



**Milwaukee Public Schools  
FOUNDATION, INC.**

## **Teacher EXCEL Grants**

*“Excellence in the Classroom” Teacher Mini-Grant Program*

*The Milwaukee Public Schools Foundation, Inc. sponsored a mini-grant program for teachers to fund creative classroom projects or activities that enrich student learning experiences. This year, 44 grants were awarded.*

## **2000-2001 Grant Winners**

**Academy of Accelerated Learning – Jodi Searls  
Literacy Exchange - \$600**

Literacy and skill building activities will provide kindergarten students an opportunity to further develop their oral and pre-reading language skills in small group settings. Supplemental materials and supplies will enable the activities to be fully implemented.

**Audubon Middle School – Katherine Vannoy  
Multimedia Interactive Yearbook - \$750**

Thirty students, selected by their peers, will learn and understand the basic elements of programming and design to develop a multimedia interactive yearbook on CD-ROM. All students will be able to purchase the CD yearbook for \$1.

**Allen-Field–Mary Conway, M. Carol Kraemer,  
and Maria Jaszewski  
Waltzing with Whales I - \$750  
Waltzing with Whales II - \$750**

Ninety 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students will embark on a collaborative study of whales combining the use of math, language arts, technology, and music. A culminating activity will involve a field trip to the Shedd Aquarium in Chicago.

**Clarke Street School – Stefanie Miller-Ahmed  
and Marcie Bonds  
2001: A Writing - \$500**

First grade regular and special education students will work together in an all-inclusive setting in a writer’s workshop covering different genres of writing. The students will be exposed to various types of writing and will practice write in each new form of writing.

*The **Teacher EXCEL Grant** program is funded mainly through contributions from MPS employees to the Milwaukee Public Schools Foundation, Inc., as a part of the MPS Employees’ Combined Giving Campaign. The grant program is also supported through contributions made to the MPS Foundation to a special fund established in memory of Ann Shansky, who was an elementary school teacher in MPS for 34 years. Mrs. Shansky was an advocate of early childhood education and dedicated her life’s work to education and development of children. Other major contributors include Aetna Services, Inc.*

If you have any questions, call Kathleen Kirchhoff at 475-8853 or by e-mail [KIRCHHKX@mail.milwaukee.k12.wi.us](mailto:KIRCHHKX@mail.milwaukee.k12.wi.us).

**Clarke Street School – Michael Turck  
Math Olympics - \$750**

Students in grades 3-5 will compete in a Math Olympics to practice, improve, and demonstrate their math skills in basic facts, problem solving, and multi-operational problems.

**Clemens School – Benjamin Chandler  
and Angela Patti  
The Docent Project - \$750**

Students in all grades will be involved in the study of art: its history, techniques, and aesthetics. The project involves several visits to area art centers. Students will select one piece of art for rigorous study and present a report to classmates, teachers, and their family.

**Cooper School – Catherine Young  
and Mary Widen  
Journey to Freedom - \$750**

Third grade students will embark on an 8-week study researching the history of slavery and the Underground Railroad and its historical importance. Students will develop skills in reading, vocabulary, writing, math, and science and will create a web site to share the results of their project.

**Cooper School – Linda Bohan  
Dance Works - \$400**

An 8-week dance workshop will be held after school for students in grades 2-5. Students will understand dance as a way to create and communicate meaning, apply critical and creative thinking skills, and understand connections between dance and healthful living. The program will culminate in a performance for the school and parents.

**Craig Montessori School – Lucy Blueberry  
and Linda Steeves  
Butterfly Garden Study - \$750**

Children ages 3-6 years will experience the life cycle of the butterfly in the classroom. Students will learn to identify the four life cycle stages, increase their vocabulary, and identify names of the parts of the butterfly. The older children will take a city bus try to the Milwaukee Public Museum to see the live butterfly exhibit.

**Eighty-first Street School – Mark Foreman  
Drum Team - \$750**

An African drum team will be established to provide an exciting activity focused on engaging at-risk students in school. Drumming demands self-discipline and group cooperation that will transfer to their academic studies in the classroom. The team will perform for the school and parents.

