



**nrfund**  
New Rochelle Fund for  
Educational Excellence



**For Immediate Release**

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## **The New Rochelle Fund for Educational Excellence Approves 13 Grants to Support Innovative Initiatives Districtwide**

**New Rochelle, New York (March 29, 2019)** – New schoolyard garden beds, a popular musical presentation that teaches kindness, and school hallways that delight children with educational sensory activities are among 13 innovative projects coming to the City School District of New Rochelle thanks to \$17,000 in grants from the New Rochelle Fund for Educational Excellence.

The NR Fund announced the awards today in its second year of the grant-making program. In choosing the enrichment programs, the NR Fund evaluated applications from teachers, administrators and parents, seeking projects that promote active student learning.

“Given the number of strong proposals we received, it was difficult making funding decisions,” said Lauren Pekats, Fund board member. “But we are thrilled to support the initiatives that were selected.” The New Rochelle Fund for Educational Excellence supports the New Rochelle School system and its extraordinary, diverse student body by advancing equity and excellence with the goal of inspiring all public school students.

“These are wonderful programs that show the creativity and devotion our teachers and administrators bring to school every day and the strong partnership we have built with District families,” said Interim Superintendent Dr. Magda Parvey. “We are incredibly grateful to the New Rochelle Fund for Educational Excellence for making the projects

possible with these grants. Students from one end of the District to the other will benefit from the Fund's generosity and vision."

Among the programs are "Addy & Uno," a family-friendly musical that teaches kindness, respect and acceptance of students with various disabilities through puppets and song. Students in grades 4 through 8 at Columbus, Trinity and Jefferson Elementary schools, along with students at Isaac E. Young Middle School, will enjoy this heartfelt and hilarious journey celebrating hope, dreams and the beauty of differences.

Other grants include: funding for Trinity Elementary School to collaborate with the Hudson Park Children's Greenhouse in building garden beds on campus; a point of sale (POS) cash register system in the General Organization (G.O.) Store for Student Government and Digital Literacy students at New Rochelle High School; kinesthetic and sensory hallways for students at both Barnard and Davis Elementary Schools; and a program titled "Literature Igniting STEAM" at Jefferson Elementary School.

The complete list of New Rochelle Fund for Educational Excellence 2019 Grants:

- 1 \$2,000 to Laurette Shrage, Jamie Ruhl, Danielle Brudner, and Dara Joseph for students in grades 4 through 8 at Columbus, Jefferson, and Trinity Elementary Schools and Isaac E. Young Middle School to bring Addy & Uno, a fun musical about kindness, respect and acceptance towards students with various disabilities to these schools.
- 2 \$1,425 to Trinity Elementary School Principal Michael Hilderbrand to work with the Hudson Park Children's Greenhouse in building two raised garden beds on school grounds.
- 3 \$1,500 to Daniela Rizzetta, PTA Co-President at Davis Elementary School, for materials and an artist to help students design and paint hallway murals in the school.
- 4 \$400 to Aline Walters, Nicole Venditto-Vazquez, Diana Planells-Bloom, Aida Salcedo-Kelly at Barnard School for the purchase of materials and installation of kinesthetic activities for hallways.
- 5 \$1,175 to Barnard Early Childhood Center Principal Nicolas Cracco for the purchase of Ladibug Document Camera projectors for five classrooms to work with existing SMARTboards.
- 6 \$950 to Aimee Ferguson at Jefferson Elementary School for the "Literature Igniting STEAM" project for both during the day and after school.
- 7 \$200 to Amy Anders and Nicole Itri at Ward Elementary School for the purchase and installation of sensory activities for a hallway within the school.
- 8 \$1,350 to Brittnee Sabatino and Marsha Diggs at Davis Elementary School for a professional development package from Little Flower Yoga for strategic mindfulness training to use within the classroom.
- 9 \$2,000 to Carol Donnelly at New Rochelle High School for a point of sale (POS) cash register system for the Student G.O. Store to be used by Digital Literacy students and Student Government members.

- 10 \$2,000 to Thalia Smith-Segal for the New Rochelle High School Science Research Program for (10) new wooden display boards and medical texts and dictionaries.
- 11 \$2,000 to Ryan Paulsen at New Rochelle High School to further the Robotics Club.
- 12 \$1,000 to NRHS Interim Assistant Principal Camille Edwards-Thomas and Colleen Gardephe of My Brother's Keeper New Rochelle for MBK's Third Annual "Take a Student Ambassador to Work Day," a one-week internship pilot program and Career Day.
- 13 \$1,000 to Candice Pinn for the Westchester Alliance of Black School Educators (WABSE) for a Black History Month Celebration at NRHS.

For 21 years, the New Rochelle Fund for Educational Excellence has partnered with the City School District of New Rochelle and engages the broader New Rochelle community to develop, fund, and implement high-quality educational and enrichment programming that enhances the school experience and helps students thrive and succeed along their educational journey. Please visit [www.nredfund.org](http://www.nredfund.org) for more information.