



2024 – 2025 Teacher Grants

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All Schools

Grant Title: Minnetonka Community Resource Night Grant

Grant #1

Lead Teacher/Staff: Anna Bjork

School/Building: All

Summary: The Minnetonka Community Resource Night team is seeking funding for the 3rd annual Minnetonka Community Resource night in the fall of 2024. The goal of this event is to provide an evening of connection, information and resources to EL and other underserved families in the Minnetonka School District. If awarded, this funding will help secure food for the evening, valuable/needed prizes for the families that attend (grocery and gas cards), postage, printing and signage for the event.

Awarded: \$1,200, partially funded by the Minnetonka Alumni Association

Grant Title: Core Boards for Universal Use

Grant #2

Lead Teacher/Staff: Melissa Talmo

School/Building: All

Summary: We, The Minnetonka Core Board Committee, comprised of 6 speech-language pathologists serving ages birth to 21 and committed to accessibility for all students, propose installing large core vocabulary boards on our elementary and early childhood playgrounds, in all gymnasiums, cafeterias and motor rooms across the district to increase communication

access for our students who are: non-verbal, have lower language skills, are deaf/hard of hearing, are English Learners or verbally shutdown when dysregulated. Currently when in these spaces, our students need to rely on gestures, or staff/peers who know them well. Boards would provide a way to communicate in the spaces with all other communication partners (peers and staff) increasing our students' sense of belonging.

Awarded: \$695

Grant Title: Seniors Serve 2025- Community Outreach Program for Graduating Seniors (June 2025)

Grant #7

Lead Teacher/Staff: Sarah Johnson

School/Building: All

Summary: The Seniors Serve program was established 20 years ago to give our out-going seniors a way to both serve our greater community and thank the members of our community who have supported them throughout their journey in Minnetonka Public Schools.

Over the course of these two days, our goal will be to have as many of the 800+ Minnetonka High School seniors engaged in service work throughout the community.

Awarded: \$300

Clear Springs Elementary

Grant Title: GPS Units

Grant #3

Lead Teacher/Staff: Haley Reiser

School/Building: Clear Springs

Summary: Our 3rd grade team is hoping to get a class set of GPS devices.

Awarded: \$5,200, given by Voyage Wealth Architects (Foundation Partner)

Grant Title: Proyecto Comelibros (=“Project Bookeater” in English =Project Bookworm)

Grant #5

Lead Teacher/Staff: Rachel Chase

School/Building: Clear Springs

Summary: We are seeking funds to purchase engaging, relevant, and authentic texts to create a shared library for 5th grade Spanish immersion students in 3 classrooms at Clear Springs.

Awarded: \$1,900

Grant Title: Sonor SMART Series Xylophones

Grant #6

Lead Teacher/Staff: Jennifer Kimball

School/Building: Clear Springs, District Choir, the 4-5th grade musical.

Summary: This is my third year applying for the amazing 3 set xylophones from the Sonor SMART Xylophones as they were such a success the last 2 years and my goal is to get more students the opportunity to play these in class and acquire a class set for each student to use individually. Thanks to the Minnetonka Alumni Association and Minnetonka Foundation students were able to experience these German made SMART Xylophones that are smaller and easier for all students but especially younger students to utilize in music lessons. They replaced our 8 step bells that did not last the test of time due to our heavy use of them during the pandemic. This 3 set SMART series stands for: Stackable; Mobile and Multifunctional; Acoustically Optimized; Refined and Trail brazing with Space Saving for bars. Students asked me to apply again to get more for the music classroom so that they had a better shot at getting a chance to play when they came to class!

Awarded: \$1,544, partially funded by the Minnetonka Alumni Association

Deephaven Elementary

Grant Title: Tools for Language Arts and Math Centers

Grant #8

Lead Teacher/Staff: Jenny Gaard

School/Building: Deephaven

Summary: I am applying for a grant that focuses on our language arts and math centers. I am requesting funds to create engaging, interactive and hands-on centers. RSK is a program where students develop fine motor skills, independent exploration, language development, reading skills and vocabulary and I would to provide more hands-on activities and opportunities for growth.

