



**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, 52 grants were awarded.

2002-2003 Grant Winners

**Academy of Accelerated Learning – Nhia Yang
and Jim Gross – “Books on Tape” – \$750**

Third grade students with limited English proficiency will participate in a “books on tape” reading program to help boost the students’ reading levels. Students will receive a book on tape each week. They will be asked to read the book and write a summary of it. The program’s focus is to improve vocabulary, word and sound recognition, and reading comprehension.

**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 and develop a multimedia interactive yearbook on CD-ROM. Students will conduct a financial and environmental analysis between a traditional paper yearbook and a digital yearbook. All students will be able to purchase the CD yearbook for \$1.

**Alcott Elementary School – Nancy Ulrich
“Guided Reading” – \$750**

Third grade students will participate in guided reading activities, a component of the MPS comprehensive literacy framework. Using Essential Skills Classroom software, students will develop as individual readers, apply reading strategies to guide and improve comprehension, and become independent learners.

**Bay View High School – Anna M. Passante and
Eric J. Becker – “Reciprocal Teaching” – \$750**

Approximately 120 ninth grade students will participate in a team-taught literacy project focused on using various effective reading strategies. Students will read a trilogy of novels by Sharon Draper and engage in activities to build vocabulary, interpret and critically analyze literature, and discuss literary and nonliterary texts to understand human experience.

*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.*

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

**Brown Street Academy – Todd Hartwig
“Reaching for the Stars” – \$750**

Second grade students will participate in a theme project on topics in space exploration. Through various hands-on activities, multimedia presentations, interactive software, exposure to currently literature and periodicals, students will acquire science content and develop critical thinking skills such as, problem solving, cause and effect relationships, and deductive reasoning. Students will visit the James Lovell Museum of Science, Economics, and Technology and the UW-Milwaukee Planetarium.

**Burbank Elementary School – Cortney Glinberg and Christine Sylvester
“Letters from Felix” – \$500**

First grade students will engage in an interactive social studies program that allows students to get involved and communicate with people all over the world. Students will learn concepts such as geography, the U.S. Postal Service, long distance communication, traveling, and U.S. and global cultures. The project is focused around the book, “Letters from Felix.”

**Burbank Elementary School – Christine Sylvester and Cortney Glinberg –
“Music and Movement” and “Publishing About Parents” – \$700**

The “Music and Movement” project will improve the interest and knowledge of music and dance concepts while increasing physical fitness for about 90 first grade students. A variety of music and musical instruments reflecting various cultures will travel between classrooms so that all first graders will have more quality music instruction on a weekly basis. A Multicultural Fair will be held toward the end of the school year.

As a part of the “Publishing About Parents” project, first grade students will participate in a step-by-step writing process to publish a book about his/her parent or care giver. Intermediate students will serve as editors.

**Burdick School – Erica Halverson
“The Literacy Loft” – \$750**

The project will create a unique space for first grade students to develop literacy skills. Students will engage in interactive, hands-on instruction utilizing multiple learning styles. Students will manipulate letters to make words, explore literacy based centers, participate in shared and guided reading, flourish in various writing activities, improve literacy across the curriculum, and develop a passion for literacy and learning.

**Dr. Benjamin Carson Academy of Science –
Tirshatha Wilson and Hazel Luckett
“The Wonders of Dissection” – \$625**

Students in grades four, five, seven, and eight will participate in the wonders of dissection. Through exploration and discovery, elementary students will be paired with middle school students to complete the dissection of a grasshopper and an earthworm. The students will explore the cardiovascular system of each and compare them with their cardiovascular system. The pairing of students will enhance interpersonal relationships and provide an opportunity to work cooperatively in a group.

**Cass Street School – David Dulmes and David Kahn-Pettigrew
“Bridges Across the Curriculum” – \$750**

Twenty-five third grade students will participate in this cross-curricular project to learn the basics of structural design and engineering through the use of K’nex bridge-building kits. The project will focus on a number of Wisconsin academic standards in mathematics, science, and language arts. For example, students will calculate the “cost” of the bridge and use geometry in its design; they will use the scientific process to predict and test the strength of their structures; and they will write descriptions of their bridge designs and give oral presentations.

Clarke Street School – Jennifer Hoffer-Johnson – “Project Moo” – \$640

Project Moo is an integrated unit on farm animals and their characteristics. Twenty-five four-year-old kindergarten students will learn about farm animals through literature and personal experiences. The students and parents will participate in various field trips to have the opportunity to actually feed a goat or see a cow being milked in person; not just see it in a book.

