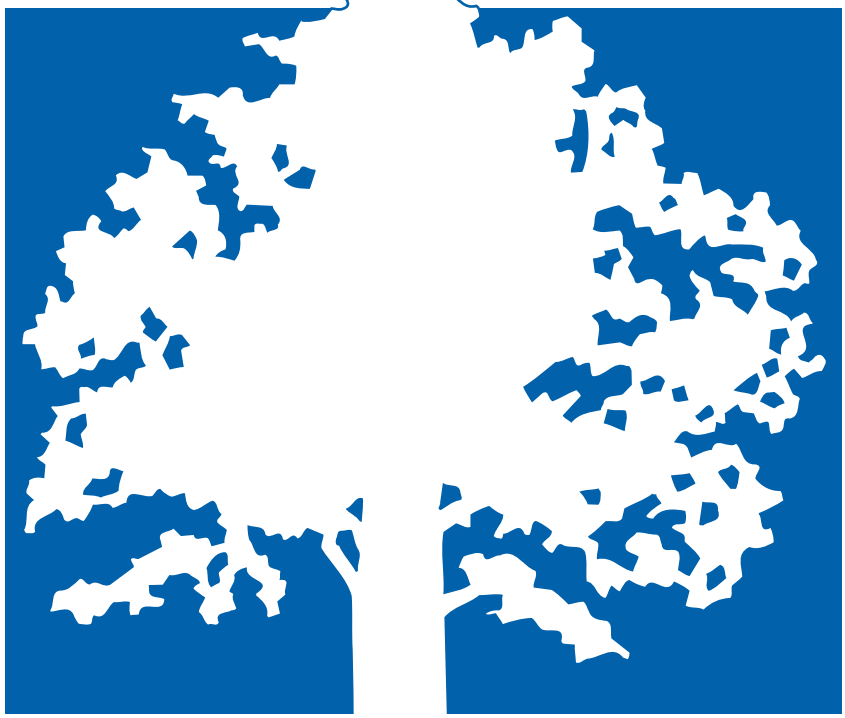
Grant Programs

Funded April 2025 – March 2026

EDUCATION MINNESOTA

FOUNDATION



for Excellence in Teaching and Learning

affiliated with

EDUCATION MINNESOTA

THE VOICE FOR PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS

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About the Education Minnesota Foundation

Since 1992, the Education Minnesota Foundation for Excellence in Teaching and Learning has awarded over **2,700** grants and scholarships totaling over **$6.8 million** to educators and nonprofit organizations that work to improve public education in Minnesota. The Foundation is primarily funded through dues from Education Minnesota members, and only those members may apply for a grant or scholarship.

Decisions about grants and scholarships are made by the Board of Trustees of the Foundation—teachers and support professionals who are Education Minnesota members, and one retired member. The Foundation's day-to-day activities are carried out by the Foundation Director, Grant Coordinator and Foundation Assistant.

www.edmnfoundation.org

Classroom-Focused Project Grants

Classroom-Focused Project Grants are intended for licensed personnel who work with students and wish to improve their practice and student achievement. Preference is given to projects that address the needs of diverse students or students at risk of failure, involve partnerships, have measurable or observable outcomes, and are replicable. These grants are awarded once per school year.

Emily Bergquist

Education Minnesota - Roseville

Empowering Leaders Cafe

$3,000.00

The purpose of this project is to build a leadership-building partnership between the 7/8 grade Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) cohort and students served in K-6 center-based special education programs at Parkview Center School. This project culminates in an ongoing school-wide coffee cart in which students will make and deliver coffee orders from Parkview staff. Students will be given real-life opportunities to practice social skills, managing money and budgets, the importance of collaborative teamwork, following instructions, and responsibility. Students in both programs will learn the value of working across age, ability, race, and cultural differences in order to reach a common goal.