Awarded: \$250, given by Domino's (Foundation Partner)

Grant Title: Flexible Seating

Grant #9

Lead Teacher/Staff: Karen Clepper

School/Building: Deephaven

Summary: Flexible classrooms give students a choice in what kind of learning space works best for them, and help them to work collaboratively, communicate, and engage in critical thinking. Research shows that flexible seating increases engagement and positively impacts collaboration and student health (Alzahrani, 2021; Gremmen et al., 2016; Harvey & Kenyon, 2013; Jones, 2020; Kennedy, 2016; Olson et al., 2019; Schilling & Schwartz, 2004; Schoolcraft, 2018; Seaver, 2019). Children need to move. Flexible seating allows them to wobble, rock, bounce, lean or stand, which increases oxygen flow to the brain, blood flow and core strength. In turn, this burns more calories and increases metabolism. It also helps keep young minds more alert and focused.

Awarded: \$900

Grant Title: Scooters, Scooters, Scooters!

Grant #10

Lead Teacher/Staff: Samantha Bauchle

School/Building: Deephaven

Summary: This grant is to update and replace our current scooters at Deephaven Elementary for physical education. Due to our double class sizes and broken equipment, we no longer have the amount of scooters we need. As scooters are expensive, it is not in our normal budget to replace these items.

Awarded: \$2,068, given by Domino's (Foundation Partner)

Excelsior Elementary

Grant Title: 2nd Grade Chinese Reading & Writing Center, Math Booster, and Team Building Activities AND Reading and Writing Performance & Math Center

Grant #12 & #17

Lead Teacher/Staff: Jieming Jin & Xian He

School/Building: Excelsior

Summary: 1. In order to make Chinese reading and writing class more engaging and meaningful, the teacher is planning to create a Chinese reading and writing center inside of the classroom. After learning a lesson, students will use hand puppets to perform the story. The teacher will also create a "creative writing" unit. Students will team up to create a story and use hand puppets to role play the story to the whole class;

2. The math learning resources will be used as a supplementary learning materials for math groups;

3. The board games and outdoor games will be used as team building and positive learning community building activities. These activities are beneficial for students' social and emotional development. This grant will enhance students' reading and writing performance, enrich their experiences in language and literature application, and elevate students' learning engagement levels.

Awarded: \$450

Grant Title: Book Club Books Expansion

Grant #13

Lead Teacher/Staff: Kelly Fisher

School/Building: Excelsior

Summary: We are working to build a robust teacher library of novel sets to enrich our reading experiences for students at Excelsior Elementary. We gratefully received a Foundation Grant for this last year and it gave us a strong start to this process. Having a rich resource of these materials for small group book clubs allows students to see themselves as readers, builds a community of literacy, and allows student choice with the books they choose.

Awarded: \$2,500

Grant Title: 1, 2, 3 Math is for me

Grant #14

Lead Teacher/Staff: Mark Broten

School/Building: Excelsior

Summary: There is a need to help students align math problems/algorithms to keep numbers in place value position. Currently we are using whiteboards, but have a need for whiteboards with grids on them so that third grade students who need help with alignment of numbers. A class set of these boards will ensure that every single student is cognitively engaged in the math lesson.

Awarded: \$236

Grant Title: Mobilo Large Building Set-120 Pcs

Grant #15

Lead Teacher/Staff: Shuang Caudill

School/Building: Excelsior

Summary: We are applying this building sets for both unstructured play time and learning station uses. Currently we each have one set (from PTO grant)in the class and we found great use of these in both math and Language art. They are also very popular during play time. We also found one set often leads to unfinished tasks. Therefore we would really like to have several more sets to add to our current material.

Awarded: \$390

Excelsior & Scenic Heights Elementary

Grant Title: Representing Native Stories

Grant #18

Lead Teacher/Staff: Ali Wachutka

School/Building: Excelsior, Scenic Heights

Summary: We are looking to enhance our classroom libraries with books that align with new LA and science standards and center Native American (especially Native Minnesotan) stories and authors. We have asked for books for read alouds, classroom libraries, and book group sets.

