



North Penn School District Educational Foundation



2024-2025
Funded Grants

A Note from the Trustees:

For this year's grants, the North Penn School District Educational Foundation awarded 47 grants totaling over \$80,000. Grants like these not only enhance the curriculum, but provide a hands-on and innovative way for students to embrace and fully comprehend the lesson. When NPSD educators and staff apply for these grants, some think of how this experience will affect the student in the future. Science and technology grants allow students to understand theories at the next level of thinking. Other grants allow teachers to think about how this experience will benefit students socially and vocationally. We are sure that when you read through these grant descriptions, you will see how these experiences allow our students to develop into better students and citizens. Without you and your generosity, the NPSD students and staff would not have access to these amazing opportunities.

Macbooks and Mainstage for North Penn Theater

NPHS, Pennbrook, Penndale, Pennfield, *Blair Higgins, David DiValentino, Tim Jernigan, Joe Santanello*

This grant funded the purchase of 6 Macbooks with hardware and software packages to allow any digital keyboard in the district to be converted to a MIDI controller. The Mainstage program on the Macbook allows any keyboard to generate hundreds of thousands of sound effects and instruments, enhancing performances across the district, and incorporating this cutting-edge technology into performing music classes and theater programs.

Boys II Men Mentorship and Girls' Group

Penndale, *Brooke Bernardini*

This grant provided funding to grow the Boys II Men and Girls' Group mentorships into a year-long program at Penndale Middle School. The program connects Black students with positive role models in school and community and provides an affinity space where students are given an opportunity to learn, bond, and develop skills to overcome obstacles and embody an attitude of excellence.

Wit and Wisdom Art in the Classroom

York Avenue, *Celeste Allerton*

Through this grant, York Avenue was able to purchase an art drying rack to let student artwork dry without being damaged. 2nd graders got to connect the Wit and Wisdom language arts curriculum with art using "notice and wonder" key art elements.



Jerry Pallotta Author Visit

York Avenue, *Megan Ward*

York Avenue Elementary welcomed Jerry Pallotta, the award-winning author of more than 90 books, including the popular "Who Would Win" series. Students got to meet Jerry and learn about his creative process of researching a creature or animal, turning that research into a dynamic and engaging book of their own. After Jerry's presentation, students received a signed copy of a book from the "Who Would Win" series to share with their families at home.

The Future is N.E.A.R. (Nanotechnology Education and Research)

North Penn High School, *Michael Boyer*

The Future is N.E.A.R. (Nanotechnology Education and Research) is a STEM education research program that parallels the senior capstone course, Engineering Design and Development (EDD), of the NPNS Engineering Academy. Students work in design teams, utilizing a combination of creative problem-solving and the latest published research available, to improve the human condition by researching and developing solutions to global energy, environment, and healthcare issues that capitalize from fundamentals of nanotechnology, materials science, and cutting-edge published engineering research.

Pennbrook Sewing Club Pillows for Patients **Pennbrook, *Anna Bingley and Jessica Marshall***

Pennbrook Middle School's after-school sewing club got creative to support cancer patients. Students met once a month to work on sewing projects for charity, and made 50 pillows shaped like hearts for cancer patients going through treatment.

Introduction to Technological Systems in Computer Engineering **Pennbrook, *Andrew Hollstein and Diana Rickert***

This grant funded sets of Microbit V2 educational coding kits, providing a hands-on approach to not only learning how to code in various languages, but also the fundamentals of physical computing. Students used the kits to learn programming languages including Scratch, Javascript, and Python. By learning basic coding languages, students were exposed to a variety of challenges including physical computing, open and closed systems, basic mobile app development, and more that challenges them to apply the engineering design process to a whole new field.

North Penn Jazz Night Guest Artist **All Schools, *Robert Kennedy***

The annual Night of Jazz is an evening for all seven North Penn jazz groups to come together and celebrate the great tradition of jazz in the district. The evening provides an opportunity for the performers and their families to hear each of the North Penn jazz ensembles in one venue. Each year the Night of Jazz features a different guest jazz artist who spends rehearsal and clinic time with each group and performs one selection with each group at the culminating concert.



Engraving Creativity for Our Students **Gwynedd Square, *Derek Fickert***

This grant funded a laser engraver and cutting machine, offering students a practical introduction to tools commonly found in both middle and high school technology education programs. By engaging in activities using these tools and participating in the before/after school club, students gained valuable insights into product development processes and explored exciting new STEM activities.

