

MINI-GRANTS Awarded 2022-2023

Awarded monthly: At the elementary level - up to \$500 awarded for a classroom and 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 an entire department.

Irwin Elementary Schools

Preschool Sensory Materials

Casey Bartlinski

Preschool children improve their fine motor skills through use of sensory materials that enhance their preparation for formal schooling. Funding this grant will provide a variety of fine motor, sensory experiences for preschool students who have developmental delays in these areas. The students often become frustrated and exhibit difficulty focusing for extended periods of time. Increasing student engagement and time on task is the goal of this grant. By utilizing the sensory materials being purchased, the teacher will better be able to reach the goals set for her young learners.

Hammarskjold Upper Elementary School

Ticket to Ride

Anthony Petro and Dan Moran

Ticket to Ride is a popular board game that students can learn in a single class period. Players attempt to claim and complete transportation routes between cities. But with everyone building their routes at the same time, players must strategize about how to spend their resources. Grant funds will allow for the purchase of nine games: three each of the Amsterdam, New York, and London versions making it possible for students to learn the rules and then apply what they have learned to different scenarios. *Ticket to Ride* will become a meaningful unit in 6th grade social studies classes.

Churchill Junior High School

Wingspan

Doug Spishock and Dan Moran

The goal of this grant is to engage biology students in ecological concepts in a fun, challenging, and meaningful way. The game *Wingspan* simulates the many demands of the natural world and the challenges for different species competing for the same resources. With grant funds, seven copies of the game will be purchased, making it possible for a full class to play the game at the same time. Learning how to play *Wingspan* in class directly addresses several of the *Next Generation Science Standards* for ecology and encourages students to engage in interpersonal communication while practicing decision-making skills.

Churchill Junior High School

Boomwhacker Sight-reading: Creating a Culture of Musical Literacy Grades 7-9

Jami De Siena

Grant funds will allow for the purchase of a class set of *Boomwhackers*, colorful tubes of different lengths that correlate with the diatonic scale. The block schedule has extended the length of time with which to work on music theory and sight reading skills. Both require higher level thinking and are necessary for students to be successful when focusing on harder pieces of music. This kinesthetic tool is a new way to engage and excite students who participate in the choral program at CJHS.

Hammarskjold Upper Elementary School

Gifted Gaming

Jeffrey Bressler, Daniel Moran

Funding will enhance a new unit of study for this year’s 6th graders receiving gifted and talented services: *Game Design*. Throughout the year, students will investigate the workings of traditional and contemporary strategy games, play some that will allow them to better understand the specific challenges, and then create and “playtest” their own games. The games being purchased are *Machi Koro* and *Dixit*. Both of these award-winning games are incredibly popular and will help reinforce the concepts of the new unit.

Irwin Elementary School

Themed Therapy

Alexa Sherman

Funding for this grant will provide therapeutic materials to be used with students enrolled in Irwin’s integrated and self-contained preschool classrooms. These young students learn language through instruction and play that is fun, exciting, and multi-sensory. To facilitate this instruction, the teachers planned learning themes for every week. The requested materials include books and items specifically chosen to support these themes and to target the students’ individualized therapy goals.

Irwin Elementary School

Take a Look, Grab a Book! Unlimited Access for All

Kimberlee Dombrowski and Aimee Ritt

With grant funds, the structure for a *Little Free Library* will be purchased and constructed to house books donated by the community. The goal of the project is to provide students, who might not otherwise have books to read at home, with access to materials that will enrich and support their lives as readers. Research shows that having access to lots of books leads to a love for reading as well as increased student achievement and motivation.

Lawrence Brook Elementary School

Channeling Young Authors through Writing Centers

JoAnn Peterson, Christin Kim, Emily Ackerman, Evagelia Kapsaskis, and Nicole Cornejo

From the purchase of special pencils, markers, and paper to utility carts and digital cameras, grant funding will enhance the writing experience for all of Lawrence Brook’s 2nd graders. Both teachers and students will have whatever supplies they need organized and at the ready for them to work their way through the writing process.



Irwin Elementary School**2nd Grade Expert Expo****Patricia Colaizzi, Rochelle Rosen, and Caitlin Gullo**

The goal of this grant is to make it possible for Irwin's 2nd graders to be able to "teach" others all about something they are experts in. As a culmination to the nonfiction writing unit, this grant will provide each student with a display board and the materials necessary to create his/her presentation.