**Elm Creative Arts School – Kathy Beck and  
Jane Wisiewski  
Science in the Park - \$575**

First grade students will work in small groups doing hands-on science discovery activities outside the classroom in a park. Sample activities include insect investigation, plant search, animal homes search, rock hunt, soil sieve, pond study, leaf rubbings, and poetry corner. The students will publish a class book to share their acquired knowledge.

**Elm Creative Arts School – Melissa Browning  
Smart Start - \$750**

Forty 4-and 5-year-old kindergarten students will choose to work on a variety of educational activities in science, math, writing, and reading using self-correcting educational materials. Children will see that learning can be fun and they are able to achieve many skills. Ongoing portfolios and skill sheets will be maintained for all students to ensure a variety of experiences.

**Fairview School – Laura Yale, Wendy Novak,  
Mary Lemke, and Kristen Mehring  
A Bag Full of Fun - \$735**

Sixty 5-year-old kindergarten students in two full inclusion classrooms will be provided with a variety of cross-curricular activities to complete at home with their families. The activities will be based on themes previously taught and will expand, enrich, and reinforce concepts learned in school covering math, science, writing, and art.

**Garden Homes School – Sandra Meyer  
Etiquette Day Lasts a Lifetime - \$250**

Fifth grade students will participate in a research and writing project on the knowledge of etiquette and good table manners. The students will publish a book based on their research and make oral classroom presentations. A culminating activity will include lunch at a downtown restaurant.

**Garfield School–Robin Booth, Lisa Rieger  
Judith Rockett, Angela Stinson, and**

**Judy Padek**  
**Cooperative Reading Project - \$710**

First and second grade students from four classrooms, along with special education students, will read together in a cooperative and relaxed setting. The second graders will help their reading partners decode unfamiliar words and use other reading strategies. Students will work together to complete story maps and book responses for the books they read together.

**Garland School – Jayne Holck**  
**Garland Student Newspaper - \$650**

Fourth and fifth grade students will develop and publish a student newspaper. The newspaper club will meet daily during the noon recess. Students will research, write, and edit articles and will learn to use digital cameras and scanners in producing a paper every six weeks. A field trip to the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* will enable the students to see the entire printing process in operation.

**Hawthorne School – Wendy Rowley**  
**S.N.A.P. - \$750**  
**(Science, Nature, Art, Photography)**

First and fifth grade regular and special education students will be involved in a project that integrates art and science through the use of photography. Students will use a Polaroid camera to enrich their science and art curriculums. The project will culminate with a science fair. Students will incorporate their nature photos as part of the science fair exhibit.

**Hawthorne School – Tiffanie Beaudoin**  
**Learning through Cooking - \$700**

Forty children age 5 to 11 will participate in an after-school program that will teach valuable skills while they learn about cooking and nutrition. In addition to being fun, the program teaches safety and incorporates reading, math, and science. The program will culminate with a final dinner project which will be served to the students' families.

**Kagel School – Myrna Caban and**  
**Radames Galarza**

**Project Butterfly - \$750**

This is a school and community-wide project to enhance the science curriculum and beautify the school grounds and neighborhood. Students are taught units on plants and the environment and go on horticulture field trips to prepare for planting day. On May 25<sup>th</sup> a total of 72 beds will be planted by all of the students and volunteers from the community. Local restaurants and the school host a lunch for all participants.

**Keefe Avenue School – Debra Dawson and**  
**Dawn Lubke**  
**Our Garden of Learning - \$750**

Fifty students in grades 2 and 5 will work together to learn about building a garden and then plan and build one at the school. Both classes will learn about plants and growth cycles, will measure wood to build the planter and graph the growth of plants. The project provides an opportunity for hands-on math, science, social studies, and reading activities. Students will go on two horticulture field trips.