LGBTQ+ Student Training in Advocacy Rights and Responsibilities **NPHS, Pennbrook, Penndale, *Dave Hall, Florence Wydra Gat, Lauren Ewaniuk***

Students participated in the Student Constitutional Rights Institute, a collaboration to teach students about LGBTQ issues and the Constitution. While at the Montgomery County Bar Association, students worked with county lawyers and Montgomery County judges to hold a mock hearing.

Monsters Sewing Project with Gwyn-Nor **Pennbrook, Gwyn-Nor, *Lauren Ewaniuk***

Pennbrook 9th grade FCS majors partnered with Gwyn Nor 1st graders to recreate a sewing project based on the first graders drawings. First grade students read the book *The Monster Who Lost His M* in class, then drew a picture of their own monsters. Ninth graders used those pictures to sew the monsters into toys, using the picture as a pattern, matching colors and other details. Ninth graders then delivered their finished project to the first graders to keep.

Community Lives Here North Wales, Minhae Kim

North Wales Elementary School embarked on a transformative mosaic mural project, funded by a Foundation grant. This grant allowed over 460 students to engage in hands-on artistic expression, enriching their creativity and sense of community pride. Through collaboration with professional artists and community members, students designed and created a vibrant mural that not only beautified North Wales, but also promoted inclusivity, fostered teamwork, and enhanced social-emotional learning.



Active Learning for 5th Grade Classroom North Wales, Sienna Jimenez

Providing students with a brain break during instruction is a pertinent component of modern education, and is often necessary for students. This grant funded a stationary bike for students to get a safe break in the classroom and self-regulate while still being present for instruction.

A Pocket of Potential: Enhancing First Grade Opportunities York Avenue, Julia Keffer

This grant provided 1st grade students at York Avenue with pockets that hang on the back of school chairs. These pockets give students easy access to learning materials, cultivating responsibility and autonomy, leading to enhanced engagement and academic success.

North Penn Boys Cross Country: Upgrading our Preparation to Go Farther North Penn High School, Michael Werner

The North Penn High School boys cross country team upgraded their preparation and safety practices with the addition of 2 iPads with cellular data, 2 weather proof iPad cases and a wireless printer. These technology upgrades improved data collection, communication, and efficiency for the entire team by providing teaching, learning, and performance tools that can be utilized in a boundaryless sport like cross country. Connecting the coaches, team members, and the community throughout a "journey of a thousand miles" enabled the entire team to go farther.



Accessible Playground Bridle Path, Amanda Van Vilet

Bridle Path students on the autism spectrum with moderate to significant needs received equipment and supplies to increase gross motor skills. Through this grant, the students were able to practice targeted skills, engage with peers, and increase independence and social skills. These items will be used for years to come with current students and future students to enhance gross motor skills and sensory integration skills.

Display Cases of Native Species

North Penn High School, *Patrick Dougherty*

Environmental science classrooms at NPHS got display cases to help students identify native plants and animals. The cases include both trees and birds, and help students recognize the biodiversity found in this area while understanding the relationships between different species. These display cases helped students see actual samples in person, rather than just on a screen.

Hands-On Environmental Science Learning Experience at the Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust

North Penn High School, *Patrick Dougherty*

This grant took students on a hands-on learning field trip to the Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust. Students got to learn from experts in multiple fields of environmental science, including water quality, wetlands, ecological restoration, plant and bird identification, tree plant, and the history and ecology of the area.



Culturally Cooking Club

Pennbrook, *Lauren Ewaniuk and Anna Bingley*

In Pennbrook Middle School's Cultural Cooking Club, students learned about new cultures and cooked a dish from that culture. Groups of students worked together to prepare recipes and share a meal together. This club helped students hone their cooking skills while also expanding their cultural knowledge.

EZY Rollers

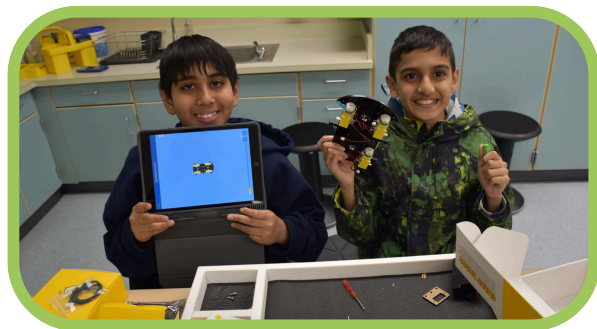
York Avenue, *Von Muller*

EZY Rollers are a fun and creative way to get students active. The Rollers are designed with 3 wheels low to the ground, providing stability and a safe way to travel using feet to propel and navigate the EZY roller through a snake-like motion. Students used the EZY Rollers in physical education classes at York Avenue, providing a fun lower body exercise.