East Brunswick High School**Bringing Macbeth to EBHS Stage****Kyle LaForge, Katherine Skidmore, Kristyna Rocha, Michael Szalecki, and Nicole Seres**

Providing funds for this project has multiple benefits in addition to enhancing the English curriculum for EBHS Juniors. It will: 1.) Expose students to William Shakespeare's work as he intended his audiences to experience it, live on stage. 2.) Make seeing the play accessible to every member of the junior class, free of charge to all students. 3.) Minimize out-of-class time. By bringing the show to EBHS, students will only miss a portion of the school day, rather than missing an entire day to attend a show at an offsite theater.

Churchill Junior High School**Dinosaurs and Deception: Paleontology Feud of Epic Proportions****Dana Poulsen**

Funds will give every 7th grade student the opportunity to "tour" the fossil hall at the NJ State Museum right from their science classroom. Kits directly from the museum will give students a variety of hands-on experiences through which they will learn about Earth's history, geology and the fossil records related to NJ's rich geologic history.

All District Schools**EB Connects-Connection Cards****Erik Myer**

One of the goals of the District's Physical Education program is to give students skills to help them to participate in games, sports, and activities outside of school. In order to accomplish this goal students need to be able to communicate effectively and build relationships. This grant will allow students at every grade level the opportunity to be introduced to three sets of card games (*Comchi*, *Ubuntu*, and *Happy Salmon*) that promote relationship building. The card games will be used for warm-ups, instant activities, and team building lessons during physical education classes.

Chittick Elementary School**Enhancing Early Language Learners****Tricia Zeitlin**

Students with communication and articulation disorders and English language learners benefit from high quality hands-on therapeutic materials to enhance vocabulary and expressive and receptive language skills. Funding for this mini grant will provide multi-sensory and engaging therapy materials that can be used during speech therapy for early language learners.

Churchill Junior High School**Evolution****Andrew Hilarczyk and Douglas Spishock**

The goal of this grant is to provide students with an extended experience that will engage them in evolutionary concepts in biology in a fun, challenging, and meaningful way. Funds will allow for the

purchase of 16 copies of the board game, *Evolution*. Evolution is a popular, award-winning board game first produced in 2014. As described in the most prestigious scientific journal in the world, *Nature*, this game's evolution theme "features sophisticated biology. Traits can be put together in a dizzying array of combinations, so each game can be very different. The theme of evolution is not just tacked on: it drives play". (Stuart West, Professor of Evolutionary Biology, University of Oxford)



Hammarskjold Elementary School
Flexible Seating and Sensory Materials
Casey Bartlinski

Funding for this mini grant will provide a multitude of sensory experiences for resource room students, many of whom struggle with time on task and a need to move during learning time. By giving students access to fidgets and other sensory input materials they will begin to learn how to regulate their bodies and advocate for themselves in order to be successful.

Irwin Elementary School
Ga Ga Ball
Abby Selgado

GaGa, a game that originated in the 1970's in Israel, is a fast paced, high energy sport played in an octagonal pit. The more players the better. Funds will make possible the purchase of a GaGa Octagon pit. This pit is portable, foldable for easy storage, and can be used outside or inside for many years to come. Having this pit will enhance the game that students at Irwin already play by making it more realistic and exciting. GaGa is very popular and it teaches many skills, including but not limited to: agility, jumping, striking, dodging, hand eye coordination, and thinking. The game provides great exercise, as players must continually move. Also, it effectively levels the playing field because no one is guaranteed to win every time. Strategy, luck, finesse and even teamwork are important components to GaGa Ball. The GaGa Octagon can be used for school events held outside of the regular school day.

Memorial Elementary School
Kaufman Kit
Roseann Bracco

With grant funds, a *Kaufman Treatment Kit 2 and Workout Book* will be purchased. This unique program helps the clinician determine why a word is difficult for a child to produce and how to change the stimulus to meet the muscular, or motoric, needs of the child. Stimulus cards feature bright, colorful illustrations on one side and on the other side, a breakdown of the target word into a series of approximations based on the least physiological effort of that target word. Additionally, the straightforward style of this program along with the downloadable workouts makes creating home programs easy, thus allowing parents to reinforce therapy sessions at home. The teacher has already had success with the first kit in the series, so this will allow her to continue her work.

