



Enhancing Educational Excellence Since 1997

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NEWS RELEASE

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FOUNDATION GRANTS MORE THAN \$16,000 TO ENHANCE STUDENT LEARNING

The Appleton Education Foundation has approved grants totaling more than \$16,000 to support creative programs and projects that enhance the education of Appleton Area School District students.

The grants include:

AASD Therapy and Special Physical Education Department – \$1,480 from the Betsy Melzer Endowment Fund to purchase materials for traveling sensory motor kits. Materials facilitate learning of fine motor skills and will benefit students with cognitive disabilities and autism, and students in kindergarten/integrated kindergarten, early childhood and community-based preschools.

Berry Elementary School –

- \$1,500 to bring local author Connie Roop to school for classroom presentations on the writing process. Roop and her husband have written more than 100 children's books including fiction, history, biography, science, nature, humor and historical fiction titles.
- \$1,080 for a project that pairs students from different grade levels to listen to stories together using Playaways, digital audio books that are battery operated and easy to use. Students will listen to stories at a higher level than their own reading level in order to build vocabulary and increase reading proficiency.

East High School – \$328 from the Betsy Melzer Endowment Fund to support the purchase of a digital camera and associated hardware and software. The equipment will benefit students in grades 9-12 who have cognitive disabilities and those with autism. Picture slide shows and a yearbook will be created to show experiences in community-based outings and other activities.

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Edison Elementary School –

- \$650 to support the Handwriting Without Tears program for three- to six-year-old students in the Early Childhood Special Education program. The new approach is expected to help students improve visual perception, body/spatial awareness, motor skills, vocabulary skills, social skills and other pre-academic skills.
- \$500 from the Betsy Melzer Endowment Fund to purchase kits of sensory materials for staff to use when teaching children enrolled in Early Childhood Special Education and being served in their Natural Environments, such as home, preschool or daycare. Speech and language development will be a main focus.

Highlands Elementary School – \$1,500 to bring brothers Robert and Daniel San Souci, an author and an illustrator, respectively, to Appleton to work with Kindergarten through sixth-grade students in at least seven AASD elementary schools. Students will have opportunities to connect with the San Soucis' works through lessons developed within the art, reading and social studies curriculum, through literature circles and large group presentations.

Huntley Elementary School – \$405 from the Betsy Melzer Endowment Fund will support Fins, Feathers and Fur, a special program focused on improving writing achievement for students with learning disabilities.

Jefferson Elementary School – \$216 to support Daily Independent Living, a language arts program that helps students develop daily literacy habits in the areas of reading, writing, world work/vocabulary and listening.

Johnston, Montessori and Richmond Schools – \$1,500 to support a Ballroom Dance Artist-in-Residency program being piloted at the three schools. Fourth- and fifth-grade students will receive ballroom dance instruction as a way to learn and reinforce social skills of courtesy, manners and respect, in a way that correlates with the district's music, physical education, health and social studies curriculum. A dance showcase involving students from all three schools will be a culminating activity for the program.

Lincoln Elementary School – \$1,085 to purchase start-up supplies and equipment for a community garden on school grounds. The project is intended as a hands-on science and social skills enrichment project for first graders.

Madison Middle School –

- \$1,500 to purchase equipment for a project that will teach students about graphic design, measuring, layout, printing and teamwork as they design and create custom T-shirts for various school clubs and community organizations.
- \$1,500 to help bring author Gennifer Choldenko to Appleton to work with students at AASD middle schools. Choldenko is an award-winning novelist whose works appeal to the preteen audience. Students will connect with her works through book discussion groups, literature circles and large group presentations.

North High School – \$1,500 to help support the purchase of a high-tech welder for use by all three AASD high schools in various curricular areas including Manufacturing, Welding & Metal Fabrication, Construction, Automotive, and Small Engines and Transportation. The equipment will allow students to learn on the same equipment they will use in their post-secondary education.

Roosevelt Middle School – \$325 to give students who are new to the United States an opportunity to participate in a camping experience. The experience is designed to help students build critical background knowledge through hands-on activities and to build confidence and leadership skills.

West High School – \$1,500 to help bring author Beth Kephart to Appleton to work with AASD high school students. Kephart will share with students about the writing process in poetry, fiction, memoir and non-fiction in both small- and large-group settings.

The Appleton Education Foundation, a supporting organization of the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region, has awarded more than \$1.3 million in grants since its founding in 1997. Grants provide accessible, flexible funding for educational programs not covered by the school budget. For more information, please call (920) 832-1517 or visit www.appletoneducationfoundation.org

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