

# **ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

## **REPORT TO COUNCIL**

**SUBJECT:** ACE GRANT PROPOSALS - 2020

**BACKGROUND:** The Advisory Committee on Education recently solicited grant proposals for the 2019-2020 school year. The budget available for ACE grants is \$12,500.00.

This is the 11<sup>th</sup> year since the ACE grants were started in 2008. This year we continue the changes introduced last year, with \$600 as the maximum grant allowed, and Teacher Development Grants at up to \$400 each.

ACE solicited grant proposals from the six ACE core schools: Greenbelt Elementary, Springhill Lake Elementary, Magnolia Elementary, Dora Kennedy French Immersion School, Greenbelt Middle and Eleanor Roosevelt High School. Turning Point Academy has moved from Greenbelt and therefore is no longer an ACE core 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 4, 2019. The proposals were for activities that will take place between February 15, 2020 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.

The Teacher Development Grants can 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 runs clubs at two ACE core schools, with Reading Clubs at SHLES and GMS. 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 \$16,633.48. Proposals were submitted from Greenbelt, Springhill Lake and Magnolia Elementary Schools, Dora Kennedy French Immersion School, Greenbelt Middle School and Eleanor Roosevelt High School.

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  | DKFIS   | DKFI Butterfly Wonder                                    | \$600.00    | \$600.00    |
| 2  | ERHS    | Diverse Voices in Literature Part II                     | \$600.00    | \$600.00    |
| 3  | ERHS    | Using Whiteboards to Enhance Student Activities          | \$600.00    | \$600.00    |
| 4  | GES     | 5th Grade Maker Space                                    | \$517.14    | \$517.14    |
| 5  | GES     | A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words!                     | \$600.00    | \$550.00    |
| 6  | GES     | Apple Tree Gifts   | \$600.00    | \$600.00    |
| 7  | GES     | I Can Build Simple Words                                 | \$180.00    | \$120.00    |
| 8  | GES     | Learning with Letters                                    | \$149.97    | \$149.97    |
| 9  | GES     | 5th Grade Maker Space                                    | \$517.14    | --          |
| 10 | GES     | Harlem Renaissance Poetic Showcase                       | \$520.00    | \$520.00    |
| 11 | GES     | Plant & Pottery Club Supplies and Materials              | \$593.75    | \$593.75    |
| 12 | GES     | Technology for Flexible Math Groups                      | \$568.45    | --          |
| 13 | GES     | STEM in the Classroom                                    | \$600.00    | \$600.00    |
| 14 | GES     | Learning about the Life Cycle of the Plant through Dance | \$600.00    | \$600.00    |
| 15 | GES     | Fairy Tales Problem Solving                              | \$600.00    | --          |
| 16 | GES     | Number Worlds Math Intervention                          | \$600.00    | \$600.00    |
| 17 | GES     | Organized Play to Support Community-Building             | \$572.00    | \$572.00    |
| 18 | GES     | Mini Magnetic Write and Wipe Boards                      | \$435.00    | \$435.00    |
| 19 | GES     | * Maryland Gifted Conference for Primary Teachers        | \$375.00    | \$375.00    |
| 20 | GES     | * Maryland Gifted Conference for Intermediate Teachers   | \$375.00    | --          |
| 21 | GES     | * Maryland Literacy Association Annual Conference        | \$400.00    | \$400.00    |
| 22 | GES     | * Maryland Gifted Conference for Administrative Team     | \$375.00    | --          |
| 23 | GES     | * Arts Integration SXSW PD Education Conference          | \$400.00    | --          |
| 24 | GES     | * Arts Integration SXSW PD Education Conference          | \$400.00    | --          |
| 25 | GES     | * Arts Integration SXSW PD Education Conference          | \$400.00    | --          |
| 26 | GMS     | GMS PTA Presents: Middle School Talks                    | \$600.00    | \$600.00    |
| 27 | MES     | Let's Get Moving   | \$580.76    | \$580.76    |
| 28 | MES     | Magnolia Stage Curtains                                  | \$600.00    | \$600.00    |
| 29 | SHLES   | Sensory Room   | \$600.00    | \$600.00    |
| 30 | SHLES   | SHL Garden Club Ongoing Project                          | \$600.00    | \$600.00    |
| 31 | SHLES   | * Teacher Development: Reading Specialist Certification  | \$400.00    | --          |
| 32 | SHLES   | Differentiating Instruction During Small Groups          | \$594.27    | \$594.27    |
| 33 | SHLES   | Animal Adaptation Assembly                               | \$500.00    | \$500.00    |
|    |         |  | \$16,653.48 | \$12,507.89 |