East Brunswick High School
Modern Student Whiteboard Collaboration
Elizabeth Kenny Stein Liz Soder

The goal of this project is to elevate student collaboration by providing modern whiteboard elements to existing classroom tables. By using durable post-it adhesive whiteboards, the current tables in the classroom will mirror updated, more expensive furniture available in some classrooms. Access to whiteboards will foster more frequent imaginative and visible collaboration among students whether they are brainstorming ideas for college essays, preparing for AP exams, or discussing literary themes and applying them to life. Because these whiteboards can be reused again and again, they can help foster an ongoing culture of collaboration.

East Brunswick High School
Virtual Guest Speakers: Closing the Distance
Rachel Moran and Liz Soder

Funding will make it possible to purchase an HD camera and several conferencing microphones that will enhance teaching and learning for a new course called, *Developing Student Leaders*. The goal of the course is to provide the opportunity for students to realize and investigate their own leadership potential. Guest speakers are an ongoing feature of the course, providing students with real-world engagement and meaning-making opportunities. The camera and conferencing microphones will allow better interaction between students and Zoom guest speakers, as well as providing a means to record speakers for use in the years to come.

Memorial Elementary School
Storytelling Kits
Nicole De Marco

When children lack background knowledge about a topic, they cannot participate to their fullest. The Storytelling Kits being purchased with grant funds will allow the teacher to build important background knowledge for her students that will ultimately lead to increased comprehension.

Memorial Elementary School
Let's Learn: Learning Centers
Alissa Ferrante, Amy Bassista, and Jennifer Beach-Eberle

The materials in this grant will benefit the students during learning centers and small group time. When not working with a teacher, students will participate in independent activities, differentiated to benefit each child's individual learning needs. Students will be able to stay engaged on academic tasks for a greater amount of time with a wide variety of materials.

Hammarskjold Upper Elementary School
Engineering Project: Droning on About Eggs
Andrew Scanlon

One of the engineering projects at Hammarskjold involves students designing a package that can safely transport an egg. The students' solutions are tested by dropping a package containing an egg from the top of the stage. This grant will take the packages that successfully saved the egg up about 300 feet on a drone to conduct a really cool durability test. It will allow for the purchase of a release mechanism for an already existing drone, bringing the packages (and the motivation level) to new heights.

Warnsdorfer Elementary School**Bears Bins and Bear Spots****Nada Soto and Amanda Lorfing**

Funding will allow for the purchase of resources that will support proven coping strategies for students who are experiencing anxiety or stress and are struggling to regulate their emotions. Among the items requested are stress balls, fidget toys, kinetic sand, etc. To ensure that these items are available to all students, they will be stored in a central location. Storage bins will be purchased to meet this aspect of grant's goal.

Warnsdorfer Elementary School**Movement Matters!****Henry Maldonado**

Adapted Physical Education is instruction in physical education that is designed on an individual basis to meet the needs of a child with a disability. The goal this grant is to provide the students in three Adapted Physical Education classes with a fun and motivating way to help them develop gross and fine motor skills. Fifteen *Roller Racers* and two storage caddies will be purchased with grant funds. The scooters are easy to use and will motivate and encourage students to participate and move. Students will need to incorporate consistent upper body movements and awareness of their surroundings to successfully navigate the teacher created obstacle courses.

Central Elementary School**Secrets You Can Share****Shannon Keely**

Students do most of their decoding work in 1st grade. Funding will give students at this level access to *Secret Stories*. Each reading "secret" has a cute and memorable story to explain why certain letters make the sounds that they do. Secret Stories is not a curriculum, rather it is a program intended to enhance the current curriculum. It will give students one more tool to decode tricky words and serve as a bridge between Reader's Workshop, Writer's Workshop, Foundations, and Heggerty.

Hammarskjold Upper Elementary School**Skull Identification****Laura Hoffman**

Skull replicas provide students the opportunity to view materials that apply to real-world scenarios and further investigative research. Grant funds will provide each grade 6 science teacher with a replica of a giant anteater skull. Students will be asked to predict the type of eater that would have this type of skull structure based on eye placement, nostril placement and types of teeth (or lack of).

East Brunswick High School**Speech-Language Materials from Speech Corner****Michelle Cieslak**

In addition to supporting language skills within the classroom environment, speech-language therapy at the high school level focuses on functional communication, daily living skills, and building independence as students enter adulthood. Fun and engaging speech therapy materials, to meet the varying needs of students at this level, will be purchased with the funding provided through this grant.

Bowne-Munro Elementary School**The Power of Purposeful Play****Theresa Vetrecin and Jessica Wojtaszek**

This grant will support and enhance the educational environment for Bowne-Munro's preschool students by giving teachers and instructional support staff updated materials that will facilitate learning