



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

Twenty-Five Grants Awarded to Educators in Fresno, Kings, Madera and Tulare Counties

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. Twenty-five of the grants were awarded to educators in Fresno, Kings, Madera and Tulare counties.

“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 Fresno, Kings, Madera and Tulare counties include using drone technology to assess and monitor a vineyard, making soap for an after-school class, building a school garden and connecting it with classroom lessons, using 3D software and printing to create innovative projects, and utilizing pre-recorded educational and entertaining audio segments as students walk outside in groups.

Here are the grant recipients from those counties and their projects by school district:

Alvina Elementary School District

- **Gigi Jones, Alvina Elementary Charter School**
First grade students will be learning about sound and how it can be used to communicate across a distance. The students will also make devices of their own for creating and communicating with sounds. Funds will be used to purchase a teacher guide, materials kit and storybooks.

Coalinga Huron Unified School District

- **Andrew Wagoner, Coalinga Middle School**
Funds will be used to repaint a large map of the United States in an outdoor lunch area on-campus. The refurbished map, originally painted in 2001 using

education grant funds from that year, will be used to teach U.S. history and geography lessons to eighth grade students.

Dinuba Unified School District

- **Steven Frederick, Grand View Elementary School**

Sixth grade students will research different growing techniques and building a greenhouse, garden boxes and hydroponics system. Funds will purchase the equipment and materials needed.

Fowler Unified School District

- **Kim Calderon, John Sutter Middle School**

Sixth through eighth grade students will create mini-lesson science videos on science topics they are learning as a class. Funds will be used to purchase iPads to use for the project. The videos will then be presented to other grade levels and the students' families as well as being uploaded to YouTube.

Fresno Unified School District

- **Sarah Graft, Heaton Elementary School**

Students in transitional kindergarten will explore and hand-raise different insects in live, miniature classroom habitats as they study the roles of plants and animals in an environmental system. Funds will purchase the insects and equipment.

- **Mike Lebsock, Edison-Computech**

Grant funds will be used to build a school garden in honor of a teacher at the school who passed away. Seventh and eighth grade students from a variety of classes will partner to build the garden using skills from lessons they are learning in their classrooms.

Golden Valley Unified School District

- **Michael R. Erickson, Liberty Madera Ranchos High School**

Eleventh and twelfth grade students will be using drone technology funded by the grant to assess and monitor a vineyard.

Kings River-Hardwick

- **Tim Price, Kings River-Hardwick**

Second grade students will be learning about GPS technology and geography skills by bringing geocaching (a game of treasure hunting) into the classroom. Funds will be used to purchase geocaching GPS devices.

- **Tim Price, Kings River-Hardwick**

Second grade students will be introduced to robotic coding at a young age. Funds will be used to purchase basic robotic packs designed to help students learn to code a robot through various activities.

Kings River Union Elementary School District

- **Randi Amador, Kings River Union Elementary School**

Fifth grade students will be utilizing pre-recorded educational and entertaining audio segments on individual players as they walk outside together in groups. Funds will purchase the walking classroom kits.

Kingsburg Elementary School District

- **Chad Bennett, Rafer Johnson Junior High School**
Eighth grade students will be learning about short wave radio and analog/digital signals. AM/FM Wave Radio kits will be purchased with the funds. They will learn how the radio works and build one.
- **Jenean Bray, Rafer Johnson Junior High School**
Grant funds will be used to purchase video cameras that teachers can check out to be used in the classroom. Specifically, the cameras will be used for teachers to capture their seventh and eighth grade students' work and showcase on the school's ePortfolio.

Kingsburg Elementary Charter School District

- **Gini Muradian, Central Valley Home School**
Students will tap into their creative side as they produce a hands-on concrete textile art. Funds will be used to purchase materials and supplies such as tread, fabric, batting, notebooks and additional materials for student to sew a project.

Kingsburg High School District

- **Steven Harness, Kingsburg High School**
High school students will be building and programming robots during an after-school program to compete in competitions. Funds will be used to purchase two robotic kits.

Lemoore Union Elementary School District

- **Deborah Weaver, Meadow Lane Elementary School**
Fourth grade students will be starting seedlings in the classroom, using the scientific method of monitoring and analyzing the growth of two different growing methods. Funds will purchase the seeds and equipment.

Madera Unified School District

- **Cecilia Young, Washington Elementary School**
Grant funds will be used to purchase supplies needed to make soap for an after-school class, open to elementary students and their parents teaching them how to make soap.

Pacific Union School District

- **Jane Hills, Pacific Union School**
Fifth graders will be building structures with Legos in groups to learn about principles of simple machines, mechanisms, and structures. Funds will purchase the Lego classroom pack with motorized parts and mechanisms.

Riverdale Joint Unified School District

- **Roland Reina, Riverdale High School**
High school students will combine creative thinking and the use of new technologies – 3D software and printing – to create innovative products such as robotic gears and parts.
- **Kayla Gregg, Fipps Primary School**
Third grade students will be starting up an aquarium and raising salmon to learn about wildlife and the environment.

- **Karen Googolian, Fipps Primary School**

Grant funds will be used to purchase a series of premade circuits which second grade students can move around and light up and learn about electronic modules.

Sanger Unified School District

- **Megan Beard, Taft High School – Independent Study Program**

High school students will learn earth and animal science during a field trip to an outdoor education program. Funds will be used for field trip costs and transportation.

- **Charlene Griesner, Fairmont Elementary School**

Fourth and fifth grade students will be learning about robotic components, building and testing mobile robots and solving an example of a real-world problem. Funds will purchase the robot design kits.

- **Anita Carrion, Fairmont Elementary School**

Grant funds will be used to purchase drum pads and sticks for elementary school students to use in drum sessions and performances.

Visalia Unified School District

- **Lori Irvine, Linwood Elementary School**

Grant funds will be used to purchase fruit trees and vines to expand the school's garden, which is used in a variety of ways to teach students about agriculture. Fifth and sixth graders are also given the opportunity to develop leadership skills by sharing their experience helping with the garden to younger students.

- **Maria Botello, Ivanhoe Elementary School**

Fifth grade students will be using science equipment funded by the grant to learn about the human body and about the similarities and differences between plants and animals.

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.

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