\* Teacher Development Proposals

## Proposal Review

ACE met on Tuesday, December 3, 2019, 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) **DKFI Butterfly Wonder. DKFI. Recommended funding: \$600 (full funding).**

Summary: First-grade students will explore the butterfly life cycle and the mathematical concept of symmetry through a performance of the puppet show, *Butterfly Wonder*. After the show, students will have a chance to make their own puppets. Finally, the students will write their own stories and present them using their puppets.

Strengths: The program combines art, performance, science and math in a complete, entertaining package. The performing artist, Ingrid Hass, has a long track record of engaging and educational programs for children.

Weaknesses: None

Note to Council: This grant was submitted on behalf of DKFI by their ACE liaison, Katherine McElhenny. Ms. McElhenny did not provide any input into ACE's decision to recommend funding for this grant nor will she benefit financially in any way from it.

### 2) **Diverse Voices in Literature Part II. ERHS. Recommended funding: \$600 (full funding).**

Summary: This proposal will be used to purchase 78 copies of the book "Pride" by Ibi Zoboi, which is a retelling of *Pride and Prejudice* set in New York with Afro-Latina characters. The books will support three new elective English classes at ERHS: African American Literature, Latinx Literature, and Women's Literature. These will allow a class set to be available for all students enrolled in the classes.

Strengths: The books purchased will continue to support the diversity of English classes offered, and will allow the students to explore different genres of reading.

Weaknesses: None

### 3) **Using Whiteboards to Enhance Student-Centered Activities. ERHS. Recommended funding: \$600 (full funding).**

Summary: This proposal will be used to purchase twenty 2 foot x 3 foot whiteboards, to be used by both culinary arts and biology students, grades 9-12, including ESOL students.

Strengths: These whiteboards will promote small-group collaboration activities in the classrooms.

Weaknesses: None

**4) 5th Grade Classroom Maker Space. GES. Recommended funding: \$517.14 (full funding).**

Summary: This proposal would build a maker space within a physical classroom that will be accessible to 5th grade students and would support existing science, math, and curriculum allowing students to apply concepts and ideas presented in an experiential way.

Strengths: The activity relates to Science, math and other curriculum that would make students more knowledgeable.

Weaknesses: No weaknesses. However, the Committee recommends having a teacher monitoring the students discussion to make sure the meaningful discussions are made.

**5) A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words. GES. Recommended funding: \$550.00 (partial funding).**

Summary: This proposal would fund picture dictionaries for kindergarten students.

Strengths: Picture dictionaries will greatly help the kindergarteners, especially the English language learners, tying visual representations to the words.

Weaknesses: The \$600 request did not match the budget for 110 dictionaries x \$5 each = \$550. ACE recommends funding at the level justified in the budget.

**6) Apple Tree Gifts. GES. Recommended funding: \$600 (full funding).**

Summary: This proposal will fund a professional puppet show, "The Apple Tree" by Beech Tree Puppets, and then allow the students to make their own puppets, sing songs and engage in a small painting project. This will be part of the Kindergarten units in Earth Science on study of plants and trees, as well as a unit on "The Five Senses."