Awarded: \$1,900, given by Kristi Weinstock Real Estate (Foundation Partner)

Grant Title: Belonging in School: Cultivating an Environment for Student Engagement

Grant #19

Lead Teacher/Staff: Qingling Mendenhall

School/Building: Excelsior, Scenic Heights

Summary: Fostering a sense of belonging in the classroom is paramount for enhancing student learning outcomes and overall well-being. It acts as a cornerstone for various aspects of education to flourish. Our district has prioritized this goal for more than a decade, recognizing its profound impact on student success. The recent release of "Belonging in School" offers 11 meticulously researched modules, presenting actionable strategies for educators to implement, fostering inclusivity among students.

This grant initiative aims to enable teachers and administrators to experiment with these strategies, collecting data to assess their efficacy in enhancing student engagement and sense of belonging.

Awarded: \$850

Grant Title: Chinese immersion Wordwall.net pro account

Grant #21

Lead Teacher/Staff: Ye Long

School/Building: Excelsior, Scenic Heights

Summary: Wordwall.net allows teachers to create interactive games and printed materials for their students. It's a great way to help students with math concepts, vocabulary understanding and memorizing in a fun way.

Awarded: \$1,800

Groveland Elementary

Grant Title: Groveland Spanish Immersion Cultural Arts Grant

Grant #22

Lead Teacher/Staff: Jen Santamaria

School/Building: Groveland

Summary: A core principle of immersion, is integrating culture. This grant invites hispanic artists from the metro area to teach immersion students about their culture through visual arts and dance.

Awarded: \$4,945

Grant Title: Innovative seating to promote individualization and independence for RSK

Grant #23

Lead Teacher/Staff: Katie Bowman

School/Building: Groveland

Summary: I am looking for individualized seating and furniture that promotes independence and individualized learning for our students who need extra support. I am hoping that by providing the necessary resources like the delta table and other seating options, my students will feel comfortable and can further their learning in our classroom environment.

Awarded: \$770

Grant Title: Fine motor and sensory supports for all.

Grant #24

Lead Teacher/Staff: Michelle Makres

School/Building: Groveland

Summary: This grant is to provide each Groveland classroom with a kit of fine motor and sensory tools which can benefit students with needs that may not be supported by the typical general education tools available in the classroom.

Awarded: \$3,384

Grant Title: Introduction to Drones for Upper Elementary

Grant #25

Lead Teacher/Staff: Peter Gausmann

School/Building: Groveland

Summary: This grant will fund three CoDrone EDU drones that will expose Groveland 4th and 5th graders to aviation by coding and piloting indoor drones.

Awarded: \$660, given by Tonkadale (Foundation Partner)

Minnewashta Elementary

Grant Title: MWA 2nd grade Spanish book club books

Grant #27

Lead Teacher/Staff: Carolyn Suarez

School/Building: Minnewashta

Summary: Sets of chapter books in Spanish will enrich student reading groups, increase student engagement and enjoyment of reading, as well as facilitate student discussion of what they are reading. The book list includes a variety of interests, vocabulary and books in a series that will encourage students to keep reading.

Awarded: \$256

Scenic Height Elementary

Grant Title: Empowering Students: The ArchChinese Approach to Elevating Chinese Proficiency

Grant #31

Lead Teacher/Staff: Qingling Mendenhall

School/Building: Scenic Heights

Summary: The past years proved that digital transformation is no longer just important — it is absolutely essential. How do we harness the power of digital technology to promote students' Chinese language proficiency? ArchChinese is a student-centered choice. With their innovative platform, students of all levels can immerse themselves in an enriching learning experience designed to maximize proficiency and fluency.

Awarded: \$100

Grant Title: Chinese Traditional Music Band Performances

Grant #32

Lead Teacher/Staff: Yuan (Andy) Wang

School/Building: Scenic Heights

Summary: I am thinking of inviting prestigious traditional Chinese musicians in Minnesota to perform for Chinese traditional festivals such as Spring Festival (Chinese New Year, usually in January/February), Moon Festival (September), Dragon Boat Festival (June), Lantern festival (February), Winter Festival (December) etc.

