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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

# Piscataway Education Foundation Awards Teacher Grants for Innovation, Collaboration and Student Engagement

*Nineteen Grants Awarded to Teachers Spanning Preschool to High School*

**Piscataway, NJ**, December 4, 2015 – The Piscataway Education Foundation (PEF) will fund nineteen teacher grants totaling close to \$20,000 for the 2015-2016 school year. This is the first year for the Inspire Grant Program, which offers teachers funding opportunities for programs, new technologies, and hands-on experiences that may not be covered under the annual school operating budget.

Grants were awarded to teachers spanning preschool through high school. Curriculum areas included Literacy, STEM, Fine Arts, Special Education, History, Foreign Language, ESL and Physical Education. Several grants were for cross-curricular projects or included life skills and socialization opportunities.

“We were very pleased with the educational thought behind every one of the grant proposals we received,” noted Dr. Frank Ranelli, PEF Executive Director. “We deeply appreciate our teachers, and their willingness to go above and beyond in preparing Piscataway students for their futures.”

The following teachers and programs will be funded by PEF Teacher Grants during the 2015-2016 school year:

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Children's Corner Preschool

Kathleen Walsh and Sonya Slyman for "Build and Maintain Garden" to create a successful, sustainable garden using organic methods, allowing students to grow plants and vegetables in a safe and sustainable manner.

Nadine Lichtenberg, Julie Trudell, Judy Sundelof, Elaine d'Esterhazy-Hagg, Patricia Barnes, Nicole Castillo and Shannon Strauss to build a live Butterfly Garden and a live Lady Bug Land.

Eisenhower Elementary School

Amy Switkes for "Peer Buddy," bringing the program that pairs students in our autistic population with general education students out of school, for a field trip to Stelton lanes.

Stacey Cukierski for "Headsprout," an early reading program for Tier 3 students that provides instruction in Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, and Fluency.

Knollwood Elementary School

Isabella Metrokotsas for "Active Seating," workspace options, including stability balls, hokki stools and standing desks.

Elizabeth Collins and Eileen Kenny for "Learning with Legos," using visual models and hands-on exploration to teach collaborative problem solving while developing perseverance.

Donna Srouji for "ESL Conversation Materials," to enrich and enhance the oral vocabulary and conversation skills of ELL and at-risk students.

Randolphville Elementary School

Brian Voigt for an Epson Brightlink for technology-infused instruction in math, science and social studies.

King Intermediate School

Karen Fleming for "Bringing History to Life," enriching the Fifth Grade Social Studies Colonial Unit through work with the D&R Canal Historical Society, East Jersey Olde Towne Village, and the Cornelius Lowe House.

Irina Nikitovic for "Mural Project," to use chalkboard/ magnetic paint for school murals, allowing the school to go green while using wall space to communicate messages, inspirational statements, group problem solving activities and more.

Lindsay DiFilippo and Jill Brown for "King Cart," to help self-contained students gain career readiness and life skills while increasing social interactions with the general education population. Working with general education student leaders, special education students will sell items from the King Cart to the school community.

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Conackamack Middle School

Dolores Taylor for “Grade 6 Making Space Craters,” hands-on science lessons that connect to the real world. Students will create craters and complete an official lab report on crater impact.

Johanna Reid, Justin Strasser and Kevin Donahue for “Resistance Band Circuit,” a new teaching strategy for health and physical education. Resistance training will be employed in general physical education as well as adaptive physical education.

Quibbletown Middle School

Carleigh Zielinski and Tara Dagleish for “Understanding September 11,” exposing students to material beyond the classroom so they will become more cognizant of events that shape our world.

Andrew Kehoe and Beth Barbarasch to support Year One of the Quibbletown Positive Climate Multi-Year Initiative: Positive Behavior Supports and Community Room. Year One initiatives include signage and incentives for positive behavior and the creation of a Quibbletown Community Room.

Schor Middle School

Courtney Angiuli for “Reading by Flashlight,” a focused and motivational reading activity that uses creative classroom materials combined with “Active Reading Strategies” for greater focus and engagement.

Brittany Perry for “Females in STEM...or lack thereof.” Benefitting female students who receive free/reduced lunch or are Mathematics Tier 3 students, offering STEM opportunities through a trip to the Liberty Science Center, with a focus on App development.

Piscataway High School

Veronica Ber for “A Taste of Spain,” bringing the Alborada dance Company to PHS for an interactive presentation of Flamenco dance and music.

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**About Piscataway Township Schools**

*Serving over 7,000 students, Piscataway Township Schools provide K - 12 and preschool programming, special education instructional programs and services, as well as before and aftercare, adult education classes, youth enrichment programs, and summer youth programs. The mission of the Piscataway Public Schools is the continual development of each child’s intellectual, aesthetic, social and physical abilities in a positive environment that fosters self-esteem, to help each student realize their abilities and gifts.*