**Clarke Street School – Michael Turck
“The Reading 100 Project” – \$750**

This is a school-wide reading and language arts project that will coincide with the celebration of the school’s 100th anniversary year. All students will be involved and each class will have the goal of reading 100 books. Students in grades 3-5 will be required to write a short summary of the book and their response to it. At least one short story or poem will be required using the number 100 in it in some way. Students in grades 1-2 will colorfully illustrate some part of the book’s story.

**Cooper School – Mary A. Widen and
Jacqueline A. Pollman – “Winter: Beauty or
the Beast” – \$750**

Fourth grade students will study the season of winter using an integrated cross-curricular approach, including science, mathematics, language arts, social studies, and art. Activities include a tour of the National Weather Service Station in Wisconsin and a trip to a nursing home to interview residents about past winters. Students will collect and analyze data, write and present reports, compare and chart climate with other regions, and create art pieces.

**Congress Extended Year-Round School
Jennifer Price – “Books and Beyond” – \$750**

This project will encourage the families of kindergarten students to use the same reading strategies at home that are used at school. Students will have an opportunity to take home quality, developmentally appropriate books to share with their family. A hands-on activity will accompany each book to focus on vocabulary building, phonemic awareness, and comprehension of the story.

**Edison Middle School – Andrea M. Azarian
and Monica Busch – “Scaling Up a Spaghetti
Dinner” – \$600**

Mathematics instruction will be enhanced for seventh grade students studying the concept of proportional reasoning. Students will prepare and serve a spaghetti dinner to all seventh grade students and their families. Students will practice problem-solving skills through cost analysis, estimation and budget itemization. The project will provide a real-world application of mathematics concepts as well as promote parent and family involvement.

**Eighty-first Street School – Michelle Toll
“The Writing Center” – \$750**

Materials for a writing center will help kindergarten students develop their writing ability. Students will “publish” their own stories by creating a rough draft, editing, writing a final copy and illustrating their work. The center will provide students with many different means to assist them in their exploration of words, spelling, and publication of their stories, including magnetic letters, chalk boards, letter stamps, dry erase boards, dictionaries, alphabet books, and other materials.

**Fairview Charter School – Laura Yale,
Danielle Hassforth, and Wendy Novak – “Our
Storybook Garden” – \$750**

This cross-curricular project will involve kindergarten and their fifth grade “book buddies” to create a storybook garden inspired by quality children’s literature. A garden will be planted on school grounds where students can enjoy an outdoor learning environment when reading. Students will be actively involved in all phases of the project, including research, planning, and computing. The project will strengthen the skills and lessons taught in language and literacy, mathematics and science, social studies, and art.

**Fernwood Montessori School – Elaine Clay
“Young Scientists Club” – \$750**

An after-school “Young Scientists Club” will be established for third graders identified as most in need of assistance in science. Two groups of 12 students will meet after school once a week for eight weeks. Students will be presented mini lessons and demonstrations on science topics, work in small groups on activities, and progress to student-designed experiments.

LaEscuela Fratney – Sarah Glodoski – “You Have to Grow One to Know One” - \$675

Sixty-five bilingual second graders will explore the life cycle of flowering plants and conduct experiments in growing conditions using Wisconsin Fast Plants as their test subject. Science, math, and literacy through literature and writing will be integrated into a six-week thematic unit about how plants grow, change over time, and react to environmental alterations. Students will have hands-on experiences and, just like scientists, will take daily notes and learn to keep careful records during the experiments to document the process.

**Garfield Elementary School – Robin Booth
“Sending the Scientist Home” – \$625**

Each week, second grade students will take home an “inquiry based” science experiment to actively engage students, parents, and other family members in simple science projects. The home science projects are an extension of science inquiry done during the day. Students and family members will be encouraged to answer open-ended questions after they complete the experiment at home. Experiments and feedback sheets will be posted on a Super-Science line on the school web page.

Grant Elementary School – Jen Pence and Jenny Carney – “Dynamic Dinosaurs” – \$750

Second grade students will study dinosaurs through the use of technology and research. Students will do research projects in cooperative learning groups, will develop a power point presentation, as well as a booklet containing all the information learned and gathered through the unit of study. The project includes an activity called, “Searching for Treasure” which teaches how paleontologists get fossils out of rocks without destroying them. The project will be enhanced by a field trip to the Field Museum.