**Rufus King High School – Henry Kranendonk**  
**Generations: Teenagers Now and Then - \$750**

Students in 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade mathematics classes will conduct a data-driven research project on the lifestyles, values, demographics, and economics of various generations. Students will design and conduct surveys and interviews, and analyze data compiled. Each student will prepare a 800 or more word summary which will be published in a research book and online, as well as videotaped. The project will culminate with a press conference in which the summary reports will be presented to the public.

**Lincoln Avenue School – Deborah Bruno**  
**The Wonders of Wisconsin - \$750**

Fourth graders will learn the history, geology, and geography of Wisconsin through this project which integrates all subject areas. Students will conduct research, role play historical figures, keep a journal, and perform science experiments. The project includes various field trips to enrich the classroom activities.

**Lloyd Street School – Sylvia Llanas Buckman  
Explore Science After School - \$750**

After school help sessions will be provided to increase enthusiasm and the number of students who complete a science project. Parents will be invited to increase involvement. Students will conduct a hands-on experiment and write a summary report. Students will be provided with a display board and other materials to complete their experiments.

**Madison University High School – Ed Kupka  
Rocket Physics - \$750**

Students in 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade physics classes will design, construct, and analyze the flight of a rocket. Students build skills in problem solving, predicting outcomes, collecting data, and comparing results with expectations. An egg and parachute are launched inside the rocket with an expected safe landing by the end of the semester.

**Malcolm X Academy – Suzanne Edstrom and  
Anthony Hooker  
Hand in Hand Beautification - \$750**

This school and community-wide project will involve students in math, science, and writing activities and beautify the school grounds. All students, parents, and the community will be involved in planting a butterfly garden, building bird feeders, painting a mural, and more.

**Metropolitan High School – Larry Miller  
Old Walnut Street History - \$750**

Students will participate in a research project about the rich contributions of African Americans who lived in the Walnut Street community. The students will conduct interviews, photograph, and videotape community members to document this history. A book will be compiled and published for distribution.

**Milwaukee Education Center – Seth Sondag  
Multicultural Children’s Literature - \$750**

Eighth grade students will plan, write, illustrate, and publish multicultural children’s literature. About 130 students will work together to produce 40 children’s books which will be provided to younger students in the school. The project will help eighth grade students pass the writing proficiency requirements.

**Milwaukee High School of the Arts –  
Cathleen Hunt  
Wisconsin Stock Market Simulation - \$745**

To enhance the standard economics curriculum, 12<sup>th</sup> grade students participate in a 10-week stock market simulation to learn how to be better producers, consumers, and economic citizens. Student teams invest a hypothetical \$100,000 in stocks and compete for the best portfolio performance. Students conduct research, engage in problem solving activities, and work in cooperative groups.

**Milwaukee Sign Language School –  
Peggy Polikowski  
Music for a Different Drummer - \$740**

A music workshop will be provided in a form that is accessible and pleasurable to children who are deaf or have a significant hearing loss. Regular and special education students age 3 through 6 will be involved in the use of instruments, a hands-on approach to rhythm, and body movement as a form of communication.

**Morse Middle School – Al Stawicki  
The Science is Fun Traveling Show - \$750**

Students in grades 6-8 will travel to local elementary schools to put on a science show using demonstrations, experiments, and a question and answer session. The program enriches the science curriculum and increases science literacy for both the elementary and middle school students involved.

**Neeskara School – Debra Polenska and  
Leann Clark  
Backpack Learning Centers - \$750**

Backpack learning centers will be created and assembled to reinforce previously taught classroom skills and increase parental involvement. Regular and special education students age 6 to 12 will take home materials developed covering all subject areas and designed to address different learning styles.

**Ninety-fifth Street School – Michelle Denofre  
Outdoor Classroom - \$750**

The entire school will participate in creating an outdoor classroom designed to enrich student learning experiences in science through hands-on activities. Each grade level will be responsible for a section of the project and will be involved in researching, planting, and maintaining the garden. Students will be able to use the outdoor classroom as a teaching and learning tool and apply it to journal writing and experiments.