Strengths: As part of the arts integration program, this project will combine the arts with STEM concepts.

Weaknesses: none.

**7) I Can Build Simple Words. GES. Recommended funding: \$120 (partial funding).**

Summary: This project will purchase word-building kits for kindergarten classrooms. Students will be able to match letters to cards to form words. This will reinforce their emerging literacy skills.

Strengths: The materials allow students of multiple levels to practice their early literacy skills in a simple and engaging way. The materials can be used for multiple years and are appropriate for both group and individual practice.

Weaknesses: While the grant requests \$180, the budget only accounts for \$120 of that amount. ACE recommends funding based on the budget given.

**8) Learning with Letters. GES. Recommended funding: \$149.97 (full funding).**

Summary: This proposal would enable English Language Learners to use magnetic letters to learn how to form words and break them apart to form other words. This teaches the students to learn how English words work.

Strengths: The magnetic letters used will allow the students to be hands on while becoming more proficient in English.

Weaknesses: None.

**9) 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Maker Space. GES. Recommended funding: \$0 (no funding).**

Summary: This proposal would enable the purchase of STEM-related materials to be put into a maker space in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade classroom.

Strengths: The materials would benefit the students who use that classroom.

Weaknesses: This grant application is a verbatim copy of another grant application for the same purchase. ACE does not recommend additional funding for duplicate proposals.

**10) Harlem Renaissance Poetic Showcase. GES. Recommended funding: \$520 (full funding).**

Summary: Fourth-grade students will learn the components of storytelling through poetry of the Harlem Renaissance. They will participate in a variety of mediums that explore the use of author voice and historical context in their writing and will be encouraged to perform their own writing at the end of the unit. The proposal will fund 10 copies each of 3 books and a spoken word/slam poetry performance and workshop by Femi the DriFish.

Strengths: Students will learn to perform their own writing and participate in variety of mediums.

Weaknesses: No weaknesses.

**11) Plant & Pottery Club Supplies and Materials. GES. Recommended funding: \$593.75 (full funding).**

Summary: This proposal would fund a potter's wheel and pottery supplies (clay and glaze). In and after-school program, children will make pots and use them to grow plants, combining arts and STEM.

Strengths: Develops spatial learning, organizational skills, visual memory, and emotional development in after school club and art classes. The potter's wheel will enhance the use of the school's kiln.

Weaknesses: None.

**12) Technology for Flexible Math Groups. GES. Recommended funding: \$0 (no funding).**

Summary: This proposal will purchase Amazon Fire Tablet computers to run math software programs such as Freckle and MobyMax for use in small groups in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classroom.

Strengths: This would enhance STEM instruction in small groups.

Weaknesses: The school system provides a budget for purchasing this type of technology.

**13) STEM in the Classroom. GES. Recommended funding: \$600 (full funding).**

Summary: This proposal would purchase a variety of hands-on STEM materials for fourth-grade classroom use. Materials would be used for both science and math activities, and include fraction tiles and STEM silly straw challenge kits.

Strengths: The materials chosen are varied and can be used for whole class, group and individual instruction. As they are durable, they can be reused in future years. Budget is detailed and well-documented.

Weaknesses: None.

**14) Learning about the Life Cycle of the Plant through Dance. GES. Recommended funding: \$600 (full funding).**

Summary: This proposal would fund a professional dance teacher to visit the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade classes at GES during their unit on the life cycle of a plant. The teacher will utilize the elements of dance – time, space and energy to encourage the active participation of students while learning about the five basic elements needed by plants, germination and pollination.

Strengths: The students will combine artistic dance with Science content to help students demonstrate their understanding of the concepts. This enhances the arts integration at the school.

Weaknesses: None.

**15) Fairy Tales Problem Solving. GES. Recommended funding: \$0 (no funding).**

Summary: This proposal would purchase four sets of Fairy Tales Problem Solving STEM kits for use by 1<sup>st</sup> graders.