**Kluge School – Susie Landingham
“Health is Wealth” – \$640**

Special education students in grades 1-5 will increase their understanding of their own health and how the body works through hands-on activities at Discovery World Museum. Classroom library set materials that support healthy living will be funded to help students make the connection that taking care of their bodies, engaging in personal care, and having a nutritionally sound diet will increase their well being.

Lloyd Street School – Phyllis Bankier and Annie Chou – “Literacy Connection Through Interactive Books” – \$650

Thirty-one English-as-a-second-language students in kindergarten through grade five will participate in the project to improve their English reading and comprehension. Students will use interactive books on the computer to enhance their learning by hearing words and stories, retelling stories in their own words, and improving English vocabulary and spelling.

**Malcolm X Academy
Deborah Williams and Delois Ferguson
“Competent Cooking Using Elements of Mathematics and Vocabulary” – \$750**

This extended-day extracurricular class for seventh graders combines cooking with mathematics and reading. In all cooking activities, a rule was established that no one cup measuring cups are allowed in class. All measurements will be done through fractions, providing students with practice in computing fractions. Students will also study rules of etiquette and improve their vocabulary of unfamiliar words.

Manitoba Elementary School _ Christine Leutner – “Weather Station-205” – \$350

The project will establish an operating weather station in a fifth grade classroom that will provide students first-hand experiences and a working knowledge of Milwaukee’s weather. Students will investigate patterns, collect and organize data, and explore a variety of ways to present the data. Students will explore how weather affects us socially, economically, and environmentally. As a part of the project, students will visit the weather station at UWM.

**Milwaukee French Immersion School – Dawn Balistreri, Dawn Mahuta, and Suzanne Green
“Meeting the Masters Through Multiple Media” – \$750**

Sixty kindergarten students will gain an appreciation and knowledge of great artists and their techniques through the use of diverse media and enriching art experiences. Art, literature, and science will be integrated enabling the students to link this new knowledge to concepts and experiences that are meaningful to them. Each artist study will conclude with a hands-on project emulating the artist’s style and use of materials.

Milwaukee High School of the Arts – William W. Jackson – “Creative Writing and Journalism” – \$750

Students in grades 9-12 will have an opportunity to publish their poetry, essays, short stories, and plays in a professional quality annual digest of student writing and art. Students will be responsible for assembling the book and getting it off to the publisher. In this process, they will learn the collaborative skills and business savvy that it takes to publish a book. The authors and their parents will receive complimentary copies of the published book.

Neeskara Elementary School – Keri Kinney and Anne Desotelle – “Big Buddies, Little Buddies” – \$700

Fifth grade students will be paired with kindergarten students to build self-esteem, confidence, and reading skills using the components of the comprehensive literacy framework. The project will foster positive reading experiences and provide meaningful reading strategies for struggling readers as well as help students appreciate reading for their own pleasure and enjoyment.

**Morgandale Elementary School – Clariza Dominicci-Lopez and Refugio Avila
“Home Support” – \$600**

Project Home Support is aimed at kindergarten students with academic at-risk factors. Twice a month the literacy coach will meet after school with parents to share helpful strategies, such as how to read to children, how to extend the book just read in the areas of math, science, and writing, how to use the library, and how to record stories so that the child may hear them over and over. Parents will be provided with an activity packet to take home to reinforce reading activities.

**Neeskara Elementary School – Julie Benning and Kathy Knutsen
“Planting the Seed” – \$750**

Third grade students will participate in the project to enhance their experiences in reading different materials. The project will pair fiction and non-fiction materials to enable students to make connections and comprehend different texts. Students will engage in a number of activities such as story mapping, personal responses, journaling, and compositions building on reading comprehension, spelling, and vocabulary.

**Morgandale Elementary School – Sara Plach
“Our Pet Business” – \$275**

This project’s focus is on literacy and science in a second grade classroom. An aquarium will be set up in the room and the students will research habitat for fish and conduct various experiments. Students will be exposed to a number of both fiction and nonfiction books to expand their study and will have writing activities. Students will observe the fish on a daily basis to learn about fish behavior, record findings in their science notebooks, and compare and contrast both cold-blooded and warm-blooded animals. The project will be enhanced with a field trip to the Milwaukee County Zoo.

**Philipp Elementary School – Roxane Reszel and Peggy Pliskie
“Snooping for Peace” – \$750**

Second grade students will create a publication, *Elementary Press*, that will feature positive things happening in their neighborhoods, school, and community. Students will investigate, interview, take pictures, and write and edit articles for their publication. The project will be enhanced with a field trip to the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* to learn how reporters get leads for their stories and how the newspaper is published.

