

2019-20 Mini-Grant Awards

The LHS PTO funded just under \$8,000 in mini-grant requests from the talented and dedicated teachers and staff at Lexington High School for the 2019-20 school year. Thank you to all the Lexington families who support the PTO. Your generous donations make the PTO Mini-Grant program possible!

ENGLISH

Abigail Chaffer and Christina Rausa attended an online course on “Facilitating Discussions about Violence and Trauma” to support the district’s goal of identifying and incorporating prosocial skills into the curriculum and ensuring they are reflected in the design of lessons. The course compliments previous courses taken that have already helped reduce stress and anxiety in the classroom. This course will help the educators create a classroom environment that is supportive and responsive to all types of tragedy, to help students navigate the most difficult parts of life.

HEALTH OFFICE

Susan Kaftan will purchase supplies for the nurse’s office that create an environment that feels supportive and inclusive of all LHS students. There are more than 10,500 visits to the nurse’s office each year and the aim is to create a truly welcoming environment. New literature, posters, and medical supplies that relate to health and wellness will be representative of our diverse student population, including showing a variety of skin tones, cultural diversity, and emotional and physical disabilities.

WORLD LANGUAGES

Beckie Bray Rankin and Ryan Casey will complete their vision to create flexible classroom spaces by adding high top tables and chairs. The aim is a “not quite deskless” environment that allows for a more manageable classroom experience with more space, aides collaborative conversation sessions, allows for learners to engage in more comfortable ways, and is easier to see the subtitles during multimedia teaching sessions. Some materials were purchased with mini-grants in previous years and the feedback from students was overwhelmingly positive and over 100 students each year will benefit from this new environment.

COUNSELING

Brielle Palin will purchase and distribute guidebooks designed to assist juniors who are the first generation students to apply for college in their families. The books will be used with a group of 12 juniors with the goal of creating a safe space and community for the students to think more deeply about what it means to be a first generation college student, the challenges they may face, and the support available to them. The books provide interactive college planning worksheets and outlines information for students and their families that can help inform their journey through the post-secondary application and attending process.

Linda Prisco will purchase easels and signage materials to enhance the evening sessions for families and students that the counseling department hosts. LHS is a large school with a confusing layout and most evenings have multiple activities happening at the same time. The aim of these materials is to help ease the anxiety of coming into the school for the help offered by the counseling department by providing clear directions on where to go for what session.

VISUAL ARTS

Monique Harris Schramme and Ann Kim Thenor will purchase software and hardware that facilitate project-based learning approaches for the design process and will support the work of the newly added Advanced Digital Art course being offered in 2020-21. Students will have the tools needed for in-depth instruction in how the contemporary artist and STEAM industries work, providing for a true studio experience and enabling the creation of original, interest-driven artwork.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Thomas Buckley will purchase sheet pockets to help students keep and organize important documents needed to address their academic IEP goals. The 60 dry-erase pockets will allow students to annotate documents as they work through math and writing tasks. Two calculators will also be purchased to support students in need.

Katie Dobbins will purchase bungee chairs and standing desks to provide a sensory integration environment for students with autism to more easily focus during independent work time. Research has shown that non-traditional classroom furniture aids in helping students to relax and concentrate while also offering opportunities for students to find a more comfortable place in which to work, ultimately reducing anxiety.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND WELLNESS

Amanda Ciarletta will purchase wireless bluetooth speakers to help aid the instruction experience of PE classes which change locations based on the time of year and curriculum being taught. The speakers will work in the gym, fitness center, field house, Lincoln fields and other outdoor areas. Students will benefit by being able to better hear instructions and educator's voices will be less strained.

MATH

Sheera Knecht will purchase 12 Android tablets to use in the AP Computer Science Principles and Computer Design, and Code classes. The tablets will enable the use of many applications that work best on tablets including Sphero Minis, and allow students to check the functionality of their unique application designs. Over 100 students are enrolled in these classes each year and adding these tablets will ensure that students have the opportunity to test their work and complete learning modules more equitably.