STEM Robotics

Gwynedd Square, *Derek Fickert*

Students got hands-on experience in STEM, learning how to build robots, program, and complete tasks with their engineered robots. Students were able to see the progression of basic robots to a more comprehensive robot that can be utilized in multiple ways in Gwynedd Square.



Field Trip Busing

Knapp, *Kelli Madden*

Knapp Elementary is one of the largest elementary schools in NPSD, which can make field trips difficult. Through this grant, Knapp got to utilize charter buses to take a trip to Philadelphia and learn more about the United States Constitution and the Revolutionary War.

Piano for Chorus **Bridle Path, Michael Klenk**

This grant purchased a keyboard to accompany the Bridle Path chorus. The instrument is used at rehearsals and concerts for the chorus of over 130 students. The keyboard is also used in the general music class.

Empanada Cooking Class **Pennfield, Jennifer Ainge**

Spanish 1 and 2 classes at Pennfield got to learn how to make empanadas from the owner of Empanada Mama in Doylestown, PA. Students also got to learn about the history of this cuisine and what it is like to be an entrepreneur.



Floating Classroom Trip **North Penn High School, John Collier and Patrick Dougherty**

This grant funded a field trip for 45 NPHS students to the Perkiomen Watershed Conservancy floating classroom at Green Lane Park. While there, students participated in environmental educational experiences, growing their appreciation of the natural world and gaining a better understanding of the scientific concepts taught in the classroom.

Volunteer Corps **Pennbrook, CarrieAnn Cummiskey, Anne Pearcey**

Middle schoolers at Pennbrook got to join the Volunteer Corps, an extracurricular club providing opportunities to give back. Students were able to make a commitment to not only helping others, but also enriching their own lives through volunteer experiences. Students learned about empathy, inclusivity, responsibility, all while giving back to local organizations, developing pride for the community.

Reading Super Bowl **NPHS, All Elementary Schools, Tracey Cliver and Cheryl Neubert**

The Reading Super Bowl is a district-wide event where NPHS football players traveled to the elementary schools and read to students. The student athletes served as role models for literacy while reading to over 6,000 students. The day was filled with excitement from both sides as students joined together for a celebration of reading!



Seestar S50 Smart Telescope **North Penn High School, James Bauman**

The planetarium was able to purchase a Seestar S50 Smart Telescope, allowing for real time tracking and imaging of deep sky objects, such as the Andromeda Galaxy. Planetarium program attendees now get the opportunity to take home real images of those deep sky objects taken during a program. This telescope also enhanced the learning experience of NPHS students in the Astronomy Club and classes.

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Cozy Corners **Extended School Care, *Jacqueline O'Beirne***

The Cozy Corners project created designated calming areas in classrooms to support North Penn students' social-emotional learning (SEL). These spaces, equipped with comfortable seating, sensory tools, and SEL materials, help students practice emotional regulation and build essential SEL skills in real-time. By enhancing students' focus, resilience, and self-awareness, Cozy Corners foster a supportive classroom environment that promotes both emotional well-being and academic engagement.

Raspberry Pi Makerspace **North Penn High School, *Ryan Kolb, Michael Voicheck***

With the creation of a Raspberry Pi Makerspace, students in the CHASE Club and Computer Program Club were able to experiment with the Raspberry Pi platform and create various devices that can automate simple tasks, gather and analyze data, and even program games. This space allowed students to experiment beyond the scope of our current programming and electronics courses to show their creativity and create new applications for these devices.



Living Marine Specimens **North Penn High School, *Daniel Krueger***

The Marine Science program at NPHS established a live marine aquarium, allowing students to explore the wonders of ocean life firsthand. This project will impact high school students annually, offering a unique, immersive experience with marine organisms such as fish, corals, and invertebrates. Students gained hands-on skills in ecosystem management, conducted real-time experiments on marine life, and deepened their understanding of biodiversity, adaptation, and environmental stewardship. This experience fostered a new generation of informed, environmentally conscious learners with a passion for protecting marine ecosystems.

