

**MAMARONECK SCHOOLS FOUNDATION
GRANT AWARDS
2008-2009**

The Mamaroneck Schools Foundation is pleased to announce the awarding of thirty-one new grants, totaling nearly \$270,000, for the coming school year, benefiting every school in the district as well as the community at large.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Podcasting to the World

Hommocks

In order to keep up with technological advances and take advantage of students' strong interest in technology, a mobile state-of-the-art mini podcasting recording studio will be created to serve the 400 eighth-grade Earth Science students. Students will complete research outside the classroom and then use various software platforms to create, record and edit podcasts, which will then be uploaded to a classroom website. A deeper and more meaningful connection to the content of their studies should result in a higher level of creativity, motivation, and possibly, test scores.

The Digital Classroom

Hommocks

This grant will create a model digital classroom complete with a student workstation, thirteen laptops and a teaching station with multiple monitors to view and share students' work. Specific curriculum units have been targeted for a fully digital experience: the Public Speaking Unit, which will take advantage of a database of over sixty speeches, and the Short Story Project, which will allow students to access digital libraries and dictionaries, and write and share their pieces instantaneously for peer review. While this will initially be piloted in an individual seventh-grade classroom, the vision is to create a rotational system to expose every seventh-grade English student to this model classroom and its technological tools and resources.

Data Collection Technology

MHS

This project will improve the quality of laboratory experiments by introducing new, cutting-edge equipment for data acquisition and analysis in the chemistry labs, serving all 300 students at the High School who take Chemistry. The equipment includes laptop computers, "Stir Stations," and Labquest chemistry packages and will be used to record chemical parameters such as pressure, temperature, concentration and pH values.

SMART Board for 7th Grade Math

Hommocks

This grant will provide a SMART board for use in a seventh-grade math classroom at Hommocks. SMART boards connect a "blackboard" to a classroom computer to allow work viewed on the board to be saved, manipulated and shared. SMART board lessons will be incorporated into the current curriculum with the hope that they will eventually be shared with all seventh-grade mathematics teachers. The grantee also plans to collaborate with an eighth-grade math teacher on the same team who also has a SMART board.

SMART Board

Chatsworth

This grant funds a SMART board for a fifth-grade classroom at Chatsworth, to be used across a variety of curriculum areas. The grantee will work with other teachers in third and fourth grades as part of a collaboration of SMART board users.

LITERACY

Beyond the Textbook: High-Interest Nonfiction

Hommocks

This grant provides for the compilation of a class library of “Reading Expeditions” from the World History Series from National Geographic School Publishing. The books correspond directly with the New York State 6th grade social studies curriculum, serving as a nonfiction supplement to the textbook. These books are interesting, visually appealing, and very readable, making history more relevant to today’s readers. The books help students learn to navigate different types of nonfiction texts while gaining a deeper understanding of the material.

Listen While You Read

Murray

This grant will provide a collection of “Playaway” books to the Murray Ave. School library. Playaways are self-contained audio books that will allow elementary students to enhance their listening, learning and reading skills. A simple set of buttons allows them to listen at several speeds, fast-forward, reverse, and bookmark. There are no CDs to scratch, tapes to rewind, or downloads to manage.

Play It Again Sam

Central

This similar grant will provide “Playaway” books to the Central School Library, as well as print copies of the same titles, so students can follow along as they listen.

Interactive Reading

Chatsworth

Under the direction of the reading specialist, an interactive computer program, along with the coordinating books, will be purchased to serve students in grades K - 2, students with reading difficulties in other grades, special education students and ESL students. This system will be used to supplement the current reading program.

READ with LEXIA

Central

This grant funds a pilot project for the first grade to provide computer software designed to build confidence and proficiency in reading and thinking skills. The software addresses the five critical components of reading instruction identified by the National Reading Panel: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. Funds also include professional training in using the software.

Exploring Our World, Expanding Our Horizons

Chatsworth

The grant funds the purchase of about 100 up-to-date social studies books for the school library. (The average age of books in their current collection is over 20 years old; in that time many countries have dissolved and been renamed, and many discoveries made.) The books will enliven instruction, research, and student-driven inquiry and support the district’s nonfiction literacy initiative.

Jump Start to the 21st Century

District

This grant will expand on the new core collections of science and technology books in each of the district's six school libraries. Recognizing that keeping current is crucial in this curriculum area, each librarian will choose books based on the specific needs of their schools. This award supports a second year of this grant, originally funded by MSF last year, through donations raised at the 2007 MSF Spring Gala.

MUSIC AND THE ARTS

PACE Computer Music Studio

MHS

This grant will fund the establishment of a computer music studio for the high school's PACE program. It will include seven computer music stations, each of which will have a computer, workstation synthesizer, iPod and headphones. Within these workstations, students will be able to work with music in a variety of ways: They may play back and edit musical samples, create beats and harmonies in diverse musical styles, explore electronic sounds and simulated instruments, and work with recording, performing and improvisation. This grant will make it possible for all PACE students, whether or not they have had prior formal music training, to successfully compose, arrange and direct their own creative works.

Audio Enrichment Equipment

MHS

The music department finally has a beautiful new home and this grant will outfit the eight new practice rooms with equipment for performing (keyboards and stands), recording (CD recorders) and playback (receivers, CD players and speaker sets). This grant will serve the 240 students in the music department, including the band, choir and orchestra, as well as 13 different ensemble groups. At times, all six schools in the district rehearse in this space for events.

Music Lending Library and Digital Recording

All Elementary Schools

This grant will provide for the acquisition of a sheet-music lending library consisting of instrumental solos and ensembles for all band instruments, to be shared by all four elementary schools. In addition, this grant will provide digital recording equipment to allow student analysis of performance.

