



Great ideas from Helena public school educators

Helena Education Foundation awards a Great Ideas Grant and 10 Spark grants



SPARK GRANTS

3D Printer for Warren Engineering Club

Educator: Alinon Arpin, Warren Elementary School
Warren Elementary's Engineering Club can create physical representations of their engineering designs from Tinkercad.com with a 3D printer. Last year, interested 3rd grade students at Warren began meeting at recess to dabble with tinkercad.com. They excelled through the tutorials and were quickly creating their own designs for vehicles, fantasy characters, etc. The printer will allow students to expand their curiosity for engineering and create something tangible.

Sponsor: Nancy Cormier

Bouncing Off The Walls

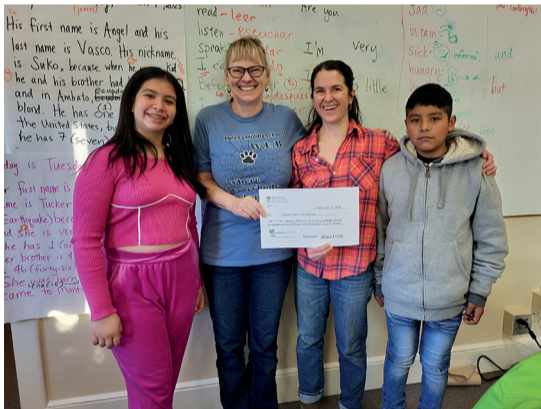
Educator: Mikayla Curtis, Helena Middle School
This grant provides funding to implement a flexible seating initiative to enhance the learning experience for students. Flexible seating options—such as wobble stools, exercise balls, fidget bands, and standing desks—have been proven to be highly effective in engaging students with diverse learning needs. Allowing students the freedom to move and fidget appropriately, these seating options will help 6th grade resource students to release excess energy, improve focus, and enhance overall classroom participation and motivation.

Sponsor: Ed and Mary Barrett

Bridging Biliteracy: Empowering Middle School Language Learners Through Spanish-English Chapter Books

Educators: Amy Friez and Therese Tucker, Helena Middle School
The "Bridging Biliteracy" grant provides bilingual Spanish and English chapter books to a range of students at Helena Middle School. The primary audience is 6th to 8th grade English Language Learners (ELLs) who are newcomers to the United States, but the books support learners of Spanish at HMS as well, fostering biliteracy for all students and supporting the growing English proficiency of our ELLs by offering engaging, high interest, and culturally relevant reading materials in both Spanish and English in their school library.

Sponsor: Alvaro Freyre



Helena Student Yoga

Educator: Brooke Kupcho, Project for Alternative Learning
Since PAL does not have a gym facility, the school partners with the community to offer students spaces to work out, take classes, and learn new skills. This grant will enable PAL to collaborate with a local yoga studio to offer students the opportunity to be exposed not just to yoga, but to HIIT, Pilates, Barre, Bounce, Power Yoga, calisthenics, and more!

Sponsor: Crowley Fleck, PLLP

Tuning in with Yoto

Educator: Brenna Stefanik, Jim Darcy Elementary School
This grant will purchase a Yoto player and library of Yoto Cards for a third-grade class to access audio books which help students build their vocabularies and become interested readers and engaged learners. In *Becoming a Nation of Readers* the authors note that the "single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success reading is reading aloud to children." Listening to books increases test scores, but more importantly, expands students' vocabularies and opens a world of reading.

Sponsor: Tasha Peterson

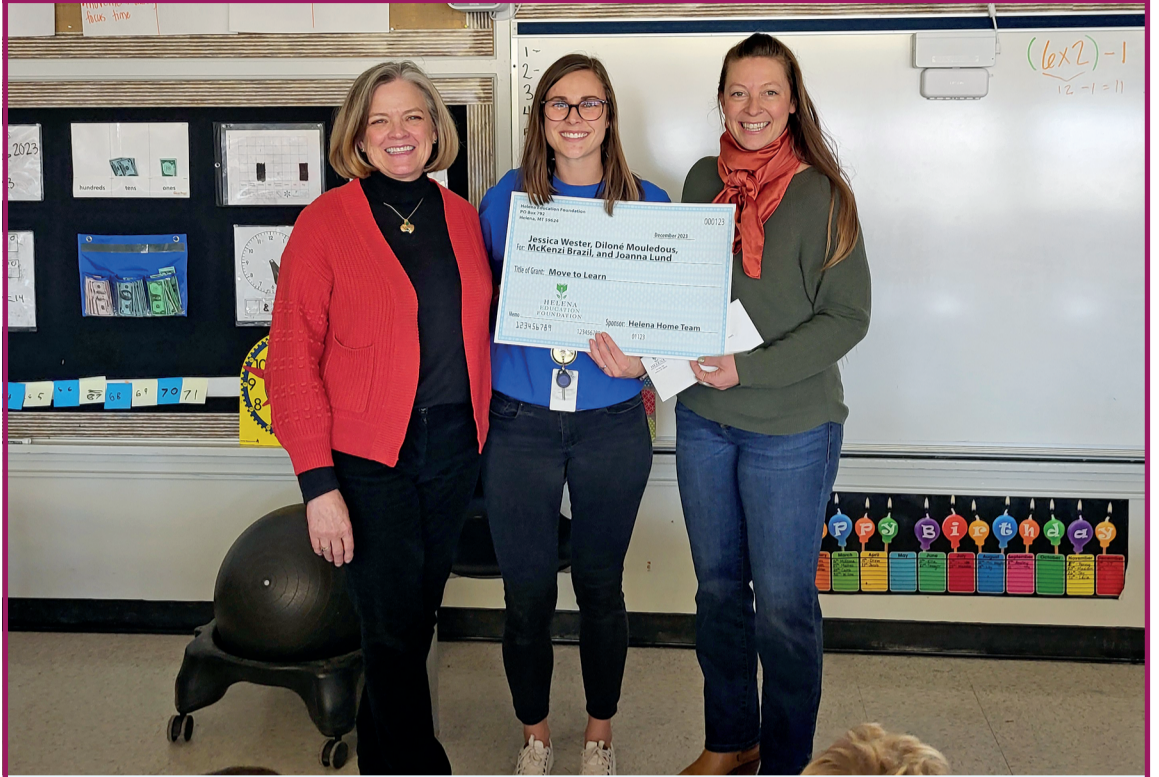
Bridging Cultures and Building Literacy with Multilingual Books

