

## MINI-GRANTS

*Awarded monthly: Up to \$500 awarded for a classroom. At the elementary level – up to \$2,100 awarded for a grade level. At the secondary level - up to \$2,500 awarded for programs that include all students in a grade level or a department.*

### **Warnsdorfer Elementary School - Dr. Renee Soccodato-Dutka**

This grant will provide funding for the purchase of rhythm instruments that will be made into "toolkits" to be used by students in the Autism program.

### **East Brunswick High School - EBHS Marching Band Technology Upgrade - Brian Toth**

Funds will allow for the purchase of a laptop computer, a protective case and cover for the laptop, additional hardware, and the MainStage app that will allow for the integration of all electronic components through one device. Students will receive training on how to integrate the updated tools into their performances.

### **Bowne-Munro Elementary School, Central Elementary School, Chittick Elementary School, Frost Elementary School, Irwin Elementary School, Lawrence Brook Elementary School, Memorial School, Warnsdorfer Elementary School, and Hammarskjold Upper Elementary School - Eclipse Double Header - Ryan Higgins**

On April 8, 2024 at around 1:45 PM, a solar eclipse will be viewable from the East Brunswick area. The goal of this grant is to provide all kindergarten through grade four students the opportunity to safely observe this phenomenon. To achieve this goal, eclipse glasses will be purchased for every student and teacher at the elementary level so that they may safely go outside and physically observe the event.

### **Warnsdorfer Elementary School - Books and Beyond! Warnsdorfer's Monthly Book Club for First Graders - Rachel Solomon, Caroline Jordan, Jennifer Smith, and Amanda Lorfin**

The goal of the monthly book club for first graders is to foster a love of reading while developing important literary skills. Books to support monthly themes will be purchased with grant funds. In addition to being class read alouds, students will take the books and a related activity home to share with their families. By including families in shared activities, teachers hope to foster a strong home-school connection.

### **Warnsdorfer Elementary School - Paws for Reading - Rachel Solomon**

The goal of the Paws for Reading program is to create a supportive and non-judgmental environment in which basic skills students can improve their reading skills and develop a love for reading. Twice a month, a certified therapy dog will visit Warnsdorfer where they will be read to by basic skills students.

### **Warnsdorfer Elementary School - Improving Phonology and Articulation One Picture at a Time - Laura D'Onofrio**

The goal of this grant is to provide additional materials that will enhance the speech instruction for a wide range of students of different ages and abilities. Most of the students who will benefit from this project are in self-contained special needs classrooms where they receive highly individualized instruction.

**Warnsdorfer Elementary School - 2023 Literacy Grant - Heather Rettberg**

Research shows that half of preschool-age children with language impairments develop significant literacy learning difficulties. Literacy-based therapy is a contextualized framework where intervention activities are organized around a book or story. The goal for this grant is to enhance an already stellar preschool program with new and inventive materials that will enable the therapist to provide students with literacy-based therapy. A variety of age appropriate books and a Literacy bundle from Teachers Pay Teachers to be used during therapy sessions will be purchased with grant funds

**Warnsdorfer Elementary School - Sunshine Through Sensory! - Maddie Neuman**

Kindergarten and first grade students on the autism spectrum that have wide ranging skills, as well as varying strengths and needs, will benefit from this grant. Funding will provide students with new sensory opportunities to help them engage in learning, reach their IEP goals, and improve their functional skills. By implementing these sensory opportunities into their everyday classroom routine, the teacher will be able to help students learn to self-regulate, generalize skills, and increase their functional communication, all of which are vital to their continuing success.

**Churchill Junior High School - Bringing the "Calm" to the Classroom - Melissa Grigal and Beth Shobe**

Teachers have noticed a significant increase in the number of students suffering from anxiety since the end of the pandemic. Additionally, when students are asked to identify what they see as the top health concerns among adolescents at least 50% of the students report that they feel that anxiety and stress are huge concerns for teens. Grant funds will allow for the purchase of "Calm Strips". Calm strips are textured sensory stickers with a special reusable adhesive. They're convenient and discreet fidget tools that cannot be used as a distraction or toy. They are crafted to provide sensory stimulation. Sensory input is used to help regulate breathing and releases restless energy resulting in increased emotional regulation and focus throughout the day. This tool is recommended for anyone, but it is especially effective for fidgeters, individuals with anxiety, ADD/ADHD, BFRB (Body-Focused Repetitive Behavior), those in Autistic communities, and students needing sensory stimulation or social-emotional release.

**Irwin Elementary School - PBSIS Sticker Grant - Krystal Weeks**

This grant will enhance Irwin's PBSIS program and support the school theme, "Strong Minds Grow Here". Funds will provide students with positive behavior rewards to encourage character development. Strong character development is deeply rooted within the *New Jersey Student Learning Standards* and the district's current curriculum design. Using the stickers will give students a visible reminder of growing their brain towards becoming stronger learners, and leaders.

