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News Release

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Nineteen Grants Awarded to Educators in Kern County

Fresno, CA – Thousands of students have the opportunity to participate in innovative educational projects, thanks to a long-standing program funded by the California Table Grape Commission (commission) on behalf of California table grape growers.

The “Innovation in Teaching” grant program was created in 1993 to support innovative teaching projects in the California table grape growing regions of the San Joaquin and Coachella valleys. Projects include the areas of agriculture, math, science, art, health, and technology.

In total, 51 education grants worth up to \$750 each are being awarded. The funded projects will be implemented in the current academic year and will reach over 9,000 students. Nineteen grants were awarded to educators in Kern County.

“California grape growers are proud to support this education grant program that benefits students in classrooms all over the table grape growing regions of the state,” said Kathleen Nave, commission president.

Examples of projects in Kern County include creating a school news network, using virtual reality headsets to enhance hands-on learning, and purchasing music instruments for the establishment of a music club.

A list of all the projects in Kern County is listed below.

About the California Table Grape Commission

The California Table Grape Commission was created by the California legislature in 1967 to create worldwide demand for fresh California grapes through a variety of research and promotional programs.

For more information on the “Innovation in Teaching” grant program, go to www.grapesfromcalifornia.com/community-outreach/.

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Summaries of Funded Education Grant Projects – 2018-19
Kern County

California grape growers are proud to support the following education grants awarded to schools in Kern County.

Bakersfield City School District

How Green is Your Garden

Kathryn Douglas-Tierney, Owens Intermediate School

Fifth grade students will grow vegetables to blend into smoothies and dehydrate into healthy snacks as they learn about physical wellness and good food choices. Grant funds will be used to purchase an Aerogarden, seeds for herbs and vegetables, a dehydrator, and a blender.

Make Math Fun Again!

Amanda Madkins-Choyce, Mount Vernon Elementary

First grade students will integrate math learning with all the other subjects, like science, art, and reading. Grant funds will be used to purchase Lakeshore curriculum kits to learn about season and weather, bugs and insects, force and motion, shapes and counting, patterns, measuring, and more.

Our Kinder Garden is Blooming!

Valerie Padilla, Evergreen Elementary School

Grant funds will be used to purchase raised garden beds, soil, compost, and gardening tools for these kindergarten students to learn about how food grows.

Tasting the Rainbow

Jessica Ercoli, New Teacher Support

Grant funds will purchase healthy eating books, fruits, and vegetables for kindergarten and first grade students to taste and try in lessons about health, science, math, reading, and writing.

The Munsey News Network

Sarah Reiss, Munsey Elementary School

Fourth and fifth grade students will write scripts and produce a twice per week news show for the entire school. Grant funds will be used to purchase a camcorder, microphone, editing software, and news team t-shirts.

The One-Mile Club

Laurie Kessler, William Penn Elementary School

Fifth grade students will run one mile in 12 minutes or less to pass the California State Physical Education test in April. Grant funds will be used to purchase a standing digital timer, stopwatches, tally counters, ankle weights, a wagon for transporting the equipment, and an extension cord.

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Water Necessary for Optimum Plant Growth

Shun Yee Florence Flesche, Munsey Elementary School

Grant funds will be used to purchase tools and plants for the garden planters as these fourth grade students explore science, technology, engineering, and mathematics to conduct science experiments and find out how much water to use to yield optimum plant growth.

Water to Help our Garden Grow

Rachel Lenix, Downtown Elementary School

Sixth grade students will contribute grant purchased water barrels to the school garden as they learn about the water cycle, water conservation, science, water safety, and nutrition.

Delano Union Elementary School District

Lights, Camera, Action!

Rene Mendivil, La Vina Middle School

Eighth grade theater and performance art students will explore their creativity as they write, direct, illustrate, perform, record, edit, and publish original plays. Grant funds will be used to purchase a camera, software, and memory cards.

Virtual Reality Classroom

Patricia Guzman, Nueva Vista Language Academy

Grant funds will be used to purchase virtual reality headsets for second grade students to see and be a part of the Discovery Channel, academic games, and far-away places, as every lesson becomes a real experience.

Mindfulness Through Fitness

Griselda Boydstun Gomez, Nueva Vista Language Academy

Grant-funded exercise equipment and healthy snacks will allow third through fifth grade students to value themselves and each other as they learn about health, fitness, and nutrition.

Edison School District

Edison Middle School Garden Expansion Project

Brian Holle, Edison Middle School

Grant funds will be used to purchase fencing and related supplies to secure, beautify, and define the expanding garden. Seventh and eighth grade students will help with the expansion project in addition to being able to grow fruits, vegetables, and ornamental plants in agriculture classes.

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Kern County

Kern High School District

CSI: Forensic Investigations

Kevin Crosby, AIM Center/Kern High School District

Grant-funded forensic kits like “Who Stole the Gold” and “Case of the Missing Mascot” will allow ninth through twelfth grade students to collaborate and analyze the data as they collect clues and solve mysteries via realistic crime scenes.

Matter and Energy Cycling in Aquaponics Ecosystems

Kristin Hudlow, Centennial High School

Ninth and tenth grade students will study food chains, food webs, biogeochemical cycles, and macromolecules with a grant fund purchased aquaponics system for classroom use.

Multicultural Classic Books for Diverse Students!

Andrew Chilton, Stockdale High School

Twelfth grade students will choose books to read from a diverse assortment that are multicultural in content and written by well-respected international authors. Grant funds will be used to purchase books.

Norris School District

Differentiated Learning Through Flexible Seating

Christy Nelson, William B. Bimat Elementary School

Sixth grade students will be able to choose where they want to sit throughout the day to maximize engagement; collaborate, communicate, and think critically with better posture; and increase core strength and metabolism. Grant funds will be used to purchase balance ball chairs, wobble seats, a table and chairs, futon, and more.

Panama Buena Vista Union School District

Hands on STEM Kits for Kindergarten

Joni Wattenbarger, Panama Elementary School

Kindergarten students will use science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) kits to be active learners and problem solvers. Grant funds will be used to purchase Design & Build Engineering centers, Create a Path Magnetic Center, and Fairy Tale Problem Solving STEM kits.

Rosedale Union School District

Making Musicians in Music Club

Steve Winn, Freedom Middle School

Grant funds will be used to purchase bongos, drums, maracas, and a cowbell beater for seventh and eighth grade music club students to learn about and enjoy drums and hand percussion. These instruments are needed to accommodate the members of this club.

Summaries of Funded Education Grant Projects – 2018-19
Kern County

Tehachapi Unified School District

Foil Landscape

Debbie Haeberle, Jacobsen Middle School

Grant funds will be used to purchase printing, photography, and art supplies for sixth grade students to create original pieces of art, laminated foil prints of landscapes.