they blew last year's goal out of the water, ultimately raising \$1.2M, with \$957K unrestricted.

SDK and I visited Peck in May of 2023, where we learned more about the renovation project and I had a chance to glimpse the fields – unfortunately it was a rather rainy day so the conditions were not great for a proper tour. Additional details can be found in a site visit report dated 5/2/2023. Unfortunately the request was slim on project specifics; I suspect because of that robust visit and subsequent update calls between myself and Director of Advancement, Sarah Quinn Clausen. I

**APPLICANT:** Peck School, The

emailed Sarah to ask for additional information regarding steps completed and remaining to break ground, both external and internal, as well as plans to cover project costs if fundraising goals aren't met. I received the following response regarding process (fundraising response is below) : *"1. Town of Morristown - The project was approved in October 2023, and the resolution was signed in February 2024. Peck's architect is preparing a response to the conditions set forth in the resolution. We anticipate the response being submitted by the end of February; 2. NJDEP - The project requires two permits from the NJDEP; both are conditions included in the Morristown resolution. One permit, for the stormwater management system, has been approved. The second is for work performed in a riparian zone/wetlands. Peck's architect continues to work with the NJDEP on approval of this permit. The NJDEP does not have a defined timeline for the review of wetlands permits (they do for stormwater management.) Peck's architect has not expressed concerns about approval; 3. Construction management - Peck retained a construction manager during the planning phase of the project. Bids for each component of the project have been received and approved. The project is within budget."*

Peck's fields have long been plagued by water issues – a sink hole, a geyser, etc. – despite some drainage work having been done in the early 2000s. Their age and suboptimal quality no longer match the high-caliber facilities of the rest of Peck's campus, which benefited from past major capital campaigns. Renovation plans include a state-of-the-art and environmentally friendly turf field that is resilient to weather. PureSelect will be used as the field infill – an organic solution crafted from California olive cores that ensures high performance and simplifies maintenance. The existing grass field will also be completely redone with an advanced irrigation system. Additionally, tiered seating, new ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliant walkways, a community patio, and dedicated concession stand will be added to improve the spectator experience and enhance school pride and community spirit. Peck's goal is to break ground this spring, in order for the fall sports teams to play on these revitalized fields in their 2024-25 season. The fundraising goal for the project is \$4.3M, and to date, Peck has raised \$2.3M in gifts and pledges. As SDK notes in his endorsement, the fundraising to date is a little disappointing for this project, but there has been some donor fatigue from multiple major campaigns, the most recent completed in 2020 which has some pledges still being paid. Andy had indicated in May of 2023 that they were being very intentional about cultivating relationships with newer, younger families for this project, which might take longer and involve smaller contributions. Sarah noted the following should fundraising goals not be met: *"More than 50% of the project costs has been raised and fundraising efforts will continue through the construction period. Bridge funding - Following due diligence by the finance committee, the Board approved the use of a line of credit for bridge financing given pledge payment schedules don't align with the timing of cash outlays. The finance committee will continue to receive updates about fundraising success and expenses, and will review options as needed. These options include continued use of the line of credit, issuance of tax-exempt bonds and borrowing against Peck's operating reserves (not the endowment)."*

Though I was unable to go down onto the fields during my site visit, the rain helped paint a picture of what Peck has been dealing with – massive mud and rain puddles were everywhere, the grass was in bad shape and nonexistent in many places, the walkway down to the fields was treacherous and I can't imagine it being doable for young kids or anyone with physical limitations. The fields simply do not match the quality of the rest of the campus or its programs. SDK and Adrienne have given personally to this campaign at a meaningful level, and he has recommended we consider payment of our grant over one year, as they will likely receive many multi-year gifts, but the project will largely need to be paid for this summer. I agree.

Therefore, based on my site visit, the request, and SDK's strong endorsement/wise counsel, I recommend a grant of \$125K in FY24, of which \$25K would be allocated towards the 2023-24 Peck Fund and \$100K toward an athletic fields renovation project.

**APPLICANT:** Peck School, The

**RECOMMENDATION:** In FY24, I recommend \$125K - \$25K in support of the Peck Fund and \$100K in support of the athletic field renovation.

**JUSTIN J. KICZEK COMMENTS:** We had a great experience at the September 2023 Board meeting, where we were able to take a tour and then have a deeper dive into the field of mental health. It was easy to see, as various Board directors and guests reconnected with former teachers and mentors, how much this institution has meant to the family. The proposal's note that 20 "extended family members" having attended the school over the past seven decades only further drives home the point!

After a relatively quiet ten years of steady annual fund support to Peck (from 2006 – 2017), FMKF has generously supported the Campaign for Excellence Elevated (with a total of \$375K in campaign contributions) from 2018-2020. While I think we would typically seek more breathing room from another six-figure special gift, considering the critical nature of this project, SDK's own endorsement and meaningful contributions, and the long legacy of Kirby family members at Peck, I concur with the recommendation made by ECP.

**RECOMMENDATION:** I recommend \$125,000 in total, with \$25,000 in support of the Peck Fund and \$100,000 in support of the athletic field renovation.

**APPLICANT:** Peck School, The

**DISPOSITION:**

- Declination
- Hold for review on/about:
- Approval for: **\$125,000**
- Recommended Grant Payment(s):  
**2024:**  
**2025:**  
**2026:**
- Hold for Board Review: **April 26, 2024**
- Payee Other Than Addressee:
- Insert Information:  
**Support of the Peck Fund - \$25,000**  
**Support of the athletic fields renovation project - \$100,000**
- Other:

Initials: JK

Date: 03/27/2024

Check #                     

Date: