



Rockland Education Foundation

THE ROCKLAND EDUCATION FOUNDATION WAS CREATED EIGHTEEN YEARS AGO BY A GROUP OF LOCAL CITIZENS AND BUSINESS OWNERS WHO WANTED TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF ROCKLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS. THIS PAST YEAR, THIRTY-TWO GRANTS TOTALING \$25,853 WERE FUNDED BY THE FOUNDATION. THESE GRANTS WERE SUBMITTED BY ROCKLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL STAFF MEMBERS TO FUND PROGRAMS AND SUPPLIES THAT WERE NOT AVAILABLE THROUGH THE SCHOOL BUDGET. TO DATE, THE ROCKLAND EDUCATION FOUNDATION HAS DISTRIBUTED OVER \$400,000 TO PROVIDE NEW AND EXCITING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ROCKLAND STUDENTS. THE FOLLOWING IS A SUMMARY OF THE GRANTS AWARDED FOR THE 2012-2013 SCHOOL YEAR.

August 2013

District-wide, students in Grades 1-4 were provided with a practical approach for reviewing and practicing the new *Common Core State Standards in Mathematics*, thanks to **COLLEEN FORLIZZI**, former District Math Coordinator. Students were exposed to problem solving and Common Core types of questions involving analysis, application, and explanation. **EMILY KIDD**, Esten School Psychologist, along with **JUDI SCARPELLI** and **CASEY SAVAGE**, Elementary School Social Workers, provided *Play Therapy in the School Setting, and Bringing Guidance to Elementary Education: Building a Library of Materials*. Both of these grants allowed for the purchase of therapeutic tools and materials to help engage students in individual and group counseling, and also provide social skills instruction. Also focusing on district-wide initiatives were **JAN-MARIE KILLINGER**, **JOYCE KIRSLIS**, **KAITLYN JUFFRE**, and **TARA DELEO MAHONEY** who were committed to *Building Better Readers*. Monthly issues of the publication *Building Readers* were sent home for nine months to all elementary school families, and included informative and fun-filled activities for parents to use to encourage reading at home. These issues were also posted on the Rockland Public Schools' website and were met with a very positive response from both staff and parents. **MONICA BABCOCK**, **MARIA CASTAGNOZZI**, and **MICHELE BISSONNETTE** also provided a district-wide program entitled *Interactive Websites for School and Home*. *BrainPop*, *BrainPop Jr.*, and *BrainPop ESL* allowed students and teachers to access cross-curricular grade-level information on hundreds of subjects. *Enchanted Learning's* website provided students with challenging lesson reinforcement and valuable teacher evaluation tools. These two websites were made available to students in Grades K-12.

Thanks to **AMY WOODWARD**, Shakespeare returned to Rockland High School last year. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was performed by the theater company *Shakespeare Now!* Rockland High students saw the Bard's words come to life and many enjoyed conversations with the cast after the performance giving insight into the life of a young theater professional. Rockland High School students were also able to perform *Fiddler on the Roof* thanks to the grant submitted by **ANGELA ARMSTRONG** and **SAM HOYO**. The play exposed students to dramatic arts as actors, cast members, or audience members, and its theme increased student awareness of different cultures and religious backgrounds. Now that the Rockland High School and the Rogers Middle School are one building, **FREEA LEAHY** and **LAWRIE DONOVAN** collaborated to provide for *The Stress Free Student*. Those students in Grades 5-12 who suffer from school and social anxieties have utilized the space and therapeutic manipulatives provided to find comfort and help them transition back into the classroom. Also at the middle school, **MARIE DONDERO** brought the *IXL Math Computer Program* to students in Grades 5-8, and **SUSAN LONERGAN**, **GLEN ENOS**, **TERRI WALSH** and **ELIZABETH JAGIELA** provided *Historical Perspectives for Children* to students in Grade 5. As a result, an actor posing as Ben Franklin visited the classrooms and to quote Robert, a fifth grade student, "He made Ben Franklin totally awesome!"

