



# 2023-24 Foundation Annual Report

Annual Report presented by Karen Foley - NWRES D Foundation President

## Contents

- Mission and Overview
- Activity Highlights
- Foundation Awards
- Financial Review
- Governance
- Plans for 2024-25

## Mission and Overview

**Mission:** We enhance and support learning opportunities for children with disabilities and those who are at risk from birth to age 21 in Clatsop, Columbia, Tillamook and Washington counties.

**Purpose of the NWRES D Foundation:** Northwest Regional ESD established the foundation in 2006 as a 501(c)3 as a way to support work outside the scope of typical operating budgets for public schools. This work includes awarding grants to educators and service providers in the NWRES D service area (Clatsop, Columbia, Tillamook and Washington counties) for classroom adapted tools, toys and materials, projects, outings, equipment for enhanced learning experiences. The foundation also fundraises for special projects such as playgrounds and other capital improvements and enables the ESD to receive grants for special projects from funders that require a nonprofit status.

---

## Activity Highlights

- **November 2023:** The foundation received 78 grant requests worth \$128,182 in funding. It was the most requested by educators in recent memory, indicating the need for additional funding for educators and their desire to do more on behalf of students and families.

- **December 2023:** The foundation board hosted a thank-you reception for NWRESD staff at the Washington Service Center. More than 50 staff attended to learn more about the foundation.
  - **February 2024:** The foundation awarded 19 grants worth \$25,000 to educators and therapists in Beaverton, Gaston, Hillsboro, Knappa, Seaside, Sherwood, St. Helens, Tigard, Tillamook and Tualatin. The projects ranged from \$260 to \$2,500. The majority of the projects aim to help students who are experiencing developmental, physical, behavioral and/or mental health challenges. Other projects support language development.
  - **May 2024:** The NWRESD Foundation held an in-person fundraiser on May 30 at the new Miller Nash location in downtown Portland. More than 40 people attended and donated a total of \$20,000 to the foundation. Thank you to Miller Nash for sponsoring this event.
  - **June 2024:** The foundation Annual Meeting was held.
- 

## Foundation Awards

Since 2006, the Northwest Regional ESD Foundation has awarded an estimated 507 grants totaling an estimated \$500,601 to honor and meet its mission to make a difference in the lives of children with special needs.

- The foundation awarded 19 grants totaling \$25,000 on Feb. 17. Educators from any of the 20 component school districts and NWRESD were informed and encouraged to apply for these grants. *Grant descriptions are included in Appendix A.*
  - The foundation awarded a \$3,000 scholarship to an aspiring teacher involved in the [Diverse Educator Pathways program](#).
- 

## Financial Review

- A. As in past years, Perkins & Co provided the foundation with a full financial review and tax preparation services at no cost. The in-kind value is \$10,000.
- B. Other Highlighted Incomes and Revenue
  - a. Annual Fundraiser: \$20,000
  - b. NWRESD staff payroll deductions and individual donations: \$2,500
  - c. Northwest Regional ESD In-Kind Donations
    - i. Staff hours - 146 hours
      1. Tracey Goldner - 65 hours
      2. Janet Bucio - 43 hours
      3. Megan Mahoney - 23 hours
      4. Kelsey Soltysiak - 15 hours

- ii. The ESD also donates various office supplies and subscription services to facilitate business activities (professional Zoom account, website hosting, news distribution, etc)
- d. Northwest Regional ESD Financial Contributions: \$10,000

*Financial statements are available by request.*

---

## Governance

Northwest Regional ESD Foundation Board of Directors (as of July 2024)

- Karen Foley, President—Retired Executive, Orthopedic Institute; Providence Health and Services - Oregon
- Jeff Condit, President Elect—Partner, Miller Nash, LLP
- Yuen Chin, Treasurer—Chief Financial Officer Willamette Dental Group
- Nancy Ford, Secretary—Retired Executive Director of Early Learning, Northwest Regional Education Service District
- Dr. Joseph Christy, Past President—Retired Director of Washington County Juvenile Department
- Grant Lawson, Member—Regional Vice President, Ricoh USA
- Miriam Meneses-Rios, Member—Regional Division Manager, Washington County Juvenile Justice Department
- Adaire Miller, Member—Retired Marketing and Development Consultant
- Dr. Katie Riley, Member—President, Washington County Kids

