



The Granby Drummer April 2011

Granby Education Foundation Community Grants

by Barbara Cashman

The GEF is pleased to announce the award of more than \$27,400 in grant funding through the Fall 2010 and Spring 2011 Community Grant cycles. Twice yearly the GEF reviews requests from local non-profit organizations to provide quality educational programming and opportunities for the Granby community. The following were found to be the most innovative and deserving from the many applications in their respective cycles.

Statistics indicate that youth between the ages of fifteen and twenty-four watch two hours of television daily, yet read only seven minutes per day for pleasure. Less than one third of thirteen year olds read for pleasure at all. In an effort to enhance the school library environment and encourage pleasure reading, the GEF is pleased to grant \$675 toward Wells Road Intermediate School librarian Kathy Waddington's request for an iPad eReader and its associated capabilities.

The GEF is pleased to once again support Kelly Lane Intermediate School and Principal Bob Gilbert's request for funding toward the after school "Destination Imagination" program. Two student teams, with minimal assistance from a teacher coordinator and parent facilitators, work together for months to develop theatrical, structural, improvisational, scientific, or technical responses to challenge questions, problems, and situations. This process fosters creativity, teamwork, and problem-solving skills. A \$1,500 grant will assist in volunteer training for team facilitators, materials, and registration for competitions.

The Art Department and Media Center at Kelly Lane Intermediate School teamed up to turn in a request for \$300 to fund materials for a mural in the Media Center. Local artist Kristen Cormier has volunteered her time to create a three panel mural entitled "Wonder of Reading"; students, under the volunteer supervision of Art teacher Katie Ransom, will create panels for each letter of the alphabet which will wind their way around the media center. "Artistic talent will be nurtured and rewarded with public display, and the rest of the student community will forever remember the process of adding art to the beautiful library space."

The Music program at Kelly Lane received \$606.43 for the purchase of a Listening Center for the music room at the request of music teacher Nicole Lucas. Students in grades 3-6 will have the ability to record and self-evaluate musical performances beginning with recorder instruction in third grade and throughout all levels of musical instruction. The listening center will also provide

the ability to connect to existing computer equipment allowing interaction with various media and projects.

The GEF is also pleased to have contributed \$350 toward the purchase of “Play Away” book technology for students at Kelly Lane. Per Principal Bob Gilbert’s application, this simple technology allows struggling readers to enjoy peer level literature, motivating students to enjoy books.

The GEF has renewed its support for the Hartford Stage In-School Residency for fifth grade students at both Kelly Lane and Wells Road Intermediate Schools with a grant of \$1,500. Led by a Hartford Stage instructor, students explore the themes central to the story of My Brother Sam is Dead through the techniques of pantomime, role-play, improvisation, and tableau, reinforcing the skills of question and answer, inference, and ability to make predictions. Teacher Meghan Bovol’s request will permit students to “examine the American Revolution in an engaging and dramatic fashion.”

Kelly Lane School, at the request of sixth grade teacher Cynthia Gordon, had received an additional grant of \$2,420 for the supplemental purchase of Classroom Performance System (CPS), a hardware and software package that allows students and teachers instant response and evaluation via “clicker” response pads. This additional set will be dedicated to the sixth grade math program.

The Granby Memorial Middle School Science program, at the request of teacher Sue Alender, has received \$200 toward the supplementation of the weather curriculum and the beautification of the Ecology Center. A local artist will paint a mural on the ceiling depicting the three types of clouds: cumulus, cirrus, and stratus.

The World Language program at Granby Memorial High School had received two separate grants. The first, requested by teacher Karen Richmond Goddard, provides \$1,500 toward the purchase of 25 microphones and noise canceling headsets for listening and speaking/recording activities. This will provide real world radio broadcast and news programs to influence the speaking fluency and intonation of language students. The second grant for \$250 will bring a flamenco dancer to GMHS. Per the request of teacher Gina Magennis, approximately 350 students will receive historical and cultural information about flamenco, its development and cultural impact, prior to demonstration and lessons for all world language students.

The final grant of the Fall cycle provides \$500 to GMHS to revive the inactive Newspaper Club. English teacher Kelly Price made a strong case for not only the need to provide relevant, reliable news for the staff and student body, but for the authentic learning experience of publication in the areas of ethical journalism, research skills, writing process, layout, advertising, and sales and marketing. This eight page publication will be produced four times per school year.

The first grant of the Spring 2011 cycle, in the amount of \$1,800, was awarded to Citizens for a Better Granby, at the request of Rosemarie Weber, to aid in the presentation of the documentary film “Race to Nowhere”. This documentary addresses the challenges and stresses facing children in the current educational and community systems, with the hope of opening dialogue among families, community agencies, and the variety of educators who touch the lives of children. A panel discussion will follow the screening.

The GEF is pleased to present \$1,300 to Granby Memorial High School, at the request of Susan Clark, to facilitate a student collaborative project in the development and distribution of student produced merchandise. Students in fine arts, business, technology, and family and consumer sciences will create, market, and distribute products, developing leadership skills and learning the steps of entrepreneurial business ventures.

The Granby Parks and Recreation Department, in conjunction with Valorie Hollister, has received \$1,900 for materials to offer "Risitas y Sonrisas" (Laughter and Smiles), an introductory course in Spanish language and culture. This afterschool program will offer third through sixth grade students at both Kelly Lane and Wells Road Intermediate Schools a multi-sensory approach to learning and retaining vocabulary and pronunciation with the introduction of practical conversation. Developed in consultation with Superintendent of Schools Alan Addley, this program will provide a basis for continued language development once students reach the formal language program in seventh grade.

The Social Studies Department of GMHS had received \$7,118 for the purchase of 30 7" Android Tablet PCs to facilitate learning and the move to a paperless environment. Teacher Joe Jarvis indicates that the continued challenge of providing new textbooks would be virtually eliminated as current textbook databases allow educators eBooks customized for their classrooms. The PC based tablets would also circumvent the shortage of computer availability at the high school level, while allowing collaboration on projects and immediate interaction and assessment between students and educators.

In the same vein, Kelly Lane has requested and received \$2,140 for the purchase of five Kineo Android Tablets. These tablets are specifically designed for use by a younger student population and are loaded with interactive lessons correlated to Connecticut standards and Common Core curriculum. This pilot will be facilitated by Laurie Smith, Technical Specialist, and special education teacher Lindsay Madsen.

To learn more about the Granby Education Foundation, please visit the website at www.granbyeducationfoundation.org.