2024 - 2025

PEF

PIQUA
EDUCATION
FOUNDATION

EDUCATION GRANTS

FINAL REPORT

PIQUA EDUCATION FOUNDATION

2024 - 2025 EDUCATION GRANTS COMMITTEE

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Education Grants Final Report
2024 - 2025

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SCHMIDLAPP GRANTS

FOR NEW TEACHERS AND STAFF

In December of 2023, PEF was awarded $50,000 in new funding by the Jacob G. Schmidlapp Trust to create Schmidlapp Grants for New Teachers and Staff. The $50,000 is intended to be distributed over the course of five years.

Each new Piqua City Schools teacher automatically receives $200 in Schmidlapp grant funds in the form of a $100 credit for United Art & Education, and a $100 credit for Teachers Pay Teachers. The credits are intended for purchase of non-curriculum classroom materials unless otherwise approved by the school district. These have been well-received and are being utilized.

As of June 30th, 2025, we have issued $7,800.00 in credits, $7,936.12 in grant funds, and have served 39 new teachers and more than 586 students with this limited-time PEF Education Grant category. We will continue this project through the 2026-2027 academic year, at which point we will evaluate the overall success of the five-year program.

SCHMIDLAPP GRANTS
FOR NEW TEACHERS AND STAFF

PIQUA EDUCATION FOUNDATION

HANDS-ON LEARNING

M. Moeller, M. Buschur, A. Peepels, P. Stephens

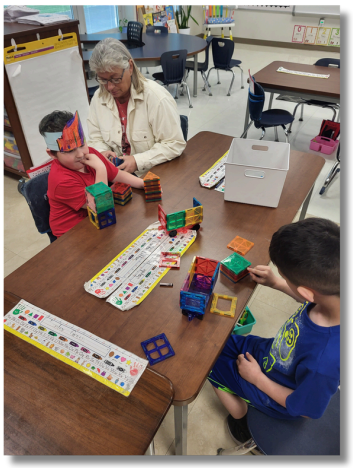
Springcreek Primary

Project Description Excerpt

Starting at the beginning of the 2024-2025 school year, we have adopted a new curriculum that has several opportunities to involve hands-on learning and improve fine motor skills. Our goal as a team is to bring excitement into our positive learning environments and enhance learning.

The new curriculum has several topics that include Nursery Rhymes and Fables, 5 Senses, Stories, Plants, Farms, Native Americans, Kings and Queens, Seasons & Weather, Columbus and the Pilgrims, Colonial Towns and People, Taking Care of the Earth, and Presidents and American Symbols. These topics cover all of our common core standards for the entire length of the school year. The list of supplies we have compiled will allow students to partake in growing plants like a farmer, exploring how to be a baker, miner, or blacksmith shop worker, and a small taste of what it takes to be a royal King or Queen.

These materials will bring endless learning to our kindergartners and allow our team of teachers to provide an education where students are actively engaged in hands-on learning.



FINAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS IMPACTED: 105+ PER YEAR



9 SQUARE IN THE AIR

N. Kroeger

Piqua Central Intermediate School

Project Description Excerpt

9 Square in the Air is a fun and versatile piece of equipment that puts a new twist on the classic game of 4 Square. Instead of bouncing the ball on the ground, players hit it upward—similar to volleyball—making the game more dynamic and engaging.

This equipment can be used in a variety of settings, including the gym at PCIS. Using it indoors allows students to stay active while working in large groups, making it an ideal tool for physical education classes. It's especially helpful for introducing volleyball-style volleying to students who may not yet feel confident in their skills. It can be used as part of a volleyball unit, as a warm-up activity students enjoy, or simply as a way to keep more students engaged and participating.

Another great use for 9 Square in the Air is during field day. Because it's portable, it can easily be set up as one of the activity stations. With nine students playing at a time, it encourages high participation and helps include everyone. It also gives students a chance to socialize and interact with peers they might not normally engage with, making it both a fun and community-building experience.

.

FINAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS SERVED
100+ PER YEAR



PIQUA EDUCATION FOUNDATION

PEF STANDARD EDUCATION GRANTS

This academic year, we saw a remarkable increase in interest for Education Grants from Piqua City Schools teachers and staff—nearly doubling the number of applications received compared to last year. This stands out as one of the most impactful years in PEF's 40-year history.

We have funded twelve standard education grant projects, totaling **$15,607.78** and impacting more than **6,800 students** throughout the district.

This positive trend reflects the dedication of our school district's educators and their commitment to creating meaningful learning experiences for all Piqua City Schools students.

PIQUA EDUCATION FOUNDATION

DISTRICT BAND CONCERT COMMISSION

W. Heinz

Piqua High School

Project Description Excerpt

The goal of our project is to honor the band department and provide the students with an amazing opportunity to have a piece of music written for them. In addition, being able to play the World Premiere of any piece is quite an honor and we want the students to be able to experience this.

My favorite part about this project is that the piece will be written for all students in Grades 7-12 to play together at one time. This is a difficult task because music is typically written for a specific difficulty or what we call "grade" level.

