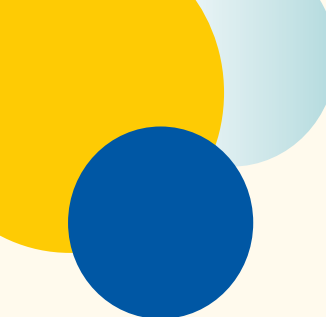




**Chatham**   
**EDUCATION FOUNDATION**

# PHILANTHROPY REPORT 2023-2024

[chathamedfoundation.org](http://chathamedfoundation.org)



## OUR VISION

To be the leading philanthropic partner for the School District of the Chathams for collaborating on innovative ideas to enrich education, support future-focused initiatives, and build a sustainable source of funding through an endowment.

## OUR MISSION

Support educational excellence in the School District of the Chathams through parent and community donations.

Chatham Education Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable organization supporting the 3,500+ K-12 students enrolled in the District's six public schools.

The Foundation is managed by a board of trustees from all corners of the Chatham community, and has no employees or physical assets. The Foundation operates independently of the Board of Education, Parent Teacher Organizations, and booster organizations. The Foundation is a leading provider of private funding to the School District, and has funded over \$1.8 million in grants and scholarships since 1997.



# Enriching the education of generations of Chatham Students

The School District of the Chathams (SDOC) is consistently ranked among the top public school districts in New Jersey and the nation, based on metrics like test scores, AP participation, and post-secondary enrollment. However, SDOC faces challenges due to inflation, budget limitations, and unpredictable state funding.

To address these challenges, the Chatham Education Foundation (CEF) was established in 1994 as a philanthropic partner to support innovative initiatives and build a sustainable endowment. As a 501(c)(3) non-profit, CEF raises funds through community donations to enhance education and aims to grow its endowment to \$4 million for curriculum grants.

In its first year, CEF raised \$33,000 and awarded \$9,000 in grants. Today, revenues and grants have increased tenfold, with total grants to SDOC reaching \$1.8 million.

The Foundation is managed by a community board of trustees and operates independently of the Board of Education and other local organizations.





# CURRICULUM- ENHANCING GRANTS

The **Chatham Education Foundation** funds initiatives not covered by the traditional SDOC budget, focusing on four key goals:

- Enhancing student learning
- Supporting educator growth
- Fostering student well-being, and
- Creating innovative learning space

Grants support initiatives that:

- Enhance existing academic program, curriculum, guidance or counseling functions, and staff development
- Enrich, not duplicate or replace the current curriculum and educational structure
- Reflect the goals of SDOC
- Are innovative and creative in teaching and learning
- Implement new and experimental methods of teaching
- Can be evaluated by some measure of quality and be expanded and replicated if successful

Our rigorous process ensures donor funds are used effectively. SDOC teachers and administrators submit grant proposals, which are reviewed and approved by the CEF Board of Trustees and the SDOC Board of Education. Funds are paid directly to SDOC, and any unused funds are returned. Both CEF and SDOC accounts are audited annually by independent auditors.

## CEF CASE STUDY

### Building Thinking Classrooms in Mathematics

Chatham High School

#### The Challenge

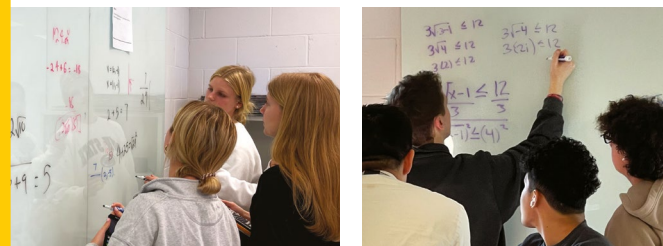
Standard math classroom environments can lack the tools and configuration to maximize collaboration and active learning. Research shows that using whiteboard surfaces boosts student productivity, critical thinking, and wellness.

#### CEF Grant Solution

With a \$14,294 grant, Chatham High School converted the final three high school math classrooms into "Thinking Classrooms," following two earlier phases funded by CEF grants in 2018 and 2021, bringing the total funding to over \$60,000. Changes included removing the traditional classroom front, adding flexible seating, and non-permanent writing surfaces.

Math Supervisor and grant applicant Aaron Yamamoto said, "The physical classroom shift encouraged academic risk-taking and collaboration, enabling real-time feedback and targeted differentiation."

