2026–2027 Impact $500 Single Grants

Carrie Busey Elementary – Maggie Beckett

Reading Success for All: Supporting Readers with Decodable Books

This project will provide first-grade students with decodable books to practice foundational reading skills, build confidence, and support diverse reading needs, including students who struggle with letter sounds and early literacy.

Jefferson Middle School – Malik Berry

Technology Suit Project

This project will engage students in researching, designing, and building a technology suit through hands-on collaboration, student voting, and family input while introducing real-world technology and engineering concepts.

Booker T. Washington STEM Academy – Cheryl Black

STEM Bins – Comprehensive Kit

This project will provide first-grade students with hands-on STEM materials to build, experiment, and solve problems while developing creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, and persistence.

Edison Middle School – Karen Easton

The Biggest Voice in the Room

This project will add a microphone and speaker to the school library to help students better hear instructions and lessons, improve focus, and support learners with hearing impairments, ADHD, and auditory processing difficulties.

Urbana Middle School – Kyoung Eo

Explore Korean Culture

This project will immerse students in Korean culture through traditional games, introductory Korean language, art, and food, fostering cultural understanding, teamwork, creativity, and appreciation for diverse traditions.

Bottenfield Elementary – Melissa Farley

Foam Clay for Bottenfield

This project will give K–5 students opportunities to create foam-clay sculptures connected to their grade-level learning, encouraging artistic expression, hands-on exploration, and interdisciplinary connections.

Barkstall Elementary – Amie Gable

Math Fluency Games and Manipulatives

This project will provide engaging, hands-on math games and manipulatives that help second-grade students strengthen math fact fluency, build confidence, and practice skills at their individual learning levels.

Dr. Howard Elementary School – Sarah Iehl

Making Early American Civilizations Come to Life

This project will bring Maya, Aztec, and Inca civilizations to life through supplemental reading materials, creative art projects, and collaborative models of ancient farming methods that deepen students' historical understanding and engagement.

Stratton Academy of the Arts – Anna Kebler

Iconic Characters, Emerging Readers

This project will expand the school library's collection of engaging, leveled books featuring familiar characters to help students of varied reading abilities, including multilingual learners and students in special education, build literacy skills and confidence.

Franklin STEAM Academy – Zanne Newman

Bringing Frankenstein to Life

This project will invite eighth-grade students to build their own Frankenstein

models as they analyze Mary Shelley's novel, connect literacy with science and art, and explore thought-provoking questions about life, consciousness, and artificial intelligence.

Novak Academy – Ryan O'Connor

Presenting through Podcasting

This project will teach students to research, script, and produce podcasts that combine literary analysis with real-world issues and potential solutions while strengthening communication, critical thinking, and presentation skills.

Booker T. Washington STEM Academy – Emily Pawlicki

Print It!

This project will expand elementary students' access to printmaking through block printing, fish printing, and cyanotype activities that encourage artistic experimentation while connecting visual arts with science and the elements of art.

Urbana High School – Amanda Perez Rosser

Accessible Independence & Resources (AIR Project)

This project will use air fryers to help students in adaptive foods classes develop practical cooking and independent-living skills, with peer leaders designing and teaching recipes tailored to classmates' needs and abilities.

Champaign Early Childhood Center – Sydni Rogers

Duck, Duck, GOOSE

This project will use a creatively dressed porch goose to spark conversation, build vocabulary and early literacy skills, and engage multilingual preschool students of all abilities in playful, inclusive learning across language, science, art, and other subjects.

Kenwood Elementary – Melissa Shungu

Building Community Through Inclusive Playgroups

This project will bring kindergarten students together with peers in self-contained special education classrooms through supported play, music,

movement, and sensory activities that foster inclusion, communication, friendship, and belonging.

Franklin STEAM Academy – Madlyn Stevens

The Art of Not Googling Everything

This project will provide students with diverse art books, artist references, graphic novels, and drawing guides to inspire original ideas, encourage exploration beyond digital searches, and strengthen artistic creativity and confidence.

Dr. King Elementary – Lisa Stiverson

Expanding Reading

This project will expand a successful literacy intervention by adding the next two levels of Links to Literacy materials, helping students strengthen foundational reading skills and continue building confidence through structured, targeted practice.

Central High School – Emily Walsh

Building Thinking Classrooms

This project will provide large magnetic coordinate grids that enable students to collaborate at vertical whiteboards, create and analyze graphs, explain mathematical reasoning, and engage in interactive problem-solving across math and science.

Dr. Williams Elementary – Jenny Weiss

Knock-Out Net

This project will use an engaging, active throwing game to help elementary students develop hand-eye coordination, agility, fitness, teamwork, and strategic thinking while reinforcing math skills through scorekeeping.

Carrie Busey Elementary – Elizabeth Well

Center Rotation

This project will provide hands-on file-folder games and learning activities for special education students in kindergarten through second grade, supporting

differentiated instruction and helping students practice and master skills independently during classroom rotations.