**Hammarskjold Elementary School - Scholastic Magazines to Support Language Arts Instruction - Kristy Ferris**

Three Scholastic resources will be purchased with grant funds to enhance students' ability to read and comprehend nonfiction texts: Storyworks, Scholastic News, and Science Spin. Each of these resources have both print and digital elements that will motivate and engage students in nonfiction learning, while also connecting aspects of the ELA, Social Studies, and Science curriculums.

**Churchill Junior High School – Orchestral Audition Workshop - Sarah Franchino, Mary O’Mara, and Susan Meuse**

The goal of this grant is to bring in two professional orchestral musicians to give students who will audition for Region/All State Orchestras a 2-hour masterclass on taking part in auditions. Students will learn how to best prepare for an audition, what judges listen for during a blind audition, and tips for how to stay calm and focused while performing. Students will also have the chance to perform audition repertoire for the visiting clinicians and receive their expert feedback.

**Churchill Junior Senior High School - A CJHS Eclipse Experience - Danielle King and Jessica DiBenedetti**

Funding will make it possible the CJHS community to safely view the total solar eclipse as it occurs in East Brunswick on April 8. A similar grant was also approved for all elementary schools. Science department leaders have planned a plethora of activities leading up to this event, including but not limited to: professional development, cross grade level lessons, and community outreach.

**East Brunswick High School - An EBHS Eclipse Experience to Remember - Stephanie Holtzman**

Funding will make it possible the EBHS community to safely view the total solar eclipse as it occurs in East Brunswick on April 8. A similar grant was also approved for all elementary schools. Science department leaders have planned a plethora of activities leading up to this event, including but not limited to: professional development, cross grade level lessons, and community outreach.

**Warnsdorfer Elementary School – Thank You Veterans! - Lise Noppenberger**

Working with East Brunswick VFW Post #133, students and staff will demonstrate the importance of service to country by giving back as they host veterans in recognition of Veteran’s Day. Funds will provide students and staff with the materials necessary to create patriotic themed decorations, cards, gifts, etc. for this special event. Books to support curricular learning on this topic will also be purchased.

**Memorial Elementary School - Articulation and Language Speech Therapy - Marissa Crespo**

The goal of this grant is to utilize evidence-based materials to improve speech sound productions and language skills to increase communicative effectiveness and academic achievement. The materials that will be purchased will be used in the treatment of apraxia of speech, speech sound disorders, and expressive and receptive language delays.

**Memorial Elementary School - Bjorem Speech - Roseann Bracco**

Big Box of Bjorem Speech Sound Cues will be purchased with grants funds. These evidence-based picture cues are designed to help young children acquire, use and combine sounds by giving each sound a meaning that makes sense and that is developmentally appropriate. This resource can be easily incorporated into reading programs, classroom settings, play-based therapy or drill work. They complement any program that involves working with children on: Childhood Apraxia, Early Acquisition of Speech, Speech Sound Disorders, Phonological Awareness, Early Literacy, Vowel Differences, and Dyslexia.

**Warnsdorfer Elementary School - Creative Native - Jennifer Traversone, Iman Shah, and Annmarie Kurdes**

The goal of this grant is to fully immerse third graders in researching and understanding Native American tribes. Students will become experts as they research, write, and participate in projects to better understand the daily lives of indigenous people. As a culminating event, they will engage in Native American crafts and games to celebrate all they have learned. Grant funds will support teachers' efforts to enhance the third grade ELA/Social Studies unit of study.

**East Brunswick High School - Polymerization in Chemis-tree - Morgan Barton**

This project is designed to introduce high school students to the fascinating world of polymers through engaging, educational activities using Shrinky Dink paper to create ornaments for a Chemis-tree. Shrinky Dinks, to be purchased with grant funds, are polystyrene sheets that, when heated, undergo a remarkable transformation that vividly illustrates the concept of polymerization. Incorporating Shrinky Dink paper into the curriculum can make the abstract concept of polymers more concrete and relatable for students. It provides a creative and interactive way to teach students about the properties and behaviors of polymers in real-world context.

**Churchill Junior High School - Fidget Frenzy for Study Skills Students -Celine Clark, Elizabeth Kaplan, Bridget LaPlante, Elizabeth Canillo and Melissa Novak**

Since the pandemic many students have been struggling with increased levels of anxiety. As a way to improve student performance, Study Skills teachers will provide students with a means for self-regulation while maintaining or improving their productivity. Included in the proposal were detailed statistics and personal comments from students describing the "fidget" that would benefit them and why. These fidgets are among those that will be purchased with grant funds.

**Churchill Junior High School - Grounding Kits for Kids - Elizabeth Stankiewicz**

With grant funds "Grounding Kits," small, tangible, discrete containers filled with various sensory items, will be created. For example, textured tape, pop-it keychains, or fidget rings can provide students with stimuli that engage their sense of touch, where scratch and sniff magnets can help engage their sense of smell, and so on. Students who experience significant anxiety can be provided with a grounding kit from their counselor to help practice techniques for grounding.

