**Excerpts from 2016 Mini Grants to Teachers Reports**

I purchased science exploration/experiment kits with a portion of my grant money. We used the magnets kit and the forces and motion kit to conduct multiple experiments during our magnets and forces and motions units in science. The kits allowed students to be hands on and actually see many of the topics we were discussing in our unit in real life. For example, one week we were discussing poles (N and S). The students conducted an experiment where they had to make magnets attract and repel to create a particular pattern. (One of the photos show this!) They absolutely loved it! We have approximately 5-10 minutes at the end of each day when we fill out planners, organize, and pack up for dismissal. Often times, the students would beg me to play with the kits during those few free minutes. Indoor recess was also a time that they would ask to play around with the kits and explore on their own. I absolutely love the kits and the students do too. I know that they will come in handy for many years to come. THANK  YOU! 3rd Grade Teacher, Romney Elementary

The small greenhouse fits nicely on a table in our classroom.  The lighting is wonderful, and the heating pad works well.  The students were excited to start!

      We began by planting parsley seeds which sprouted nicely.  Everyone took turns watering the tiny plants.  However, we sadly found out that we should not leave the lights on the small plants over the weekend without watering them daily.  The parsley seedlings did not make it.

     The students then planted grass seed in plastic Easter eggs and placed them in the greenhouse.  The grass grew well (we turned the light off over the weekends).  Each student enjoyed watering his/her own "egg."  They then decorated the eggs with faces, cut the "grass hair" as they wanted, and named their eggs.  They took these, home for Easter.  We have planned an Eggbert reunion later in May!

    We have now planted flower seeds in hopes of repotting seedlings in little pots for Mother's Day presents.  The children will decorate the pots before they take them home.

    I had planned for the students to plant something they could transplant in our school garden, but I'm not sure we will have enough time this year.  I believe if we plant radish seeds as soon as school starts in the fall, we may have a chance to transplant and then harvest before the first frost.

     These hands-on experiences are very valuable to the students as we study plant growth.  We also learn from our mistakes!   Thank you so much for your generous grant.   I know the students will enjoy the benefits for years to come.   *4th Grade Teacher, Slanesville Elementary*

The iPad and Osmo stay set up in the classroom at all times. It is available for students to use during homeroom and advisory as they wish. I allow up to four students at a time to use the Osmo/Ipad. Once I completed an introduction of the Osmo/Ipad upon their arrival students began using it right away. They have the choice of using it to practice math and English terms using the Words app with letters. They have also used the Tangram app to practice making shapes which help with higher level thinking skills. Students also enjoy Newton. I added a white board to the Osmo/Ipad station to make using the apps easier on the students. The greatest impact the Osmo has had on my classroom is in the area of vocabulary and collaboration. Since students have to work in teams and piece words together, they are becoming very fluent with the math and vocabulary terms we use in 6th grade. I look forward to adding additional units to the Words app in the future to allow for a broader list of vocabulary words to practice. *6th Grade Teacher, Romney Middle School*

I am amazed not just by the grant I received, but seeing the impact of how the grants were used by other teachers in my school. It seems like every year the costs go up of supplies, while we are getting less money to support our classroom. Many of our families cannot even afford basic supplies, so what little money we do get is going for basic needs. Being in a rural area, our children are at a disadvantage keeping up with emerging technology. However, your organization is making it possible for our children to experience things they would not otherwise get too. *Kindergarten Teacher, Augusta Elementary School*

For the 2016-2017 school year I had a total of 23 students in my class. All of these students become readers and use the classroom library on a daily basis. However, these will not be the only students given a chance to enjoy these books. Many students for years to come will be able to use these books to become better readers. *First Grade Teacher, Romney Elementary School*

I applied for a mini-grant, and received funding to purchase an IPAD mini for my classroom. There are many applications on the IPAD to help my students meet their goals in letter and number recognition, counting, sorting, and patterning as well as many other developmental skills. Another goal that I have for my students is that they will be able to collaborate more and learn to work together to reach a goal. My students were so excited to receive the IPAD. We have just started an activity in which students are learning to work together while using the IPAD. My students will soon be transitioning into kindergarten. New students will be entering the classroom. Some children may never have been to school before. We thought about this and decided that we could answer some questions that these children may have about Pre-K. We decided to have the students work in pairs and interview each other about our year in Pre-K. With teacher help, students will ask each other questions such as: What was my favorite food at school?

* What was my favorite thing to do in the classroom?
* Who are my friends?
* What is something new that I have learned?

With teacher help, we will videotape our interviews using the IPAD. We plan to show this video to the new students to help ease their fears about Pre-K. We also plan to take pictures of some of the favorite things from their year in Pre-K. It could be used as a slideshow to play at Open House for new students. Through this activity, my pre-k students are learning to use technology as well as to collaborate together. We are very thankful for our new IPAD, and are learning new things everyday. *Pre-K Teacher, Head Start Center*

One of the greatest things I saw as a teacher was the emergence of leadership within our class. Students who are often shy or don’t share a lot during classroom discussions were able to shine by working with their peers. Thanks you so much for funding our project. The skills my students acquired will be with them long after they leave my kindergarten class. *Romney Elementary School*

In response to seeing so many students dealing with not only health conditions, but with stress and anxiety-related conditions, the School Nurse and a teacher completed training and became certified to teach/facilitate “Teen Yoga.” Starting in the Fall of 2015, yoga-inspired breathing and stretching exercises were introduced to students at the beginning of all PE classes for first 15-20 minutes of class. Students seemed to enjoy the stretching and the non-competitive component of this activity in PE. Students completed these exercises on the floor of the gym and would ask about having mats they could use. Students were instructed and then able to demonstrate breathing exercises and stretches they could use at school or home before exercising, when transitioning between classes or to help focus and/or relax.

Fifty colorful yoga mats were purchased with the Grant money from the Community Foundation. Students have been even more enthused with this activity using the mats and having their own personal space. All students can participate in this activity, which has been especially nice for some of our students in Special Education classes that aren’t able to do all of the activities/games offered in PE class.

Teachers have also used these mats for certain activities in their homerooms and/or classrooms. *School Nurse, Romney Middle School*

The materials had a great impact on student learning in our Kindergarten classes. Students who needed a more concrete way of learning letters were able to touch and feel the wood pieces and move them around. There were enough pieces to give each student in a class which allowed everyone to participate and engaged in the activities. The paper with the small gray blocks provided a simple easy way for students to learn how to write letters within a space. The program used simple basic language such as lines and curves which helped the students understand how to form the letters. Thank you so much for making this possible! *Reading Specialist, Augusta Elementary*