

PPS Foundation and CFCI Classroom Grant, Field Experience Grant and STEM Grant Recipients for the 2024-25 School Year

Name	School	Grant Type	Project Name	Project Summary	Amount Awarded
Jeffery Adams	Knoxville Center for Student Success	Classroom Grant	K.C.S.S Drumline	The KCSS Drumline has the potential to be a cornerstone of success, focusing on improving individual and ensemble drumming techniques while reducing performance anxiety. By engaging in competitions and community events, the program aims to strengthen connections with the local community and increase support for The Knoxville Center for Student Success. Through mentorship, workshops, and leadership opportunities, the drumline will foster musical excellence, confidence, and community engagement, creating a safe and motivating environment for students. Grant funds are essential to the success of the KCSS Drumline program. They will be used to purchase instruments that are vital for student engagement and learning. The grant will enable us to buy a variety of percussion instruments, ensuring that each student has the necessary tools to participate fully.	\$1,000
Denise Baker	Whittier Primary	Classroom Grant	Social Emotional Support for the Classroom	Social Emotional needs for students must be addressed in order for students to feel safe, comfortable, and ready to learn. Many students in my class this year are lacking some of the social emotional skills needed to be successful as well as they are coming to school hungry. The plan is to purchase items to assist students with social emotional skills/needs such as books, fidgets, "class friends", rewards for making good choices, and snacks to assist with healthy learning because it is hard to learn when all you can think about is being hungry.	\$1,000
Leigh Ann Cloud	Peoria High School	Classroom Grant	Fun Focus on Freshmen!	The library media specialist has put together a list of 54 titles of books/box sets of a variety of genres and formats based on the lists students were submitting. By providing books they are interested in such as manga, horror and romance or topics such as photography, gardening or cooking, the library media specialist and English teacher hope to match each student to that "just right book" to increase the likelihood of the students developing their reading stamina. This project supports the students' passion for reading by acquiring the books they want to read this school year.	\$996
Chetni Cobb	Annie Jo Gordon Community Learning Center	Classroom Grant	Cobb's Place The Green Wing Cafe	This project involves transforming my classroom into a reading and writing oasis for my middle school students. I intend to create a space where students learn to love reading and writing. This atmosphere I believe is necessary to help ensure that all students are college and career ready in all areas of literacy. The purpose in creating this environment in my classroom is for my students to become independent, accountable, appreciative learners. So many students depend on the teacher to complete most of the tasks required for them to learn.. The project includes the purchase of several items to help me pursue this new concept; two metal book carts on wheels, a stand steady three shelf utility cart, two beanbag chairs and a small area rug that students can gather at that will be housed in our new reading nook, wicker baskets that will be used to display books throughout the classroom that will help expose students to rich literacy that they would not normally look through my bookcases for, and a charging station/power strip that I can affix to a booth that students can sit and work on their streams.	\$1,000
Heather Cunningham	The Elise Ford Allen Academy	Classroom Grant	Kindergarten Yoga	This project would fund Yoga Learning Adventures with Angie Swearingian. The goal of the project would be for Angie to come in for 10 weeks at 45 minutes per session from January to April. She would use yoga to teach the students mindfulness and self-regulation.	\$1,000
Kirianna Dryden	Lincoln K-8 School	Classroom Grant	Young Authors	This project lets students see the value of writing in real life. Students over the course of 7 months (Oct - April) will brainstorm, write, revise, edit, illustrate and format a novel. Students will be motivated to write more, and will improve writing assessment scores, NWEA reading scores, ACCESS scores and IAR scores. Grant funds will be used to pay for a professional artist to work with students, ChaptGPT subscription for generating digital images, printing the books and shipping them to school, and an author party.	\$900
