



## 2008/2009 Grant Awards

In April 2008 the Canton Alliance for Public Education (CAPE) solicited grant applications from teachers, administrators and other staff of the Canton Public Schools. Nine applications were submitted requesting a total of over \$23,224. The CAPE Grant Committee reviewed all the applications and approved six grants for funding, totaling \$16,224.

### Spring 2008 Grant Awards

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<i>Project Name:</i>	<b>Building a Teaching Bridge from Reading to Math</b>
<i>School:</i>	Hansen
<i>Applicant(s):</i>	Claire Lund, Carol Rogers, Cheryl Belvin, Maryanna Biedermann
<i>Cost:</i>	\$3,625.00

This project will bring together reading and math through math literature. The books provided through this grant will be used to explore mathematics and present opportunities for children to communicate about math. Children learn best when they connect new learning to their existing knowledge and skills. Experience with literature, as active listeners and as active participants, will enable them to gain this experience. In reading, they will benefit from instruction in key concepts such as colors and shapes, prepositions, sequence, and classification. In math, students need to have a strong sense of numeracy and the ability to effectively communicate their understanding. This project will also include a school-wide presentation connecting math and literacy from noted author Stuart Murphy for students in grades K-5 with a Family Math Night for students entering Grade One and their families in the evening. In addition, children will explore some of the first grade mathematical concepts presented in Mr. Murphy's books at the emergent and early reading levels through games and activities by means of math activity stations..

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<i>Project Name:</i>	<b>Marimba Madness</b>
<i>School:</i>	Kennedy
<i>Applicant(s):</i>	Becky Smart
<i>Cost:</i>	\$2,810.00

Marimba Madness is a project for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students. Students will perform music based on the Shona marimba bands from Zimbabwe. Through this style of music making, every student is an active participant in the marimba ensemble working as a team member towards a goal. Concepts learned through this style of music making will include: music with 3-6 independent parts, improvisation, solos and duets, form, syncopation and following a

conductor/leader. All of these concepts are part of the National Standards, as well as the Massachusetts Arts Curriculum Frameworks for Music.

This project builds on existing resources. Currently, the JFK School owns an entire set of Orff instruments, including xylophones, glockenspiels, and metallophones. These instruments were purchased through the Community and Composition project, funded by CAPE (2006). The xylophones will be used in addition to instruments purchased through the Marimba Madness project

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*Project Name:* **Microfinancing in an Integrated Curriculum: Can It Create a Critical Citizenry?**

*School:* Kennedy

*Applicant(s):* Jennifer Henderson, Barbara Carbone, Jean Gefteas, Paul Akoury, Elisa Blanchard, Meredith Carey, Jaime Cuddeback, and Nancy Mark

*Cost:* \$2,500.00

This project is based upon the book *One Hen* by Katie Smith Milway. The story is about a young boy Kojo who takes a loan for one hen, selling the eggs, earning money to attend school, developing a farm, hiring members from his community, etc. Although one focus is the concept of microfinancing, the implications of the true story are much broader. We will use the story as a basis for assisting in developing our students as global citizens, those who recognize social/economic injustices, ethnic inequalities, the affects of ecological loss, and, most importantly, the impact they can make on change. The project, which will focus on grade four only, will encompass and enhance various aspects of our existing curriculum and resources in an integrated manner including:

Math: concepts of microfinancing, taking out a loan, interest, handling money (number sense/operations), developing spread sheets, etc.

Social Studies: Study of a third world country, in this case specifically Ghana to include weather, forms of transportation and shelter, continents, foods, animals,

Science: Potential environmental impact of small loans, food sources throughout the world

ELA: Persuasive essay writing (op-ed) focusing on a “take action topic”, vocabulary development, research on children who have made a difference in the or organizations devoted to small loans – big changes in third world countries such as FINCA.

Community Building and Global Citizenship: Study of the concepts of public school availability (1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child), determining how money raised can “make a difference”, establishing a microcredit agency dedicated to a chosen community “cause”, and building working teams

The culminating project will be the establishment of a microcredit agency, dedicated to a specific community fundraising need (as determined by the students during team building times).