Deep Dive into Various Forms of Manufacturing in the 21st Century **North Penn High School, *Julia Young***

Deep Dive into Manufacturing in the 21st Century was implemented at North Penn High School and will reach a minimum of 125 students per year in the classroom alone. A CNC router and Kreg jig joinery system allowed the students to explore other methods that can be used by home woodworking or homeowners. Students also learnt about designing, programming, and creating G-code, which is used in manufacturing settings each and every day. These tools helped students learn and experience real-world solutions and gain skills that will be beneficial in the job market and across many different settings.

Pennbrook Art Club **Pennbrook, Anne Pearcey**

The Pennbrook Art Club enhanced students' creative expression and artistic skills through diverse art projects, fostering a collaborative and inclusive environment. Members work on individual and collaborative projects, allowing them to express their creativity while developing artistic skills.

Montgomery Elementary Sensory Room **Montgomery, Destenie Bongiorno**

This grant spruced up the sensory room at Montgomery, offering more sensory equipment, causing a calm and organizing response. This project provided many students with difficulties in sensory processing the opportunity to learn what they need to stay calm and focused for learning, becoming more independent over time in self-regulation and promoting a better environment for learning.

From Fields to Fluency: Cultivating Language Skills on the Farm **A.M. Kulp, Rebecca Cucuzza and Nicole Grossman**

This grant funded a workshop experience at Rose Bridge Farm and Sanctuary for ESL students at A.M. Kulp Elementary, aimed at enhancing their listening and speaking skills. Through hands-on interaction and real-life visual aids, students expanded their vocabulary and built essential background knowledge. This experience deepened their understanding of living and nonliving things, agriculture, and farm life, supporting their engagement in the ELA and Science curriculum.

Clay and Color: Inspiring Creativity Through Ceramic Art and Specialty Glazes **Pennfield, Vanessa Ebert**

This project introduced students to the creative and technical aspects of ceramic art, allowing them to explore new materials and techniques. The use of newer and vibrant specialty glazes that create unique surface effects enabled students to experiment with color, texture, and form, fostering their individual artistic voices. The students learnt about the science behind ceramics, including how glazes react during firing, and had the opportunity to create their own ceramic pieces using both traditional and contemporary glazing techniques.



Stinging Science: A Deep Dive into Jellyfish Ecology **North Penn High School, Shane T. Misuro**

This project provided students with a unique, hands-on learning experience that fostered a deeper understanding of marine biology, scientific inquiry, and environmental stewardship. The jellyfish tank served as a dynamic teaching tool, inspiring curiosity and inspiring students to pursue careers in marine science and conservation.

6th Grade Field Trip to Camp America **Knapp, Jennifer Sicinski**

6th graders at Knapp had a one day trip to Camp America, working together through various team building exercises to solve problems while having fun.

Model United Nations

North Penn High School, *Yash Verma and Rachel Wilcox*

Model United Nations is an amazing experience teaching public speaking and global issues. It teaches students how to debate global issues, negotiate solutions, and develop skills in public speaking, research, and diplomacy. This grant funded the NPHS club's trip to several conferences to connect with their peers.

Innovating Ceramics: When Traditions Meets 3D Technology

North Penn High School, *Maggie Horvath*

This grant integrated innovative 3D printing technology into the high school ceramics program, transforming how students create and explore their artistic potential. With the addition of a 3D printer, students designed and produced custom tools, blending traditional ceramics techniques with modern digital design. This project enhanced creativity, engagement, and skill development, preparing students for future opportunities in art and technology.

Graphic Design: T-Shirt and Printing Business Project

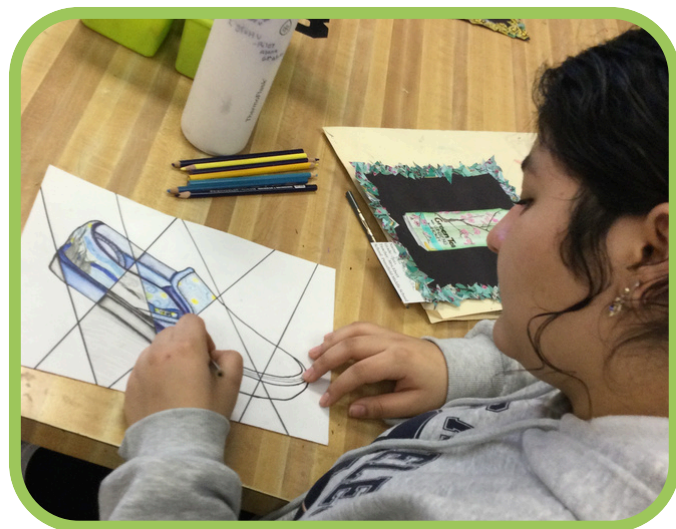
North Penn High School, *William A. Raab*

In the Electronic Art & Graphic Design class at North Penn High School, students in grades 10-12 experienced what it is like to work in the graphic design industry through thought-provoking lessons. They created a fictitious clothing company, designed aesthetics for the brand, and finally produced a prototype product. With the xTool Screen Printer: 1st Screen Printing Solution, students took it one step further and created tangible products associated with their design.