*Supported in part by the STEM Endowment Fund  
(Anonymous Donor)*



# Chatham Education Foundation's 2023-2024 GRANT AWARDS







### The Maud Dahme Library of the Holocaust

Chatham Middle School and Chatham High School

**\$15,000**

Applied for by Michael LaSusa, Rachel Ruffner, and Lisa Calamari, this grant supports the creation of the Maud Dahme Library of the Holocaust, advancing the school district's focus on Holocaust studies and other genocides. The library will highlight stories of overlooked survivors and house a collection of books, interviews, and manuscripts, including works from Maud Dahme's personal collection. It will serve CHS and CMS, impacting 800–2,000 students. An evening program with Maud Dahme will also be part of the library's launch. "This library reflects our community's commitment to teaching uncomfortable truths and broadening students' understanding of history," says Michael LaSusa.

Supported in part by the Routh Family Endowment Fund and the Epstein Family Endowment Fund.

### Supporting the Transition to a 5–8 Middle School

Chatham Middle School & Lafayette Avenue School

**\$3,050**

Applied for by Anthony Orsini and Danielle Dagounis, this grant will allow CMS and LAF educators to attend the AMLE national conference on middle school best practices. They will share key takeaways with staff as the district works on a grade-level reconfiguration. Anthony Orsini says, "This grant will help enhance CMS's strengths and identify growth areas for a successful transition to a 5–8 middle school."

Funded in part by the Kuppenheimer Family Endowment Fund.

### Building Teamwork, Collaboration & Creativity with Outdoor/Indoor Block Play

Washington Avenue School

**\$5,500**

With this grant, Kindergarten and 1st grade teachers at WAS will purchase a set of blocks and a storage system for indoor and outdoor recess. The blocks will support gross motor development and offer alternatives to tag, jungle gyms, and swings. They also align with the Pushes and Pulls Science Unit and the 1st grade D&T curriculum. Grant applicants were Kelli Finn, Francesca Verducci, Rebecca Sheasley, Megan Tompkins, Nancy Volker, Joyce Luongo, Megan Stevens, and Lisa Kressler who explained, "We are always looking for ways to enhance student collaboration and team-building skills...primary students need more strategies to work together, problem-solve, and share materials."

Funded in part by the Dickson Family Endowment Fund and the Blue Foundry Bank Endowment Fund.



### NJ Symphony Residency

Chatham High School & Lafayette Avenue School

**\$3,000**

This grant funds 30 hours of coaching for the CHS and LAF Orchestra and Band classes from NJ Symphony musicians, along with instruction for educators. The musicians will lead multi-week small group sessions to deepen students' understanding of musicianship. Grant applicant Liam Keller, along with Lauren Spooner, Emily Gaul, and Brian Conti, explained, "As active community members, these musicians will offer students insight into lifelong musicianship and the role of professional performance in New Jersey's social and economic landscape."

Funded in part by the Rooney Family Endowment Fund and the PriVikNik Endowment Fund.

### Creating Collaborative and Engaging World Language Classrooms

Chatham Middle School

**\$11,823**

To enhance students' understanding of Chinese characters and promote collaboration to accelerate language acquisition, grant applicants Hongbin Ng and Tine Engell will purchase dry erase desks and flexible classroom furniture to support diverse seating arrangements for various learning tasks. Hongbin Ng says, "This grant will create a culturally authentic environment and support language learning, including proper stroke order for writing characters."

Funded in part by an endowment funded by an anonymous donor.



### District Choral Festival

Lafayette Avenue School, Chatham Middle School, Chatham High School

**\$4,750**

This grant will bring a professional New York City-based cappella ensemble of five vocalists, arrangers, and beatboxers to the Annual District Choral Festival. The ensemble will provide hands-on learning, create a custom arrangement for students in grades 4–12, and teach skills like beatboxing, pop vocal techniques, and vocal improvisation. Dana Goldstein, who applied for the grant with Ken Bryson and Christie Spriggs, says, "This project will help form connections between students who are just starting out their choral career and students who have been participating for a decade. In previous years, our Choral Festivals exhibited first-hand how this event improved student communication, collaboration, and musicianship. CHS students paved the way for CMS students who then became role models for Lafayette students."

Funded in part by the Ryan T. Ganley Memorial Endowment Fund (Metviner family).

