

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

REPORT TO COUNCIL

SUBJECT: ACE GRANT PROPOSALS - 2019

BACKGROUND: The Advisory Committee on Education recently solicited grant proposals for the 2018-2019 school year. The budget available for ACE grants is \$12,500.00.

This is the 10th year since the ACE grants were started in 2008. We made two changes. First, we increased the maximum grant from \$500 to \$600, the first increase we have made. Second, we introduced an opportunity for Teacher Development Grants, up to \$400 each, to support registration fees, tuition and/or required course materials for teachers to take classes, attend conferences or participate in other professional development programs. We announced that we would consider up to 5 Teacher Development Grants, within the available funding.

ACE solicited grant proposals from the seven ACE core schools: Greenbelt Elementary, Springhill Lake Elementary, Magnolia Elementary, Dora Kennedy French Immersion School, Turning Point Academy, Greenbelt Middle and Eleanor Roosevelt High School. Proposals were welcome either from the school itself or from the school's parent-teacher organization. There was no limit to the number of proposals that could be submitted from each school. The proposals were due on November 5, 2018. The proposals were for activities that will take place between February 15, 2019 and the end of the 2019-2020 school year.

The ACE Grants Program will support activities that enhance or enrich school-based activities. Some examples include supporting field trips, bringing an activity into the school, or purchasing equipment and materials for a special project. The grants are NOT intended to underwrite items that are normally supplied by the school system such as copier paper, etc.

ACE believes that the grant-writing workshops have been successful at both encouraging more proposals and improving the quality of the proposals that are submitted. This year, ACE partnered with the Greenbelt Community Foundation and the ERHS PTSA to organize a grant-writing workshop that was held at ERHS in early October.

ACE runs clubs at three ACE core schools, with Reading Clubs at SHLES, GMS and a new club starting at TPA soon. The clubs, which are not funded by the grants program, provide some balance in ACE programs between the schools in different locations throughout the city. There is a Reading club at MES which was originally started by ACE, but the teachers running the club now organize it without ACE sponsorship.

FINDING: ACE received 33 proposals from 6 schools for a total request of \$17,503.05. Proposals were submitted from Greenbelt, Springhill Lake and Magnolia Elementary Schools, Turning Point Academy, Greenbelt Middle School and Eleanor Roosevelt High School. ACE did not receive any proposals from Dora Kennedy French Immersion School this year.

Selection of the proposals for funding is made by the Greenbelt City Council based on the input from ACE. This table is a summary of ACE recommendations. The details are below.

#	School:	Purpose of grant request:	Request:	Recommend:
1	ERHS	Choral Collaboration 2019	\$ 600.00	\$ 600.00
2	ERHS	Choral Excellence with No Excuses	\$ 600.00	\$ 600.00
3	ERHS	Victory Garden	\$ 600.00	\$ 600.00
4	ERHS	Diverse Voices in Literature - Part II	\$ 600.00	\$ 600.00
5	GMS	Ukeleles for GMS	\$ 450.00	\$ 450.00
6	MES	* CPI - Professional Development for Teachers	\$ 600.00	---
7	MES	Dreambox Learning Intervention Class	\$ 588.00	\$ 588.00
8	MES	North Bay Adventure Education Visit	\$ 600.00	\$ 600.00
9	SHLES	Bringing Home and School Together: Family Game Night	\$ 600.00	\$ 300.00
10	SHLES	SHL Garden Club	\$ 600.00	\$ 600.00
11	SHLES	SWPBIS Incentive Program	\$ 600.00	\$ 600.00
12	SHLES	CRI Community Based Instruction Field Trips	\$ 600.00	\$ 600.00
13	TPA	PTO Events	\$ 600.00	---
14	TPA	* Professional Development	\$ 400.00	\$ 400.00
15	GES	* The K-3 Guide to Academic Conversations	\$ 398.25	\$ 398.25
16	GES	Composting: A Gardening Adventure at GES	\$ 327.11	\$ 327.11
17	GES	* Dancing Through the Curriculum	\$ 400.00	\$ 400.00
18	GES	Digital Project-Based Learning	\$ 600.00	---
19	GES	Drawing Journals - Documenting Plant Life Cycles	\$ 600.00	\$ 600.00
20	GES	Drawing Machines!	\$ 600.00	---
21	GES	First Grade Math and Reading Literacy Materials	\$ 423.38	\$ 423.38
22	GES	Green Screen Me!	\$ 600.00	\$ 600.00
23	GES	Instructional Materials for Teaching the Russian Alphabet	\$ 594.41	\$ 594.41
24	GES	Library Organization Items for the GES Library	\$ 336.95	\$ 336.95
25	GES	Mindfulness Room	\$ 600.00	\$ 600.00
26	GES	Nature Pavers	\$ 600.00	\$ 600.00
27	GES	Greenbelt Outdoor Classrooms	\$ 600.00	\$ 554.79
28	GES	Physical Education Technology Request	\$ 525.95	---
29	GES	Second Step Curriculum	\$ 409.00	\$ 409.00
30	GES	* Staff Book Studies	\$ 400.00	\$ 400.00
31	GES	Student Success-Self Regulation & Behavioral Support	\$ 600.00	---
32	GES	* Introduction to the WIDA Standards Conference	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00
33	GES	World Drumming at GES	\$ 600.00	\$ 600.00
			\$ 17,503.05	\$ 13,631.89