Awarded: \$1,000

Tonka Online

Grant Title: The Tonka Online Toolkit & Tonka Online Artist Residency

Grant #33 & #34

Lead Teacher/Staff: Grace Mevissen & Tim Ketel

School/Building: Tonka Online

Summary: The Tonka Online Toolkit Grant will equip students with physical and virtual tools to meet the unique needs of our K-5 Tonka Online scholars. The toolkit includes items such as: digital subscriptions, physical books and virtual field trips/author visits. There is no experience quite like a student working with a professional artist to create and perform their own masterpiece. We would like to bring that experience to the students of Tonka Online K-5 through an immersive artist residency with local authors and poets.

Awarded: \$2,500

Grant Title: The Virtual Naturalist

Grant #35

Lead Teacher/Staff: Tim Ketel

School/Building: Tonka Online

Summary: We would like to work with a local naturalist, who will lead virtual lessons about nature and environmental topics with the Tonka Online elementary students.

Awarded: \$825, fully funded by the Minnetonka Alumni Association

Minnetonka Middle School East

Grant Title: Science iPad Magnifiers

Grant #36

Lead Teacher/Staff: Anna Schoeneberger

School/Building: MME

Summary: Magnifier Clips for the iPad have been piloted and greatly enhanced the Earth and Space Science course. The ability to turn the iPad camera into a magnifier brings to life rock and mineral samples as well as well the ability to "take a microscope outside of the classroom" for magnification in the real-world in real-time.

Awarded: \$176

Grant Title: LabCam

Grant #37

Lead Teacher/Staff: Michelle Brunik

School/Building: MME

Summary: This grant request seeks funding for a LabCam microscope attachment to enhance the 7th-grade science classroom's ability to photograph and record microorganisms found in pond water and other samples. This technology will provide students with a hands-on learning experience, fostering a deeper understanding of microbiology and ecology. By capturing detailed images and videos, students can engage in meaningful scientific exploration and analysis.

Awarded: \$289, fully funded by the Minnetonka Alummit Association

Grant Title: Dry (But Not the Boring Kind of Dry)

Grant #38

Lead Teacher/Staff: Nicole Berwanger

School/Building: MME

Summary: Prior to the 6th Grade Water Walk, Honors students will read the dystopian book, Dry by Neal Schusterman. It's about the California drought escalating to catastrophic proportions. They will research what is fiction and what is true in the story. They will finish the unit by writing persuasive letters to people and groups who can/do have an impact on water scarcity/conservation efforts in the United States.

Awarded: \$1,300

Grant Title: Future trends in Physical Education

Grant #39

Lead Teacher/Staff: Stacie Olson

School/Building: MME

Summary: The world of education, much like everything else, is in a constant state of evolution. PE, once regarded as a straightforward discipline focused primarily on traditional sports, is blossoming into a multidimensional field that intertwines health, technology, and holistic student development.

Awarded: \$2,575

Grant Title: Aqua Escape - An extended learning opportunity for ALL!

Grant #40

Lead Teacher/Staff: Susan Wolfe

School/Building: MME

Summary: To augment our current swimming curriculum and to enhance the elements of student choice, inquiry and exploration., I would like to provide an "Aqua Escape" experience for all students to participate in and enjoy at the end of every swim class period.

Awarded: \$652, given by Minnesota Inboard Watersports (Foundation Partner)

Minnetonka Middle Schools East & West

Grant Title: Water Rocket Launcher

Grant #41

Lead Teacher/Staff: Charles Plumadore

School/Building: MME, MMW

Summary: Engineer, Construct and Test. These are key aspects of STEM and the new "Next Generation Science Standards" from the State of Minnesota. This Water Rocket Launch System will allow students to complete each of these steps and then evaluate their results. With this system, teachers at MME and MMW will have a high quality resource available to them without ANY reoccurring annual expenses.

Awarded: \$1,390

Grant Title: Lego Robotics!

Grant #42

Lead Teacher/Staff: Dan Chies

School/Building: MME, MMW

Summary: Looking to continue to purchase lego robotic kits for use at the middle school level. These are used in 8th grade Advanced Robotics and 7th grade Tech Ed, and are an incredibly useful way to tie engineering, coding, independent use, and hands-on learning together. Also, the current 6th graders are using a defunct robot and app, so moving everyone to the new level would be a key objective.

