



2021-2022 Final Grant Awards Report

Thanks to donors' generous support, the Chatham Education Foundation funded the following grants in its 2021-2022 fiscal year, in the sum of \$108,678.80. Of this sum, nine endowments contributed \$10,845.30 toward the grants.

The Thinking Classroom – Phase 2 (CHS)

\$23,222

Alex Elgart, Meredith Kempson, Kyle Lynott, Laura Scerbo, Stacy Winters, Aaron Yamamoto

This grant expands the "Thinking Classroom" within the CHS mathematics wing to four additional classrooms. The initial phase of CEF's "Thinking Classroom" grant in 2018 demonstrated the validity of the current research that supports students working on whiteboard surfaces in the mathematics classroom, resulting in observed increases in student productivity, critical thinking, and wellness. These design changes include vertical non-permanent writing surfaces on flexible seating/standing tables, and the de-fronting of the traditional classroom setting.

*This grant was funded in part by the Routh Family Endowment Fund.

Reimagining Geometry (CMS)

\$31,524

Stacy Winters

Building off the success of the Thinking Classroom, this grant allows for the redesign of Chatham Middle School math classrooms to coincide with a curriculum sequence change in which 8th grade Chatham Middle School students now take Geometry prior to Algebra 1. This sequence change provided an opportunity to reimagine what students can do with the knowledge of Geometry, and this grant provides the technology and materials to allow students to demonstrate this new knowledge. All three 8th grade math classrooms will be transformed into thinking classrooms, and the grant provides whiteboard vertical spaces and whiteboard desks and tables of different and adjustable heights for students to complete problems. Some of the whiteboards can even be brought into the math hallway, extending the classroom reach so that all students can work on math while social distancing.

CMS math teacher Carmelo Sortino says of the grant, "Thank you again for the desks and whiteboards. The students love them and utilize them every day."

Enriching Kindergarten Reading Workshop and Word Study Programs (WAS & MAS) \$2,136.14

Lisa Kressler, Annemarie Steigerwald, Kelli Finn, Francesca Verducci

Four kindergarten classrooms at WAS and MAS are enriched in this grant with materials to enhance reading and writing, including boogie board tablets, consonant-vowel-consonant games, and manipulatives. The grant materials are supported by research showing that students learn best when learning with a multisensory approach. The boogie board tablets allow students to participate in interactive writing activities, apply letter-sound and spelling knowledge with a quick, easily erasable alternative to paper and pencil and dry erase boards, and can be used for math and other curricular areas.

Ms. Finn shared, "Thank you so much for the boogie board tablets and other materials for our kindergarten students. They love them!"

CMS Self-Contained Classroom Furniture

\$5,342

Pamela Wichot, Nicole Moschella

Two self-contained special education classrooms at CMS will now receive updated, flexible furniture and seating options. Rocking chairs and floor rocker seats encourage healthy movement and a moderate range of motion, and wheelchair accessible desks with adjustable leg heights fit those that need it. By having flexible seating options, the students will have the opportunity to be in a conducive learning environment tailored for them and their various educational, social, and emotional needs.

District Choral Festival (LAF, CMS, CHS)

\$2,330

Ken Bryson, Amber Blakovich, Dana Goodstein

This grant brings all the choirs in grades 4-12 together on March 10, 2022 for a day of learning, singing, and program development in a first ever district-wide Choral Festival. The students will be taught for the day by legendary composer and musical artist, Stacey V. Gibbs. During the event, Mr. Gibbs will work with the students on pieces they are familiar with, including a piece of his that has yet to be premiered, on text expression, music history, and vocal technique, both as individual schools and as a whole unit. In addition to working together musically, they will incorporate social-emotional learning through various musical and non-musical team building activities.

The final performance of the students performing together is being recorded with very high audio recording devices, which were funded by a prior grant from CEF.

*This grant is funded in part by the Ryan T. Ganley Memorial Endowment Fund (Metviner Family).