CHRISTINE PRUITT, Jefferson School Principal, was *Building Confident and Competent Mathematicians* last year. As a result of her grant, teachers had access to Susan O'Connell's book *Now I Get It*, which was used to enhance math instruction and gave the students a deeper understanding of math concepts. **JESSICA ROBERGE** and **MICHAEL HOUDLETTE** were able to provide Jefferson School students with *Non-Fiction Science Texts* to encourage their love of

science and to align instruction with the new state standards. In addition, Jessica's *Let's Do Science* materials allowed hands-on projects to study weather, animal adaptations, electricity and minerals. **LAUREN PARKER** facilitated a *Speech and Language Center* which allowed students in preschool through Grade 5 to use the most modern technology to improve speech and language skills. Lauren also collaborated with **KRISTIN BUTLER** to provide *A Social Thinking Project*. Their students became more effective communicators through the use of materials created by Michelle Garcia Winner, a national leader in the research and treatment of children with social skill weaknesses and disorders.



At Memorial Park School, students were using *Toobaloo to Enhance Reading Instruction and Writing Skills* thanks to **MARIA CASTAGNOZZI** on behalf of Grades 1 & 2. Use of this device has been shown to improve phonemic awareness, phonics fluency, expression and comprehension. **KAREN NEE**, **MARY WELLS** and **RACHEL MACK** were *Using Picture Books to Teach Comprehension Strategies* and also *Transitioning to the Common Core Using Test Exemplars* in Grade 3. **BARBARA LABOLLITA**, **HANNAH GRIEMANN**, **ERIN O'DAY**, **EMILY ADAMS**, **MICHELE BISSONNETTE**, **MARIA CASTAGNOZZI** and **MONICA BABCOCK** provided a *Tuck in Night* for their students in Grades 1 & 2. Children came to school in the evening clad in their pajamas and carrying a pillow, and were read to by their parents and guest readers in an effort to promote reading in and outside the classroom. **RACHEL MACK**, **MARIA CASTAGNOZZI**, **ERIN O'DAY** and **CAITLIN OAKLEY** provided Grade 4 students *Fabulous Folk Tales, Fables, Myths, and Fairy Tales in the Common Core* genre, and **KERRI BLAKE**, **KELSEY COOLEY**, and **CAITLIN OAKLEY** had students *Reading Their Way to Common Core Proficiency Using High-Interest Non-Fiction Texts*, also in Grade 4. **MARIA CASTAGNOZZI**, **MONICA BABCOCK** and **MICHELE BISSONNETTE**'S students in Grade 2 found that *Fossils are Fun* as a result of their grant.

At Esten School, **CHRISTINE SMITH** introduced *Authors for Children and Their Books* to students in Grades 1-4. These books will be a part of the Esten Library for years to come. Principal **CAROL MCGRATH** brought *A Poet in Residence* to Esten School. Liam the Poet (Bill Alberti), provided a week-long workshop to Grade 4 students after which their original works were published in a booklet for them and read at a "Poetry Palooza" for their parents. All of the second grade students at the Esten School were treated to in-house field trips about *Reptiles and Amphibians*, *Fossils*, and *Birds of Prey*; and their classrooms were provided with *Read Aloud Books* for all to enjoy as a result of two grants written by **KATHLEEN FERRY**. **MEGHAN BYRNE** provided her students with an *Elementary Program for Academic and Social Skills Using the iPad* to enhance their collaborative problem solving and attentive listening skills in a fun and engaging way. **JENNIFER ROBACK** and **ERIN O'DUGGAN** brought *News 2 You and the Unique Learning System* to their special needs students in Grades 1-4. This program was used to increase comprehension and understanding of current events for students with global developmental delays, language disabilities and life skills limitations. It was available for all grade levels and was also available in Spanish. Lastly, **MICHELLE SCHEUFELE** had her Grade 3 students *Snuggle up with a Good Book*, and she also *Made Smart Moves in the Classroom* by using a DVD from *Tablevision Learning* to increase focus, attention, and retention skills in every subject area.

THE ROCKLAND EDUCATION FOUNDATION APPLAUDS THESE STAFF MEMBERS WHOSE GRANTS WERE CHOSEN FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND IS LOOKING FORWARD TO PROVIDING ANOTHER YEAR OF FABULOUS EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE STUDENTS OF THE ROCKLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

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