

# 13

# GREAT IDEAS!

The Helena Education Foundation

awards **Spring 2022**

Great Ideas Grants

**+ Spark  
Grants**



## 1. Bounce to Attention and Show What You Know

**Teacher:** Shay Coil, Four Georgians Elementary School

Research shows providing movement opportunities helps support attention needs and enables students to better engage in instruction. This grant will allow students to bounce their feet on a tension-based desk band to help relieve anxiety, hyperactivity and/or frustration, providing for better student focus. The second component of the project will provide students with whiteboards and markers to enable students to demonstrate mastery in more ways than one, providing the teacher a quick formative assessment of the skills of each student.

**Sponsor:** Andy O and Jeff Barber Realty at Keller Williams

## 2. CHS Robotics New Dimensions

**Teacher:** Jake Warner, Capital High School

Building the structural components of robots can be difficult and resource-consuming, but with a 3D printer the students at CHS will manufacture most, if not all, of their own robotics parts. This grant will fund the purchase of a 3D printer to be used daily in robotics class, for robotics competitions and to help further upgrade the robotics classes' tools for the future. Other math classes at CHS will also access the printer for their 3D printing units.

**Sponsor:** Dowl

## 3. Drumroll, Please!

**Teacher:** Abby Nyhof, Central Elementary School

This grant will purchase two new Tubano floor drums to expand the musical instrument inventory at Central School. For kindergarten and 1st grade students, Tubanos are ideal for reaction training, watching and copying a leader, and turning familiar words into simple rhythmic exercises. For intermediate students, these drums are great for pattern recognition/duplication, ensemble performance skills, and rhythmic literacy skills. For fourth and fifth grade students, Tubanos are tools for rhythmic composition projects, improvisation and increasingly complex ensemble skills, such as rhythmic independence.

**Sponsor:** Helena Dermatology

## 4. Fill Our Library With New Adventures

**Teacher:** Mikayla Bloyder, Four Georgians Elementary School

Throughout the first-grade year, students make incredible progress in their reading abilities. A main factor in encouraging and supporting reading growth is putting a variety of books in the students' hands. With more practice reading, using decoding and comprehension strategies, students are more likely to find books that pique their interest and "hook" them on reading. This grant will purchase 80 books for the classroom library, including classroom favorites as well as a variety of non-fiction stories.

**Sponsor:** Sandy Wikle, RockHand Hardware

## 5. Relevant Free Reading en Español

**Teacher:** Carrie Owen, Helena Middle School

This grant will fund a subscription to *¿Qué Tal?*, a Scholastic publication for first year Spanish students, and *People en Español* for this HMS classroom. When students finish projects or tests before their peers, students are required to spend the time free reading in Spanish. This project will provide a variety of relevant reading choices and will improve the selection and relevance of the reading materials available to students.

**Sponsor:** Jock and Tere Bovington

## 6. Stretch and Wave!

**Teacher:** Tamara Ashley, Jim Darcy Elementary School

This project will help students in grades K-5 get physical exercise in a new, creative way, while helping them to better understand physical and personal boundaries and learn their colors at the same time. This grant funds the purchase of stretchy bands to help students see physical boundaries, as well as help them begin to understand what the general space is, while helping to reinforce the primary colors. (General space refers to all the available space in the classroom.) This grant also includes the purchase of brightly colored ribbon wands to help students explore movement in their own personal space and help the younger students reinforce their colors.

**Sponsor:** PacificSource Health Plans

## 7. Who Was? Part II

**Teacher:** Kellen Alger, Jefferson Elementary School

These funds will be used to purchase books from the "Who Was. . .?" series in sets of five. The books will then be used as anchor texts for vocabulary and comprehension instruction during our WIN (What I Need) time. This project will provide an opportunity for students to explore the stories of a diverse group of historical figures. Who Was?" Part II is a continuation of a successful Spark Grant from earlier in the 2021-2022 school year.

**Sponsor:** Anonymous

## 8. ArcLight to the Future

**Teacher:** Cindy Galbavy, Helena High School

This grant will help fund the purchase of a new Plasma CAM ArcLight Pro 4x8 table 9600x to replace one purchased in 1997. The new table will bring the welding work of HHS students up to industry standards and enable the use of current software. Students will learn job ready skills and help create amazing pieces of art and different projects to benefit our community through fundraisers, park projects and more.

