

# Hands-on Learning Grants – 2015-2016 School Year

## **Family Stories, Handmade Books: Learning Through Shared Legacy**

Author: Lauren Pagel

Program: ECFE (Early Childhood Family Education)

Our bookmaking project has two parts: Part A engages preschool students and their families, and Part B works with adult English Language Learners (ELL). With the preschools, we will use the book to strengthen their pre-K literacy skills, and work with parents to teach them how to support their children as they transition into Kindergarten. With adult ELL's, we will write and edit student texts in English, and then publish a unique collection of student writing in handmade book form. This project addresses diverse linguistic and cultural student backgrounds, pre-literacy skills building, and parent-child family education.

## **3D Printing for Everyone**

Author: Christian King

School: Cooper High School

Imagine students designing their own objects – brooches, mugs, chess pieces – or choosing a design for an object and modifying it to their own liking, and printing that actual object. That's a kind of creative power most of our students have never know, but should.

3D printers are becoming common in many commercial settings. Our students need experience with them. With such a device, we would conduct session in the Media Center on how to use the software and print objects. Students in our engineering classes could print their designs, too.



## **Collaborative Planning and Learning Center**

Author: Linda Goering

School: Robbinsdale Middle School

This grant will be used to purchase lounge chairs and ottoman cubes for the media center. These items will be used by staff and students for collaboration on projects, PLC (Professional Learning Community) work by staff members and student learning. It will also be an area for teachers to send small groups of students working on literature circles as well by small groups of students before school.

Media Center usage is changing so the media space must change to meet the needs of our staff and students. The purchase of comfortable chairs and ottomans will address these needs.



### **Ukuleles in the Classroom**

Author: Sarah Henning

School: Lakeview Elementary

Ukuleles are an accessible, inexpensive instrument that students can use alone or in an ensemble. Fifth graders at two different buildings will use this tool to work towards music curriculum objectives such as improvisation, musical expression, and music reading and notation. In addition, this hands-on approach to music making empowers students to find their individual strengths. The use of ukuleles in the classroom provides an opportunity for the standards-based learning of diverse cultures and music genres. The rigorous thought necessary to play ukulele well also engages students within the music classroom, and allows students to demonstrate high intellectual performance.



### **Outdoor Garden Classroom**

Authors: Molly James and Judie Bomchill

School: Lakeview Elementary

This project will expose students to:

- hands-on environmental education
- connect the curriculum to the world
- Provide students with an opportunity to grow and eat fresh produce.
- Offer parents an opportunity to engage with the school community.
- Develop a program that sustains itself year after year.



### **African Drumming in the Upper Elementary Setting**

Author: Paula Wagener-Lutz

School: Forest Elementary

This grant provided 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students an authentic African drumming experience with a Ghanaian drum master. It directly correlated to three of the four goals of District 281 Unified District Vision. It “utilized culturally relevant teaching and personalized learning” by having a master African drummer teaching the unit. It “engaged family and community members” with an evening concert/demonstration of African Drumming as the final event. It “engaged and empowered students by amplifying student voice” by the hands-on learning technique that is fundamental to African drumming.



## **Chickens in Our Backyard**

Author: Erica Lauinger

School: Robbinsdale Middle School

This chicken coop project allows students to experience a cross-curricular education and teamwork. Students incorporate science, math, English, art, humanities, FACS, and GTT courses to create a functional chicken coop.