**Pierce Elementary School – Katie Fitzpatrick
“Butterflies, Buttercups, and Butter Pecan Ice
Cream” – \$750**

This is a school-wide cross-curricular project for all grade levels. Students will grow their own flowers from seeds or seedlings and nurture Painted Lady butterflies from larvae stage to adult stage. This study of plants and the life cycle and habitat of butterflies will culminate in a spring celebration “flower show and butterfly release.” Parents and the entire school community will be involved in the project and celebration.

**Project STAY – Kim Kampschroer and Bill
Briesemeister – “Mr. B’s Art Group” – \$750**

The project was created to build a sense of teamwork and citizenship among students in this alternative high school setting. Students will learn healthy and effective methods of communicating and will express themselves through artwork, journal writing, and cooperative learning activities. As a part of the project, students will participate in the MPS Ropes and Challenges Course to promote cooperation and trust.

**Pulaski High School – Daniel R. Voboril
“Automobiles of the World” – \$400**

Ninth grade students will participate in a project to integrate World Geography with the school’s automotive component. Students will discover the importance of the automobile around the world and research the economic connection in various countries. During this weeklong unit, students will work on a detailed world map, highlighting the countries involved in producing automobiles. Other activities will include a guest lecturer and oral presentations by each student.

**Robinson Middle School – Carol Reiners and
Ouida Williams – “Integrating Science into
the Arts” – \$750**

This weeklong summer project will provide 25-30 sixth through eighth grade students with the opportunity to experience hands-on science within the visual arts. A biology professor and visual arts instructor at Wisconsin Lutheran College will teach the course. It will encompass the use of scientific lab equipment and art mediums including photography. The theme of study will be aquatic and bird life within natural settings.

**Sarah Scott Middle School – Phyllis Hibben
“Read 180 After School” – \$750**

Approximately 80 students will participate in an after-school reading program to improve their reading skills and increase their interest in reading for enjoyment. This is an expansion of a program currently in place in an effort to reach out to more students. Students will be provided with high interest books to motivate them to participate and encourage them to read more. The program will invite parents to participate and will provide parents with Reading Toolkits to help their children at home.

**School-to-Work Transition/Special Services
Jane Glodoski
“Literacy in the Workplace” – \$720**

The project will support approximately 30 high school students with disabilities who are currently enrolled in the School-to-Work Program at two job sites to enhance students’ workplace literacy and employment skills. Each student will develop an “Employability Portfolio” including performance profiles, resume, work samples, writing samples, photos, awards, certificates, and letters of recommendation. Students will develop and write weekly goals in the areas of attitude, attendance, job skills progress, and literacy.

**Sherman Multicultural Arts Elem. School
Marti Anderson and Maureen Dardis
“Exploring Our Senses” – \$750**

Kindergarten students will be fully engaged in hands-on, experiential activities exploring the five senses. Through a variety of lessons in all curriculum areas, the students will use sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell to gain a basic understanding of how their sensory organs work both separately and in conjunction with each other. The project will be enhanced with a field trip to the Betty Brinn Children’s Museum.

**Sherman Multicultural Arts Elem. School
Lori Carmichael and Brenda DePriest
“The Solar System” – \$750**

This is a cross-curricular project for 70-second grade students around the theme of space science. Students will be engaged in various learning activities in reading and language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. A culminating event will be a field trip to the Museum of Science and Industry.

Tippecanoe School for the Arts & Humanities
Denice Niebuhr and Carrie Davis
“Celebration of Humanity” – \$750

Thirty kindergarten students will participate in a multimedia presentation developed and performed for the school community, family members, nursing homes, Children’s Hospital, and the MPS Art School production, “Artwork for Kids.” The project will showcase what students have learned about the habits, patterns of living, and cultural celebrations. Students will learn about how and why people celebrate in Milwaukee and throughout the world with a special focus on China. Music, food, and customs will be studied.

Trowbridge Elementary School
Jacalyn Oliva and Linda Bolin
“Centering Around Balanced Literacy” –\$750

Forty-five kindergarten students will engage in small group interactive learning through a literacy center approach. Center activities will focus on components of comprehensive literacy, including word study, independent writing, interactive reading, guided reading, and more. Computer technology software will be used to guide students through storyboards and activities.

