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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Making Bold Ideas Happen: Hopkins Education Foundation (HEF) Awards \$52,632 for Experiential Learning, Labs, and Creative Partnerships

As evidenced by HEF's November 2019 grant awards, Hopkins Public Schools educators at every level, in every building, have embraced the district's forward-focused mission and are redefining learning opportunities for their students. These 17 grants totaling \$53,632 will positively impact students, including those receiving special services, to become confident, well-traveled, critical thinkers. Labs and innovative, collaborative pilot projects are bringing bold ideas to life with the specific goal of disrupting predictable outcomes to create exciting new ones.

Experiential Learning is an important component to today's learners. Grants awarded to North Junior High, Glen Lake Elementary and The Pavilion (off-campus program) are pilots to bring students into their community to learn the academic connections between school and the real world, as well as to make meaningful personal connections. These deliberate experiences have specific ties to the curriculum and to necessary 21st Century life skills.

Hands-on activities purposely designed to excite and enhance student learning will be funded at Eisenhower/XinXing Academy (Flamenco dancing and Modern Band) and Gatewood Elementary (Modern Band), North Junior High (Mandala Painting), Tanglen Elementary's Media Center, Hopkins High School Choir (Breezin' Thru Theory), and Meadowbrook Elementary PreSchool (Log Cabin). These experiences offer guided exploration into a multitude of exciting avenues, such as nature, modern music, and art therapy.

Not content to continue down a path of predictable outcomes, Hopkins High School will employ La Oportunidad to challenge the status quo for Latino/a students; and EmpowerU to address debilitating anxiety. HEF is funding library materials for The Closet, as named and created by West Junior High students from the Gay Straight Alliance; a project to embrace all students' differences and eliminate stigma.

Meadowbrook Elementary is rethinking homework by piloting HEF-funded Lab Packs in the 3rd grade: by replacing traditional homework with fun, exciting kits, students will have access to curiosity-inducing learning experiences. To increase rigor and engagement, HEF's funding will send a handful of Glen Lake Elementary staff to proven training at the Ron Clarke Academy, which they will then share among colleagues. Early intervention for our youngest learners is key to allowing each child to reach their potential. HEF funds will purchase the SPOT Vision Screener for all preschool and elementary school vision testing to accurately and reliably identify a host of vision deficiencies that hinder learning.

Creative collaboration and partnerships among staff are evident throughout this grant cycle, all for the benefit of student learning. Two specific examples are Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) and Special Education

(ECSE) partnering to build a new curriculum around speech pathology for both parents and staff. And a Master Gardener will assist students with unique needs from West Junior High and Transition Plus to build year-round gardens in both locations. Students will practice food prep using another HEF grant from 2018, Kitchen a la Cart.

Learn more about each of these grants – by school or by topic - here:

<http://hopkinseducationfoundation.org/grants/>

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About the Hopkins Education Foundation

Hopkins Education Foundation (HEF) has awarded more than \$2.9 Million, through 467+ grants, to enhance education in the Hopkins Public Schools. The non-profit Foundation, independent from Hopkins Public Schools, is dedicated to providing resources to engage, innovate and energize students, staff and curriculum. It is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors.

The Foundation is supported entirely through community contributions, including:

- parents and other community members
- corporate contributions
- fundraising events and projects
- gifts of stock, cash and securities
- a beneficiary of wills and estates

Each year, grant applications from teachers, staff - and even student clubs - are rigorously reviewed by HEF's Board. Funds are allocated to individual schools, to pilot projects, and to broad initiatives incorporated across all schools.

About Hopkins Public Schools

Hopkins Public Schools is an award-winning school district with a K-12 population of about 6,800 students, serving the city of Hopkins, most of Minnetonka, about half of Golden Valley, and portions of Eden Prairie, Edina, Plymouth, and St. Louis Park. It has six elementary schools, one magnet Chinese immersion school (XinXing Academy), two junior highs and one high school.