Strengths: STEM activities are beneficial to all students.

Weaknesses: The proposal was short and lacked detail or description. There was no explanation provided as to what “Fairy Tales” had to do with STEM, nor was there any information provided as to what materials are contained in each kit, or what the activities would be.

**16) Number Worlds Math Intervention. GES. Recommended funding: \$600 (full funding).**

Summary: Number Worlds helps struggling learners in response to Intervention Tiers 2 and 3 achieve math success and quickly brings them up to grade level by intensively targeting the most important standards. This will train the students of 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades.

Strengths: The activity relates to math capability strengthening and will benefit the students of specified grades. The kit include a 6-year subscription for support.

Weaknesses: No weaknesses.

**17) Organized Play to Support Community-Building. GES. Recommended funding: \$572.00 (full funding).**

Summary: This proposal would fund recess equipment (alphabet bean bags, jump ropes, balls, board games) selected to engage the students in group activities. When there are more organized and engaging activities and items, there are fewer disagreements and misunderstandings between students.

Strengths: Develops students' physical abilities, interpersonal skills, friendships, teamwork, optimism in working through challenges, etc. The proposal includes items for both outdoor and indoor recess, some of which were selected to replace existing items that have worn out.

Weaknesses: None.

**18) Mini Magnetic Write and Wipe Boards. GES. Recommended funding: \$435 (full funding).**

Summary: This proposal will purchase 150 mini white boards for individual use in the primary classrooms.

Strengths: The mini white boards will allow for small group individualized and differentiated instruction. Students can make and break words as well as solve math problems.

Weaknesses: none.

**19) Maryland State Gifted Conference for Primary Teachers. GES. Recommended Funding: \$375 (full funding).**

Summary: This proposal would pay for registration for five teachers in grades 2 and 3 to attend the Maryland State Gifted Conference on the instructional needs of gifted learners, social-emotional needs of gifted learners and underrepresented populations in gifted education.

Strengths: This conference offers various presentations by experts in both the social and emotional needs of gifted learners. The strategies discussed can be used to develop lesson plans that will engage high potential students but can also be scaffolded for use with a diverse range of learners.

Weaknesses: Three nearly identical grants were submitted by GES to send staff to this conference. ACE chose to fund registrations for the primary grade levels since it was felt these were the most beneficial to support.

**20) Maryland State Gifted Conference for Intermediate Teachers. GES. Recommended Funding: \$0 (no funding).**

Summary: This proposal would enable four teachers in grades 4 & 5 to attend a conference on the instructional needs of gifted learners, social-emotional needs of gifted learners and underrepresented populations in gifted education.

Strengths: This conference offers various presentations by experts in order to help increase achievement for gifted learners. The information later shared by the attendees would enhance the instructional strategies used at GES for gifted learners as well as for teachers of other diverse learners.

Weaknesses: Three nearly identical grants were submitted by GES to send staff to this conference. ACE chose to fund registrations for the primary grade levels since it was felt these were the most beneficial to support.

**21) State of Maryland Literacy Association Annual Conference. GES. Recommended Funding: \$400 (full funding).**

Summary: This proposal would enable two teachers to attend a conference on literacy.

Strengths: This conference offers various presentations by experts in literacy instruction. The information later shared by the attendees would enhance the reading program of the entire school, particularly for teachers of students with diverse learning styles.

Weaknesses: None.

**22) Maryland State Gifted Conference for the administrative team. GES. Recommended Funding: \$0 (no funding).**

Summary: This proposal would enable five school administrators to attend a conference on the instructional needs of gifted learners, social-emotional needs of gifted learners and underrepresented populations in gifted education.

Strengths: This conference offers various presentations by experts in order to help increase achievement for gifted learners. The information later shared by the attendees would enhance the instructional strategies used at GES for gifted learners as well as for teachers of other diverse learners.