The Scientific Investigation and Collaboration Classroom (CHS)**\$16,483.21**

Emily Cafaro and Rebecca Ryan

This grant transforms two science classrooms at CHS, similar to what has been done by CEF for nine math classrooms at CHS and CMS. These classrooms will have different furniture than a traditional classroom, including whiteboard tables, and it creates a more collaborative space to further investigative learning. The grant teachers shared, "Students are consistently completing labs and investigations which require them to share their data analysis and results as well as evaluate peer work. Redesigning the classroom and incorporating whiteboard tables would enable students to easily work through an investigation and share their findings."

Ms. Ryan also shared, "Thank you so much for approving our grant. We cannot wait to see the change in collaboration in our classroom dynamic next year."

Let Our Fingers Do the Poppin' (MAS, SBS, WAS)**\$2,365.92**

LeeAnn Wertheim, Aaron Yomamoto, Jessica Vega, Jaime Trauger, Beth Zimmer, Grace Malanga, Amy Kerr, Megan Militello, Katelyn Clifford, Samantha Aquilina, Robin Ciccone, Angela Piazza, Shannon Moran, Dianne Conti, Brooke Hegarty, Megan Stevens, Joyce Luongo, Jacqueline LaBrutto, Helen Oliver, Nancy Volker, Megan Tompkins

Twenty classrooms at MAS, SBS and WAS will have math manipulatives to help their K and 1st grade students understand the relationships between numbers and quantities, and aid in their addition and subtraction skills.

*This grant was funded in part by the PTO Endowment Fund.

Read for Pure Joy! (CMS)**\$826.79**

Lynne Ann Collier

This grant adds alternative, comfortable reading locations in a 6th-7th grade classroom at CMS where small group ELA is taught to struggling students. Ms. Collier explained that when students are comfortable and relaxed, it contributes to a joyful reading experience, which leads to longer sustained periods of reading and a positive connotation with reading.

The supervisor for student support services Dr. Kimberly Lanza said, "I can't wait to see our middle school students getting comfy and settling in with their books. We are fortunate to have the support of CEF."

Ms. Collier said, "I am so excited to create a warm, comfortable space that will encourage the joy of reading in my classroom. Thank you and the rest of the CEF members for your continued support of learning at CMS."

*This grant was funded in part by the Allen Family Endowment Fund.

Writing in Comfort (WAS)**\$4,694.59**

Jennifer Taylor, Michelle Busanic

This grant enhances the resource centers at WAS with furniture designed to make students more comfortable when writing. This furniture will allow students to sit and move in various ways so that they can be comfortable while writing and reach their potential. Students assisted the teachers in writing this grant application.

Ms. Taylor shared, "Please know Michelle and I are so thankful for your support as we provide the most comfortable environment for our classified students to flourish as strong, confident writers and learners."

*This grant was funded in part by the Prael Family Endowment Fund.

Bouncybands for Student Wellness (CMS)**\$1,399**

Lydia MacIntosh-Haye, Lynne Ann Collier

This grant places Bouncybands on almost every chair in CMS's small group and special education instructional spaces, including self-contained classes and resource centers, with a few additionally in selected general education classrooms. Bouncybands allow students to self-regulate by having discreet movement breaks without leaving their seats.

Ms. Collier said, "Thank you so much for your continued support. The bouncy bands make a HUGE difference in the classroom."

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Caj9X46s2ss>

Farm to School (CHS)**\$4,309.28**

James Miller, Emily Cafaro

This grant enhances the environmental science courses by having students grow food with a hydroponic system in the greenhouse and raised beds in the courtyards. The students will be responsible for designing the planting schedule, types of plants, the actual planting, and maintenance of the gardens. Students and cafeteria personnel will participate in harvesting at appropriate times, and the produce will be incorporated into the CHS menu.

Mr. Miller shared, "This grant will be so useful to the students for several reasons. First, students will be able to work in-person with state of the art food production systems, which is a big part of our environmental science curriculum. We will also be able to provide a source of locally grown produce, which we will work with our food services provider Chartwells to incorporate into school lunches. We are very excited to get started with this project and have students involved at every level. Thank you for this opportunity."