Alyssa Emanuelson	Richwoods High School	Classroom Grant	Knight Recovery	Student athletes at Richwoods High School often come into the athletic training room looking for food and snacks that are nutritious and serve as fuel for practice. As the focus in this room is on recovery and prevention, the ability to provide protein and other snacks and hydration for in-season student athletes is imperative. We hope to offer health snack and hydration options to help eliminate calorie deficit for athletes in the athletic training room. The money utilized from the grant funding would be put toward a snack space for athletes that are currently in season. Funds can be used to purchase protein bars, health snacks like granola, lowfat yogurt, bottled water, hydration drinks like Prime and EIMNT, etc. The items would be kept in the athletic training room at Richwoods High School and under the supervision of the athletic trainer/teacher that maintains the space. We would seek further donations and funding to maintain this program in an ongoing capacity.	\$1,000

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Christina Erwin	Dr. C.T. Vivian Primary School	Classroom Grant	Décor Galore	By the end of the 2024/25 school year, my class would like to complete a project known as Decor Galore. This project aims to beautify the school with student-created designs. We are striving for a student-friendly environment. Students will be creatively brainstorming quotes, conducting research for school positivity, and turning their thoughts and ideas sayings. Students will learn how to use the Cricuit program to design and create murals for our school.	\$1,000
Oriana Gilson	Woodruff Career and Technical Center	Classroom Grant	Young Alumni-Student Engagement Conference	The Young Alumni-Student Engagement Conference brings together dual-credit PPS students in the Health Occupations, Criminal Justice, and EMT/Fire Science programs with Young Alumni Ambassadors- recent PPS graduates currently attending college. Students gain insights to better prepare them for the academic and lifestyle changes of college and all participants grow their networks within their fields. The conferences features a keynote speech followed by Q&A, networking lunch, and roundtables led by Young Alumni Ambassadors. Roundtable discussions cover college and career topics such as getting involved on campus, accessing campus resources and supports, dorm life, and adjusting to college expectations.	\$1,000
Adelyn Gruse	Whittier Primary	Classroom Grant	Classroom Library	I am looking to add new books to our classroom library to meet all readers at their reading level. These books will not only be used for independent reading and small groups but for project based learning. We will utilize the books cross-curricular experineces in science and social studies. We are buying culturally relevant and appropriate books that kids want to read. Our goal is to encourage the love for reading and allow students to see themselves in the books.	\$1,000
Monica Hayes	Richwoods High School	Classroom Grant	Building Biliteracy & Confident Communication	This project builds on grants that I have won in years past. I had incorporated novels and communicative activities such as chat mats, and the students' reaction has been tremendous! The written and speaking activities that I plan to purchase will help my students become stronger writers by incorporating connective phrases and utilizing colorful visuals to help scaffold conversations in the target language. Students will read for 30 minutes in the target language each week using new library materials. Additionally, the teacher will incorporate lesson supplements for daily writing and conversation practice. The supplies will be purchased and put into action immediately.	\$456
Laura Ray Kelly	Valeska Hinton ECEC	Classroom Grant	No Bored Autistic PK Students With Adapted Board Books Around	The goal of this project, upon receiving the board books, is to add the modifications to the books that allow my autistic students to interact with them. They will interact by adding visuals to the pages that encourage varied skill development, comprehension and love of literature.	\$1,000
Jennifer Kimble	Valeska Hinton ECEC	Classroom Grant	Outdoor Balance Beam Nature Explore Classroom	This project will enhance the outdoor learning classroom for 120 preschool students with various needs. A natural balance beam in the outside learning classroom will address multiple skills. Beginners can start by practicing basic skills like beam walks and jumps. Students should begin slowly and focus on building balance, body control, and accuracy. When a child walks slowly across a balance beam, their body develops balance and learns where it is in space. It requires concentration, hand-eye coordination, muscular strength, endurance, and maintaining posture to walk on a balance beam.	\$1,000
Adrienne Locke	Liberty Leadership	Classroom Grant	Supporting Deaf Identity though Literacy	I would love to create a library of books centered around stories that feature Deaf or Hard of Hearing characters, their lives and experiences and spanning across all grade levels. I hope to start a book study with my students to dicuss the various themes, how they apply to their lives, or lived experiences and ultimately help to create a greater sense of identity related to their hearing loss. The book study would start at the beginning of each school year and span for however long it needs with each individual student (sometimes introducing new stories as the year progresses that relate to the challenges or success they are experiencing in their life at that time).	\$1,000