### Improving Math Facts and Flexible Thinking

Lafayette Avenue School and Chatham Middle School

**\$1,400**

Reflex Math is an online program offering adaptive games to help students improve math skills, accuracy, and efficiency. The goal is to boost math confidence and provide a foundation for higher-order thinking. This grant funds Reflex Math for the Basic Skills Instruction (BSI) Program, supporting 4th and 5th-grade students. Grant applicants Kelly Antunes and Jennifer Magno explain, "Knowing math facts and the ability to recall them is a fundamental component of mathematical competence that significantly benefits struggling 4th and 5th-grade learners. It provides a solid foundation for more advanced mathematical concepts, increases efficiency in problem solving, and accuracy."

Funded in part by the Sally and Bryan Allen Endowment Fund

### Supporting Learners in Non-Traditional Settings

Milton Avenue School

**\$8,161**

Modeled after a successful project at Washington Avenue School, this grant will provide resource room and Basic Skills students with seating options, writing support devices, and fidget tools to improve focus and academic performance. Amy Kerr, who applied with Jacqueline Maroney and Gina DelloStritto, explains, "When students use alternative seating and fidgets purposefully, it has shown to increase student engagement and achievement in the classroom."

Funded in part by the Quon Family Endowment for Diversity, Inclusion, and Special Education

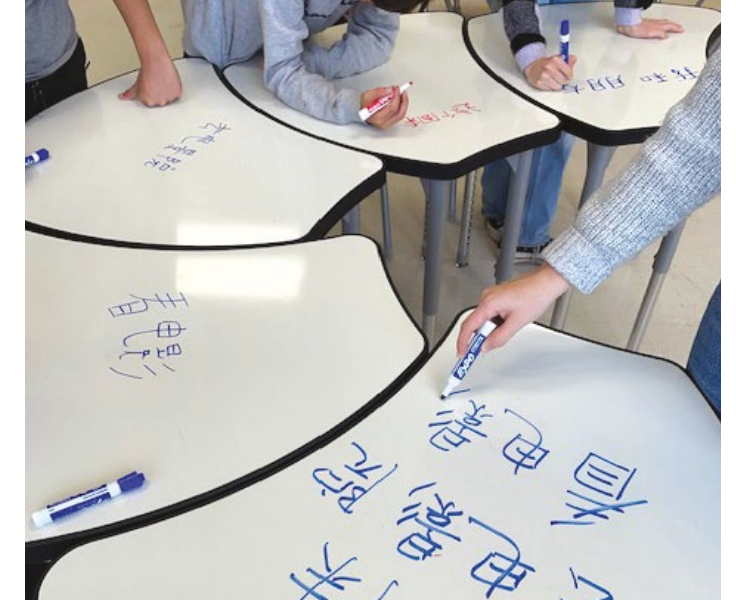
### TV/Film Broadcast Studio Equipment

Chatham High School

**\$7,600**

Applied for by Patrick Clark, this grant will upgrade TV and video production equipment, providing students with hands-on experience using state-of-the-art technology for video production, editing, and broadcasting. The new equipment will better prepare students for careers in media production, offering a competitive edge in college admissions and the job market. The new equipment will also be used to capture and broadcast major district events, including the CHS Fashion Show, TEDxYouth@Chatham, graduation, concerts, and community gatherings.

This grant was funded in part by an Endowment funded by an anonymous donor



### Gaga Ball and '9 Square in the Air' Equipment

Chatham High School

**\$1,500**

This grant will enhance the physical education experience for grades 9–12 by introducing new games that promote physical activity, strategic thinking, and teamwork. Research shows these activities improve cooperation, social skills, and problem-solving while fostering inclusivity. Gary Adair, who applied with Anna Amster, says, "These are great tools to be used for team building activities while aligning with broader education goals of promoting social and emotional growth as well as a healthy and collaborative school environment."

This grant was funded in part by the PTO Endowment Fund

### Musical Exploration of the Duruflé Requiem

Chatham High School

**\$2,927**

Applied for by Ken Bryson and Liam Keller, this grant supports a collaboration between the CHS Performing Arts and Visual Arts departments to create works inspired by the movements of the Requiem. This follows their successful 2018 Mozart Requiem collaboration and marks the third CEF-sponsored masterwork performance by the CHS Choir and Orchestra. Ken Bryson says, "By exposing our students to such historical pieces of musical literature—masterworks—we are able to significantly enrich their learning and give them a better understanding of the historical and cultural significance of the music and how it influenced the music they are performing and listening to today."