*This grant is funded in part by the Endowment Fund for Environmental Sustainability (Abbott Family).

Trout in the Classroom (CMS)

\$1,958.63

Jillian Brandt, Ceara Cleaves

This grant project gives 8th graders at CMS a hands-on approach to learning in a year-long process of inquiry and data collection. The students would raise the trout in the classroom from eggs until fingerlings and then release into a nearby, approved location to add to the current ecosystem.

Ms. Brandt and Ms. Cleaves shared, "We are excited to bring the Trout in the Classroom program to Chatham Middle School. Our 8th graders will be able to raise trout from eggs to fingerling size that will be ready to be released in the spring. Along the way, the students will focus on how abiotic factors affect biotic factors and learn the importance of clean, cold water. Students will be responsible for checking pH levels, nitrate levels, and nitrite levels daily."

*This grant was funded in part by the Kuppenheimer Family Endowment Fund.

Be Inspired by Gobi - a Literacy, Wellness & Character Education Event (MAS, WAS, SBS, LAF)

\$6,675.75

Danielle Dagounis, Lisa Lattarulo, Karen Leister, Nick Andrezza, Cheryl Russo, Kristine Dudlo, Kathleen O'Connor, Marco Freyre

Finding Gobi is a true story of an ultra-marathon runner who met a stray dog while running a race in China. This grant proposal brings the author for a visit to each school, as well as buying books for each classroom library. It is designed to introduce elementary students to a story of friendship, teamwork, perseverance, and wellness through the book Finding Gobi. It also would accompany newly designed library/media and health/physical education lessons.

Danielle Dagounis shared, "We are beyond excited that the CEF is able to fund our grant so that we can host wellness events at each of our elementary schools. This grant will enable our elementary library/media specialists and health & physical education teachers to collaborate and develop learning experiences for our students to discuss and learn about the topics of perseverance, teamwork, friendship, kindness to others, and the importance of physical well-being."

*This grant was funded in part by the Karpowic Family Endowment Fund.

<https://youtu.be/HKhvJcQhEYM?t=13>

Building Social and Emotional Learning Through Cooperative Games (LAF) \$3,997
Cheryl Russo, Cindy Weiner

This grant creates opportunities at LAF during Character Periods for students to have hands-on Social Emotional Learning and related discussion through group play of familiar board and card games. Six classic board games and card games would be purchased for each of the 25 classrooms. By setting up instructional opportunities, the teachers will be able to provide the students with the necessary managing conflict resolution and socialization skills needed to work together in small groups and to manage conflicts on the playground and in other social situations.

Cheryl Russo & Cindy Weiner said, “We are thrilled the CEF grant committee supports our goal to help students grow socially and emotionally through games. Managing conflicts, making friends, increasing self-esteem, and improving communication are critical aspects of a student's development. We are confident that these games will promote those skills and so many more to the entire LAF student community for many years to come!”

TEDxYouth@Chatham (District) \$1,412.75
James Lawrence, Christina Reed

TEDxYouth@Chatham is a district wide public speaking event that is the culmination of the Talking the Talk elective course at Chatham High School. The program was initiated from a grant in 2018. Students deliver professional TED talks to a live audience which are recorded and uploaded to the TED platform for public distribution. Microphone sound quality is critical to the effectiveness of these talks. This grant funds eight new body microphones, in both light and dark colors to match skin tones of different students. These microphones attach around the head, creating stability to enhance overall sound quality and also eliminating the need to tape mics up students' backs. These mics will also be used by the Performing Arts Department for performances.

Christina Reed said, “Thank you so very much for sponsoring and supporting TEDxYouth@Chatham in all of the ways that you do. The mics were fantastic -- not only do they sound really clear, but they made the speakers feel more comfortable and confident.”

“The new body microphone I used the night of my Ted Talk was a significant improvement over the older ones we were practicing with. It means a lot to me to know the CEF continues to support our learning and development. Thank you!” Skate Lapus, CHS Class of 2023

*This grant was funded in part by the Rooney Family Endowment Fund.

Submitted,
Cheryl Whitney
Grants Chair 2020-2022