Sonya Nunez	Valeska Hinton ECEC	Classroom Grant	Playground For All	This project is to complete a sensory playground this Fall, designed specifically to meet the needs of Special Ed. students with various needs. 90% of the playground is fully developed but needs a small end of it finished off with sod and a built in race track for toy cars installed. We would also like to add a few special needs adaptations to help with labels and picture communication systems while out of the classroom.	\$1,000

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Jaime Peterson	Kellar Primary School	Classroom Grant	Dog Treats for All	Students will be completing a community based service project to support the local animal shelter, by making homemade dog treats. This goal is specific, measurable, and encourages kids to actively participate in making a positive impact on their community. The project should be completed in 2 weeks.	\$500
Meredith Popp	Peoria High School	Classroom Grant	The 7 Mindsets of an Artist	I am seeking a grant to enable students to create a living embodiment of the 7 Mindsets curriculum that will be taught to them every Wednesday which focuses on Social Emotional Learning. These are talented fine arts students from all over the district and I want their artwork to inspire the entire school. It will be a yearlong project to coincide with the curriculum. We plan on using the funds for mural board, paints, brushes and canvas.	\$1,000
Joy Quezada	Lincoln K-8 School	Classroom Grant	Creating New Futures for Newcomers	I would like to purchase several Illustrated English/Spanish dictionaries, English/Spanish Flashcard sets with rings, an ESL conversation card game, and some Lapare Spanish/English Audible Flash Cards. My goal is to get our Newcomer ESL students speaking, reading, and writing in English as soon as possible. I would like for our students to feel comfortable and confident in their English speaking skills. I believe that using illustrations, role playing, and listening activities are essential for a newcomer to absorb their new language.	\$1,000
Jamie Quinn	Northmoor Primary School	Classroom Grant	A Visit to Our State's Capital ~ Springfield	Fourth grade students and 8 teacher/staff/parent chaperones will travel to Springfield, IL to experience both The A. Lincoln Presidential Museum and the Lincoln Home National Historic Site via Peoria Charter buses. This experience will follow an 8 week themed literacy unit plan of Illinois History, Black History, with a Spotlight on The United States/ Midwest. This will be an innovative experience as our fourth grade students will be immersed first hand into sight seeing the Land of Lincoln state's capital, Springfield, Illinois.	\$1,000
Kevin Roecker	Woodruff Career & Technical Center	Classroom Grant	The Chill Factor	The request is to purchase five ice cream making devices that would attach to our Kitchen Aid stand mixers. These attachments can make ice cream, gelato, sherbet, and other frozen treats. The goal of this project is to introduce our students to the world of creating frozen desserts. Our students are aware of desserts such as ice cream, sherbet, and gelato, yet very few have an idea of the processes which create these frozen treats. Students would be able to customize their own flavors, consistencies and textures, while understanding how added ingredients and varying fat content will change the consistency of their final product.	\$550
Deneta Russell	Valeska Hinton ECEC	Classroom Grant	Sensory support for inclusion students, general education students, and other students in the six classrooms.	The objective of this project is to give students a place to go when they are overstimulated and need to use their hands to explore their surroundings. This request is to purchase sensory activities that can be used throughout our classroom and village to help with social-emotional supports. We need something that is interactive for our students that have IEP's due to multiple factors such as; being legally blind, autistic, developmental delays, and those who need social-emotional supports.	\$1,000
Kayla Steele	Von Steuben Middle School	Classroom Grant	Utilizing Literacy to Explore Diversity	Our project is to expand our school's library content. The school librarian and school counselor will collaborate to create a list of books to add to the library. Book content topics will include LGBTQ+, BIPOC (black indigenous people of color), Latino stories and more as we dig deeper into who our student population is and add additional content topics as needed. The expansion will include both fiction and nonfiction stories as well. We will survey our student population about topics that they would like to see added to the library as well. Students today deserve to see themselves in the literature available to them in their own school library. Our goal is to enrich the content available to our students, with the additions available for checkout by the spring semester.	\$750
