

## **Wellesley Education Foundation Awards over \$61,000 to Wellesley Public Schools**

The Wellesley Education Foundation (WEF) is pleased to award over \$61,000 in Fall 2011 grants to benefit the Wellesley Public Schools. Grants will fund new programs and class offerings as well as expand and enhance Wellesley Public School's core curriculum. In the Sciences, grant awards will provide further enhancement of technology in classrooms as well as allow advanced high school biology students to participate in a gene sequencing experiment with the Dana Farber Cancer Institute. In Visual and Performing Arts, WEF will fund new equipment to update and enhance current class offerings. In the Social Sciences, WEF has granted funds to provide Professional Development for teachers in the English Department.

WEF's mission is to invest in educational excellence and innovation in the Wellesley Public Schools, and grant awards are the primary vehicle for fulfilling this important mission. The WEF Spring grant cycle begins in early March 2012. To learn how to participate in these educational initiatives and more about WEF please visit our website at [www.wellesleyeducationfoundation.org](http://www.wellesleyeducationfoundation.org).

### **District-wide Awards**

#### **iPads for Language Development**

For ELL students, WEF will help facilitate language development and allow students to access the curriculum while improving their self-confidence and independence. This grant funds the purchase of ten iPads and various apps for the ELL program at Fiske, Hardy and Schofield Elementary Schools. The use of the iPads will provide a multimodal learning platform tapping into students' auditory, visual and kinesthetic modalities, a method shown to aid faster, deeper learning.

#### **Professional Development for Teaching Grammar Grades 6-10**

WEF's grant will help develop instructional tools and strategies for teachers to teach grammar more effectively. The grant award will fund a workshop for Middle School and High School English teachers featuring Jeff Anderson, a renowned consultant in writing and reading. The workshop will give teachers a larger repertoire of lesson plans to strengthen their teaching effectiveness and to promote greater student appreciation.

## **Elementary School Awards**

### **First Grade Literacy with iPod Touches**

In the first grade at Hardy School WEF will aid in literacy development. Level guided reading groups will share three WEF funded iPod touches with multiple headsets. Children will listen to quality literature and record themselves reading aloud. This will also support the “home-school” connection by allowing the teacher to download oral reading fluency mini-lessons onto the class website so that parents may access them at home.

### **Digital Microscopes in 5<sup>th</sup> Grade**

At Schofield Elementary, 5<sup>th</sup> graders will use portable digital microscopes, funded by WEF, to observe microscopic organisms while in the classroom or out in a pond ecosystem. They can then capture or modify images of video directly onto laptops from the microscope. Students will be able to record many different life forms observed at the pond without having to take so many of them back to the classroom, thus minimizing disturbance of the ecosystem.

### **Morning Math Group**

WEF will fund the purchase of math manipulatives and other supplies to support the creation of a morning math group at Schofield School for selected second and third graders that need extra math support.

## **Middle School Awards**

### **iPods for Modern and Classical Languages**

Students at Wellesley Middle School will use thirty iPod Nanos funded by WEF to support authentic speaking and listening tasks in foreign language classes. Students will be able to record their responses to presentational and interpersonal speaking prompts, listen to their response, receive timely feedback from the teacher and make changes in their work immediately. Students will also be able to rewind and replay audio files chosen by the teachers, enabling them to work at their own pace.

### **Chromebooks**

WEF’s award will extend a one-to-one computer environment in a 7<sup>th</sup> grade classroom, allowing students to continue to benefit from valuable organizational and writing skills. WEF’s grant will fund the purchase of 25 new Chromebooks for David Nichols’ Social Studies class. The Chromebook is a “streamlined” laptop whose primary purpose is to give the user access to the Internet and web applications at a fraction of the cost of a

traditional laptop. The Chromebooks will replace the 7-year old laptops currently used in the classroom, originally funded by WEF's laptop initiative.

### **Counseling Ethics**

Using funds from WEF, the WMS Guidance Department will host a full-day training session on counseling ethics led by Carolyn Stone, Ed.D., and the author of "School Counseling Principles, Ethics and Law". WMS guidance counselors will review the most updated ethical/legal standards for the profession, as well as discuss sample situations that present complex ethical dilemmas.

### **Risers for new Drama Room**

WEF will provide critical funding for adequate seating and space requirements for the drama department. WEF's grant will fund the purchase of five flipFORMS risers to address problems of inadequate seating in drama classes and space constraints in after school performances.

### **Reading Reality**

WEF will fund a literature discussion program for 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. The goal of the program is to allow students to learn about difficult issues through literature and, during the group discussion, to connect what they have read about to their own lives. The students will read a book chosen from a list of titles focusing on difficult topics. They will then participate in small book group discussions consisting of about 10 students and one adult faculty member. Students will also be asked to write a personal reflection about their book in journals and evaluate their experience.

### **SoundField System for WMS**

WEF has awarded funds for a voice amplifying SoundField system, to be installed in a 6<sup>th</sup> grade classroom. This system will provide a wide array of educational benefits including aid for students with quiet voices, undiagnosed hearing disabilities, English language learners, and attention difficulties. In addition, research has shown that these systems provide widespread educational improvements for all students.

## **High School Awards**

### **Ceramic Potters Wheels**

WEF's grant will extend the hands on time for students using ceramic pottery wheels by reducing clean up time and improving safety issues. The grant funds five new pottery wheels for the Art Department, benefiting ceramics classes as well as students participating in the open ceramics workshops and the popular lunchtime program "Clay with Keough" in which students throw on a potters wheel alongside Principal Andrew Keough.

### **Forming and Raising into Jewelry**

Further expanding the Art Department's jewelry offerings, new jewelry making tools will be purchased using WEF funds to allow students to create jewelry in a 3D format and also to begin to work in the realm of sculpture and sculptural objects. The grant will facilitate a transformation to a jewelry/metals studio.

### **Digital Interactive Response System**

A Digital Interactive Response System (Senteo), funded by WEF, in CP/ACP chemistry sections will allow the teacher to better assess all students learning. Students will be required respond to questions using the hand-held Senteo rather than by speaking aloud in class. This will allow the teacher to know immediately if students understand the material. Benefits of this technology include greater student engagement and greater awareness of individual student comprehension.

### **Two Document Smart Board Cameras**

To help engage students in formative language learning activities and to provide immediate clear feedback to teachers, WEF will fund the purchase of two Document Smart Board cameras, one for use in a Spanish class and one to share in the Classical and Modern Languages Department. Document cameras will enable students to share their writing assignments with the class, thereby helping to enhance writing skills. Teachers will use to project pictures to present new vocabulary and to display homework activities.

### **Gene Exploration of *Brassica Rapa* and Other Bacteria**

In addition to other past awards for its microbiology labs, WEF has awarded additional funding that will continue to help maintain the department's excellence in its laboratory science program. New equipment will expose students to true science lab experiments involving genes and DNA. Students will perform a series of experiments to extract DNA from Brassica plants. Results of the experiments will be sent to Dana Farber to discover the difference in gene structure between plants that were planted. This equipment will be used in AP Biology classes this spring and by all biology students undertaking independent research projects. WEF funds will allow for the purchase of water baths, centrifuges, a light bank, an incubator, test tubes and funds for sequencing.