Awarded: \$8,000

Minnetonka Middle School West

Grant Title: 7th Grade Microscopes MMW

Grant #43

Lead Teacher/Staff: Beth Keskey (Beth Ahlgren)

School/Building: MMW

Summary: This is a perfect microscope for students to learn science. It comes with full optical glass elements, metal framework, 360 degree rotatable monocular head, and LED illumination. It offers five magnification settings, 40X, 100X, 250X, 400X and 1000X.

Awarded: \$,1530, given by Cargill Inc. (Foundation Partner)

Grant Title: MMW Spanish Immersion Book Club Unit

Grant #44

Lead Teacher/Staff: Emma De Santiago

School/Building: MMW

Summary: We have piloted a Book Club unit with our 8th graders the past couple of years and have used digital copies of books. We would like to purchase physical copies of the books so all students can read on paper rather than on the iPad; this also aligns with best practices in reading.

Awarded: \$513

Grant Title: Best Buddies

Grant #45

Lead Teacher/Staff: Madeline St. Martin

School/Building: MMW

Summary: Best Buddies is a non-profit organization that supports inclusion for individuals with disabilities. MMW adopted our Best Buddies chapter about three years ago, and already we have won many awards for being an inclusive chapter. We need this grant money in order to keep this going.

Awarded: \$300, fully funded by the Minnetonka Alumni Association

Minnetonka High School

Grant Title: Virtual Enterprise (VE)

Grant #50

Lead Teacher/Staff: Andrew Werner

School/Building: MHS

Summary: Virtual Enterprise (VE) is a program in which students run business ventures in their classrooms and engage in trading with other student-run businesses both nationally and internationally. VE students establish and manage a company that replicates all the functions and demands of a real business. A typical firm is staffed in Operations, Management, Accounting, Finance, Sales, Marketing, Legal, Human Resources, and IT. The business and classroom are entirely student run, led by managers and a CEO. VE is a year-long, credit bearing course, which is enhanced by regional, national, and international business plan competitions and trade shows. We were very fortunate to receive a grant from the foundation last year and hope to build on our success. VE had 25 students enrolled last year, and has grown to 35 students this year. We fully expect even more students next year, which would require starting a second business and additional funding.

Awarded: \$5,000

Grant Title: Tool Cart for Robotics Team**Grant #51****Lead Teacher/Staff: Celeste Hill****School/Building: MHS**

Summary: Through the funding provided we would invest in a new tool cart which would be used to store the MHS robotics teams tools and supplies.

Awarded: \$500**Grant Title: CTE Woodworking teacher****Grant #52****Lead Teacher/Staff: David Kitzmann****School/Building: MHS**

Summary: Only a handful of students even attempt a Wood turning project. This is because I only have 3 lathes and they are decades old and difficult to use.

Awarded: \$10,950**Grant Title: Thinking Math Classroom****Grant #53****Lead Teacher/Staff: Heather Richins****School/Building: MHS**

Summary: The Thinking Math Classroom aims to foster a “math thinking” culture. Through task design and purposeful use of large vertical non-permanent surfaces (whiteboards) around the classrooms, teachers can increase engagement in the class, critical thinking skills, and academic understanding. This project aims to transform Minnetonka High School classrooms into centers for collaborative problem solving and mathematical inquiry. Our ask with this grant is to get multiple whiteboards in three math classrooms.

Awarded: \$2,500**Grant Title: Measuring Velocity with Self Contained Photogates****Grant #54****Lead Teacher/Staff: Joe Cossette****School/Building: MHS**

Summary: Classroom sets of self contained photogates that will unlock a direct method to measure the instantaneous velocity of a moving object. The new capabilities that this equipment allows will result in more hands-on opportunities for physics students to make connections between their real-world experiences and the mathematical equations describing the motion that they observe

Awarded: \$2,500**Grant Title: Frames for the Art Department****Grant #55****Lead Teacher/Staff: Meg Koenitzer****School/Building: MHS**

Summary: The Art Department is seeking money in which to purchase frames in which we can display student work throughout the year. These would primarily be used in the art gallery located in the Art Center and would benefit nearly every art student. Our current frames are in such disrepair that we literally duct taped them together and hung them with a shoe lace last art show.