Adam Stevens	Manual High School	Classroom Grant	Classroom Yoga & Mindfulness	Trauma-Informed teachers from Soulside Healing Arts will provide mindfulness sessions that incorporate yoga movement, breathing techniques, and meditation for 30 minutes once a week, for the duration of the school year. These activities are proven to alleviate the physical, emotional, and behavioral symptoms of stress and trauma, while serving as an embodied approach to the key concepts of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL). We hope to see fewer absences and improved emotional regulation as measured by the DERS assessment and qualitative self-reports before and after the program.	\$1,000

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Alivia Taylor	Northmoor Primary School	Classroom Grant	Scootin' to be fyzically fit in physical education!	The funds for this project will be used to replace twenty-year-old worn-out scooter boards with new scooters that have bigger boards & safer wheels. A scooter board provides vestibular input and helps self-regulate through motor planning. In addition, when riding a scooter, students will work to strengthen their body by directly focusing on their core muscular section which is necessary to perform curl-ups for the physical education Fitness Gram assessment. Once the new scooter boards are received, the equipment will be implemented directly into the daily lesson plans specific to relay races, obstacle courses, and motor movement patterns.	\$1,000
Kimberly Thomas	Glen Oak Community Learning Center	Classroom Grant	GEObread Houses	This project will be completed in December. My goal is to give my students the hands-on experience of creating a gingerbread house in mathlicious form. Students will apply thier cooperative + critical thinking skills as they complete mathivity sheets that corresponds with each stage of the Geobread house.	\$1,000
Stephanie Walker	Valeska Hinton ECEC	Classroom Grant	Check Back with Me-Durable Visual Schedule Boards	Visual schedules are important for all children, especially children with Autism. This project will purchase durable individual boards for our 3 PK Autism classrooms in our building. Staff will create all the needed pictures to represent the different parts of the student's day. The visual schedules will be posted in a location where students can independently access them and remove a picture as each segment of the day is completed. The students can them understand the next transition and what needs to be done without meltdowns. With fewer meltdowns student are able to focus on learning new skills.	\$1,000
Mario West	Woodruff Career and Technical Center	Classroom Grant	Tools and Parts Organization	Our new HVAC program and lab are building blocks of our students' career and technical education (CTE) experience. However, the lack of adequate Storage for tools, parts, and equipment significantly hinders our ability to provide optimal learning opportunities. This project aims to transform our lab into a dynamic, efficient, and engaging learning space by investing classroom grant funds in essential storage solutions. Completing the project by the holiday break would be beneficial to our classroom and students.	\$1,000
Hilari Willdrick	Dr. Maude A Sanders Primary School	Classroom Grant	VBMAPP for Life Skills	During the 2024-2025 school year and beyond, students in self-contained special education placements have delayed language and social skills which require intensive intervention. The current curriculum utilized in my program does not include materials and methods for targeting language and social skills needed to become successful, productive members of society. The Verbal Behavior Milestones Assessment and Placement Program (VB-MAPP) is a widely used language and social skills assessment program for children with autism or other intellectual disabilities. The VB-MAPP can provide parents and professionals with the information necessary for developing IEPs that target the right skills at the right time. I would use the funds to purchase the guide and protocols for the current year and beyond. With this curriculum, students would learn the language skills and social skills necessary to be successful, productive members of society and be able to use the skills to work with others and communicate with peers.	\$1,000
Debracca Williams-Hangen	Valeska Hinton ECEC	Classroom Grant	How Do I Feel?	The "How Do I Feel?" project aims to help preschool students build emotional literacy by teaching them to identify, express, and manage their feelings in a supportive setting. The funds for this project will be used to purchase tools and resources to support students experiencing strong emotions. Each day, children being dropped off will place a dot under the emotion that best represents how they feel, creating opportunities for daily emotional reflection and discussion. This project can be interacted into the daily routine and continuously used throughout the school year to support emotional development and classroom conversations.	\$1,000