* Teacher Development Proposals

Proposal Review

ACE met on Tuesday, December 14, 2018, to consider the proposals. For each proposal, the committee listed the strengths and weaknesses and assigned a numerical score on a 100-point scale. The points were assigned according to the following scale:

- Intrinsic merit (40%) – Will the proposed project enhance or enrich school-based activities? Does it meet the criteria listed in the ACE grants call?
- Budget (30%) – Is the proposed budget realistic? Is the budget well justified?
- Benefit to students (20%) – Will the program provide wide benefit to the students in the school, or will it just benefit a few students?
- Proposal format (10%) – Did the proposal follow the proposal rules, including proposal length, project schedule, requisite signatures, etc.? (Note: severe violation of the proposal rules could result in rejection.)

On the basis of this careful consideration, the committee makes the following recommendations:

Proposals:

1) Choral Collaboration 2019. ERHS. Recommended funding: \$600 (full funding).

Summary: This proposal would pay for the hotel rooms for the Eleanor Roosevelt Chamber Choir in Williamsport, PA for a performance and a cultural exchange with a youth choir there.

Strengths: The ERHS Choir participated in a choral collaboration last year, which was a great success.

Weaknesses: The Choral Department will need to hold fundraisers to pay additional hotel costs.

2) Choral Excellence with No Excuses. ERHS. Recommended funding: \$600 (full funding).

Summary: This proposal will purchase choral ring binders for the ERHS Choral Department. The binders will provide a uniform and professional look for the ERHS Chorus during performances. Since the binders are specifically designed for choral music, they will also be easier to use than standard academic folders.

Strengths: The proposal is well-written and the budget is clear and well-justified. The folders are durable and should be able to be reused.

Weaknesses: No weaknesses. The committee recommends that the embossing on the binders say "Eleanor Roosevelt High School" without specifying the name of the choir, to provide flexibility for future use.

3) Victory Garden. ERHS. Recommended funding: \$600 (full funding).

Summary: This proposal from the Gardening Club, and the 'Bring Change to Roose Club', requests funding to rehabilitate the old garden by purchasing and installing raised beds, preparing soil, installing fencing and creating a maintenance plan.

Strengths: Gardening and working outside has been shown to increase self-esteem and reduce stress. This grant is a collaborative effort to create an accessible garden on school grounds. The club hopes to work with the cafeteria staff to include herbs and/or vegetables into the lunches. This proposal, while very ambitious, includes phases to break down the enormous tasks ahead.

Weaknesses: None.

4) Diverse Voices in Literature—Part 2. ERHS. Recommended funding \$600 (full funding).

Summary: The funding would be used to purchase 49 copies of *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas. This often-requested novel examines issues of police brutality in communities of color and code switching that students of color often must learn to succeed. It also traces an individual's journey to find her own voice.