Funded in part by the Karpowic Family Endowment Fund and the Asian Community Endowment for Chatham Schools





# Fundraising

Chatham Education Foundation’s financial support comes from over 550 generous parents and other community members and businesses. Fundraisers include the Endowment campaign, Fall and Spring Annual Appeal letters, Teacher Tributes, Trivia Night, and our 30th anniversary gala.

Our FY2023–24 donor list can be found at the end of this document, and we most appreciate those loyal supporters who are helping to support our mission.

## Endowment Campaign

Chatham Education Foundation launched its first endowment campaign in 2018. Almost 30 named endowment agreements have been signed, and the market value of the endowment is over \$2 million. The long term goal is \$4 million.

## The Chatham Education Foundation’s endowment consists of three components

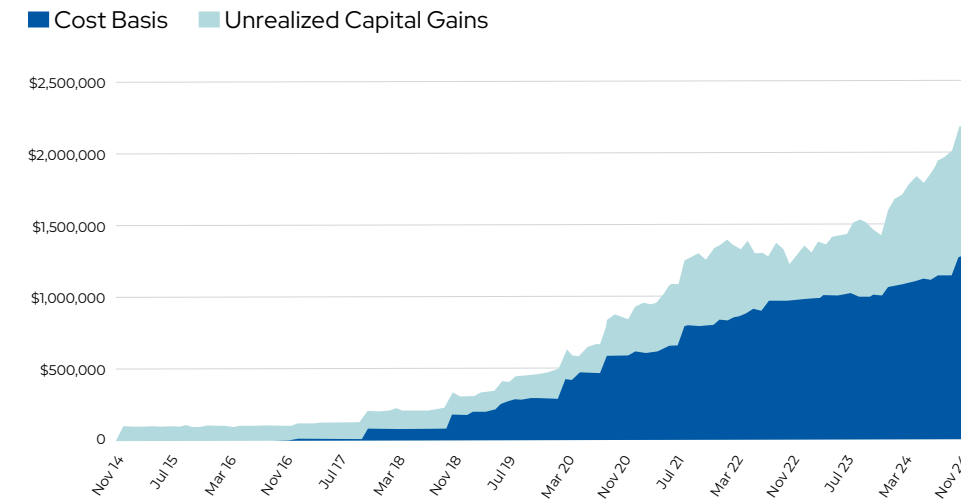
**Permanent Endowment.** By producing a reliable stream of income, brings increased stability and longevity to grant funding, as well as the ability to increase the absolute level of grants.

**Term Endowment** will help the School District of the Chathams deal with potential budget shocks resulting from unpredictable New Jersey State funding levels.

**Quasi Endowment.** Built from funds surplus to grant needs, this board designated endowment category can be used to attract additional endowment gifts via matching.

Grant spending funds generated from the endowment were \$11K in FY2021–22, \$21K in FY2022–23, \$30K in FY2023–24, and are expected to reach \$38K in FY2024–25.