Coloring the Imagination: Expanding Creative Possibilities with Prisma Colored Pencils

Pennfield, *Vanessa Ebert and Cari Taylor*

Prisma colored pencils are known for their rich pigmentation, smooth application, and blendability, making them ideal for students who are learning to create vibrant, layered artwork. These pencils allowed students to experiment with shading, gradient techniques, and color mixing, helping them refine their skills in drawing and illustration. With access to high-quality materials, students will have the opportunity to engage in more sophisticated artistic processes, including detailed still lifes, imaginative compositions, and even abstract works.



Virtual Summer Enrichment Program

All Schools, *Nina Fenstermaker*

This grant funded an innovative summer enrichment program for approximately 400 students across North Penn's elementary schools, reaching grades K-6. Designed to combat summer learning loss, the program provided engaging, self-paced activities in reading, writing, math, STEM, and physical education, allowing students to explore, learn, and stay active over the summer. Through hands-on projects, interactive activities, and exciting raffle prizes, students built academic confidence, developed critical thinking skills, and fostered a love of learning that they can carry into the new school year. This grant created impactful, equitable learning opportunities that support North Penn's commitment to student success and lifelong curiosity.

Day of Exploration at the Museum of the Revolution in Philadelphia Oak Park, *Geretha Billetz*

Twenty-two 5th and 6th grade Oak Park Elementary School English Language learners were transported back in time to the "Museum of the American Revolution" in Philadelphia. This wonderful opportunity enhanced their background knowledge, vocabulary, and conceptualization of how our nation was born, which is inundated throughout the K-12 Social Studies curriculum! These students were also given the fantastic opportunity to dine for lunch in one of the most famous, historically significant cities in the United States.

Aquatic Adventurers Engaged at Adventure Aquarium Oak Park, *Geretha Billetz, Tamara Nardo, Lydia Oh*

Sixty Oak Park Elementary School English Learners in grades 3rd-6th had the incredible opportunity to experience a variety of fascinating aquatic creatures at Adventure Aquarium in Camden NJ. This grant provided these children with an opportunity to further develop their background knowledge and vocabulary development, viewing a simulated, natural environment with many hands-on opportunities that they would have otherwise not been able to view.



CNC Lathe North Penn High School, *Michael Voicheck*

The CNC lathe is a computer-controlled tool used to create functional, mostly cylindrical, objects from metal. Using existing knowledge of design through courses taught in the NPHS engineering program, students will be bringing those drawings to life with high precision and repeatability. Using CNC equipment in modern manufacturing has increased productivity, accuracy, and worker output. The addition of this lathe to the grouping of existing CNC equipment opens opportunities to prepare students with real-world experience whether they plan on attending post-secondary education or transitioning directly into the workforce.

Indoor Recess Screen Break Games Nash, *David Foley*

General Nash Elementary School was looking to provide students an alternative to screen time during indoor recess with unique games that help support social-emotional learning, cooperative gameplay, problem solving and respect. The grant provides all K-6 students at General Nash with a variety of unique board games and card games to enjoy during any indoor recess time slot; ensuring a variety of options while also being equitable across all classes and grade levels. With an assortment of games for K-2 and 3-6, students will have the opportunity to take a break from screen time if they choose during the times they are unable to get outside for a regular recess block.

THE NPSD EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION & THE NP ALUMNI ASSOCIATION: A PARTNERSHIP WITH THE PAST FOR THE FUTURE

In 2012, the NPSD Educational Foundation, in conjunction with NPSD administration launched the North Penn Alumni Association as a committee of the Foundation. The association's mission is to encourage networking and communication among North Penn School District alumni and to help maintain and enhance the legacy of North Penn schools for future generations. We hope to see more graduates join us for NPSD and Foundation events, attend reunions, and stay informed on the happenings of the district. For more information, visit northpennalumni.org.