Digital Video for Musical Performance

Central

A digital videocamera will be purchased to document, analyze and assess musical performances by students at Central. This grant also covers the cost of a DVD-R/VHS recorder/player to create DVDs of all "filmed" performances and a High-Definition TV for viewing those performances. The feedback this system gives students will enable them to analyze themselves as a band, choir, orchestra or ensemble.

Expanding the Three-Dimensional Art Program

Hommocks

To enhance the sculpture component of the art curriculum, two display cases will be purchased and placed in the hallways outside the Hommocks library to showcase three-dimensional student work.

ENRICHMENT

Lunchtime Activity Programs

Hommocks

This program will pilot the development of a winter lunchtime program at Hommocks for all three grades. A project coordinator funded through this grant will develop a menu of elective "classes," recruit volunteers and organizations from the community to teach the classes, and supervise the implementation of the program through the winter of 2008-09. The grant also covers materials and stipends.

A Well-Rounded Globe

MHS

This grant is designed to promote and teach good journalism to students working on the high school student newspaper, The Globe. The grant will cover a pre-season offsite workshop with local professional journalists for a day; a spring trip to attend the Columbia Scholastic Press Association's one-day workshop; and a laptop for the new advisor and the Globe's top editors. It is a goal for the Globe staff to learn through these workshops how to make the newspaper pay for itself through subscriptions and ads.

Academic Literacy and Literacy Assistance

District

The CAP (Community Action Program) Center in Mamaroneck will provide free home-work help in the evenings for the at-risk population that the CAP center serves. This grant will help pay for staff to provide out-of-school support to students whose families cannot provide adequate academic support at home. Homework help will be provided by appointment and on a walk-in basis. This grant is funded by the Barbara Bennett-Rones Endowment.

Kindergarten Fine Motor Centers

All Elementary Schools

Following a successful pilot program, fine-motor centers will be set up in all of the district's kindergarten classrooms to help children develop the underlying skills required for tasks such as handwriting and cutting. Kindergarten teachers and occupational therapists will work collaboratively under the direction of Dr. Laurie Olson (the district's supervisor for occupational therapy) to set up this early-intervention program.

Water and Sand Tables for Kindergarten Classrooms

Chatsworth

The five kindergarten classes at Chatsworth will be equipped with new water/sand tables and accessories including pulleys, funnels, multilevel flow pans, and extensive tubing networks. As part of the science curriculum, this equipment will allow children to explore cause-and-effect relationships and make connections to real-world experiences, i.e., the natural flow of water in a sink or bathtub, the waves in the ocean and the basic properties of sand and water.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Creative and Contemporary Dance

All Elementary Schools and Hommocks

This district-wide grant will expose all K – 8 students to the performing arts through instruction by professional dance teachers from Dance Cavise, a reputable local studio. The program enriches the physical education curriculum by utilizing music and dance as a creative and enjoyable alternative to sports for physical activity.

Music for Movement

Chatsworth, Mamaroneck, and Murray Avenue

An iPod and docking station, along with music in the form of gift cards or internet credit, will be purchased for use by the traveling phys. ed. teacher. As music is an integral part of the

elementary school physical education program, this will allow for the purchase, cataloging, programming and play of music for movement in the Chatsworth, Mamaroneck Ave. and Murray schools.

Softball Complex Enhancement

District

This grant will provide enhancements to the softball field at Central School. Since its opening, this field has been used by both varsity and JV girls' modified softball, as well as Little League softball and baseball teams throughout the spring, summer and fall. The grant will be used to create easy-access walkways along the first and third base sides of the field, clear and level the spectator areas, and remove unwanted weeds and vegetation. MSF was a major source of funding for the creation of this field, and this grant helps put the finishing touches on this well-used school and community resource.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Music Therapy

Mamaroneck Ave.

A six-week program will be funded to evaluate the use of music therapy with some of the school's most disabled students. The Music Therapy Institute at the Music Conservatory of Westchester will offer group and individual sessions with students, teacher training, and parent workshops. Musical instruments and recording equipment are included in the funding.

Manhattanville College Partnership for School Aides and Teaching Assistants

District

This grant funds full-day training workshops for Special Education aides and teaching assistants, to be held on the four Superintendent Conference Days during the 2008-09 school year. The workshop sessions will be run by professors from the Special Education Department at Manhattanville College.

MISCELLANEOUS

"Stay Connected With Your Teen" Parenting Group

Hommocks & MHS

As a complement to current parent workshops conducted in English, this grant will provide a parent support group/workshop for Spanish-speaking parents led by a Spanish-speaking counselor. There will be separate groups for Hommocks and High School parents. The objective of this program is for parents to improve communication with their children, increase their understanding of adolescent issues and become more effective at managing behavior issues at home.

Class Amplification Through Microphones

Murray

This grant funds six wireless microphone systems at the Murray Avenue School to be piloted in two classrooms each for grades 1, 3, and 5. These amplification systems are used throughout the country to help enhance the audio quality in the classroom and improve the learning environment. Students benefit from the use of sound-field amplification as the level of the teacher's voice over the ambient noise is increased. Long-range benefits include improved student attention, higher test scores, and a reduction in special education referrals.

Fiscal Accountability: Expenditure Projections

District

This grant will pay for training for the members of the Citizens Financial Advisory Committee (CFAC) to be able to make reliable, ongoing five-year projections of expenditures for the school district. This will help fulfill the community's request that the district make more reliable budget projections and share them with the community.

Indoor Seating

MHS

Six benches will be placed in pairs in the Post Road building, on the third-floor landing, outside the computer room, and near the counselors' offices. The benches will promote conversation between students in a more congenial environment and improve the overall aesthetic appearance of the campus.