Aaron Blechert

Mounds View Education Association

Engaging with Native Literature: Conversations with Local Ojibwe Author Anton Treuer

$3,000.00

The purpose of this project is to deepen a culture of literacy and reading at Irondale High School by providing an enrichment activity with a visit from author Anton Treuer, one of the foremost scholars of Native American Culture, History, and Literature. A half-day student engagement experience will foster a communal literary experience for all students to share. This project will deepen student engagement with the literature through this real-life, direct connection to the author, increasing student learning beyond a simple classroom experience.

Molly Carbonneau

Luverne Education Association

Math game on to meet the Standards

$3,000.00

The purpose of this project is to purchase high-quality math games that align with the Minnesota fourth-grade math standards and support student mastery through engaging, hands-on learning. These games will help students see that math can be both fun and educational by minimizing passive screen time and changing the focus toward active problem-solving, collaboration, and strategic thinking. This project isn't just the purchase of materials, but rather creates a structure for ongoing cooperative learning and less boring worksheets and mindless screen time. Kids will have daily opportunities to apply mathematical concepts in meaningful ways that go beyond basic memorization.

Mesay Doyamo

Education Minnesota - Willmar

Foods In The Community

$3,000.00

The purpose of this project is to establish a classroom-supported school garden consisting of six raised beds to serve as a year-round applied learning laboratory for my Foods In the Community class. The garden will be integrated directly into instruction by allowing students to plan crops, manage soil amendments, grow produce, and then apply harvested produce in class labs. Students will engage in experimental design, collect environmental and yield data, study nutrient density, and then translate the experience into cooking, and food systems research. The garden transforms instruction from theoretical lessons into hands-on learning that requires scientific reasoning, collaboration, problem-solving, and authentic performance-based assessments.

Denise Dzik

Education Minnesota - Roseville

Student Support Space

$2,998.96

The purpose of this project is to improve and enhance our student support space. Students are with us during high emotions, dysregulation, or need to debrief a problem. The environment needs to be safe and soothing, as well as help students practice strategies for self-calming and self management. With input from the paraprofessional staff that serve students alongside me in these areas, this grant will provide tools and resources for our work. I hope to purchase some key items for our space and resources to aid our efforts. While we do not have a traditional classroom setting, it is still a critical learning space. These materials will enhance student learning while they are with us and also increase their chances of learning once they are back in their classrooms.

Savannah Forrester

Saint Paul Federation of Educators

Building a Love of Literacy with Geodes "Readables"

$3,000.00

The purpose of this project is to purchase a Level 2 Geodes library for use with striving readers and students still developing their phonics skills. Unlike traditional decodables that often feel repetitive, Geodes are around 90% decodable while also offering meaningful content, cultural depth, and background knowledge. Students do not just practice decoding, they engage with high-interest topics that spark curiosity and build comprehension. This project will transform the reading experience for struggling students: instead of disengaging with simple word lists, they will access authentic texts that encourage persistence, confidence, and a love of reading. Geodes will be used in small group instruction, targeted intervention, and as accessible texts for older striving readers who need more than basic decodables.

Isaiah Fuller

Faribault Education Association

Functional Skills Greenhouse Project

$3,000.00

This project is about creating a program where students learn life skills, earth science, problem solving, teamwork, and vocational training through hands-on greenhouse work. Students will grow plants from start to finish, care for them daily, and track progress. Field trips to local farms, nurseries, and garden centers will let students see how greenhouse work happens outside of school, building connections between what they learn in class and the community. The

program will end with a student-run spring plant sale, giving students a chance to apply everything they've learned in a meaningful and practical way.

Crystal Hall

White Bear Lake Area Educators

Living American Folk Music and Dance

$2,990.00

This project will teach students about the cultural roots of Americana folk traditions, and ultimately perform with acclaimed local folk duo Too Old Cat — featuring Helen Forsythe (fiddle and accordion) and Mikey Marget (cello) in a culminating folk dance event. The final event will take place during the school day and be open to the broader school community, including parents and families, so that students can experience the power of live music and participatory folk dance in a shared public setting. In addition to the artist residency, three banjo ukuleles will be purchased to expand and deepen instruction in American folk music. These instruments will support students in exploring a wide range of American folk styles for years. The banjo, in particular, is a historically significant American instrument with African roots that stands at the crossroads of many American folk traditions.

