



Informational Memo - Winnetka Public Schools Foundation Grants- 2020-2021

TO: School Board
Superintendent Kocanda

FROM: Maureen Chertow Miller, *Director of Technology*
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Overview & Background

Each year the Winnetka Public Schools Foundation (“Foundation”) raises funds from the community for the benefit of the District’s students and staff. Most of the money raised is provided to the District in the form of grants to fund innovative educational activities or programs. The grants are awarded on a competitive application basis, with the winners selected by a committee of incoming and outgoing Foundation Co-chairs and District personnel. For the 2019-2020 school year a total of **\$53,156** was provided by the WPSF. The detail of these grant allocations is provided in the detailed annual plan, [click here to view](#).

In 2018-2019 the WPSF shifted the focus of Core Plus funds. Core Plus has traditionally provided funding for content areas after their first year of adoption. With all content areas recently reviewed, it was decided to transition to an updated model. The WPSF is now targeting Core Plus funds to support one big idea that is on the leading edge of teaching and learning that supports ALL content areas, including social-emotional learning.

2018-2019 was the year of the [Learning Space Design Team Pilot](#) and in 2019-2020 the Winnetka Public Schools Foundation launched initiatives around Virtual Reality/Augmented Reality (VR/AR). Virtual Reality and Augmented reality programming have been used in conjunction with [Social Emotional Learning and](#)

[Special Education programming](#) where students create their own virtual reality experiences for others to experience. Examples of resources for VR/AR include Google Expeditions, [Merge Cube](#), [360 Cameras](#), and the HTC Vive.

Throughout the 2019-2020 School Year, the WPSF supported the District's work with Social-Emotional Learning (SEL). The work started in the summer of 2019 with a two-day summer institute and continued with various Winnetka Parent Institute's focused on SEL. The WPSF supported staff members by sponsoring conference registration to the [Educating Anxious Brains Conference](#) and supported parents by hosting Matt Dewar for the Carlson Event.

In March of 2020, with the onset of remote learning, the WPSF managed a quick pivot to partner with the School District to provide a series of events to promote community engagement. Their sponsorship of approximately \$10,000 lended a positive note to the end of the year activities. These events were a mix of fun, support, and artistic enrichment. For a full list of events, [click here](#).

The District's students, staff, and parents are very fortunate to benefit from the efforts and support of the Foundation. The grants offer a meaningful contribution to the educational program of the District.