Weaknesses: Three nearly identical grants were submitted by GES to send staff to this conference. ACE chose to fund registrations for the primary grade levels since it was felt these were the most beneficial to support.

**23) Education & Arts Integration SXSW PD Education Conference. GES. Recommended Funding: \$0 (no funding)**

Summary: This proposal would partially fund registration for one third-grade teacher to attend the SXSW Education conference in Austin, TX, in March of 2020.

Strengths: The SXSW Education Conference will provide a wide-range of speakers, workshops and film screening pertaining to elementary instruction.

Weaknesses: ACE grant funds will not be released in time for attendees to preregister with the funds. The registration price quoted in the grant (\$430) is for the November 2019 deadline. ACE grants are not given for reimbursement of already purchased items. The registration fee is a small part of the costs of traveling to Texas to attend the conference, and the committee felt that supporting attendance at conferences closer to home would be a better use of the City funding. There were three nearly identical proposals submitted for this conference.

**24) Education & Arts Integration SXSW PD Education Conference. GES. Recommended Funding: \$0 (no funding)**

Summary: This proposal would partially fund registration for one third-grade teacher to attend the SXSW Education conference in Austin, TX, in March of 2020.



Strengths: The SXSW Education Conference will provide a wide-range of speakers, workshops and film screening pertaining to elementary instruction.

Weaknesses: ACE grant funds will not be released in time for attendees to preregister with the funds. The registration price quoted in the grant (\$430) is for the November 2019 deadline. ACE grants are not given for reimbursement of already purchased items. The registration fee is a small part of the costs of traveling to Texas to attend the conference, and the committee felt that supporting attendance at conferences closer to home would be a better use of the City funding. There were three nearly identical proposals submitted for this conference.

**25) Education & Arts Integration SXSW PD Education Conference. GES. Recommended Funding: \$0 (no funding)**

Summary: This proposal would partially fund registration for one third-grade teacher to attend the SXSW Education conference in Austin, TX, in March of 2020.

Strengths: The SXSW Education Conference will provide a wide-range of speakers, workshops and film screening pertaining to elementary instruction.

Weaknesses: ACE grant funds will not be released in time for attendees to preregister with the funds. The registration price quoted in the grant (\$430) is for the November 2019 deadline. ACE grants are not given for reimbursement of already purchased items. The registration fee is a small part of the costs of traveling to Texas to attend the conference, and the committee felt that supporting attendance at conferences closer to home would be a better use of the City funding. There were three nearly identical proposals submitted for this conference.

**26) GMS PTA Presents: Middle School Talks. GMS. Recommended Funding: \$600 (full funding)**

Summary: This proposal would provide a setting where the students of GMS are able to come and listen to opinions, views and gain knowledge and information presented by panel guests and staff. Some of the topics to be discussed include: self-esteem, bullying, mental health and college/military options. There will also be a portion where students are able to share their experiences and participate in a Q & A session.

Strengths: The forum will meet once a month at GMS after school hours, and will be offered to all students.

Weaknesses: None.

**27) Let's Get Moving. MES. Recommended Funding: \$580.76 (full funding)**

Summary: This proposal would provide flexible seating options to be used within the classroom, as well as yoga mats students could use in the morning "Let's Get Moving" program to promote mindfulness. The items include fidget bands, chair balls, lap desks and kid's sofas.

Strengths: There is abundant research to show that flexible seating promotes student engagement, as well as mindfulness' ability to reduce stress.

Weaknesses: None.

**28) Magnolia Stage Curtains. MES. Recommended funding: \$600 (full funding).**

Summary: The project is to purchase new stage curtains for Magnolia Elementary School to replace current curtains that are over 20 years old. The current curtains are an eyesore and are very worn out.

Strengths: It will give new look to the stage and performers will be enthusiastic performing on this stage.