Leah Harris

Intermediate District 917

HeartMath

$483.00

This project seeks to implement HeartMath emWave® technology and strategies to allow students to build emotional resilience through biofeedback-supported social and emotional learning (SEL). SEL strategies help students recognize and regulate their emotions, reflect on their feelings, and manage their behavior. HeartMath is a biofeedback system that uses evidence-based techniques and coherence technology to strengthen the heart–brain connection and improve emotional regulation. Its tools display heart rate variability (HRV) in real time, allowing individuals to see how thoughts and feelings influence their physiology and learn to create coherent heart rhythms. This builds self-regulation skills that reduce stress and anxiety and enhance resilience.

Susan Lee

Mounds View Education Association

Hydroponic Gardyn for Science Classroom

$2,075.19

This project will enhance students' understanding of Minnesota science standards. The hydroponic system will allow us to grow plants year-round, supporting lessons about plants, environmental responsibility, and nutrition. The Gardyn Classroom System will provide real-life, hands-on science experiences, inspiring curiosity and further inquiry. These experiences not only align with several Minnesota science standards, but also connect to units covered in our school's new reading curriculum, CKLA, as well as several lessons taught to our Multilingual Learners by our ML teachers.

Jennifer Luka

White Bear Lake Area Educators

Adaptive Learning Ecosystem Project

$2,922.00

The purpose of the P.A.W.S. Adaptive Learning Ecosystem Project is to implement a centers-based "work-break-work" instructional model that integrates flexible seating options with structured sensory regulation activities. This project serves students with severe cognitive and sensory disabilities at Mariner Middle School. This project enhances learning by transforming the physical classroom into a responsive environment that meets students where they are. By pairing

flexible seating options—which allow students to learn in positions that support their physical comfort—with active sensory regulation tools for scheduled breaks, we create a cycle of regulation. This "work-break-work" structure ensures students can self-regulate during instruction (using adaptive seating) and decompress during breaks (using sensory tools), thereby maximizing their readiness to learn and achieve academic goals.

Jean Mather

Marshall Education Association

Becoming Junior Historians: A Project-Based Exploration of Minnesota's History and Government

$3,000.00

This project will transform students into active historical and civic investigators through standards aligned, immersive experiences at the Minnesota History Museum and the State Capitol. Students will research Dakota and Ojibwe cultural stories, document artifacts and exhibits through photography and reflective notes, and explore the Capitol's art, architecture, and legislative chambers to connect primary sources with classroom inquiry. Back in class, students will synthesize their findings into capstone projects — such as digital photo essays and oral or multimedia presentations — and compile a collaborative digital book to accompany their final presentations. These activities will deepen students' understanding of Indigenous histories and democratic institutions while building research, documentation, and public speaking skills, thereby, fostering culturally responsive learning that endures beyond a single lesson.

Dani Morris

Blue Earth Area Education Association

Take a Seat, Take the Lead!

$1,964.00

This project will transform our classroom into a flexible learning environment where students can choose seating that supports their comfort, learning style, and self-regulation. Fourth grade students in our classrooms spend much of the day seated at traditional desks. Research and experience show that providing choice and movement in seating can reduce restlessness, increase student engagement, and improve focus — especially for students who struggle with attention, sensory needs, or executive functioning.

Justine Reinhardt

St. Charles Education Association

CPR/First Aid Classroom Equipment and Supplies

$437.63

The goal of my project is to create a hands-on, engaging learning environment for my students to learn CPR and First Aid. These resources will allow students to practice and develop the skills necessary to respond effectively to both life-threatening and non-life-threatening situations, including broken bones, deep lacerations, wounds, sprains, and strains. Because this course requires skill-based learning, access to appropriate training materials is critical. Students cannot be expected to fully grasp the content or apply it confidently in real-life scenarios without the proper tools. This project will ensure students receive the highest-quality instruction and are well-prepared to act in emergencies out in the real world.