Northwest Regional ESD Board Liaison

- Christine Riley, Zone 1 (Gaston, Sherwood and Tigard-Tualatin school districts)
- 

## Plans for 2024-25

During the 2024-25 school year, the NWRESF Foundation plans to:

- host a fundraiser at the Miller Nash offices in downtown Portland.
- distribute grants to educators from Clatsop, Columbia, Tillamook and Washington counties during the 2024-25 school year.
- support students in the Diverse Educator Pathways program with scholarships.
- expand fundraising efforts to corporate donors.
- seek grant funding for specific projects that are yet to be determined.

- visit schools and special programs to learn, share information and develop stronger relationships with the educators who work with children with special needs in the NWRES D region.
- 

## Appendix A

### Grant Title: Adaptive Art and Tools to Improve Access

**Total awarded:** \$900

**County:** Washington County - Northwest Regional Education Service District

**Educator:** Danielle Benjamin

**Grant description:** Preschoolers with disabilities often struggle to participate in school art projects, but there are low-cost solutions for making these types of activities more accessible. This grant will fund supplies such as zip ties, pliers, piping, tape, velcro, moldable plastic and bendable hose for an early childhood center in Tualatin. Adapting painting, chalking, drawing and cutting stations will give children who use walkers or wheelchairs or who have trouble gripping art supplies the opportunity to participate and express themselves creatively.

---

### Grant title: Auditory Filtering Aides for Sensory Affected Students

**Total awarded:** \$260

**County:** Tillamook County - Tillamook School District

**Educator:** Dr. Erica Elledge

**Grant description:** This grant will fund eight specialized earplugs for middle and high school students with disabilities. Students who become overwhelmed with typical classroom noise are unable to focus on their work. The benefits of these earplugs is that they are inconspicuous -- some older students are self-conscious about wearing large, noise-canceling headphones -- and come in two styles for students to choose from. Students will learn to identify when they need to filter background noise and be responsible for cleaning and storing their earplugs.

---

### Grant title: Class Study of Novel in Verse for Sixth Grade Dual- and Nondual-Language Arts Students

**Total awarded:** \$891

**County:** Washington County - Beaverton School District

**Educator:** Shawn Parker

**Grant description:** When students have the opportunity to see themselves and their own family's experiences reflected in the books they read at school, they are more likely to engage with the stories and have feelings of positive self-worth. When students have the chance to read stories about the experiences of people who have been historically oppressed, they learn empathy and unlearn harmful stereotypes.

This grant will provide classroom sets of a novel titled "They Call Me Güero" in English and Spanish for students at Whitford Middle School. This novel is about a Mexican American seventh grader growing up in a border town and follows him as he explores poetry and his own bilingual and bicultural identity. The grant will also provide funding for several supplemental graphic novels.

---

## Grant title: Culinary Arts Program

**Total awarded:** \$2,500

**County:** Washington County - Northwest Regional Education Service District

**Educator:** Soraya Saba

**Grant description:** Funding for this grant will provide a weekly cooking class at Levi Anderson Learning Center. The school is located on the St. Mary's Home for Boys campus in Beaverton and provides specialized mental and behavioral support to students in sixth through twelfth grades. The class, which introduces students to foods and recipes from around the world, teaches students about cooking, culture and nutrition. The grant will also pay for 150 students to get their food handler's card so they can work in the food industry in the future.

---

## Grant title: Developing Interoceptive Awareness

**Total awarded:** \$700

**County:** Clatsop County - Seaside School District

**Educator:** Kristi Roberts

**Grant description:** Children who experience autism can struggle to identify or be aware of sensations within their own bodies, including hunger, thirst and fullness. Developing an understanding about these sensations is called interoceptive awareness. This grant seeks to strengthen that awareness for a class of middle and high school students. Funding for this grant will give students the opportunity to explore food, hunger signals and community involvement,

including matching their own hunger to an appropriate snack and visiting a farmer's market, grocery store and food bank.

