

## Foundation awards Fall Mini-Grants

Once again, fall mini grants were awarded in October for innovative projects with clearly defined educational goals. These projects will all be implemented in the Batavia Public Schools during the 2009-2010 school year. Mini grants are not to exceed \$700. The Foundation thanks all the educators who applied for grants this year. The complete list of funded grants follows.

### **Skinny Books: Using Social Networking to Create a Special Collection for Reluctant Readers— Batavia High School**

This proposal would use social network technology, such as blogs and Facebook to gather suggestions from teens about the best high interest in “skinny books,” books with 125 pages or less. These books would then be purchased, promoted, and made available to all students in general and to reluctant readers in particular. Students (9-12), teachers, and librarians from across the state who use social networking sites are able to submit suggestions for consideration and approximately 50 paperback books will available in this special collection.

### **Embedding Communication through Technology— Rotolo Middle School**

The RMS Computer, Foreign Language, and Challenge departments would like to implement podcasting and Skype in their curricula. Skype is a program that allows users to make free phone calls and participate in video conferencing over the Internet. Three types of devices are necessary in order to bring this technology into the classroom. Devices include web cams, high quality “snowball” microphones and individual USB microphones. Skype activities and podcasting activities will provide opportunities for students to express themselves creatively, share their expertise, improve communication between their instructors, classmates and others around the world.

### **Improving Student Learning in PLC’s—Batavia High School**

Funding would provide for the purchase of a new test scoring machine that would be able to score test blanks for multiple choice tests just like previous machines, however, this machine has the ability to connect to computers and produce detailed reports about how students performed (which answers were selected most often, which students met proficiency for the exam, and the class’ proficiency).

### **An Electronic Database for Our Youngest Researchers—Grace McWayne School**

PebbleGo is an interactive electronic database created just for young researchers. This database includes hundreds of animals, presented with audio and video clips, carefully leveled text, and educational games. Even non-readers construct meaning easily because of the multimodal organization of PebbleGo. Because this database is web-based, students are able to access PebbleGo anywhere and any time they have Internet access at home or at school.

### **Creating Readers of the World through Authentic Reading— Rotolo Middle School**

This activity would include a weekly class subscription to *Weekly Reader: Current Events* for struggling readers. The *Current Events* magazine is specifically for grades 6-10 and would be delivered each week. Students would be allowed to take the magazine home once a week and have assignments that encourage decision making/critical thinking. The magazine will be read in and out of the classroom and students will be choosing one article per trimester to create a presentation on the computer.

### **School Bytes—Alice Gustafson School**

The purpose of this project is to provide a digital reference library for Alice Gustafson students and their families. Teachers will produce digital videos and recordings that will be made available via the Internet to share information and promote learning at home. This grant requests funding for the purchase of web cams to enable video conferencing from the classrooms, a video camera and memory card to enable production of videos to post to the internet, and a computer microphone to enable digital voice recording. Posting video and sound to the Internet enables participation to this project by all students and their families.

Spring grant requests for projects in excess of \$700 that will be implemented during the 2010-2011 school year are due on Monday, March 15.



## Thank You! to 2009 Foundation donors

The Batavia Foundation for Educational Excellence would like to thank all the people whose generous donations in 2009 make it possible for us to continue to fund innovative programs for our students.

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A special note of gratitude also goes to Sandra Miller for her many years of service as a teacher and principal in Batavia and also for her very generous support of the Foundation. We wish you good health and happiness in your retirement!

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