## **Sensory Junction**

Author: Mary Kay Olson

School: Neill Elementary

The Positive Behavior Intervention Systems and Supports (PBIS) program helps students be successful. In some cases, students need more specific behavioral interventions to help them. One of the most successful interventions for some students is *Sensory Breaks*. This grant provides a variety of sensory equipment to compliment this space. The equipment consists of sensory equipment, spinners, weighted vests, Zuma Rockers, noise reduction headphones, and other researched items that will help the brain regulate emotions and improve academic achievement



## **Swimming is Essential for All**

Authors: Diane Dickmeyer and Theresa Zingery

Programs: Community Education and Family Literacy

Learning to swim is a necessary life skill and is especially important when living in a state with many bodies of water. According to the Swim Strong Foundation, immigrant children are at a greater risk for drowning due to lack of previous exposure to swimming. This program provided swimming lessons to immigrant preschool students in a family literacy program. This swim program developed lessons so that the parent will understand the basics of swimming and water safety along with the child and then would play a role in helping the student learn to swim.



## **“Hands-on” Rhythm for All Students**

Author: Patti Arntz

Schools: All Elementary Schools

Every elementary student in District 281 practices rhythm by speaking, reading, singing, playing, performing, and writing it while in their vocal music classroom. It is the basis of every activity during their music time. As part of the curriculum, students are assessed on these skills, whether formative or summative. These “Hands-on” rhythm cards with sequential patterns offer a creative way to deliver music instruction to all elementary students.



## **Balancing Our Pride**

Author: Gretchen Enselein

School: Robbinsdale Middle School

Gaiam Balance Ball Chairs will be used to help all students in the classroom reach their full potential. Students in the classroom have a strong need to use a fidget to release their energy, stress, and anxiety. The ball's instability allows for students' core muscle groups to be consistently engaged, with continuous movement without disrupting their fellow classmates. While the student sits on the ball, they're able to direct their natural kinesthetic energy and movement in a positive way.



## **Future in Focus**

Author: Laura Grant

Implementor: Heidi Miller

School: Cooper High School

Digital arts in the new literacy for 21<sup>st</sup> century learners. Three Canon SL1 cameras paired with the artistry of our students will create a hands-on learning experience that will arouse a passion for knowledge in the flourishing technology fields. We will be bridging the digital divide and the achievement gap for underrepresented students by placing state of the art technology in their hands in conjunction with formal industry standard instruction. Creative and innovative minds will generate cultured mature imagery that will engage students, families, as well as the community at large.



## **Hip-Hop After School: Beatz & Mindz**

Author: Michael Hastert

School: Robbinsdale Middle School

Hip-Hop After School: Beatz & Mindz is a learning enrichment program where students in grades 6-8 learn about hip-hop culture and create their own music. Students are taught the history of hip-hop and its original core values of peace, community, unity, and having fun! Students learn the fundamentals of how to arrange, compose, produce, and record their own hip-hop music using technology and musical equipment. Beatz & Mindz motivates youth to be positive and creative members of their community by providing multiple opportunities for youth leadership and giving students a safe place to be after school where they can learn, laugh, play, create, and be inspired.



## **K-5 Storytelling and Drama Integration**

Author: Amy VanderMeeden

School: Neill Elementary

We will partner with Rippling Stories/Professional Storyteller and Teaching Artist to offer hands-on, literacy-focused arts integration residencies to enhance the current District 281 Reading and Writing curriculum. Every teacher and student in our building will be directly impacted. Rippling Stories will offer several-session residencies in each of our classrooms, lead a community storytelling night, perform for large groups of students, and train our teachers in arts integration during Professional Development (PD) sessions and by embedding PD into their residencies. This grant will be a part of a match for a larger grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board.

## **The Moon and Earth: Let's Learn How This All Works...Hands-on Style!**

Author: Lesley De Paz/Maureen McCullagh

School: Robbinsdale Spanish Immersion School

Often the moon and sun are children's first exposure to earth science as they become enthralled by the glowing ball in the sky. Having a complete understanding of how our planet Earth along with the moon and sun are situated within our solar system is a foundational piece to understanding earth science. This project allows students to explore the relationship between the moon, earth, and sun with a hands-on approach. The material provided in this research based science program provide in-depth, hands-on, inquiry based exploration into the true science behind the relationship between the moon, sun, and earth while simultaneously meeting a foundational state standard.