Weaknesses: At just over \$6000 total, this is an expensive project. The school has identified the other sources of funding, and the ACE grant is needed to complete the total. If the other sources of funding fall through, then the committee recommends that the school return the ACE funding.

**29) Sensory Room. SHLES. Recommended funding: \$600.00 (full funding).**

Summary: This proposal would fund a sensory room with various lights and materials of different textures for use by special needs and other students.

Strengths: A sensory room is a specially designed room which combines a range of stimuli to help individuals develop and engage their senses. There is a space inside the Crisis room that we would use turn into sensory room. Of particular benefit to the Special Education students, the room will calm students in distress and engage different areas of the brain. The room will also be available for the general education students.

Weaknesses: None.

**30) SHL Garden Club Ongoing Project. SHLES. Recommended funding: \$600 (full funding).**

Summary: This proposal will provide continuing funds for the SHL Garden Club; the project for this year is to develop a sensory garden. Students in grades 3 through 5 will nurture flowers, grasses, thorny plants, herbs, vegetables and fruits to engage the five senses.

Strengths: The after-school garden club teaches responsibility, independence, capacity for collaboration and environmentalism, while beautifying the school environment.

Weaknesses: none.

**31) Teacher Development: Reading Specialist Certification. SHLES. Recommended Funding: \$0 (no funding).**

Summary: This proposal would pay for Praxis testing and tuition reimbursement to support the completion of a master's degree in literacy education and reading specialist certification.

Strengths: Reading specialists are valuable members of the PGCPs staff.

Weaknesses: There are a variety of programs to provide tuition support for teachers furthering their education. Because these other programs are available, ACE felt that this proposal was not a good use of city funds.

**32) Enriching/Differentiating Instruction During Small Groups. SHLES. Recommended Funding: \$594.27 (full funding).**

Summary: This proposal would purchase a variety of items for enriching and differentiating experiences for students at SHLES. The goal of the materials, to be used in small groups, is to build fluency, language and engagement; also to increase math fluency and letter recognition.

Strengths: The students utilizing the materials should be able to help them work more independently.

Weaknesses: None.

**33) Animal Adaptation Assembly. SHLES. Recommended Funding: \$500 (full funding).**

Summary: This proposal would provide the cost for the Echoes of Nature presentation on Animal Adaptation. There will be three programs with live animals given, so that the entire fifth grade (135 students) will have access to see them in shifts.

Strengths: This presentation is closely tied to the Life Cycle curriculum that the SHLES students will be studying. The opportunity to see live animals is also very valuable to students in a school with significant minority enrollment.

Weaknesses: None.

**RECOMMENDATION:** This is the 11th 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 24 proposals, totaling \$12,507.89 with the following distribution per school:

| School        | Requested           | Submitted | Recommended         | Approved  | Rejected |
|---------------|---------------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------|----------|
| DKFIS         | \$ 600.00           | 1         | \$ 600.00           | 1         | 0        |
| ERHS          | \$ 1,200.00         | 2         | \$ 1,200.00         | 2         | 0        |
| GES           | \$ 10,378.45        | 22        | \$ 6,632.86         | 14        | 8        |
| GMS           | \$ 600.00           | 1         | \$ 600.00           | 1         | 0        |
| MES           | \$ 1,180.76         | 2         | \$ 1,180.76         | 2         | 0        |
| SHLES         | \$ 2,694.27         | 5         | \$ 2,294.27         | 4         | 1        |
| DKFIS         | \$ 600.00           | 1         | \$ 600.00           | 1         | 0        |
| <b>Totals</b> | <b>\$ 16,653.48</b> | <b>33</b> | <b>\$ 12,507.89</b> | <b>24</b> | <b>9</b> |

This year ACE budgeted \$12,500 for ACE grants, and recommends grants totaling \$12,507.89. ACE is satisfied with the recommended programs and does not request additional funding for the grants that were not approved.

Approved by ACE on 12/3/2019 with a vote of 6-0 with three members absent.