Educator: Marla Unruh, Broadwater Elementary School
The "Bridging Cultures and Building Literacy" project provides chapter books, graphic novels, and bilingual picture books in Spanish, Turkish, and Portuguese to a range of students at Broadwater and Jefferson Elementary Schools. The primary audience is English Language Learners (ELLs) and students who speak a language other than English at home. Bilingual books foster biliteracy (the ability to read in two or more languages) and support the growing English proficiency of our multilin-

Thank you grant sponsors:

- Ascent Bank
- Ed and Mary Barrett
- Nancy Cormier
- Crowley Fleck, PLLP
- Alvaro Freyre
- Helena Home Team
- Carol and Chris Hunter
- Intrepid Credit Union
- Mountain West Bank Endowment
- Tasha Peterson
- Dale Tig Vernon

GREAT IDEAS GRANT



Move to Learn

Educators: Jessica Wester, Dilone Miloudous, McKenzi Brazil, and Joanna Lund, Kessler Elementary School
Class instruction doesn't always mean sitting and listening! This grant funds a partnership between Kessler School teachers and Cohesion Dance Project to bring movement and dance into the 3rd through 5th grade classrooms. The project aims to improve student engagement and deepen understanding in both math and reading by incorporating movement into direct instruction. Each movement or dance will be directly correlated to the standards being taught in math and reading curriculums.

Sponsor: Helena Home Team

To date, the Helena Education Foundation has awarded

517 grants
totalling more than **\$874,975**

197 High School Grants
15 PAL Grants
79 Middle School Grants
233 Elementary Grants

The Helena Education Foundation Grants programs enhance the education and experiences of virtually all of Helena's nearly 8,000 students.



gual students by offering engaging, high interest, and culturally relevant reading materials in both their home language and English in the students' school libraries.

Sponsor: Mountain West Bank Endowment

Executive Function Skill Development

Educator: Heather Madsen, Warren Elementary School
Activities, games, stories, crafts, task cards, visuals and posters, choice boards, and lesson plans will help students build executive functioning skills. Warren School will build a library of resource bins filled with age-appropriate activities to help students learn to plan, organize and initiate tasks, as well as how to persevere, follow through, and use time management while completing tasks. Students will become more flexible in their think-



ing and schedules, self-regulate better when any emotions are high, and build their working memory.

Sponsor: Ascent Bank

We Built This City

Educator: Jessica Freeman, Capital High School
Students in the CHS Small Business Management class will purchase supplies to build their own three-dimensional city. Students will come up with their own unique small business ideas and then, as a class, build a city, using components of business education including teamwork, collaboration, communication, and creativity. This project engages students in the business development process and covers topics including business basics, entrepreneurship concepts, marketing, business law, management, and leadership.

Sponsor: Intrepid Credit Union

Typing for Success

Educator: Kimberly Carson, Hawthorne Elementary School
This grant will purchase a license for a typing program for elementary-aged students. Besides being an essential college and career skill, keyboarding helps students on their required assessments, which are now online. As students become more successful and confident with their typing, they will feel more comfortable and able to focus on the academic questions as opposed to how to get their answers typed quickly, reducing student anxiety about online assessments.

Sponsor: Carol and Chris Hunter



Writing Workshops with Tom Harpole

Educator: Tricia Rummel, Capital High School
This project brings Tom Harpole, a local writer whose writing has appeared in *National Geographic*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Smithsonian*, and *Air & Space* among other publications, to Capital High as a writer-in-residence in sophomore English classes. The workshop experience gives students the opportunity to work with a published author who can expertly guide them through the writing process, giving rich feedback at every stage. Students will be encouraged to submit their final pieces for publication in *Pen and Ink*.

Sponsor: Dale Tig Vernon

Great Ideas and **Spark Grants** empower educators to go beyond what's expected to create novel and foundational experiences for Helena students. All grants are named for major donors to the Helena Education Foundation; please contact HEF if you are interested in sponsoring a Great Ideas or Spark Grant.

hefmt.org

hef@mt.net ★ 406.443.2545