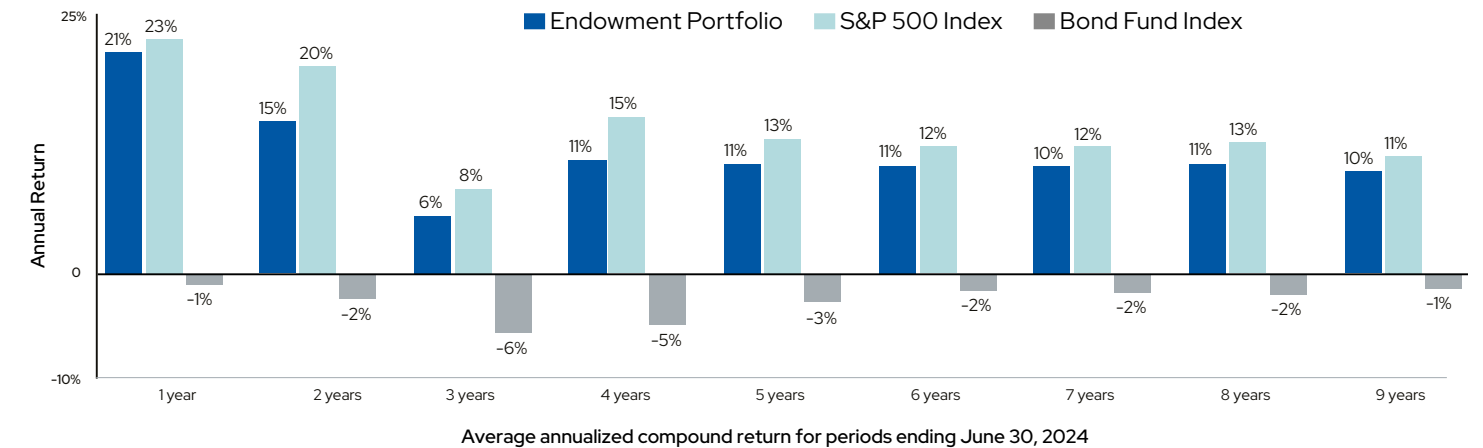
## Endowment Portfolio Market Value



The endowment portfolio market value has reached a level of over \$2 million.

## Annual Compound Return

Returns on endowment investments are aligned with market trends, averaging 10%/year return on investment over the last 9 fiscal years.



## What people are saying about CEF

“As Superintendent of Schools, I can think of no better cause to support the School District of the Chathams than Chatham Education Foundation’s Endowment Campaign.”  
DR. MICHAEL LASUSA

“By initiating the Endowment for Environmental Sustainability, we parents can provide financial resources well into the future to help students learn to protect the planet and to create sustainable school campuses locally.”  
THE ENDOWMENT FUND FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY (ABBOTT FAMILY)

“We are a diverse group representing different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, but we all share a commonality in our belief in the power of education [to teach] youth to rationally think for themselves. We hope this fund brings about fair and equitable opportunities for all.”  
THE ASIAN COMMUNITY ENDOWMENT FOR CHATHAM SCHOOLS

“Chatham schools are the bedrock of the community, and we strongly believe that private support is a vital element in maintaining excellence in these schools.”  
THE ROUTH FAMILY ENDOWMENT FUND

“Our gift to the Chatham Education Foundation endowment reflects our family’s strong belief that private funding directly to the schools benefits both our children and our entire community. The endowment provides long-term, sustainable funding for enrichment programming, facilities upgrades, and teacher training that public school budgets alone can’t fund.”  
THE DICKSON FAMILY ENDOWMENT FUND

“Bryan and I have seen first-hand the benefits of our school district’s curriculum and education on our own children’s intellectual and social-emotional growth. We hope that the impact of our charitable giving to the Allen Family Endowment Fund is a future generation of students that are inspired to make this world a better place.”  
THE ALLEN FAMILY ENDOWMENT FUND

# Named Endowments

- Allen Family Endowment Fund
- Anonymous Endowment Funds
- Asian Community Endowment Fund for Chatham Schools
- Battiato Family Endowment Fund
- Blue Foundry Bank Endowment Fund
- Bojanowski Family Endowment Fund
- Dickson Family Endowment Fund
- Endowment Fund for Environmental Sustainability (Abbott Family)
- Epstein Family Endowment Fund
- Guerrero Family Endowment for Special Education
- Karpowic Family Endowment Fund
- Kuppenheimer Family Endowment Fund
- Prael Family Endowment Fund
- PriVikNik Endowment Fund
- PTO Endowment Fund
- Quon Family Endowment for Diversity, Inclusion & Special Education
- Rooney Family Endowment Fund
- Routh Family Endowment Fund
- Ryan T. Ganley Memorial Endowment Fund (Metviner Family)
- STEM Endowment Fund
- Voleti Family Endowment Fund

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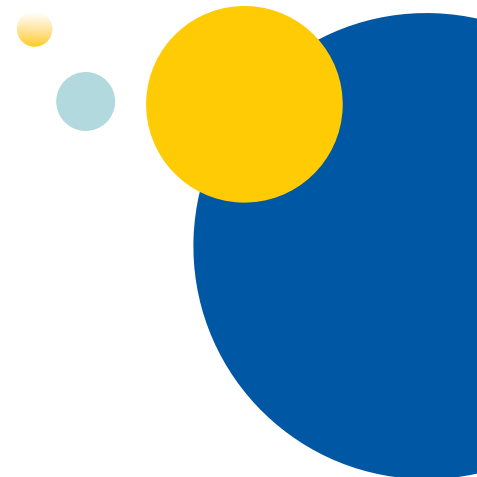
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