FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For Publicity, contact Lisa Carroll
843-304-1922 or FFEEinfo@email.com
Foundation for Educational Excellence

November 22, 2023

FOUNDATION AWARDS 16 INNOVATIVE GRANTS FOR B.C.S.D. TEACHERS AND SCHOOLS

BEAUFORT CO., S.C. – The Foundation for Educational Excellence announced funding for 16 grants to teachers and schools throughout the Beaufort County School District. These grants totaling over $16,000 were awarded for innovative learning opportunities and projects that go beyond the regular school district budget. A total of 13 schools North and South of the Broad are represented by the awards provided.

"The Foundation is thrilled to provide these innovative learning opportunities to students across the district," stated Kim Dempsey, Innovative Grants Chair and Foundation Board Member. "The impact of these projects will be evident in all grade levels and we can't wait to hear about the results of these amazing projects."

This year, the projects funded by the Foundation's grants ranged from funding equipment for benefiting students' physical fitness to purchasing reference books to updating spaces on campus. For example, Julie Alford, the school librarian at Battery Creek High School, received a grant for her project "Elevating Student Voice in the Creekcast Studio." The funds will go towards updating a space in the school with equipment to create high-quality podcasts for class assignments. She also hopes that students will now have the opportunity to take part in podcast competitions.

At Coosa Elementary, Jamey Porter and Jennifer Lyles received a grant for "Innovate and Illuminate." The funds will allow for the purchase of Ozobot Evo to help enhance students' understanding of natural hazards and their impacts through an interdisciplinary approach that integrates coding, geography and environmental science.

In addition, Karen Gareis, the school librarian at Bluffton High School, was awarded a grant for her project "Expanded Learning Environment." This multi-faceted school enhancement project includes a story walk, as well as expansion of the existing wildlife habitats. These updates will provide students with a place to learn and explore, encouraging contemplation and reflection alongside the natural diversity of the Lowcountry and the diversity of the student population.

A special donation was given to the Foundation by Jeff and Ann Keefer of Vivid Art Gallery designated for a photography grant. The Foundation awarded these funds to Kendra Wheeler's "Photography Perspective" project at May River High School towards the purchase of a photography printer. This will help the students to develop strong digital photography skills, design and digital creativity through photography and other platforms.

"The Foundation loves being a part of impacting thousands of students throughout Beaufort County through these innovative projects," said Linda Navorska, the Foundation's Board Chair. "We are so grateful for the generous support of many local organizations and individuals that helped make these grants possible."

The grant recipients for Fall 2024 are listed below:

GRANT NAME	SUBMITTED BY	SCHOOL
A Bench of Buddies	Jennifer Friend-Kerr	Hilton Head Island School for Creative Arts

Innovate and Illuminate: Ozobot Evo in the Classroom	Jamey Porter and Jennifer Lyles	Coosaw Elementary School
STEM Stories Unfold: Cultivating Curious Minds in the School Library	Kim Waters	Port Royal Elementary School
Get Your Library Search On!	Bonnie Minton	Hilton Head Island Elementary School
Sensory Path	Susan Held	Beaufort Elementary School
Write – Here, There and Everywhere	Marianne Blake	Beaufort Elementary School
Building Fluency Libraries	Kristin Hibbett	Coosaw Elementary School
Bright Bobcat Plates	Ann Buckley	Bluffton High School
Gatorball Fitness	Richard Dobson	Mossy Oaks Elementary School
"Take Out" Anyone?	Heidi McAlister	Hilton Head Island High School
Elevating Student Voice in the CreekCast Studio	Julie Alford	Battery Creek High School
Magnetic Math	Eve Weaver, Caroline Arrowood, and Victoria Hardy	Robert Smalls Leadership Academy
Photography Perspectives	Kendra Wheeler	May River High School
Dictionary Detective	Jaquelyn Barnwell	St. Helena Elementary School
Bluffton High School Expanded Learning Environment	Karen Gareis	Bluffton High School
Buenos comunicadores/Bons communicateurs	Irma Rameizl	Hilton Head Island Middle School

ABOUT FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

The Foundation for Educational Excellence raises funds to support the mission and goals of the Beaufort County School District by furthering student instructional activities and projects through Innovative Teacher Grants, Innovative School Resource Grants and Student Enrichment Grants. Established in 2007, the Foundation awarded its first grants in 2009 and has awarded over $375,000 in grants to the teachers and students in the public school system since its inception benefitting thousands of students across the county each year.

Grants are applied for and awarded once a year. Projects are chosen on their merit by board members of the Foundation. Innovative Teacher Grants are for learning experiences above and beyond the normal classroom like science projects, arts performances, and robotic materials and provide unique learning opportunities that are not funded through traditional budgets. Innovative School Resource Grants are for innovative instructional school-wide projects. These grants help spark the imaginations of students to create a life-long interest in learning. Often these grant awards provide multi-year learning impact.

The Foundation is supported by individual donations and these local charities: The Bargain Box of Hilton Head, Friends of Callawassie Island, Italian-American Club of Hilton Head, Wexford Fund, Moss Creek Charitable Fund and Women's Association of Hilton Head. We are grateful for their ongoing support of our work.

The Foundation is a fund of Community Foundation of the Lowcountry and a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Donations are tax deductible as allowed by law and can be made at https://www.foundationedexcellence.com/donate

For information, contact the Foundation at www.foundationedexcellence.com , 843-304-1922, or FFEEinfo@email.com