

COVENTRY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

2007 - 2008

Mini-Grants Executive Summary

After School Academy (Grades 6-8) – Troy Hopkins; \$700

The *After School Academy* had a very successful first year. As of March 2007, 21 middle school students benefited from the program, as well as 17 high school students who received community service credit for their tutoring. The second year of this project will continue to provide an extra safety net for our most academically at-risk students. Teacher teams and guidance will recommend students for this after-school program who are in danger of failing academic classes. Students will first be signed up for 4 weeks of the academy with possible extensions, if needed. They will work with their high school role models on school assignments as well as develop better work habits and study skills. Instructor's manuals have been created which include the school calendar, homework hotline extensions, the daily agenda and other organizational resources and ideas. Grant money will be used to pay for a variety of instructional supplies and snacks for the participants.

Creative Problem-Solving with Simple Machines (Grade 7) – Jane Scopino; \$700

The *Creative Problem-Solving with Simple Machines* project is an innovative way for students to explore the relationship among force, distance and work ($W = F \times D$). Students will investigate, assemble, problem-solve, and finally design and test various forms of simple machines. Students will use language arts to gather and interpret science information and to construct a booklet detailing their investigations through diagrams and descriptions. Scientific inquiry and mathematical analysis will come into play as students explore the potentials of each simple machine to help solve real-life situations. Students will need to use evidence from their lab observations and data to support their conclusions. Grant funds will be used to purchase five Lego Simple Machine kits and batteries. Knowing how to support our beliefs and stances, as well as evaluate the substance of the beliefs and stances of others, is an invaluable skill in life.

Data Partners (Grade 3) – Katie Stiles, Erin Jackson, Ronnie Giana; \$700

Data is all around us and can be presented in many forms. The ability to assimilate and evaluate it is a lifelong skill. *Data Partners* is a simulation activity that helps students learn and apply higher level thinking, research, data collection, and data analysis skills. Students are partnered with a student from another school. They exchange data about themselves, analyze their partner's data and form hypotheses about their partner based on the data. Class data is also exchanged and analyzed. Students will become immersed in their learning and motivated to continue analyzing the world around them. The students will have an opportunity to meet their partners. Meeting for a lunch at the school as well as an educational field trip at a science museum would be the most beneficial. Grant money would be used to pay for transportation and museum admission. This project will allow students to explore the cultural, racial, and ethnic diversity of Connecticut.

Discovering Classical Music (Grade 4) – Janine Goldsnider, Michelle Santese, Kim Licata, Erin Hazzard; \$644.60

Music has a great value that enriches our lives and cultures. Research shows that when music accompanies learning material, it provides a powerful superhighway straight into the brain. The *Discovering Classical Music* project will expose students to the classical musicians and their music. The more intelligences one uses, the greater the learning. Music is especially effective in developing interpersonal and intrapersonal skills and maturity. In the long run, it is hoped that students will become lifelong learners and understand the influence of music in our culture. Students may be inspired to play musical instruments, which will foster a positive self-image and self-confidence. Grant money will be used to purchase a variety of materials from The Classical Magic Company that will be used to introduce children to classical compositions and their composers.