

2020 Classroom Grant Summaries

Not in any specific order

Arduino Fundamentals in the Physics Classroom

LEAD Innovation Studio

Alan D. Gleue

I was introduced to the ARDUINO computer platform when my son used one in his college physics courses. The Arduino, a mini microcontroller, can be programmed by students to do different tasks (my son used it to build an EKG). I was able to use them in my previous district and found students loved this unit. I wanted to jump in here, feet-first at Park Hill, too, with this unit. Students will write code for the Arduino platform, learning about its hardware and software. I'm very excited about starting this project here at PH.

Reaching Readers

Tiffany Ridge Elementary School

Amy Hoban

After implementation of the Pathways to Reading small group intervention, I have found I need additional materials from this program to use within my classroom that were not provided in the original kit our district purchased. These materials, such as extra phonics manipulatives, phonemic awareness guides, and decodable books, would be very beneficial to the struggling readers I work with on a daily basis.

Cause and Effect Toys

Southeast Elementary School

DeJahanna Crockett

For my project I am focusing on cause and effect toys and any other cause and effect activities to help improve my student's development in different areas; hand eye coordination, simple actions that can be repeated, sensory play, problem solving etc. Understanding the relationship between cause and effect would help my students understand their actions have consequences and they have the ability to control their environment in some aspects. My goal is to help students grasp and understand the concept of cause and effect in a fun memorable way they can understand.

Oh So Sensory & Zen Den (Two Grants)

Chinn Elementary School

DeNae' Bush

There will be two areas for our students. One will be a sensory wall and the other will be a calming place. Both full of sensory tools in the K-3 Essential Skills classroom or in a designated area in the building where students can relax, reset their brains and bodies, have a moment by themselves, and get the sensory input they need. Students in the Essential Skills program are emerging in their Adaptive behavior, Social-Emotional behavior, and Daily Living skills. Students are learning what it means to do school. They are learning how to make requests appropriately, self-regulate, handle moments of upset, and use calming, sensory tools to reach their sensory needs.

Switch Fun for Everyone!

Gerner Family Education Center

Elisa Parker

Fred Donaldson says, "Children learn as they play. Most importantly in play children learn how to learn." The Gerner Family Early Education Center is a testament to this statement as we strive to make learning fun and engaging creating meaningful experiences for our students. Play comes natural for the majority of our students, however there are some students who have difficulty manipulating toys and materials due to physical impairment. Some of our students are at the level of learning cause and effect toys. Switches and adapted toys help these special young learners make connections related to learning through play. Adapting these toys opens the door for new activities and opportunities for learning that would otherwise not be possible. These students are in need of more toys and replacing equipment that have broken over the years.

We are Mighty

Tiffany Ridge Elementary School

Gayle Erikson-Laney, Leslie Andes

Mightier is a bio-responsive video game program that includes a Mightier tablet, mighty band and monthly consultation with a Mightier certified clinician. This is a program where students who struggle with emotional regulation will play a video game while connected to a heart monitoring band. As their heart rate and emotions increase, the game shuts down and teaches students calming strategies in real time. Mightier is an evidenced-based practice demonstrating positive results with 3 clinical trials completed at Boston Children's Hospital, Harvard Medical school and Massachusetts General Hospital. The research has shown children who use Mightier technology have reduced symptoms of aggression, oppositional behaviors and stress.

French Immersion Day at the Nelson!

Park Hill High School

Hope McPheeters

Art and Beauty is one of the 6 themes included on the French AP test- each year I strive to teach students how to talk about these concepts in French and bring the real-life culture of French art to the students. We are blessed in Kansas City with a FREE museum that has one of the best exhibits of Impressionism and Post-Impressionism pieces from Francophone culture. Our students will be able to tour this exhibit in French and have an immersion lunch discussing our experience.

English Landing 5th Grade Simulated City

English Landing Elementary School

Leah Peters, Kevin O'Connor, Abbie Sanford, Cody Sanders

This project will teach students economic concepts through a cross-curricular, hands-on learning experience. Fifth grade classes will participate in a "Simulated City" at school. Students will design their own business, create a business plan, select and order products to sell, and develop knowledge of the concepts of business expenses, pricing, scarcity, and supply/demand. Students will act as consumers and producers throughout the program. By allowing students to experience these ideas firsthand, they will develop a deeper and more relevant understanding not only of our 5th grade standards, but the world at large.

Building Minds with Math Toolkits

Renner Elementary School

Lindsay McKay

As part of our continued focus for mathematics instruction this year, I would like for my students to have individual math toolkits they can use to perform math tasks. Through items such as digit cards, dice, counters, problem solving mats, and other math tools, my students will have everything they need to be successful. As a carpenter or plumber needs tools to complete their daily job tasks, our young mathematicians need tools in their hands at all times. While we do have many manipulatives in our classroom for students to use, having a personal toolkit stocked with specific items based on the 4th grade curriculum, Missouri Learning Standards, and individual student goals will ensure students can have the tool of their choice available to them at all times. Additionally, each student having their own tool kit will allow for me to stock them with the items most beneficial to them and/or will most help them to complete math tasks.

Drums Alive

Southeast Elementary School

Lori Lopez

Drums Alive is a whole brain and whole-body wellness program that combines aerobic activity and movement while reinforcing rhythmic concepts and musical development through the use of drumming and music. This program will promote physical, social, emotional and cognitive health of our young learners. It is my hope upon implementing this program, our music students will show more engagement in musical activities, have greater rhythmic success, feel more comfortable moving their bodies, and have greater endurance during physical tasks.

Building a Toolbox for Dyslexia

Prairie Point Elementary School

Lyndsay Beaver

Dyslexia in the classroom is more common than one would think. Being prepared with the right tools in the classroom is necessary for not only students diagnosed with dyslexia, but also for struggling readers and writers. Studies have shown about 1 in every 5 students have some dyslexic tendencies, including slow or inaccurate reading, poor spelling, writing, or simply “mixing” up letters and numbers. There are many materials that can help both dyslexic students and struggling readers in the classroom. From color overlays to leveled text, these students will build their confidence as well as their reading skills.

Self-Regulation Sensory Toolkits

Prairie Point Elementary School

Marla Anderson, Ally Swisher

Our students have increasingly been struggling with managing their behavior. This ties directly to their inability to manage their response when they experience emotions that cause them to feel threatened. As part of our Tier 1 behavioral intervention, Prairie Point Elementary would like to create Self-Regulation Sensory Toolkits for all of our classrooms. Students and teachers will be taught how to use this proactive measure so they will be able to set a timer, choose a tool to help them relax, refocus, and regain control over how they respond to their emotions. This strategy aligns with Missouri DESE’s Trauma-Informed Schools Initiative.

Complete Comprehension

Renner Elementary School

Tina Mecklenburg

For students to meet the increasing challenges of comprehension, readers need to be taught reading strategies that directly match their needs. As a way to meet the needs of our striving readers in Tier 2 and 3, comprehension kits would allow teachers to assess and evaluate students using whole books instead of just short passages. These complete comprehension kits would allow teachers to find the exact area where students are struggling to be able to provide reading strategies that match.