Alexandria Slocum

Rochester Education Association

Empowering Students Through Solar Energy Exploration

$3,000.00

This project seeks funding to expand our school's hands-on solar energy training. Limited resources reduce opportunities for direct, hands-on learning and we wish to create a more equitable, engaging, and age-appropriate learning experience,

ensuring all learners can actively participate in building and using solar panels while learning about renewable energy and its role in a sustainable future. It also enables smaller group work, providing more equitable access to high-quality STEM resources. The hands-on nature of the project helps reach different learning styles — kinesthetic, visual, and experiential — creating a more inclusive and supportive learning environment. Solar energy is one of the fastest-growing sectors in our global economy, and understanding its principles connects classroom learning directly to real-world challenges, moving beyond theoretical lessons to practical application. By helping students understand renewable energy, we are equipping them with the knowledge and motivation to lead in tomorrow's green economy. These experiences nurture future innovators, engineers, and environmental stewards who will contribute Minnesota's sustainable future.

Jodi Swenson

Faribault Education Association

Encouraging Collaboration & Communication

$3,000.00

This project will provide activities that support collaboration and language development into my English Language Learning. With the new technology of the interactive whiteboard, students will be able to physically engage with lessons — coming up to the board, manipulating content, participating in shared problem-solving, and practice speaking in a low-pressure, supported environment. This new technology will transform lessons from being teacher-centered to student-driven, giving my students far more opportunities to participate, communicate, and take ownership of their learning.

Katherine Wangberg

Bemidji Education Association

American Sign Language Field Trip

$3,000.00

I would like my ASL students to participate in a panel with Deaf students and have a tour of the campus at the Minnesota State Academy for the Deaf in Faribault, Minnesota. While there, they will learn about the history of Deaf culture and Deaf education. The students will be able to interact with other Deaf students their age and be able to put their ASL skills into use. They will also experience Deaf culture firsthand since this academy is 100% in ASL. This experience will also help my students to be able to have a better understanding of how to interact with a Deaf person.

Rachel Weaver

Education Minnesota - Roseville

A Unique Learning System for Unique Students

$1,146.62

This project is to help support our Setting III Autism program (CID-Communication Interaction Disorders) by creating a cohesive program for our Setting III teachers and students. This will enable our students in the CID program to be successful with access and inclusion into the mainstream training. Our project, A Unique Learning System for Unique Students, will allow these students to access evidence-based practices that help to increase their independence, academic skills, and greater self-sufficiency at their differentiated level.

Katie Zuehlke

Annandale Education Association

Cardinal Hour

$3,000.00

The purpose of our project, "Cardinal Hour," is to improve students' nonfiction reading, writing, and vocabulary skills. Students will select topics they are passionate about and read, write, and create to demonstrate their new nonfiction learning. "Cardinal Hour" will enhance student learning in three main ways. First, since "Cardinal Hour" is student-driven, learning will become more engaging. Students will select research topics based on personal passions. Second, students will use more creativity to share their nonfiction learning. Whether it's a poem, a labeled clay model, or a drawn digital slideshow, students will be inspired to showcase their new learning in creative ways. Third, student learning will be enhanced because "Cardinal Hour" will be ongoing throughout the entire year. Once students research, create, and share one topic, new nonfiction research will then be started. This continuous cycle will allow students to learn from one "Cardinal Hour" and make their next experience even better.

Second-Year Classroom-Focused Project Grants

Classroom-Focused Project Grant recipients may apply for a second year of funding to extend their project.