Strengths: Reading about characters in books with whom they can relate teaches students about their own humanity; reading about those characters who are different from them teaches them compassion and understanding. This book supports students struggling to improve their skills and since it will be used in ninth grade classrooms, it would help build a foundation for students as they move forward into other grades.

Weaknesses: None.

5) Ukeleles for GMS. GMS. Recommended funding: \$450 (full funding).

Summary: This proposal seeks funding for ukuleles for the general music classes. The students would utilize these while learning about various styles of music including folk and world music. This would be infused into the curriculum.

Strengths: The students in the general music classes will be able to learn about different styles of music using a real musical instrument.

Weaknesses: None.

6) CPI - Professional Development for Teachers. MES. Recommended funding: \$0 (no funding).

Summary: This Teacher Development Proposal seeks to send teachers to the Crisis Prevention Institute for training in how to deescalate crisis situations in class.

Strengths: The training would be valuable and would help the teachers to minimize disruptions. Magnolia intends to send all of their teachers to this training at the rate of two per week.

Weaknesses: The requested grant would pay for substitute teachers to cover the classrooms while the regular teachers are taking the training. The committee did not believe that paying substitute teachers was an appropriate use of ACE grant funding, and therefore does not recommend funding this grant.

7) Dreambox Learning Intervention Classes. MES. Recommended funding: \$588 (full funding).

Summary: This proposal would purchase the subscription rights for 21 students to use on-line tools to improve their math skills. These students are currently testing at Basic or Below Grade Level in math.

Strengths: Dreambox activities are aligned with Common Core Standards, and would provide these students with the extra support they need.

Weaknesses: There are no weaknesses.

8) North Bay Adventure Education Visit. MES. Recommended funding: \$600 (full funding).

Summary: This proposal will provide MES sixth graders with two days of in-school training by North Bay Adventures. The first day will focus on character and team building activities. The second day will be about environmental issues. The two sessions will be used as preparation for a field trip to North Bay Adventures where the students will put their training to work on both physical (zipline, rope course) challenges and environmental ones.

Strengths: This program will provide beneficial character and science education for Magnolia sixth graders. The students will be able to use the information both on the associated field trip and in their school and home communities.

Weaknesses: None.

9) Bringing Home and School Together: Family Game Night. SHLES. Recommended funding: \$300 (partial funding).

Summary: SHLES requests funding to provide math and reading kits which include six different games, at various levels. Each student attending the Family Game Night will bring home a bag of games at their level.

Strengths: These game kits are designed to provide fun math and reading activities for the whole family. The kits allow families to practice skills at home at their convenience.

Weaknesses: The committee recommends fully funding the math and reading kits, but not to fund the \$300 requested for incentives and prizes.

10) SHL Garden Club. SHLES. Recommended funding \$600 (full funding).

Summary: This first Garden Club at SHLES will give students from 3rd to 5th grade the experience of planting and growing their own fruits and vegetables and also help improve the school courtyard. All students will have their own individual plots so they can learn to be responsible and take pride in what they can do and produce. Also planned is a butterfly garden which would benefit all students.

Strengths: Objectives of this club include giving students an opportunity to develop their sense of responsibility and independence as well as collaboration with others, promote love of gardening, increase awareness of the benefits from a green environment, and beautify the school property.

Weakness: None

11) SWPBIS Incentive Program. SHLES. Recommended funding: \$600 (full funding).

Summary: This proposal seeks to utilize various incentives to support a PBIS (positive behavior intervention and supports) program. The incentive program with PBIS will support the climate and culture.

Strengths: The program will work to decrease suspensions, increase attendance rate and overall academic performance.

Weaknesses: None.

12) CRI Community Based Instruction Field Trips. SHLES. Recommended funding: \$600 (full funding).

Summary: The Community Referenced Instruction (CRI) program provides individualized academic, social and emotional assistance for students with disabilities in order to foster their successful integration into the mainstream population. This proposal would enable students to learn and practice skills such as riding public transportation, shopping for grocery items from a list and ordering at a restaurant.