**Sponsor:** Dick Anderson Construction

## 9. Art for All

**Teacher:** Heather Ditch, Capital High School

This grant will fund the purchase of products needed to improve the art classroom for all students at CHS, specifically students with higher needs. Adapted chairs, slant boards, noise cancelling headphones, and light filtering items meet the needs of a range of students; fluorescent lights, traditional stools, and flat surfaces can be barriers for some. Meeting individual needs for seating and work surfaces will be safer and encourage students' creative expression.

**Sponsor:** Tim Speyer

## 10. Remember the Ladies

**Teacher:** Jodi Delaney, Broadwater Elementary School

This grant will fund the purchase of biographies about women in U.S. history. Picture books and novels are an excellent resource for building reading skills, and this project will serve double duty: simultaneously teaching about social, political and scientific issues of the past and present.

**Sponsor:** Dale Tig Vernon

## 11. Take Time in Life to Learn Something New

**Teacher:** Nicole Evans, Hawthorne Elementary School

This grant funds the instrument and book resources to support a cross-curricular project in which students take the spark of a folktale and develop it—researching instruments from diverse traditions, as well as preparing and performing music using some of the very instruments they research.

**Sponsor:** First Community Bank

## 12. Just Listen— Teens Talk

**Teacher:** Joanne Didriksen, Helena High School

This grant will allow for students' stories to be collected, edited, produced and shared. By working with journalist Clay Scott, students will be empowered by sharing their stories with our community, and also will learn the art of storytelling, journalistic practices, interview skills, audio production and publication. Students have compelling experiences to share; teen voices need to be heard and teen stories should be told.

**Sponsor:** KTVH/KXLH, Scripps Media

## 13. Faint Footprint

**Teacher:** Missy Sampson, Helena High School

John Steinbeck said it best, "I'm in love with Montana. For other states I have admiration, respect, recognition, even some affection. But with Montana it is love." This grant will help foster the love of Montana among kids by taking them on an adventure to the Rich Ranch in the Seeley-Swan area. They will learn about community and watershed level conservation, public lands, natural resource management, and how sustainable small businesses can thrive in a rural economy.

**Sponsor:** William and Judy Walter





To date, the Helena Education Foundation has awarded **429** grants, totalling more than **\$779,519!**

**177** High school grants  
**13** PAL grants  
**65** Middle school grants  
**187** Elementary grants

The **Helena Education Foundation Great Ideas Grants** program enhances the education and experiences of virtually all of Helena's 8,000 students.





## New Year, New Name: SPARK GRANTS

To augment our Great Ideas Grants program, last year we piloted a grant program to provide additional funding for smaller scale enrichment opportunities for students. The program was a big success among educators; we awarded \$12,000 in 20/21. In its second year, we renamed the program Spark Grants. Educators may apply for up to \$500 in four cycles per school year. Spark Grants provide more flexibility for smaller learning projects. Like Great Ideas Grants, Spark Grants are sponsored by local businesses and individuals. Contact HEF if you or your business would like to sponsor a grant for students.

“ Literature, history, dedicated educators and...costumes! As Rosie the Riveter proclaimed “We can do it.” Yes, we can. As HEF points out “Great schools are everyone’s business.” I’m a very grateful uncle of two Helena Public Schools graduates and have this to say about HEF: Simply unparalleled programs and results. Thank you HEF for enhancing both students’ and educators’ experiences!”

—“Uncle” Dale Tig Vernon



### Highlight from a past grant award:

► **A Collaboration Learning Commons for the HMS Community:** This grant funded the purchase of furniture, equipment, and supplies to convert the former computer lab at Helena Middle School into a collaborative “learning commons” where students, staff, and community members can work and collaborate on a variety of projects.

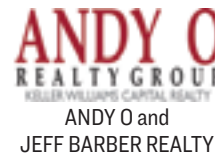
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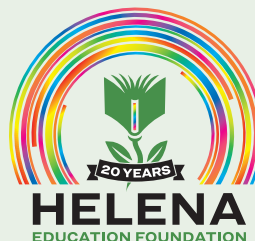
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