Jennifer Kiminski

North St. Paul Maplewood – Oakdale Education Association

Mid Technology Lending Library

$3,000.00

Katie Zuehlke

Annandale Education Association

Rhythm, Rhyme, Music all the Time

$3,000.00

Professional Development Grants

Professional Development Grants are intended to provide education support professionals (ESPs), higher education faculty of colleges and universities, and teachers with opportunities to take the lead in acquiring and sharing new skills and knowledge. These skills might include new instructional tactics, use of technology, or working with parents. These grants are awarded twice per school year — once in the fall, and again in the spring.

Classroom Teachers

Kathryn Amdahl
United Teachers of South Washington County (UTSWC)
Advancing Thinking Through Writing
$1,050.00

Lisa Anderson
Education Minnesota Monticello ISD 882
Elevate Your Classroom Conference
$1,300.00

Kathryn Bartholomew
United Teachers of South Washington County
Group member(s): Mallory Martin
Instructional Coaching Professional Development
$4,000.00

Maureen Bechard
Dakota County United Educators
Group member(s): Karen Huberty
Navigate and Innovate ASCA 2025
$3,950.00

Cristina Benz
Minneapolis Federation of Teachers
Group member(s): Lashawn Adams, Macy Ashby, Abbie Finger and Nancy Hellander
MPS Transformational Coach Project
$10,000.00

Ashley Braun
Glencoe-Silver Lake
Experiencia Colombia
$2,000.00

Laura Bray
Intermediate District 917
ASL (American Sign Language) Connect Course
$2,355.00

Kate Buhr
United Teachers of South Washington County
The Art of Coaching Teams
$2,000.00

Claudia Burgos Zuniga
St. Cloud
Group member(s): Tarsila Lemos Borges
Dual Language Summer PD
$1,400.00

Jennifer Corcoran
Bloomington Federation of Teachers
SEED Certification
$2,000.00

Kesia Dominguez
Education Minnesota - Worthington
2026 American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting
$3,000.00

Anna Eull
Education Minnesota - St. Michael-Albertville
Enhancing Special Education Through Effective Classroom Management and Behavior Support Strategies
$1,288.00

Joseph Eveslage

Rochester Education Association

2026 SHAPE America National Convention & Expo

$2,680.00

Krystyna Freeman

East Grand Forks Education Association

Cognitive Coaching Foundations Seminar

$2,000.00

Ann Gliddon

Anoka-Hennepin Education Minnesota

Group member(s): Kelly Beulke, Laura Marx, Jennifer Rollings and Katie Yankovec

NSTA Conference

$2,125.00

Jodi Hansen

Education Minnesota - Worthington

Cognitive Coaching Foundation Seminar

$2,000.00

Justine Hill

State Residential Schools Education Association

Cognitive Coaching Seminar

$1,513.01

Kelly Johnson

Education Minnesota - New London-Spicer

Group member(s): Tracy Detloff and Lindsay Vernier

Innovative School Summit

$6,000.00

Amy Kirchner

Burnsville Education Association

The Catalyst Approach

$275.20

Rebecca Koech

Mounds View Education Association

Cognitive Coaching Foundation Seminar

$2,000.00

Kelly Koehn

Wayzata Education Association

ACTE's Career and Tech Vision

$4,000.00

Mary Kurvers

Rush City Education Association

Group member(s): Adam Engel, Ashley Fitcher, Tami Knudson, Cynthia Lakeberg and Charlotte Thill

Professional Learning Communities

$7,914.00

Tracy Lermon

Houston Education Association

MASE Best Practices Spring Conference

$1,399.92

April Lipkie

Robbinsdale Federation of Teachers

Autism Navigator for Early Intervention

$1,075.00

Chivouayi Lo

Saint Paul Federation of Educators

Group member(s): SeePha Vang

Student Learning Center Immersion Experiences

$4,000.00

Emily Mattson

Education Minnesota Roseville

Group member(s): Marisa Knoss

WIDA National Conference

$4,000.00

Cindy Miller

Duluth Federation of Teachers

Computer Science Teacher Association Conference

$2,000.00

Calli Moreau

White Bear Lake Area Educators

Group member(s): Jill Bristow and Karen Schmitz

American School Counselor Association Annual Conference

$6,807.00

Ann Myers
White Bear Lake Area Educators
Teachers' Teachers New Approaches to Ceramic Education
$2,000.00