Our top students at PHS play a Grade 4 piece of music at a typical concert. At the HS our second ensemble plays a Grade 2.5. The 8th grade band at this point in the year plays a Grade 2.5-3 and the 7th grade plays a Grade 1.5-2. This piece is going to be written at Grade 3-3.5 level but will have parts that are at a 1.5 level for each of the instruments. That means all 6 grades of students can play this piece together at the same time without having to worry about it being too difficult. Each part is just as important as the next.

Jarod Hall, the nationally-known composer, is excited to have a challenge like this for him to write. It will push him and it will give the students an incredibly educational opportunity to play in a way that is not common.

Watch Here!

FINAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS SERVED: 250+

6TH GRADE AUTHORS

J. Raber

Piqua Central Intermediate School

Project Description Excerpt

Sixth Grade students will be authoring and illustrating a children's book. Once the process is completed, we will be 'publishing' our work into book form, walking to Washington Primary, reading our book to the kindergarteners, and then gifting our books to our new kinder-friends.

As sixth graders move through the writing process, they'll use a rubric to track their progress and align with state writing standards. The true measure of success will come when they share their published books with kindergarten classes and hand off their inspirational bookmarks to incoming fourth graders at PCIS.

The heart of this project lies in the belief that our sixth graders can make a meaningful impact on younger students. Through their writing and positive messages, they're not only encouraging today's kindergarteners and fourth graders—they're also inspiring the next generation of sixth graders to lead with kindness and creativity.



FINAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS SERVED

400+

LIVE THEATER PERFORMANCE

A. Woods, T. Williams, H. Jacques, M. Grassbaugh, and B. Johns

Piqua Central Intermediate School

Project Description Excerpt

Students will attend a live performance of Charlotte's Web at the Victoria Theatre, an experience that will greatly enhance their skills in speaking and listening, narrative writing, theme analysis, and understanding the elements of drama.

Many of our students come from low-income households, as reflected by the high percentage receiving free or reduced lunch. This often means limited access to the arts outside of school. When we teach drama or descriptive writing, students sometimes struggle to visualize how written text translates to a live performance. Currently, they don't have opportunities like this within the school day—and we want to change that.

Attending this performance will not only be an enjoyable and memorable experience, but it will also help students make deeper, more meaningful connections with what they're learning in the classroom.



FINAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS SERVED

400+

IV

PIQUA EDUCATION FOUNDATION

MIDWEST CLINIC INTERNATIONAL BAND FESTIVAL

W. Heinz

Piqua High School

Project Description Excerpt

The Midwest Clinic is a renowned international music education conference that offers a unique opportunity for educators to learn from world-class clinicians, network with colleagues, and experience inspiring performances.

By attending the clinic, the director will gain insights into innovative teaching methods, cutting-edge techniques, and the latest trends in music education. These new skills and knowledge will be applied directly to their classroom instruction, resulting in improved student performance, increased student engagement, and a more enriching musical experience for all involved.

This clinic is an invaluable experience for band directors. Sessions offer unique insights into teaching and conducting techniques. Additionally, performing with a prestigious ensemble like the Springboro Wind Symphony provides an opportunity for a director to enhance their musicianship and gain valuable performance experience.

Learn More Here!

FINAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS SERVED
200+ PER YEAR

V

PIQUA EDUCATION FOUNDATION

FORENSIC SCIENCE CAREER DAY FIELD TRIP

B. Kopp

Piqua High School

Project Description Excerpt

Students will receive an overview of crime laboratory operations, the roles of the Coroner and Medical Examiner, and the wide range of career paths available within the Criminal Justice system. During the event, they will rotate through various stations and have the opportunity to engage with professionals currently working in the field.

This field trip is part of the Crime Scene Investigation unit in the Law Enforcement Apprenticeship class, which is designed for students with a strong interest in pursuing a career in law enforcement. The experience will allow them to explore different facets of the Criminal Justice system in a hands-on, interactive setting.

Students will also have the chance to network with representatives from local law enforcement agencies, potentially opening doors for future employment after successfully completing the Law Enforcement class and graduating from Piqua High School.
Additionally, students will be able to schedule job shadowing opportunities across various Criminal Justice disciplines. Upon returning, they will create a presentation to reflect on and share their experiences from Career Day.



FINAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS SERVED
45

VI

PIQUA EDUCATION FOUNDATION

TI-84 PLUS CE GRAPHING CALCULATORS

J. Mullen

Piqua High School

Project Description Excerpt

This project aims to reduce the need for students to purchase their own calculators and to replace outdated classroom models with updated, rechargeable graphing calculators. New calculators will offer improved visuals and eliminate the need for frequent battery replacements. The calculators will remain in the classroom, stored securely and charged daily for use across all class periods. We expect them to last at least five years.

Goals & Impact:

- Increase student engagement and motivation
- Strengthen problem-solving and critical thinking
- Improve standardized test performance
- Reduce financial burden on families

Student feedback will be collected through Google Forms to assess the calculators' impact on learning.

