



Wolcott families, did you know that The Foundation for West Hartford Public Schools has provided funding for the grants described below? The Foundation is able to support great programs and projects at your school thanks to the generous support of the West Hartford community. Visit www.fwhps.org to learn more about The Foundation and other grants in the WHPS system.

Be a Page Turner!

Wendy Gorfain, Lead Teacher

This grant funds book clubs, to be named Page Turners, at Wolcott Elementary School. The clubs will exist for multiple levels of ability at each grade level, and will involve parents. Starting in October, a different book club will be offered bi-monthly to target specific populations. Once the club finishes reading and discussing the book, the participants will offer several book talks to the rest of the student body to spread excitement about reading. All Page Turner books will be housed in a special student-suggestion section of the library.

Carson Family Foundation Grant: Reading with Connections in-residence

Amy Fisher, Lead Teacher & Cathy Fagan, Christine Mori, Josh Ranaudo

Connections is an in-school residency program, through the Hartford Stage Company, that uses theater techniques to strengthen reading comprehension and build excitement about reading. For five

consecutive days, a teaching artist will visit each of the fourth grade classrooms at Wolcott Elementary School to lead drama activities based on a work of literature chosen by the fourth grade teachers. Students are engaged through theatre skills that are inherently active and collaborative, and reinforce grade level Common Core State standards. Through improvisation, role-play, dialogue, and other theatre techniques, students explore the context, plot and characters of a fourth grade level book, building prior knowledge, creating suspense, and encouraging empathy.

Duprey Family Grant: Composting and Gardening

Karen Abels, Lead Teacher & Jennifer Clinton, Emily Thurston

Kindergarteners at Wolcott Elementary School will learn first-hand the process of composting and the importance of recycling. Through planting a garden and tending it through the year, they will learn that composting provides a way of reducing the amount of waste that needs to be disposed of while converting it into a product that is useful for gardening and beneficial to the environment. They will learn that organic waste is a potential resource instead of something “yucky” that should be thrown away. This project will also enhance students’ love of nature and give them an opportunity to learn about the outdoors and nature in a safe place. As flowers bloom in the fall, students will have a better understanding of the Signs of Spring poem and writing unit, which is part of the kindergarten curriculum.

Gengras Motor Car Grant: Listen to Learn

Sarah Lynch, Lead Teacher

3rd, 4th and 5th grade students at Wolcott Elementary School will benefit from the purchase of Playaways - portable digital audio players loaded with audiobooks for circulation in the library- and MackinVIA audiobooks- digital audiobooks that students can listen to on a mobile device or computer (streaming or offline). Students will gain academic

benefits and make curriculum connections. Audio players will help students to decode words and hear letter-sound correspondence and also allow learners with special needs, struggling readers, and ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) students to read a book with the support of a professional reader. ESOL students will get support in understanding the way in which English is read, punctuated, and pronounced. By following along with a professional reader, these students will be able to see and hear how sentences are formed in English. Students will not only become more accomplished students in school, but better users of the English language. This will help them make friends, communicate with teachers better, and solve problems with words.

Snap Circuits: Exciting Electricity

Matthew Dicks, Lead Teacher

Snap Circuits is a product that allows for a wide variety of projects and creativity related to electronic circuitry. By purchasing Snap Circuit kits 85 5th grade students at Wolcott Elementary School will be able to enhance their 5th grade science unit on electricity through hands-on experimenting. The fifth grade students will gain a greater understanding of electricity, circuitry, power sources and switches.

Thomas Ford Memorial Grant: Natural Photography

Cathy Fagan, Lead Teacher & Joshua Ranaudo

Fourth graders at Wolcott Elementary School will have a creative, hands-on learning experience with cameras while exploring various scientific aspects of water to better understand the water cycle and conservation. During the course of a week, students will have daily hour-long instruction from photographer Craig Norton that will tie together visual arts and the 4th grade science curriculum. They will be taught how to handle and operate digital cameras that will be provided by Mr. Norton. Then they will use the cameras to photograph the different aspects of water. When possible, they will

visit natural habitats such as marshes, lakes or rivers to capture the environments from both scientific and artistic perspectives. On the last day of the residency, students will each have three photographs added to a group display and Mr. Norton will provide feedback.

Visiting the State Capitol

Cathy Fagan, Lead Teacher

This one-day field trip to the Connecticut State Capitol building will take place in conjunction with the 4th grade Connecticut History unit at Wolcott Elementary School. As a result of this grant, students will enjoy a docent-led tour of the Capitol Building, will visit the adjacent museum to learn about the political system and see artifacts that are unique to Connecticut. This grant will make the Connecticut social studies unit come to life.

Women's Health Specialty Care Grant: A Vision of the Future

Matthew Dicks, Lead Teacher

Bringing students to Manchester Community College and Trinity College at the onset of their last year at Wolcott Elementary School will give them a vision of possibilities for the future. Planning a visit with opportunities for tours and discussions on campus, before and after, can provide inspiration and useful information in order to fulfill the Common Core directive of college and career readiness.