Katie Ness
Burnsville Education Association
Group member(s): Aimee Hagen, Nikki Harves and Kim Zondag-Hamer
Literacy Conference Attendance
$7,867.68

Robert Noel
Minneapolis Federation of Teachers and ESPs
2025 ELATE Summer Conference NCTE
$2,000.00

Chandra Pagel
Kasson-Mantorville Education Minnesota
Group member(s): Heather Hindal
Council for Exceptional Children Convention and Expo 2026
$3,742.00

Rebecca Paluch
Southwest-West Central Service Cooperative
ASHA Convention: Orofacial myofunctional disorders
$2,000.00

Allison Persick
Kasson-Mantorville
Group member(s): Alyssa Swanson
Council for Exceptional Children Convention and Expo 2026
$4,690.90

Abby Poplawski
Education Richfield
Comprehensive Orton-Gillingham Plus Training
$1,500.00

Amanda Rosemeyer
Columbia Heights Federation of Teachers
Group member(s): Shannon Campbell and Allie Schoon
Early Learners Fundamentals of Structured TEACCHing
$1,620.00

Devin Ruddy
Mounds View Education Association
Spanish Lessons for Family and Student Interactions
$2,626.00

Ashley Ruzicka
Wayzata Education Association
Cognitive Coaching Seminar for BRAVE Staff
$2,000.00

Gino Villeza
Red Lake Public School - ISD 38
NCTE 2025
$2,000.00

Erica White
Dakota County United Educators
Group member(s): Kim Sikkink
National Association of School Nurses Annual Conference
$2,580.00

De Zhang
St. Paul Federation of Educators
NABE and AERA conferences in 2026
$3,000.00

Emily Zimmer
Saint Paul Federation of Educators
Group member(s): Erin Steffes
Learning to Support Apraxia of Speech in Early Intervention
$4,000.00

Katherine Zobro

Mounds View Education Association

The Orton-Gillingham Approach Training - The Reading Center - Dyslexia Institute of Minnesota

$2,595.00

Katie Zuehlke

Annandale Education Association

Kagan Summer Academy

$2,901.80

Education Support Professionals

Michelle Dennard

Education Minnesota - Osseo

Group member(s): Zakkiyya Abdulwahid, Tracy Dorn, Sohnma Greenfield and Gail Huggins

ESP National Conference 2026 - Resilience. Respect. Power.

$15,000.00

David Jensen

Dakota County Federation of Interpreters

Group member(s): Megan Dietrich, Katherine Filas, Jodi Monson, Dawn Savage and Gregory Waletski

RID National Conference 2025

$4,200.00

Ellen Olsen

St. Paul Federation of Educators

Group member(s): Cayenne Dupay, Carly Fischbeck, Lindsay Jenson, Sue Snyder and Ellen Sutton

National RID Conference 2025

$5,724.00

Higher Education Faculty

Kristen Cooper
MSCF - Normandale Community College
Counseling Clinical Supervision
$3,000.00

David Edmund
UEA - Duluth
Creative Musical Improvisation: A Resource for Elementary Music Teachers
$2,945.00

Anna Gryczman
MSCF - Century College
Nursing Leadership Conference
$2,604.00

Renu Kumar
MSCF - Minneapolis College
ASM Conference for Undergraduate Educators (ASMCUE)
$3,000.00

Alejandro Maya
MSCF - Minneapolis College
2026 Latin American Studies Association's International Congress "Republic & Revolution"
$3,000.00

Denise Reeser
MSCF - South Central College
2026 National Farm and Ranch Management Conference
$2,275.00

