Manalapan Englishtown Regional Schools

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In 2009, upon facing a budget cut, a group of dedicated parents and community members formed The Foundation for MERS. The Foundation for MERS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that seeks to enhance the education of the children in our district. They are managed by a board of volunteer trustees and operate independently of the Board of Education and Parent-Teacher Organizations. Foundations trustees work together with community members to plan fundraising events and recruit local and corporate sponsors. As a result, the Foundation for MERS has raised over $700,000 to fund innovative school projects. These grants range from supporting our educational programming with technology to funding sustainability projects. Over the last 5 years, the foundation has funded the following sustainability projects:

STEM Lab: Manalapan-Englishtown Middle School ($15,000 approved)
The grant will be used to purchase equipment and materials that will support STEMrelated instructional activities. The students will be provided with an environment that promotes creativity and exploration in a learning process. The long-range objective of the STEM Lab is to increase STEM literacy skills for all students so they are better prepared to face the challenges of our increasingly technological 21 century society. It is the hope of this program to expose students to STEM related activities and possibly ignite their interest enough to pursue advanced STEM-discipline degrees which will be in high demand in the near future.

STEM Program: Lafayette Mills ($3,025 approved)
The items requested through this grant will be used to implement a STEM program at Lafayette Mills. STEM activities combine the subjects of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math. This program will give students of all grade levels an opportunity to engage in activities that allow them to problem solve, collaborate and innovate. These are 21st century skills that are necessary for students to be successful in our global society. Students will also be encouraged to make real world connections through the projects and activities set forth in the program. The grant will provide students with the opportunities to engage in STEM related activities.

Playground Equipment: Clark Mills ($15,000 approved)
The planning, design, purchase and installation of this state of the art playground was a collaborative effort. This updated, current, 21st century equipment enables more children to utilize the apparatus and participate at one time. The newly designed Clark Mills playground encourages children to exercise all parts of the body. Slides provide climbing exercise for the legs, bars utilize arm and shoulder muscles, while jungle gyms emphasize a total body workout. Together, all of the all equipment encourages children to run from one piece to another, giving them a needed dose of heart healthy exercises. Having students observe their peers engaged in active play influences them to become more involved, practice social skills, and develop decision making skills through activities offered by the various playground equipment components.

Functional Movement Systems (“FMS”) Certification: Wemrock Brook ($688.85 approved)
Functional Movement Systems will be emphasized as part of the Physical Education Curriculum at Wemrock Brook. Proper fundamentals of basic movements have been and will continue to be stressed at the primary grades. FMS will help reinforce and improve the basic movement patterns of all students.

Sensory Hallways: Wemrock Brook and Taylor Mills ($2400.00 approved)
Sensory hallways were funded by the Foundation and installed at both Wemrock Brook and Taylor Mills for the 19-20 school year. Given the increasing number of students who have sensory diets and benefit from sensory breaks, these hallways will provide an important outlet to help students to regulate their emotions and work off extra energy so that they can return to class ready for learning.

Lu Interactive Playground: Pine Brook School ($14,000 approved)
The Lu Interactive Playground grant was awarded in the Fall of 2019 and is currently being installed to combine core content learning and physical activity in an interactive way, both enriching and enhancing our STEAM and PE offerings at the sixth grade center.

Ozmo for Kindergarten: Milford Brook ($3500 approved)
Kindergarten teachers at Milford Brook school petitioned the Foundation for a “mini-lab” of Osmos in their kindergarten classrooms so that students would learn valuable foundational skills in the area of literacy and digital literacy/coding most specifically. The addition of Osmos to kindergarten further enhances our technology and science curriculum.

These are just a few of the grants provided by the Foundation for MERS. They have also helped provide professional development for staff and technology tools for teachers in every building in the district.

Sincerely,

District Principals
Rebecca Seery
Kerry Marsala
Jayme Orlando
Gregory Duffy
Michael Fiorillo
Melissa Foy
Jodi Pepchinski
Julie Szustowicz