Melvin Ama	Dr. Maude A. Sanders Primary School	Field Experience Grant	Field Trip Destination: Fon du Lac Park in East Peoria, Christ Orchard in Elmwood, Roth Pumpkin in Morton, Landmark Bowling in Peoria, Bass Pro in East Peoria, Elevate in Peoria, Christian Center Bowling in Peoria, Riverfront Museum in Peoria, Jumpstart Gymnastics in Peoria, and the Peoria Zoo	Project Name: Life Skills Learning Trips - Field trips give students in the life skills program a chance to explore new places and interact with their peers. This helps them become better communicators, problem-solvers, and critical thinkers. Plus, getting out of the classroom allows students to gain hands-on experience that plays a key role in developing their social skills.	\$500

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Joe Baumgardner	Richwoods High School	Field Experience Grant	Field Trip Destination: Shedd Aquarium, Field Museum, Adler Planetarium: all in Chicago	Project Name: Science Club Trip to Shedd Aquarium, Adler Planetarium & Field Museum - This field experience to the museum campus in Chicago will allow high school science club students the opportunity to observe scientific phenomena they can't see in the classroom. They will have the opportunity to tour the Shedd Aquarium and see an aquatics show, followed by a choice of either the Adler Planetarium or the Field Museum of Natural History. With such a wide range of learning opportunities available, students will be able to choose activities that are relevant to them and teach them about the world in a way that isn't possible in a classroom setting.	\$500
Michael Bowen	Annie Jo Gordon Community Learning Center	Field Experience Grant	Field Trip Destination: St. Louis Zoo in St. Louis, MO	Project Name: St. Louis Zoo Experience - This would be our 3rd annual trip to the St. Louis Zoo where students are able to see animals and further their studies on biomes, traits, and habitats. Students will participate in a guided educational scavenger hunt provided by the zoo.	\$500
Christina Brown	R.A. Jamieson School	Field Experience Grant	Field Trip Destination: Luthy Botanical Gardens	Project Name: Hands on Wreath Making - During this experience students will use their skills of following sequential directions while being lead by an member of the Luthy Botanical Garden's staff. They will be able to apply their creative fine arts skills, vocational skills and learn about nature through the attendance of this activity. Students will also gain knowledge about what it would require of them to make and sell their own holiday wreaths in the future.	\$500
Janice Camanan	Glen Oak Community Learning Center	Field Experience Grant	Field Trip Destination: National Museum of Mexican Art in Chicago, National Museum of Puerto Rican Arts and Culture in Chicago, Newberry Library in Chicago	Project Name: Hispanic Cultural Heritage Field Trip - The field experience at the museums and the library will provide an immersive experience for our 7th and 8th grade Dual-Language students in the Hispanic Heritage. The students will be exposed to different arts and print materials that showcase and at the same time draw appreciation for their rich hispanic cultural heritage. This 12 hour field trip in May 2025 will supplement their lesson on human migrations.	\$500
Leigh Ann Cloud	Peoria High School	Field Experience Grant	Field Trip Destination: Library Community Connections Peoria Public Library - Main Branch, East Peoria Library, and Bradley University Cullom-Davis Library	Project Name: Library Community Connections - This field experience has two goals: 1.) to unmask the mysteries of the Peoria Public Library to freshmen who are just learning how the library can support them throughout their lives, and 2.) to give upperclassmen the opportunity to experience services provided by the undergraduate libraries within our community. The trips will provide real world experiences that connects students to services they may access as community members in their future studies or future reading enjoyment. The students will participate in activities that support scientific inquiry, information gathering, research strategies, and synthesis of information required in the English Language Arts high school curriculum.	\$300
Natasha Lynn	Lincoln K-8 School	Field Experience Grant	Field Trip Destination: Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum	Project Name: Curating History: Building a Connecting With Our Past - The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum will allow students to engage in history through their own lens of discovery. The students will participate in a Q&A session with a museum historian and learn more about the significance of primary and secondary sources as well as the life and legacy of Abraham Lincoln before, during, and after the Civil War. Using a hands-on experience, students will learn to develop, install, and interpret exhibits at the museum and document their experiences along the way, directly connecting to our 4th-grade history curriculum.	\$500