Sarah Sponholz
MSCF - Minnesota North Vermilion
2025 Fall AMATYC National Conference
$3,000.00

Erica Stene Winkler
MSCF - Minnesota State Community and Technical College
Enhancing College Counseling through Professional Supervision
$3,000.00

Jolene Sundlie
MSCF - Saint Paul College
XL Postgraduate Course on Victimology, Victim Assistance and Criminal Justice
$3,000.00

Nick Timmerman
MSCF - Fond du lac Tribal and Community College
Crossroads: Environmental Histories on Contested Ground
$1,500.00

Bradley Wolfe
MSCF - Ridgewater College
Studying Cultural Diversity through Coursework
$2,500.00

IMPACT Grants

The Education Minnesota Foundation seeks to encourage and support broad-based efforts to inject meaningful, long-lasting change in the policies and practices that shape teaching and learning. Using innovative program designs and projects, and in partnership with agents most likely to assist in driving these changes, the Foundation ultimately expects to positively impact the learning experiences of students in Minnesota. These grants are awarded once per school year.

Jodi Cherwenka

United Teachers of South Washington County

See You Laser: Empowering Student Entrepreneurship through Laser Technology

$15,000.00

This project aims to establish a student-run business focused on engraving and printing services using a Trotec laser. The project will be embedded within the Work-Based Learning (WBL) classes at Woodbury High School, providing students with hands-on experience in business operations, technical skills, and entrepreneurship. Through this initiative, we aim to equip students with valuable workforce skills, promote creativity and innovation, and foster leadership qualities while serving the local community. This project collaborates with SoWashCo Cares, a nonprofit organization that supports needy students by providing funding and community resources. SoWashCo Cares buys snacks, backpacks, supplies, and sports equipment, and funds classroom grants. We plan to donate proceeds to SoWashCo Cares, while only keeping enough funds to buy supplies/equipment to keep the student enterprise running. This project aims to bridge the gap between education and real-world business applications for students in our district, preparing them for successful careers while fostering a sense of community engagement.

Brianna Havir

West St. Paul Federation of Teachers

The Scientist in Me: Middle Schoolers Leading STEM's Future

$15,000.00

Our project aims to address systemic educational barriers by fostering equitable opportunities for all students, particularly in underrepresented communities, by promoting culturally responsive practices, encouraging diverse representation in STEM fields, and empowering educators with resources and training. Our goal is to provide professional development for staff that will support inclusive curriculum development and increase access to STEM opportunities for students of all backgrounds. This project will also support larger goals of social justice and equity in our school by bringing E-STEM to all students by increasing cultural awareness, embracing project-based learning, making connections to life outside the classroom, and exposing students to professionals in STEM careers who are representative of many different backgrounds and cultures.

National Board Certified Teachers Scholarships

The process to become a National Board-Certified Teacher is demanding and complex. For members willing to commit to the process, the Education Minnesota Foundation offers scholarships to help offset the costs. Thanks to a generous donation from Tradition Mortgage, the Education Minnesota Foundation is able to award scholarships to applicants each year. These scholarships are awarded once per school year.

Richard Bettini

Dakota County United Educators

English Language Arts - Adolescence and Young Adulthood

$1,000.00

Joe DeLisi

Chisago Lakes Education Minnesota

Music - Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood

$1,000.00

Jodi Hansen

Education Minnesota - Worthington

Science - Adolescence and Young Adulthood

$500.00

Shaun Pakenham

Education Minnesota - Edina

Generalist - Early Childhood

$1,000.00

Suzanne Scheuerlein

St. Paul Federation of Educators

Mathematics - Early Adolescence

$500.00

Total projects and scholarships awarded:

131

Amount funded:

$274,020.91

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The benefit of union membership.

EDUCATION MINNESOTA FOUNDATION

for Excellence in Teaching and Learning

EDUCATION MINNESOTA

THE VOICE FOR PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS

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3/2026

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