---

## Grant title: Early Access to Communication Support for Lead Interventionists

**Total awarded:** \$585

**County:** Washington County - Northwest Regional Education Service District

**Educators:** Christine Baird

**Grant description:** Funding for this project will provide 20 recordable button switches and one multmessage device for an early childhood center in Tualatin. This technology helps children who cannot communicate verbally share their needs and wants. Infants and toddlers with autism, cerebral palsy, childhood apraxia of speech, traumatic brain injuries and developmental language disorders all benefit from using this type of technology as early as possible. The switches will be loaned out to families so they can learn about using this type of alternative and assistive technology with their child.

---

## Grant title: English/Spanish American Sign Language Instruction for New Language Learners

**Total awarded:** \$500

**Counties:** Clatsop, Columbia, Tillamook and Washington Counties - Northwest Regional Education Service District

**Educator:** Laurie Harrison

**Grant description:** This grant will provide an American Sign Language curriculum for teaching ASL to families with children who are Deaf or hard of hearing. The curriculum, which will be purchased in English and Spanish, will ensure teachers have a consistent plan for working with families. The curriculum specifically focuses on at-home ASL use and basic school signs for students of all ages. Using this curriculum will support families who choose ASL for their family.

---

## Grant title: Indoor Play Structure for Wilson River and NWRES D Pre-K

**Total awarded:** \$2,000

**County:** Tillamook County - Tillamook School District

**Educator:** Autumn Jungling

**Grant description:** Wilson River Preschool and NWRESA's Tillamook Service Center currently share a building with a small indoor play area that has toys and a few trampolines. This grant will provide additional equipment for the space, including an indoor play structure, a climbing dome and mats. The goal of the project is to provide preschoolers attending these programs with a fun, dry gym experience that will improve their balance, strength and coordination. Research shows that climbing builds not only physical strength but also cognitive skills such as memory and spatial awareness.

---

## Grant title: Multi-Sensory Supports for Early Literacy

**Total awarded:** \$550

**County:** Clatsop County - Knappa School District

**Educator:** Carrie Palenske

**Grant description:** This grant will provide 40 LCD writing tablets and 40 magna doodles for Hilda Lahti Elementary School. These tools will provide an age-appropriate, multisensory way for children, including those with disabilities, to practice reading and writing. When children use another sense while learning, it helps them remember new skills.

---

## Grant title: Play-Brain Food

**Total awarded:** \$2,428

**County:** Washington County - Northwest Regional Education Service District

**Educator:** Kara Rogers

**Grant description:** Young children learn through play. This grant will provide funding for dozens of toys that support early brain development. Items include magnetic trains, sensory tubes, sorting boxes, building blocks, play mats, board books, cars, baby dolls, a light center and more. The toys will be used at an early childhood center in Beaverton as part of the early intervention program, which supports babies and toddlers who are experiencing disabilities and/or delays.

---

## Grant title: Reading/Language Resources for English Language Learner Students

**Total awarded:** \$642

**County:** Washington County - Gaston School District

**Educator:** Colleen Paola

**Grant description:** Funding from this grant will provide journals, card and board games, dry erase boards and reading comprehension cards to the English Language Learner class at Gaston Elementary School. These resources will help students practice their English skills through fun, educational games.

In her application, teacher Colleen Paola wrote: "Most of these students have come to the United States from very traumatic situations in their home country. Taking time to laugh and have some fun while learning helps to build student-to-student relationships as well as student-to-teacher relationships."

---

## Grant title: Sensory and Regulatory Tools and Materials

**Total awarded:** \$1,300

**County:** Washington County - Northwest Regional Education Service District

**Educator:** Kayley McDonald

**Grant description:** This grant will provide equipment and supplies to help preschool-aged children with autism and other sensory processing needs calm down. Items provided by the grant include compression vests, weighted shoulder/lap pads and chew toys (aka chewies), which all help children regulate their emotions and participate in school.