Strengths: There are 54 students in the CRI program. Although PGCPs pays for transportation for Community Based Instruction field trips, they do not provide the funding for the students to practice making individual purchases.

Weaknesses: None.

13) PTO Events. TPA. Recommended funding: \$0 (no funding).

Summary: This proposal would provide refreshments and decorations for a Spring Dance for grades 6-8. It would also be used for some unidentified fundraising.

Strengths: A spring dance run by the PTO could be a nice event.

Weaknesses: This grant did not specify how the \$600 requested would be spent on the refreshments, the decorations or the other fundraising. There was no budget. A spring dance is primarily a social event and would not enhance the school-based educational activities, and therefore is not an appropriate use of ACE grant funding.

14) Professional Development. TPA. Recommended funding: \$400 (full funding).

Summary: This is a Teacher Development Proposal. As a charter school, Turning Point Academy educators do not always get the same professional development opportunities provided to traditional public schools. This proposal will bring professional development speakers to TPA.

Strengths: This will provide useful professional development to a school not usually provided with these opportunities.

Weaknesses: The proposal would have been strengthened by a better description of the trainings which were chosen.

15) The K-3 Guide to Academic Conversations. GES. Recommended funding: \$398.25 (full funding).

Summary: With this Teacher Development Proposal, teachers of grades kindergarten through third grade who also teach ESOL students will be given a copy of the book, The K-3 Guide to Academic Conversations: Practices, Scaffolds, and Activities.

Strengths: The text provides sample lesson plans, rubrics, links to videos and downloadable resources to better work with English language learners. Stronger academic conversation skills aim to increase motivation and allow the students to retain more content.

Weaknesses: None.

16) Composting: A Garden Adventures at GES. GES. Recommended funding: \$327.11 (full funding).

Summary: Funds will be used to purchase two compost bins and gloves. All grade levels will be introduced to the composting process, including lessons in the classroom and staff training by the William S. Schmidt Center. Over time, the goal is to have every classroom visit and use the compost bins. This would include bringing compost materials to the bins, maintaining the bins and contents, and later transferring compost from the bins to the school gardens.

Strengths: The composting program helps meet the goals of environmental literacy set for the school. Students can study life science by viewing the organisms that aid in composting and studying how plants in the garden grow. It will also help both teachers and students access new methods of teaching and learning.

Weaknesses: None

17) Dancing through the Curriculum. Greenbelt ES. Recommended funding: \$400 (full funding).

Summary: This Teacher Development Proposal seeks to support Arts Integration which is used to infuse the arts into the general education program. The Young Audiences of MD (YAMD) will support the mission of Arts Integration through a workshop on learning various dance techniques.

Strengths: Teachers will be able to support their students through learned dance techniques which will better help students to reflect on personal experiences and implement strategies to increase positive behavior.

Weaknesses: None.

18) Digital Project-Based Learning. GES. Recommended funding: \$0 (no funding).

Summary: This proposal seeks to purchase 4 Dell Chromebooks for use in the 4th-grade classrooms.

Strengths: The Chromebooks would be used by the students for project-based learning. The application of technology to real-life problems increases student engagement.

Weaknesses: The proposal was vague and did not specify how the computers would be used. The project-based learning opportunities were not specified or described.

19) Drawing Journals for Life Science. GES. Recommended funding: \$600 (full funding).

Summary: This proposal will cover the expense of having the services of a visiting teaching-artist. It will also provide potting materials and sketchbooks so that 100 3rd grade students can make drawings of plants at various stages of development.

Strengths: This activity will teach observational and artistic skills in order to better understand the biology of plants.

Weaknesses: There are no weaknesses.

20) Drawing Machines! GES. Recommended funding: \$0 (no funding).

Summary: The proposal will bring in a resident artist for a one-session program in designing electrical creatures that draw geometric patterns. Students will use engineering and design thinking to design creatures that they will be able to keep and take home. All students in the third grade will participate.

Strengths: The program sounds both fun and educational.