**Bowne – Munro - The 3D Pen is Mightier than the Sword! - Wendy Tepper and Andrew Scanlon**

The goal of this grant is to create an innovative and engaging environment where elementary students can explore the realms of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) through the use of 3Doodler pens. A 3D pen is a pen that extrudes warm plastic from the pen's nozzle. Twenty-four 3D pens and related supplies will be purchased with grant funds to be used during Media time for multiple STEM activities, from creating art to building a part needed for an engineering solution.

**Central Elementary School - A Spot of Social Emotional Learning - Sara Enis**

This grant will provide the means for the purchase of the *SPOT Social Emotional Learning Resource*. The SPOT program materials requested include: books with accompanying activity sheets, feelings posters, activity cards, and more. The program will be implemented during whole class lessons, as well as individual and group counseling sessions to support students as they develop skills in emotional regulation, conflict resolution, communication, empathy, and cooperation.

**Churchill Junior High School - Mayhem Poets - State Theatre New Brunswick - *Miriam Berotte-Francis and Jessica Loux***

Mayhem Poets are a New Jersey-based “slam poetry” trio who met while studying together at Rutgers University. The goal of the grant is to expose students to this form of poetry that combines the elements of performance with writing, competition, and audience participation. Funds will cover the cost of admission for 100 grade eight students to attend a performance at the State Theatre. A study guide, provided by the theater, includes activities to both prepare students prior to the performance as well as to extend their learning following the performance.

**Central Elementary School - Decodables for Developing Readers - *Allison Pimentel, Michele Sperduto, and Katie Fabiano***

Grant funds will provide for the purchase of multiple copies of a variety of decodable books. The goal, to enhance phonological awareness, is a crucial element in ensuring reading success. Having multiple copies of many decodable books will allow teachers to meet the various individual needs of their students.

**Central Elementary School - Wondering Wonderland: Texts for First Graders - *Shannon Keely, Stephanie Berke, and Ami Checo***

Grant funds will allow for the purchase of a culturally diverse, cross curricular collection of high-quality texts that teachers will utilize to connect their ELA lessons to topics being addressed in both Social Studies, and Science. The goal is to engage students with rich language, foster vocabulary growth, and develop comprehensive skills across the curriculum.

**Irwin Elementary School - Paper, Pens, & Poetry - *Patrici Colaizzi, Rochelle Rosen, and Gina Tabone***

Grant funds will make it possible for 2nd graders to interact with a published poet, through a virtual presentation, with the goal being to motivate and encourage the students to read and write poetry. Special notepads and fun quill pens for students to use when writing their poems will also be purchased. This will be the culminating activity for the Poetry Unit of Study.

**East Brunswick High School - PE Ipad Mini - *Christian Portera***

Funding will allow for the purchase of five iPad Minis and related protective equipment for the high school physical education program. The use of iPad Minis in the EBHS PE program will serve multiple purposes, primarily focused on improving teaching and assessment processes. Incorporating iPad Minis into the PE classroom will create a dynamic learning environment that promotes student engagement, advances skill development, and encourages lifelong physical fitness habits.

**Churchill Junior High School - Bringing Shakespeare to Life - *Natasha Cuiffo, Mitchell Pollock, and Miriam Berotte-Francis***

Grant funds will provide the means to bring a performance of A Midsummer Night’s Dream from the Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey to the CJHS cafetorium so that 8th grade ELA honors students can appreciate and celebrate this classic work. In addition to the performance, the Shakespeare Live! touring company also provides a study guide that can be used by teachers to update the way that they impart the curriculum related to the play.

**East Brunswick High School - Mixing Minds, Shaping Futures: A Grant to Expand Live Digital Audio Education - *Michelle DaGrosa and Zachary Gates***

This grant will fund the purchase of a state-of-the-art digital mixer to enhance the educational experience for EBHS music students. This tool will serve as a central component in teachers' efforts to empower students with the skills needed to mix live audio for bands, manage production and school performances, and support audio projects within the school community.

**Churchill Junior High School - Shakin'Up Shakespeare: Bringing Romeo & Juliet to Life - *Celine Clark, Elizabeth Kaplan, Stephanie Greene, Kristen Rice, Daniel Pfeiffer, Jen Pouliot, Kristen Rice, Edie Weinstein, and Alyssa Yang***

This grant provides the funds for artists from the Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey to conduct engaging workshops for English 9 Honors classes while they are reading Romeo and Juliet. These workshops will enhance students' interpretation of the text, while also supporting teachers' ability to teach the text to classes in the future.

**Hammarskjold Upper Elementary School - "I've Got Rhythm" - With Slip-On Taps - *Sarah Wells and Eileen Mann***

The budget breakdown for this grant includes strap on tap shoes which can be applied right over street shoes and individual tap boards that are collapsible for easy storage. These items will make it possible for students enrolled in the Music and Movement and Intro to Dance classes to safely tap on classroom floors when the JMPAC stage, where there is a Marley floor, is not available.