---

## Grant title: Shoebox Tasks

**Total awarded:** \$1,703

**County:** Tillamook County - Tillamook School District

**Educator:** Jenna Angelini

**Grant description:** Elementary-aged children with significant developmental delays often struggle with fine motor skills, which require coordination between a person's brain and their muscles. Funding from this grant will provide the basic and advanced Shoe Box Tasks curriculum and activities for students in a life skills class. Activities include stacking, sorting, putting-in, pulling apart and matching small objects.

---

## Grant title: Shoebox Tasks 2

**Total awarded:** \$1,702

**County:** Tillamook County - Tillamook School District

**Educator:** Casey Coulson



**Grant description:** Elementary-aged children with significant developmental needs often struggle with fine motor skills, which require coordination between a person's brain and their muscles. Funding from this grant will provide the basic and advanced Shoe Box Tasks curriculum and activities for students in a life skills class. Activities include stacking, sorting, putting-in, pulling apart and matching small objects.

---

## Grant title: Social Emotional Learning Interventions

**Total awarded:** \$433

**County:** Washington County - Sherwood School District

**Educator:** Leah Brushwein

**Grant description:** This grant will provide social-emotional learning curricula and book sets for the behavior team at the Sherwood School District. The books -- part of the A Little Spot and Social Thinkers sets -- focus on helping elementary-aged students understand their emotions and develop their social skills.

---

## Grant title: Student Computer/Media Production

**Total awarded:** \$1,719

**County:** Washington County - Northwest Regional Education Service District

**Educator:** Benjamin Spofford

**Grant description:** The funding for this grant will provide video equipment, including a laptop, video camera and video editing software, for a social emotional learning school in Beaverton. The school is located on the St. Mary's Home for Boys campus in Beaverton and provides specialized mental and behavioral support to students in sixth through twelfth grades. Students will use the equipment to create videos about their own lives -- topics include school and sporting events, student and teacher features and music and comedy performances. Students will gain storytelling, video, audio and editing skills in addition to an understanding about how stories are told and by whom.

In his application, Benjamin Spofford wrote: "We feel that it is essential now more than any time in the past to teach media literacy and media ethics. We want students to have media production skills but also the ability to gauge the reliability of media and how to make ethical decisions so that the purpose of their media is clear and transparent to viewers."

---

## Grant title: Therapeutic Swing Access for Washington County EI/ECSE Programs

**Total awarded:** \$2,494

**County:** Washington County - Northwest Regional Education Service District

**Educator:** Erin Dupuis

**Grant description:** This project will provide three therapeutic swings and mats for early childhood centers in Washington County. Swinging helps young children build strength, balance and coordination. When children swing, they also gain an understanding of their own body and how to right themselves. Depending on the child's disability, specialists such as physical and occupational therapists will teach parents about how to safely swing and teach them about the various physical and developmental benefits swinging provides.

---

## Grant title: Unified Sport Initiative

**Total awarded:** \$2,400

**County:** Washington County - Tigard-Tualatin School District

**Educator:** Tori Alderman

**Grant description:** Funding for this grant will provide 18 uniforms, 8 soccer balls and 8 basketballs to the unified sports team at Tigard High School. The team is currently borrowing equipment and using old uniforms, so the grant will give students access to new uniforms and equipment. Unified sports teams give students with disabilities the opportunity to play sports with typically developing peers. The aim is to make sports -- and by extension school -- more inclusive.

---

## Grant title: Wobbly Seaters

**Total awarded:** \$1,320

**County:** Columbia County - St. Helens School District

**Educator:** Janelle Nelson

**Grant description:** This grant will provide 12 wobble chairs for McBride Elementary School. This type of alternative chair helps children build core strength and helps them get their wiggles out in a safe way. Wobble chairs also promote better posture, which helps blood flow -- improving the students' alertness.