**Palmer School – Debra Carlson  
The Nature of Your Neighborhood - \$600**

Three fourth grade classes will study the environmental cycles of water, food chains, and pollution and their responsibility to the community in preserving the environment. Working with community volunteers, students will conduct water quality testing using a scientific method format and other activities. The project includes two field trips.

**Sherman School – Brenda DePriest and  
Lori Carmichael  
The Solar System - \$750**

Second grade students will learn about the solar system in a creative, cooperative learning environment that emphasizes thinking, speaking, reading, and writing. Students will create an “Out of this World” alphabet book, do various science and math activities, and connect with social studies by talking about life in space. The project will culminate with a field trip to the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago.

**Sholes Middle School – Jennifer Freckmann  
Butterfly Garden - \$750**

With the assistance of volunteers from the University of Wisconsin-Extension and the Milwaukee Public Museum, sixth grade science classes will work on a courtyard restoration project. Students will research elements of backyard conservation and butterfly gardening and design, plant, and maintain the garden consisting of native flower and plant species.

**Thurston Woods School –Marlene Hoth  
Book Court - \$750**

The project will encourage all students to read many different books and help them develop good oral communications skills. Students will select a book to read at home, write a summary, and present an oral report before the Book Court. Students will receive a new book and certificate when they successfully present their report. To enhance parent involvement, a family reading night will be sponsored.

**Tippecanoe School – Carrie Davis and  
Denice Niebuhr  
The Forest - \$750**

Kindergarten students will learn about the value of forests through hands-on activities involving all subject areas. Students will research birds and animals, compose an original musical composition about the forest, read various books, learn how artists use nature in their works, conduct science experiments, and more. Each student will receive a disposable camera to take home to take pictures of their family outdoors in nature. The project includes field trips.

**Trowbridge School – Diane Piedt  
Harry Potter’s Lunch Club - \$660**

A book reading lunch club will be established for regular and special education students in grades 3-5 who are reading below grade level. Students will meet for 16 weeks to listen and read along with audio tapes of books, discuss plot, characters, themes, setting, and style. Students will use the Harry Potter Internet sites and e-mail answers to questions from their teachers. The project will culminate with an ice cream sundae party. The club will continue indefinitely.

**Twenty-first Street School–Richard Ringhand  
and Dawn Peplinski  
Early Childhood Computer Applications-\$750**

Over 175 kindergarten through first grade students will learn how to identify letters, symbols, and keys to improve computer skills. Students will learn basic keyboarding skills, use the Internet as a research tool, and use word processing, drawing and painting programs. The students will produce animal and alphabet books with text, pictures, and student artwork.

**Vieau School – Amy Mudlaff**

**Photo Safari – \$730**

Fourth grade students will create their own non-fictional book as both illustrator and author. The students will research animals, insects, and plant life and will write a documentary to go along with a series of pictures they take using disposable cameras. The books will be laminated and bound and displayed at the P-5 Learning Project Fair. The project will involve a field trip.

**Literacy Connection - \$750**

Second grade students will take home literacy kits to initiate greater parental involvement in reading development and to promote recreational reading at home. The kits will include a durable bag to carry items, books, instructions for parents, high frequency word cards, art project ideas, and more. The program hopes to build bridges between school and home and improve reading scores.

**Walker Middle School–Pamela Gail Dempsey  
Impressions - \$740**

Sixth and seventh grade students will cooperate with a partner to complete a biographical study of an impressionist painter of their choice and prepare a 2-3 page research paper on the artist's work. The project includes a visit to the Art Institute of Chicago and an experience of French cuisine with breakfast items and a picnic lunch.

**Wheatley School – Denise Johnson-Phillips  
and Debra Alpert-Frolkis  
Writer in a Box - \$700**

A portable Writer in a Box workshop will be created for use by grade 3-5 teachers to improve students' writing proficiency levels. The box will contain stimulating materials; consumable supplies such as paper, scissors, and tape; resource materials; publishing tools; writing prompts; and more. Students will create a "best of" portfolio of their writing, along with assessment notes to share with parents.

**Wisconsin Avenue School – Eydie Gremmer  
and Mara Thompson**