

Northville Educational Foundation Innovative Teaching Grants enhance educational programs

The Northville Educational Foundation (NEF) approved grants from its Innovative Teaching Grants program totaling more than \$9,000 for the 2009-10 school year to support projects that will enhance the education of Northville Public Schools students. The Foundation's Innovative Teaching Grants program provides funding for educational projects that cannot otherwise be provided given Northville Public Schools' limited operating funds.

The grants are awarded through a competitive process and reviewed by a panel that evaluated for factors such as:

- Does the project offer an innovative approach to learning or teaching?
- Will the project improve student learning?
- Does the project have a specific relationship to state curriculum benchmarks and/or school improvement plans?

Northville teachers and staff recently completed the following 14 projects funded through the Innovative Teaching Grants program.

Project Title: *Developing and Implementing Formative Assessment in Classrooms*

Grant Awarded: \$380

School(s): Meads Mill Middle School

Teacher Name(s): Maura Jary

Project Description: Five teachers on the Formative Assessment Team will conduct a book study based on *Introduction to Student-Involved Assessment for Learning* (Rick Stiggins) to help improve student academic achievement.

Project Title: *Local Organic Approach to Producing Food*

Grant Awarded: \$620

School(s): Northville High School - Science

Teacher Name(s): Scott Szukaitis

Project Description: Students will plant, design and implement an organic vegetable garden in the community as part of the Michigan Natural Resources and Advanced Placement Environmental Science classes.

Project Title: *Applying Technology to Music Literacy*

Grant Awarded: \$215 per school

School(s): Amerman, Moraine, Ridge Wood, Silver Springs, Thornton Creek and Winchester elementary schools

Teacher Name(s): Kristen Kreiss, Jackie Lenze, Cecelia Mac-Smith, Roxanne Minch, Theresa Weiss

Project Description: Music notation software will be used with all elementary music classes to provide opportunities for students to use their creativity and innovation with music writing activities. The software will also allow innovation in music instruction through generation of printed media for classrooms. Instruction will be enhanced by the ability to differentiate instruction to varying levels of skill in the classrooms.

Project Title: *Listening For Fluency RAZ Kids*

Grant Awarded: \$659

School(s): Ridge Wood Elementary – first and second grade classrooms

Teacher Name(s): Lisa Lindsay, Lindsay Kiebler, Brooke Harris, Marie Thomas, Teri Scott, Kate Sims, Brandi Gottman, Lillian Knoth, Angie Zecman, Carey Kahle, Marie Bravo

Project Description: *RAZ Kids* audio books allows teachers to select appropriate text for each child and effectively monitor student progress. Students will follow highlighted text visually as they listen to books being read aloud fluently. This program is designed to increase reading fluency and enables students to spend meaningful time with books as teachers monitor personal reading goals.

Project Title: *Take Home Sight Word Kits*

Grant Awarded: \$373

School(s): Ridge Wood Elementary – Kindergarten classrooms

Teacher Name(s): Kim Gall, Debbie Lalonde, Heather Zoldak

Project Description: Sight word reader books will be included in *Take Home Sight Word Kits* for Kindergarten students to encourage positive school-home communications focused on student achievement in reading.

Project Title: *Get Ready To Learn Yoga*

Grant Awarded: \$700

School(s): Cooke School

Teacher Name(s): Susannah Steele, Jan Fox-Davis

Project Description: Yoga mats and instructional videos will allow teachers to initiate the "Get Ready to Learn" program for special education center program students. The program uses yoga movements and postures to wake up the brain and body in order to prepare students for learning in a predictable and calm way.

Project Title: *Sound Box Book Series*

Grant Awarded: \$414

School(s): Old Village School – Dual-Diagnosed Program

Teacher Name(s): Catherine Shapero

Project Description: Sound Box books will supplement instruction to emergent readers in the Dual-Diagnosed Program.

Project Title: *Comparing & Contrasting Watersheds in Michigan*

Grant Awarded: \$750

School(s): Hillside Middle School

Teacher Name(s): Isaac Cottrell, Dwight Sieggreen, Colleen Polydoras

Project Description: Water testing probes and hand-held microscopes will help students study both chemical and environmental indicators of water quality. This project will allow students to collaborate with students from Michigan's Upper Peninsula to compare the quality of water in their respective watersheds.

Project Title: *Salmon Ecosystems*

Grant Awarded: \$750

School(s): Meads Mill Middle School

Teacher Name(s): Dawn McGuffin

Project Description: The “Salmon in the Classroom” initiative, in partnership with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, will allow students to raise, care for and maintain salmon in their school from fall until spring. At the end of the school year, students will release the young fish into a local watershed that feeds one of the Great Lakes. Funding provides for a temperature controlling device, and pH test strips. A similar grant was awarded to seventh grade teachers at Hillside.

Project Title: *World Atlas and Model Magic*

Grant Awarded: \$604

School(s): Hillside Middle School

Teacher Name(s): Laura Berry, Arlette Comben, Donna Hicks

Project Description: World atlases and Model Magic supplies will be purchased to allow students to work with maps through a multi-sensory, hands-on, three-dimensional approach.

Project Title: *Digital Video Production*

Grant Awarded: \$383

School(s): Hillside Middle School

Teacher Name(s): Greg Lanzi, Beverly Schellhase

Project Description: A digital camcorder and tripod will be used to film student musical performances and rehearsals, which will increase the ability to communicate and share mastery of classroom goals.

Project Title: *F.A.S.T. Reading*

Grant Awarded: \$703

School(s): Ridge Wood Elementary

Teacher Name(s): Kristy Kenneally, Sheri Janer

Project Description: The *Foundations of Analysis Syntheses Translation* (FAST) program will be used to teach students key phonetic concepts, which will enhance creative teaching strategies. This approach will benefit struggling readers as well as provide foundational skills for all beginning readers.

Project Title: *Salmon Ecosystems*

Grant Awarded: \$750

School(s): Hillside Middle School

Teacher Name(s): Doriana DeSanto, Isaac Cottrell

Project Description: The “Salmon in the Classroom” initiative, in partnership with the Michigan DNR, will allow students to raise, care for and maintain salmon in their school from fall until spring. The program culminates at the end of the school year with the release of the young fish into a local watershed that feeds one of the Great Lakes. Funding provides for a temperature controlling device, and pH test strips. A similar grant was awarded to sixth grade teachers at Mead Mill.

Project Title: *Understanding the Principles Behind the Electrophoresis of DNA*

Grant Awarded: \$677

School(s): Northville High School

Teacher Name(s): Kim Taylor-Papp

Project Description: An *Electrophoresis Lab System* and supplies for biotechnology instruction will allow students to use prepared samples of DNA to analyze a number of genetic engineering situations and develop an understanding of DNA fingerprinting and real-life applications.