



ELEMENTARY LEARNING FOUNDATION
HELPING DISTRICT 64 REACH NEW HEIGHTS / district64elf.org

DISTRICT 64 ELEMENTARY LEARNING FOUNDATION 2020 – 2021 GRANTS

Since 1994, ELF has established and supported innovative educational programs by awarding grants to teachers and staff who are committed to excellence in education. This year, more than \$21,300 in grants will be awarded to District 64 schools, advancing ELF's total direct grants to over \$835,800!

Digital Music As Assistive Technology

Carpenter Elementary School

On the accessibility side of things, there is no other instrument or adaptive technology available that does what the Sphero Specdrums can do to make instruments accessible to all students. There are students who would benefit from adaptive technology that addresses more than just physical/gross motor/fine motor issues. This allows a student with special needs to participate fully and much more independently in music class by making the same music other students are making. Outside the music classroom, students in Maker Club could have access to Specdrums for composing and performing music in groups, and classroom teachers could incorporate coding and sequencing skills into mathematics lessons and enrichment activities.

PAWS To Read Library

Carpenter Elementary School

“Paws” to Read is a project designed to give Intervention students easy access to a variety of books at their “just right” reading level for at home reading. With busy schedules, we want students to take the time to read high interest books to achieve their reading goals, but also have access to a variety of genres and text types so they can continue to enjoy books that are of interest to them. The project would create a “Paws” to Read Library of fiction and nonfiction books for the K-5 students in Intervention, which will contain numerous titles for students to select from. When students visit the “Paws” to Read Library, they will be able to select books as long as they exchange good quality books; so for each book selected, one will need to be exchanged. The “PAWS” to Read Library will give students the opportunity to select books they can read at home so they can continue to build their reading skills and develop a “love” for reading quality literature.

Thematic Coding Kits

Field Elementary School

This project aims to promote computational thinking, multi-age coding opportunities, and college/career readiness skills through unique hands on learning experiences. Kano Coding Kits, when implemented in the classrooms and innovation station, will complement our future-ready curriculum and teach students in a way that is simple for beginners, and expansive for experts. The objective is to not only create future-ready students by teaching them 21st century technology skills, but also to re-ignite their passions in literacy and math by pairing the coding activities with books and using them to support current math standards. Because the Kano Coding Kits have themes that not only captivate student interest (Harry Potter, Star Wars, and Frozen) but also have physical book/literacy tie-ins where students and teachers can read, talk about characters, motivations, and plot, it is easier to naturally incorporate the coding lessons.



Mud Kitchen

Jefferson School

A mud kitchen at Jefferson would allow for daily opportunities for our children to interact with nature, while allowing for creative expression, strengthening fine motor development, and encouraging social-emotional and language development as children work together collaboratively. Mud is a great medium to teach our early learners about math and science by comparing and measuring. Children can increase their language development by describing their mud creations and describing the way the mud feels in their hands. Social emotional development is encouraged by sharing, taking turns and manipulating materials in the kitchen. And children are encouraged to explore and get messy! We also plan to reach out to the maintenance department of District 64, Village of Niles and City of Park Ridge in search of tree rings/slices to create a walking trail as well as tree stumps to be used as natural “chairs” for children and staff.

School Anxiety/Avoidance

Lincoln Middle School

Our larger goals, as a Lincoln Education/Guidance Office Team, are to cut down on student absences, teach students coping skills that can be used in and out of school, empower teachers and staff to respond to student anxieties and needs, as well as programming to educate parents on how to address student anxiety and school avoidance. We also would like to develop some professional development, including best practice. This grant will help build a number of supports for students experiencing anxiety that affects their school attendance/school avoidance. Three tiers will be developed, including a school-based team to identify students at risk, an elective class with a curriculum to increase coping/resiliency skills, and collaboration with professionals at Rush Neurobehavioral Institute.

World Music Drumming

Carpenter, Field, Franklin, Roosevelt, and Washington Schools

Incorporating World Music Drumming into the musical experiences provided to 3rd through 5th Grade students would enhance their elementary music experience. This curriculum would provide musical benefits as well as social-emotional benefits for our students. The objectives of this project are:

- 1) Grow students’ musical abilities through practicing rhythms as they perform the World Music Drumming ensemble pieces, and
- 2) Strengthen the classroom community through learning and performing World Music Drumming ensemble pieces, which inherently requires teamwork, cooperation, patience, and respect in order for students to succeed.

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