Weaknesses: The proposal lacks a clear description of the project. No supporting materials from Young Audiences of Maryland, who offers the program, were included. The budget is vague and poorly justified.

21) First Grade Math and Reading Literacy Materials. GES. Recommended funding: \$423.38 (full funding).

Summary: Math and reading materials, including dominoes, dice, magnetic letters and boards, to help convey a more concrete understanding of mathematical concepts and letter correspondence.

Strengths: Materials will be used regularly in group instruction and center learning. These tools can be used throughout the current year at various levels, and for years ahead.

Weaknesses: None.

22) Green Screen Me! GES Requested funding \$600 (full funding).

Summary: In this project, six digital camcorders, a green screen, and an innovative technology kit would be purchased to help students complete assignments that would be impossible with pen and pencil. Fourth grade students could create virtual trips and reports and give them a digital-based learning opportunity.

Strengths: Assignments could be enriched with project-based learning that brings curriculum to life. With this equipment and support system, for example, when students do research papers, they could

speaking about the places and things they studied showing real images as they stand in front of the Green Screen. The level of rigor connected with the application of a real-life life project increases students' engagement and academic success.

Weaknesses: None.

23) Instructional Materials for Teaching the Russian Alphabet. Greenbelt ES. Recommended funding: \$594.41 (full funding).

Summary: This proposal seeks to provide instructional materials for students learning the Russian language. In particular, the younger students need the most support in learning basic knowledge. Through hands-on learning such as games and earning blocks, etc., the students will have a better opportunity to grasp those concepts easier.

Strengths: Hands-on learning is another way for younger students to learn as they grow in any educational setting.

Weaknesses: None.

24) Library Organization Items for the GES Library. GES. Recommended funding: \$336.95 (full funding).

Summary: This proposal will provide shelf dividers, labels, signs, bookends, book baskets and descriptive posters for the GES Library. These items will help the students learn about the sections of the library and how to find the books that they have looked up in the electronic catalog.

Strengths: The items will help to keep the library organized and will enable the students to find the books. Some of the materials, such as the posters, include an educational benefit by themselves. The proposal included a detailed budget.

Weaknesses: None.

25) Mindfulness Room. GES. Recommended funding: \$600 (full funding).

Summary: This proposal will provide carpeting, beanbag chairs, pillows and a tabletop fountain to enhance the Mindfulness Room.

Strengths: Greenbelt Elementary has created a Mindfulness Room for students to use after disciplinary action so they can calm themselves before returning to their classrooms. It has been so successful, the room is also used throughout the day by students and teachers who need a quiet place to regain their focus.

Weaknesses: There are no weaknesses.

26) Nature Pavers. GES. Recommended funding: \$600 (full funding).

Summary: This proposal will provide materials for fifth graders to design and create mosaic pavers which will be installed in the school's garden. Pavers will be designed around the theme "Nature Works Together" and will complement the larger mosaic installed on the school last year.

Strengths: Through art, students will explore their scientific understanding of how natural process work together to sustain life. The project will allow students to take responsibility for their own design process and create something lasting and beautiful for the school.

Weaknesses: None.

27) Greenbelt Outdoor Classrooms. GES. Recommended funding: \$554.79 (partial funding).

Summary: A greenhouse, soil, seeds and other materials are requested to allow students to learn how to grow and care for plants.

Strengths: The greenhouse can be used for years, and will be constructed and maintained by parent volunteers. Teachers have agreed to utilize the greenhouse throughout the season during the science block.

Weaknesses: The request for \$600.00 did not match the budget for \$554.79. The committee recommends funding at the level justified in the budget.

28) Physical Education Technology Request. GES. Recommended funding: \$0 (no funding).

Summary: The Physical Education Department is requesting a grant to purchase iPad Mini 4 and STM Dux Case.

Strengths: The iPad Mini 4 would benefit Physical Education teachers by downloading assessment applications that will allow them to effectively perform formal assessments for large groups of students.

Weaknesses: The ACE Grants Program supports activities that enhance or enrich school-based activities that directly benefit students. This iPad would serve as a convenience for the teachers without providing a strong direct benefit to the students.