Why It Matters:

Graphing calculators are essential tools in modern math education. They help students visualize abstract concepts, understand functions, explore data, and apply math to real-world problems. This investment will support STEM readiness and deepen student understanding of key mathematical principles.



FINAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS SERVED

30+ STUDENTS PER YEAR

LEAD GAME BOARD CREATION

J. Raber

Piqua Central Intermediate School

Project Description Excerpt

Our 29 LEAD members will design and create phonics games for kindergarten and 1st-grade students. As part of the project, they will develop a questionnaire for teachers to gather input on instructional needs and age-appropriate game features. Based on this feedback and additional research, students will tailor the games to support phonics development at each grade level.

To ensure the games are easy to implement, LEAD members will also produce a short instructional video for teachers. The video will explain the game rules, demonstrate setup and gameplay, and include a mock session to model effective use in the classroom.

FINAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS SERVED

830+

VIII

PIQUA EDUCATION FOUNDATION

CLASSROOM PET HABITAT

A. Ferncez

Piqua High School

Project Description Excerpt

A classroom snake will enhance biology and astronomy lessons, supporting topics like ecosystems, adaptation, and sustainability. It will also be used in chemistry word problems to increase student interest. Exposure to a harmless reptile may help reduce fear and promote empathy.

Funds will cover long-term habitat needs (enclosure, heating, humidity controls). After setup and monitoring, the snake will be adopted—ideally from a local rescue or reputable provider. Ongoing costs such as food will be covered separately.

The snake will be used in various lessons throughout the year. Student surveys will be used to assess its impact on engagement and learning.

Research shows classroom pets improve learning, responsibility, and emotional well-being. A snake offers a unique, engaging way to spark curiosity and support science education at the high school level.



FINAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS SERVED

1000+

BEHAVIOR RESOURCES

E. Kuck

Springcreek Primary

Project Description Excerpt

This project will provide students with tools to help them manage emotions, improve social skills, and stay engaged in classroom learning. With better self-regulation, students can spend more time in Tier I instruction and experience academic success.

The tools will be available to all students, including those in general and special education, and will be used for years to come. Students in Tier II and III behavior support will benefit from consistent access to these resources throughout their time at Springcreek Primary.
All student use is documented, tracking time, purpose, emotional state (Zones), and tools used. This helps monitor progress and guide support.

As more students face trauma and social-emotional challenges, these resources—aligned with programs like PAX and Zones of Regulation—will offer vital support and introduce new, effective ways for students to self-regulate.

FINAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS SERVED
350+ PER YEAR



X

STANDARD EDUCATION GRANTS

PIQUA EDUCATION FOUNDATION

BOYS NIGHT OUT PUTT PUTT

E. DeBella and G. Koth

Piqua Junior High School

Project Description Excerpt

8th grade STEM students will design and build themed putt-putt golf holes for Boys Night Out, a PJHS event that fosters connection among students, high school mentors, and adult role models. Each hole will include a creative theme tied to the Piqua community, along with an obstacle, elevation change, signage, and border.

From March 10-24, students will work in teams with assigned roles to complete the project as part of a graded STEM assignment. The golf holes will debut at the April 11 event and be reused at future school events, making the project sustainable.

Students will be assessed using a rubric covering design elements and theme. This project blends academics with real-world impact, encouraging collaboration, creativity, and pride in contributing to the school community.



FINAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS SERVED

100+

XI

STANDARD EDUCATION GRANTS

PIQUA EDUCATION FOUNDATION

ASL TEACHERS ASSOCIATION NATIONAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

S. Taylor

Piqua High School

Project Description Excerpt

This project supports professional development through attendance at a rare, ASL-specific conference at Gallaudet University—the only Deaf university in the world. The event features 16 expert-led sessions on curriculum design, special education, technology, and assessment tools tailored to ASL instruction.

New strategies and insights will be used to improve lesson planning and student engagement, especially as the current curriculum is being implemented for the first time. Student learning will be tracked through existing assessments and retention in higher-level ASL courses.

This is a unique opportunity to access targeted training and connect with other ASL educators—resources not typically available through standard world language professional development.

FINAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS SERVED
100+ PER YEAR

XII

STANDARD EDUCATION GRANTS

PIQUA EDUCATION FOUNDATION

HOLOCAUST AND HUMANITY CENTER FIELD TRIP

A. Buehrer

Piqua High School

Project Description Excerpt

This experience will connect students' research projects with the Upstander exhibit. Students are exploring causes that matter to them, and this visit will offer real-world inspiration from historical and current activists.

As students begin their research, they will draw on examples of advocacy and change. The goal is to empower them to become active participants in causes they care about—moving from learners to creators of knowledge.

Student learning will be measured through their research projects, which include a researched argument and a call to action influenced by the exhibit.
This meaningful, one-day experience will motivate students to become changemakers in their communities and beyond.



FINAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS SERVED
76