



CALIFORNIA  
TABLE GRAPE  
COMMISSION

392 W. Fallbrook,  
Suite 101  
Fresno, California  
93711-6150  
phone: 559.447.8350  
fax: 559.447.9184  
grapesfromcalifornia.com

# News Release

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Contact: Jeff Klitz  
jeff@grapesfromcalifornia.com

## **Students Benefit From Education Grants** Seventeen Grants Awarded to Educators in Kern County

Fresno, CA – Students in the table grape growing regions of California’s San Joaquin and Coachella valleys are benefiting from grants awarded this academic year.

In total, 50 education grants worth up to \$750 each were awarded by the California Table Grape Commission on behalf of California’s table grape growers. The funded projects will be implemented in the current academic year and will reach over 5,000 students. Seventeen of the grants were awarded to educators in Kern County.

“It is great to see so many exciting and innovative projects being implemented by teachers in the state’s table grape growing regions,” said Kathleen Nave, president of the commission. “Thousands of students will benefit this spring from these projects supported by California table grape growers through this program.”

Examples of the projects in Kern County include making shoes for clogging (stomp dancing) and exercising, creating and donating quilts, studying the ripeness of fruits in the school’s garden, using robotics kits in an after-school robotics club, and going on a field trip to visit art school campuses and an art museum.

Here are the Kern County grant recipients and their projects by school district:

### Bakersfield City School District

- **Sarah Riess, Horace Mann Elementary School**  
Third through fifth grade students will be making shoes for dancing and exercising, and then they will be clogging (stomp dancing) three times per week. Health and fitness will be the focus of the project, with funds used for materials to make the shoes.
- **Kevin Valentine, Mt. Vernon School**  
Kindergarten through third grade students will use scientific tools funded by the education grant to examine the effects of antibacterial soap on different types of mold growth.

- **Gigi Maurer and Stella Helton, Dr. Juliet Thorner Elementary School**  
Grant funds will be used to purchase equipment for sixth grade physical education classes.
- **Shana Doverspike, Harding Elementary School**  
Second grade students will be starting up and maintaining a fish aquarium, then releasing the trout into the wild. Funds will be used to purchase equipment for the aquarium.
- **Christina Eliades, Walter Stiern Middle School**  
Sixth through eighth grade students will have speech therapy through the study of California grapes with research and reading a book using iPads and a speech articulation app. Funds will be used to purchase two iPads and books.
- **Heather Randolph, Pauly (Leo G.) Elementary School**  
Third grade students in an after-school computer coding club will be learning about coding on computers, and programming careers. Funds will be used to purchase books and software for teacher resources.

Delano Joint Union High School District

- **Carol Gardner, Cesar E. Chavez High School**  
High school students will be learning about the art of quilting, and creating quilts to donate to a local children's hospital. Funds will be used to purchase fabric, thread, batting, needles and quilting tools.
- **Evelyn Cantu, Cesar E. Chavez High School**  
Tenth and eleventh grade students will study and memorize a classic poem, and write, memorize and perform their own poem in front of their peers, parents and administration. Funds will be used to purchase poetry books for studying and refreshments for when the student present their poems.

Fruitvale School District

- **Dana Villicano, Fruitvale Junior High School**  
Seventh and eighth grade students will study the ripeness of fruits grown in the school's garden using refractometers and pH testers funded by the grant.

Kern High School District

- **Luis Jáuregui, Liberty High School**  
High school students will be using advanced calculators purchased with the grant funds to graph different types of movement and explaining how they relate to real-life daily scenarios.

Lakeside Union School District

- **Arlee Hall, Donald E. Suburu School**  
Elementary school students in an after-school robotics club will be using robotics kits funded by the grant to complete various tasks using geometry, robotics, physics, engineering and other skills.

Maple School District

- **Amy Bloemhof, Maple Elementary School**

Fourth to eighth grade students will be offered an introductory course in Lego robotics followed by an advance after-school component. Funds will be used to purchase the robotics sets.

McFarland Unified School District

- **Leslie Daniels, McFarland High School**

Eleventh and twelfth grade students will go on a field trip to visit two art school campuses and an art museum near Los Angeles. Funds will be used for meals, mileage and museum entrance fees. The trip is a follow up to representatives from both campuses presenting in an art class and student interest in attending the schools.

Panama-Buena Vista Union School District

- **Michele Decker, Douglas J. Miller Elementary School**

Fifth and sixth grade students will read a novel while integrating elements of the story in a science project about electricity. Funds will be used to purchase copies of the book and electrical kits for the science project.

- **Nikki Escobar, Douglas J. Miller Elementary School**

First and second grade students will be doing a variety of science projects and afterwards having a science fair to showcase the projects. Funds will be used to purchase materials and supplies for the projects.

Norris School District

- **Rebecca Been, William B. Bimat Elementary School**

Fourth grade students will be learning about California agriculture through reading books, chatting with farmers using technology, and tasting food they have studied. Funds will purchase books for students to check out and food taste testers.

Rosedale Union School District

- **Diana Cable, Rosedale North Elementary School**

Grant funds will be used to purchase exercise and fitness equipment. Voluntary fitness activities will be set up during lunchtime for students two to three times each week.

The Innovation in Teaching Education Grant Program was created in 1993 to support innovative educational projects in the table grape growing regions of California's San Joaquin and Coachella valleys.

For more information, go to [www.grapesfromcalifornia.com/EducationGrants.php](http://www.grapesfromcalifornia.com/EducationGrants.php).