29) Second Step Curriculum. Greenbelt ES. Recommended funding: \$409 (full funding).

Summary: This proposal seeks to provide lessons through a curriculum designed to support the social and emotional needs of students. It focuses on things such as listening while tuning out distractions as well as gives support to those who need a basic social skills review. With the support of this curriculum, the goal is for teachers to spend less time correcting behaviors and more time on instruction.

Strengths: Through small group learning, the interventions will help student's better handle conflict in a calm manner while working through their feelings and solving problems.

Weaknesses: None.

30) Staff Book Studies. GES. Recommended funding: \$400 (full funding).

Summary: This Teacher Development Proposal will purchase 5 sets of 3 books on guided reading, challenging behavior and differentiated instruction. The books will rotate through the entire staff at the school. The administrative team will lead weekly meetings for discussion of the books.

Strengths: The book studies will improve the staff's abilities in the areas of student behavior management, Talented and Gifted instructional strategies and guided reading small group instruction.

Weaknesses: None.

31) Student Success- Self-Regulation. GES. Recommended funding: \$0 (no funding).

Summary: This proposal would purchase a Classroom Break Box, flexible chairs, a blow-up sofa, and a Best Behavior Board Book Collection for a resource room for students with special needs.

Strengths: Special needs students could receive some benefit from these purchases.

Weaknesses: The proposal mainly delineated the function of the flexible seating; the Break Box and the books were not adequately described. The budget was over the \$600 limit, even before shipping and handling charges. This proposal is also very similar to GES' Mindfulness Room proposal, which is available to the whole school, including the special needs students.

32) Introduction to the WIDA Standards. GES. Recommended funding: \$250 (full funding).

Summary: This Teacher Development Proposal will pay for registration for the WIDA standards workshop in Baltimore in March of 2019. This workshop will provide beneficial professional training to the ESOL department at GES.

Strengths: The workshop provides information on both background standards and practical application of the standards for students struggling with Language Arts, principally ESOL students. Information from the workshop can be brought back and taught to other educators in the school.

Weaknesses: The proposal would have benefited from a brief description of WIDA standards to help non-educators better understand the workshop.

33) World Drumming at GES. GES. Recommended funding: \$600 (full funding).

Summary: This grant would provide most of the funding needed to purchase 2 sets of three Tubano drums.

Strengths: The GES Music department has a strong world drumming program. Currently, students have to share drums to participate in the drumming circles. These additional drums would allow more students to participate. The drums would also be used by the Drumming Circle after school club and in future years.

Weaknesses: None.

RECOMMENDATION: This is the 10th year that ACE has solicited grant proposals. The ACE grants to schools program has been highly successful. The final grant reports received from the schools document the positive impact on education in Greenbelt that the program has had. The continued interest of the schools and the creativity of the proposed projects are a testament to the success of the program. In this report, ACE recommends that the City Council approve funding for 27 proposals, totaling \$13,631.89 with the following distribution per school:

School	Requested	Submitted	Recommended	Approved	Rejected
ERHS	\$ 2,400.00	4	\$ 2,400.00	4	0
GMS	\$ 450.00	1	\$ 450.00	1	0
MES	\$ 1,788.00	3	\$ 1,188.00	2	1
SHLES	\$ 2,400.00	4	\$ 2,100.00	4	0
TPA	\$ 1,000.00	2	\$ 400.00	1	1
GES	\$ 9,465.05	19	\$ 7,093.89	15	4
DKFI	\$ -	0	\$ -	0	0
Totals	\$ 17,503.05	33	\$ 13,631.89	27	6

This year ACE budgeted \$12,500 for ACE grants, but recommends grants totaling \$13,631.89. ACE was impressed with the overall quality of the proposals submitted this year. ACE proposes to move \$1,131.89 from the funds reserved for the ACE clubs to the grants budget, as the TPA Reading Club got off to a late start this year and will not spend the full allocation.

Approved by ACE on 12/14/2018 with a vote of 7-0 with one member absent and one open position on the committee.