Awarded: \$1,000, fully funded by the Minnetonka Alumni Association

Grant Title: New Photon 2 Chips for CIS Course @ MHS**Grant #57****Lead Teacher/Staff: Nick Bahr****School/Building: MHS**

Summary: This grant will help fund the purchase of new Photon 2 chips for the CIS: Introduction to Computing Systems course at MHS. The current Photon chips are being discontinued and the course needs new Photon 2 chips to stay current with what the U of MN offers students. Without the purchase of these new chips, the course will be utilizing old technology that is no longer relevant to the course curriculum and real world industry standards.

Awarded: \$800**Grant Title: Digital Cameras for Digital Photo 1,2, Tonka online photography, & Independent Study/AP Art****Grant #58****Lead Teacher/Staff: Rebecca Marks****School/Building: MHS**

Summary: With digital photography becoming more and more popular, these courses are growing in number each year. This is fantastic, but the 12 classroom cameras that our budget currently allows for are not quite enough to cover our numbers. Each digital photo 1 course currently sits around 32-36 students, meaning that we have about 1 camera per 3 students- our goal with this grant is to purchase more cameras to get us to a ratio of 1 camera per 1 or 2 students to allow for the courses to have more authentic, hands on learning within our daily curriculum.

Awarded: \$4,800**Grant Title: Ceramics Olympic Kiln****Grant #59****Lead Teacher/Staff: Sarah Young****School/Building: MHS**

Summary: We are asking for a new kiln for the Ceramics classes at MHS.

Awarded: \$13,535**Grant Title: More Hands On Snap Circuit Kits!****Grant #60****Lead Teacher/Staff: Simon Skluzacek****School/Building: MHS**

Summary: The physics department has been utilizing, and loving, the set of 12 Snap Circuit Kits that Physical Science received from a 2018-2019 MTKA Foundation grant. They give students a hands-on, intuitive, and safe (max of 6 Volts) way to investigate electricity. We are applying to build another set of 14 custom kits so that more than one teacher can plan to use them on a given day, minimizing group sizes to two to three students per kit and maximizing student engagement!

Awarded: \$1,700**Grant Title: Reading Pen for Dyslexia****Grant #61****Lead Teacher/Staff: Stacey Edlavitch****School/Building: MHS**

Summary: Some of our students in the Anchor Program are Dyslexic. We would like 1 pen for the 9/10 classroom and another pen for the 11/12 classroom. Our students would benefit from using a pen because it would help them read from our classroom novels and text books that are not available online.

Awarded: \$400, fully funded by the Minnetonka Alumni Association

Grant Title: Community Builders**Grant #62****Lead Teacher/Staff: Stephanie Nelson****School/Building: MHS**

Summary: I would like to purchase some games that could be used as community builders in my elective science classes. Students are in grades 10-12 and often don't know each other. Short game sessions would provide an opportunity to get to know each other using learning games like Banagrams, Operation, Codenames, and Shrinky Dink (creating miniature models of human body organs)

Awarded: \$434**Grant Title: Metal Shop Cordless Drills****Grant #63****Lead Teacher/Staff: Steve Nugent****School/Building: MHS**

Summary: I would like to ask for six cordless drill for the metal shop. We are currently working with 2 drills that are old and don't hold a charge very long. Students in both the Art and Tech ed department use these drills.

Awarded: \$1,074**Grant Title: Demonstration Probes for Physics****Grant #64****Lead Teacher/Staff: Tom Tomashek****School/Building: MHS**

Summary: This grant will be for the acquisition of three probes to be used for physics demonstrations. The probes are for measuring static charge, electrical current and electrical voltage. With these teachers will be able to demonstrate a variety of electrical phenomena for most of our physics classes.

Awarded: \$237**Grant Title: VANTAGE Inclusion Expansion****Grant #66****Lead Teacher/Staff: Roger Andre****School/Building: MHS, VANTAGE Momentum Building**

Summary: VANTAGE has professional clothing requirements that can be a barrier for students from home situations without the means to purchase these cloths. Each year a small number of student (0-15) request assistance. For the past two years this assistance has come through a Minnetonka Public Schools Foundation grant.

Awarded: \$2,500, given by Refine Wealth Strategies (Foundation Partner)