Trowbridge Elementary School
Cheryl Scholler and Karen Rinka
“Reading Buddy Fun Bags” – \$750

Fifth grade students will be paired with first grade students to read and work together on a weekly basis. Students will do a variety of literacy activities, i.e., make a puppet to go with the story, find rhyming words, identify beginning sounds, tape record a story, and more. Students will be able to take home a Reading Buddy Fun Bag to practice reading and complete fun and engaging literacy projects.

Twenty-first Street School
Jayne E. Jaskolski
“Character Education Counts” – \$750

The entire school will participate in a cross-curricular character education program that will help students identify, model, and live by the six pillars of character: Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring and Citizenship. The project promotes core ethical values as the basis of good character. Students will be recognized for modeling good character.

Urban Waldorf School
Barbara Prendergast
“Three Cultural Environments” – \$675

Fourth grade students will participate in a study of African animals, Norse Mythology, and Native Americans through hands-on activities across curricular areas. Students will create three environments in the classroom using cooperative learning techniques. All three environments will exhibit the geography, crafts, people, and culture of that area. Students will write stories, present oral reports, and use math skills to create objects to scale.

Vieau Elementary School – Amy Mudlaff
“Flat Stanley” – \$650

Fourth grade students will complete a research paper on the five regions of the United States. Based on the story Flat Stanley by Jeff Brown, students will “send” themselves (via a picture) to friends or family in another region in the U.S. and obtain information about their city while visiting. Students will track where everyone went on a map, compute distances traveled, collect information, and write a paper about one of the regions. Students will learn how to use the public library to conduct research using the Internet and reference materials.

Walker International Middle School
Kathleen Smith and Mary Owens – “Our Community: Past Present and Future” – \$750

Seventh grade students will complete a research project about “Our Community.” Students will be exposed to art, history, and the multicultural richness of Milwaukee through a number of experiences. Students will cooperate with a partner to conduct research at the school and public libraries, through the Internet, and at the Milwaukee County Historical Society. Students will prepare a research paper, make oral presentations, experience ethnic cuisine at a local restaurant, and create a three-paneled mural depicting the community in the past, present and future.

**Washington High School – Leah Moreau
“Young Entrepreneurs” – \$750**

Seven students interested in entrepreneurial endeavors will attend the Young Entrepreneurship Conference and Business Competition held in Milwaukee March 26-28. Students will see displays and hear presentations given by students from all over the United States who have started their own businesses. They will hear keynote speakers who are successful business owners and participate in breakout sessions lead by experts in the business field.

**Wisconsin Avenue School – Nicole Thomas
“High Interest Literacy Circles” – \$700**

The High Interest Literacy Circle will provide grade 2-4 students with special needs literacy material that is at their instructional level and that is of high interest to them. Circle activities will encourage and initiate greater family involvement and promote reading for enjoyment. Students will meet with their literacy circle twice per week to build confidence in reading and improve comprehension. Students will be encouraged to read at home with their families.

**Westside Academy II – Anthony Hooker
“Neighborhood Beautification Project” – \$750**

Seventh grade science students have learned about the impact of the environment, air pollution, water pollution, weathering and soil characteristics. They will participate in this project to improve the aesthetics in front of the school building by planting flowers and adding landscaping to beautify the school and neighborhood. Students will expand what they've learned about the environment by researching different plant species appropriate for the climate, proper planting and gardening techniques, and will document the project's progress. Family and community members of students will be invited to participate in the project.

**Wisconsin Conservatory of Lifelong Learning
Char Harteau and Lynn Maholias
“Supporting Connecting Courtrooms to
Classrooms” – \$650**

This cross-generational project connects students in grades 5-11 and their parents with the judicial system. Students will learn about federal and state laws, county government, and the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government. They will conduct research on careers, become aware of appropriate courtroom behavior and etiquette, learn about due process, follow current cases, and conduct a mock trial showcasing their knowledge. The project will be enhanced through field trips to the Milwaukee County Courthouse, Marquette Law School, Congressional leaders, and the County Jail.

**Wisconsin Avenue School – Nicole Goodno,
Vongdeuan Gonzaga – “Authors and
Illustrators in the Spotlight” – \$750**

This project will introduce to second graders a plethora of authors and illustrators to provide insight into their lives, work, inspiration, and creative process. The purpose is to provide students with models of strong writing and motivate them to read for enjoyment with greater enthusiasm and understanding. A resource corner, “Spotlight,” will be established in the classroom supplemented with books and writing and art supplies.