

## **EDUCATION GRANTS AWARDED 2021-2022 (TOTAL = \$43,348)**

- **Great Leaps Reading and Math Fluency (SES)** This comprehensive intervention program, for reading, language, and mathematics in grades K-5, is targeted for students with moderate to significant reading, language, and mathematics difficulties. It is designed and has proven to generate significant and lasting gains, using short but frequent sessions with immediate, corrective feedback. The materials may be shared throughout grades 1-5.
- **Free Library Composite Book Houses (SES)** The project makes libraries accessible on the school's playgrounds in "book houses" made of weather resistant material. The book houses will provide an activity for students who may not be able to participate at recess, whether due to injury, upset, or the need for a break from intense activity. These students will be able to still enjoy recess when it is outdoors while gaining additional reading practice. **(Bill and Anne Kirkpatrick Fund)**
- **Mock Trial and Escape Room Supplies (SHS)** This innovative project looks to increase participation and understanding by actively engaging students in mock trials and other participatory exercises that will challenge their critical thinking skills.
- **Laser Engraving and Manufacturing (MBA)** This request is for an OM Tech 40W Laser Engraver for the MBA Technology Education program. This will provide students with an opportunity to manufacture precise and specialized components for class and individual projects. It will also offer students experience with CAD (Computer Assisted Design) which is widely used in many occupations.
- **Butterfly Enclosure and MBA Courtyard Improvements (MBA)** This, and the next two grants, focus on the learning environment, rather than specific classroom needs. SEF has always supported the idea that student attitudes toward learning are greatly affected by the total school environment. In this case the courtyard is being transformed into both a learning area, through the addition of a butterfly enclosure for Monarch Butterflies, and a restful and calming space for students. The butterfly enclosure will support learning in several disciplines and be maintained by members of the Environmental Club.
- **Safe Spaces: Inclusivity in the SHS Cafeteria (SHS)** The is grant aims to transform the SHS Cafeteria from a place where some students are uncomfortable and unwelcome to a place where everyone has "place at the table." At present all seating is at large tables, which leaves those with no friends in their lunch wave, those who have only a few friends, or those made anxious by the noise and bustle, with no comfortable or welcoming place. As a result, lunch becomes a time of anxiety and separation, and these students usually skip lunch entirely or eat covertly in other places in the school. To alleviate this problem, this grant provides a few smaller tables for individuals or pairs. It also increases the outside seating, away from the high energy of the cafeteria, for months where that is a viable option. The grant writers have carefully investigated the problem and found that students are receptive to the additions provided by the grant.
- **Stackable Rocking Seats (SES)** These are stackable rocking seats that provide (independent) flexible seating around the classroom. First grade students will use them as individual reading spots or work spaces while still remaining socially distant. They will provide an alternative to sitting in the confines of a desk and chair throughout the day.
- **Weight Room Upgrade (SHS)** This grant would result in the total makeover of and replacement of the equipment in the high school weight room, which at present is inadequate,

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outdated, and in disrepair. The new facility will be able to accommodate PE classes for units in weight training, thus giving all students experience and knowledge in training safely with weights. It would also be available after school for teams and individual students under supervision. The total grant is for \$30,000, half to be funded in SEF's 21-22 budget and the other half in the 22-23 budget.

- **Kindergarten Picnic Tables (SES)** Placed out outside and accessible to all pre-k, kindergarten, and 1<sup>st</sup> grade classes, the tables would be available for many uses: for students working on curricular projects; for specialists working with small groups of students; for reading aloud to an entire class; as a social space during lunch or recess; as a space for students unable to actively participate in recess to read using the Little Free Library. The tables would be an alternative space for students working in groups and when the class was divided for different tasks, thus providing teachers with greater flexibility in meeting individual needs. **(Antonacci Family Fund and the Mazzoli Family Fund)**
- **SBAC Incentive Program (MBA)** This grant focuses on the motivation for learning and specifically for optimal performance on the SBAC, the comprehensive state test taken by all students. It is based on the growth goals formulated individually for all students. Those students who reach their goals will be invited to the SBAC honor breakfast and will receive raffle tickets for various prizes. Most importantly this program focuses not on those with the highest scores, but on those who reach their individual goals. **(Salva Family Fund)**
- **Specialist Smartboard Projector (SES)** The smartboard can serve to reinforce and supplement learning in music class in many ways. It can be used to watch performances and provide instruction for student individual responses. Music teachers can use software notation to compose with the class and display and use interactive music websites and games. Students can practice music theory, ear-training, and music literacy in a new and engaging way. It does not replace instruction; it augments it in ways that provide immediacy and focus attention. The smartboard is mobile and will be available to all specialists (PE, art, etc.) at Somers Elementary School, who will use it in many ways appropriate to their curriculum areas.
- **Book Collection for Little Free Library (SES)** This grant supports a previous grant, which set up the Little Free Library, which has been a huge success for students unable to participate actively in recess. The titles purchased in this collection were selected by students. They include selections with jokes, poems, and interesting facts that can be in read brief intervals of time and be repeatedly enjoyed during recess. **(Bill and Anne Kirkpatrick Fund)**
- **Digital Piano (MBA, SHS)** Digital pianos have replaced upright pianos with soundboards because they add many functions now integrated into teaching choral music. This digital piano will replace one that is damaged in several ways and for which parts are not available. It will also provide a second digital piano so that there is one in each school, rather than one moving back and forth between schools. This will add significantly to the life of both pianos. **(Dan and Jane Roulier Fund)**
- **Peaceful Playgrounds (SES)** This grant provides a complete recess program for an elementary school, including equipment, game and activity guides, and materials to create interactive game surfaces on the blacktop. The play and activities are structured to promote positive play interactions, cooperation, and sportsmanship skills. Teachers are provided with guides that will help them facilitate the games. The materials can also be used for PE classes. **(Helen and S. Prestley Blake Fund)**