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*Project Name:*       **Junior Solar Sprint**  
*School:*               Galvin Middle School  
*Applicant(s):*       Greg Noble  
*Cost:*                 \$1,500.00

Each year, the Boston Area Solar Energy Association (BASEA), in conjunction with the Northeast Sustainable Energy Association (NESEA) and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), hosts the Junior Solar Sprint. Teams of middle school students work in a friendly, competitive environment to build model solar cars that aim to perform well in a variety of categories. Working at school, local and regional levels, the competition aims to bring awareness of renewable energy to classrooms around the country in a fun, practical way. This grant proposal aims to bring the benefits of this event to the students at Galvin Middle School, enhancing an evolving curriculum that has increasingly focused on environmental science and alternative energy issues.

The school competition will be open to any student teams who express interest and can abide by the guidelines and timeline set forth during the opening weeks. Students who choose to participate will gain understanding in solar power as a renewable energy resource and in related concepts such as basic engineering design processes. Along the way, they will gain experience in aspects of friendly competition and team dynamics, all of which will only help them down the road in their academic and social lives. They can carry their newfound abilities and understanding with them as they progress through high school and college in other engineering-based endeavors. Teachers involved with the project will gain experience in coordinating their knowledge and experience to better facilitate the benefits that the project will have for the students. The school community as a whole will gain a sense of pride and accomplishment at seeing representatives compete at local and possibly regional levels.

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*Project Name:*       **Cache Club**  
*School:*               Galvin Middle School  
*Applicant(s):*       Greg Noble  
*Cost:*                 \$1,500.00

Cache Club is a group composed of middle school students who love the outdoors and have an interest in the fun, practical applications of Global Positioning System (GPS) technology. Current students receive only very basic training in the fundamentals of GPS using limited resources and have little opportunity to enhance their understanding or use the technology outside the classroom. The Cache Club is meant to provide that opportunity. Integrating concepts and skills in science and technology, the program will use GPS to expose students to local geography and geology. This project will directly benefit the twelve to twenty-four students who show the most interest in learning and applying the skills of orienteering with the Global Positioning System. It will serve to bring these students closer to their natural environment through the use of technology and, as the year progresses; it will also serve to supplement their understanding of certain concepts reflected in the Earth and Space Science

Frameworks for grades 6-8. Once participants have established their GPS-related skills during the first year, they are then better suited to apply them on their own either through the geocaching community or other related avenues they choose.

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<i>Project Name:</i>	<b>Meeting the Needs of a Diverse Student Population</b>
<i>School:</i>	All
<i>Applicant(s):</i>	John D'Auria, Robin Billing
<i>Cost:</i>	\$5,788.75

Our student population is becoming more and more diverse, including an increased number of students of color, as well as students from different language and cultural backgrounds. In order to better meet the needs of *all* students, we need to develop greater understanding among our K-12 staff about the academic, social and emotional needs of these diverse learners. We plan to develop this understanding by engaging staff at all levels in focused professional development activities and ongoing open and honest dialogue.

One of the vehicles for increasing staff understanding and providing a basis for meaningful dialogue is to provide each member of our professional staff with a copy of two important books: *Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss What Matters Most* by Douglas Stone, Bruce Patton & Sheila Heen and *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria? And Other Conversations About Race* by Beverly Daniel Tatum. As a district leadership team, we have used these two books to inform our own thinking. We believe that they can be used effectively to provide all staff with a common foundation and language that can be used to have important discussions about the needs of our diverse students and how we, as educators, can best serve those needs.

The goal is to provide each member of our professional staff with a copy of both books prior to the end of the 2007-08 school year along with encouragement to read them over the summer in preparation for the following school year. Beginning in September 2008, our district-wide professional development program will include presentations, speakers, and ongoing focused discussions at both the district and school level around the following topics:

- the skills involved in conducting "difficult conversations,"
- how race impacts student achievement, and
- how to create more inclusive, welcoming, and responsive learning environments for students of color and students from different language and cultural backgrounds.

All professional K-12 staff (approximately 275) will be involved in this systemic effort which, ultimately, will impact the lives of all students in the district (3000+). The skills and understandings developed through K-12 professional development activities and ongoing dialogue at the district and building level will help us continue to improve as we strive to meet the academic, social and emotional needs of diverse learners, now and in the future.