Jitske Miedema (Chef Jetty)	Woodruff Career and Technical Center	Field Experience Grant	Field Trip Destination: Illinois ProStart Invitational in Des Plaines, IL	Project Name: ProStart Invitational - The invitational will give Culinary Arts students a change to compete againts other high school Culinary Arts students in a fast paced and exciting competition. In addition, they will have a change to win scholarships and a trip to Nationals. Students will also experience a college expo and a career fair at this event.	\$500
Carlee Swalve	The Elise Ford Allen Academy	Field Experience Grant	Field Trip Destination: Tanners Orchard in Speer, IL	Project Name: EFAA Kindergarten Visits Tanners Orchard - The field experience to Tanners Orchard will allow EFAA kindergartners to go on a hayrack ride through the orchard, pick apples, and tour the facilities where the food and products are made. Students will learn about the process of growing produce, harvesting produce, and how that produce can be used to make foods like donuts, jams, and pastries. They will also have time to explore the Back 40 Acres, play, and get lots of exercise.	\$500

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Joe Baumgardner	Richwoods High School	STEM Grant	Richwoods Science Club	This grant would be used to fund the yearly activities of the Richwoods Science Club. The grant would allow us to continue activities from previous years such as sponsoring after-school science clubs at Northmoor Primary and Kellar Elementary schools, leading Robotics and Kitchen Science programs at Reservoir Gifted Academy (RGA) and participating in the Illinois Junior Academy of Sciences Science Fair. Additionally, it would allow us to begin new programs, such as a monthly engineering challenge for science club members and piloting 1-2 new exploratory programs at RGA focused on small-group science and engineering challenges to build problem-solving skills in middle schoolers.	\$1,500
Casey Collins	Richwoods High School	STEM Grant	STEM in Core Sciences	This project is designed to provide hands-on activities with the help of the company KiwiCo. Every month, KiwiCo will mail a science/engineering/design based project intended to spark imagination and allow students to make real-life connections to the sciences. The project will reach 25+ students with learning needs/IEPs monthly over the course of the school year.	\$900
Dawn Gersich	Rolling Acres Middle School	STEM Grant	Getting Laser Focused	Last year, Peoria Public Schools introduced a new science curriculum to our middle schools called Invention Convention. This great curriculum encourages students to become inventors, creating an engineered solution to problems they identify. Having a laser in the classroom would allow students to take their inventions from pen and paper drawings to a functioning three dimensional object. If I receive the grant, my plan is to have students be able to use the laser cutter to create the pieces needed to build their invention.	\$1,500
Jennifer Marshall	Manual High School	STEM Grant	NO PHONE ZONE	Provide ELL student with adequate technology to advance their educations. My classroom has no functioning computers. Students need them for translation and assignments. In order for the ELL students to be competitive, they need to be able to function in the 20th century. Students all have different speaking, writing, and comprehension levels. Many lacked basic English instruction in their former countries. Starting from the basics is essential. Students needs to be addressed at their particular levels. Technology allows students in the same class to be working on different material. For example, IXL. Some student know basic sentence structure, while some are learning. I can assign appropriate materials.	\$1,239
Amanda Rubini	Lincoln K-8 School	STEM Grant	STEAM collaboration	Every other week on Friday, we will be implementing an opportunity for students to complete hands on learning activities though STEAM/imagination. This will help SPeD students to work together and learn things through collaboration and project based learning which they may not otherwise experience in a self-contained classroom setting.	\$1,500
Andrew (Andy) Sea	Reservoir Gifted Academy	STEM Grant	Challenger Space Mission	Students learn about Space in 5th and 6th grade Science class. The Challenger Learning Center in Normal, IL will enhance their learning experience and make it seem real. Students have to work as a team to successfully land a shuttle on Mars. Funds will be used to offset transportation costs and the cost of the mission itself. Students experience different roles throughout the mission. If not successful in one aspect, they may flourish in another. Hands-on experiences always make learning more meaningful and memorable.	\$1,500
Jessica Slater	Harold B. Dawson Middle School	STEM Grant	HBD Middle School Community Building through STEM	Our goal is to create teambuilding opportunities among grade levels through STEM activities. Our goal is to use our STEM lab to bring together grade levels to create mentor and mentee relationship and create unity at HBD Middle School. This will be an ongoing yearly project in our school spearheaded by our Science teachers.	\$1,500