

Comal Independent School District

NEWS RELEASE

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Nearly 4,000 students, 39 teachers **will benefit from the Comal Education** **Foundation's 12th Prize Patrol**



Nearly 4,000 students and 39 teachers in the Comal Independent School District will benefit from \$24,000 in grant money awarded by the Comal Education Foundation's 12th Prize Patrol. A total of six new innovative grants will be implemented in the 2010 -2011 school year.

"Our teachers are dedicated to engaging students in hands-on activities that make the students want to come to school each day," said Margaret Tenorio, Foundation Executive Director.

In only its eighth year of existence, The Comal Education Foundation has awarded more than \$574,000 to Comal ISD classrooms through teacher grants and district-wide initiatives. The mission of the foundation is to enrich learning and expand educational opportunities so all Comal ISD students can excel, and to date, all 24 Comal ISD campuses have benefited from grant funding. The grant funds are used to improve student achievement and skill development and to recognize and encourage excellence in education.

Round 12 of the grant awards went to six different campuses. The process began in February when teachers submitted grant proposals for innovative projects that enhance curriculum. A committee of dedicated grant reviewers from the foundation's board of Directors read 34 grant requests and had the difficult task of selecting which projects would receive funding. The Round 12 grants and recipient schools are:

Arlon Seay Elementary School

Mande Drum Ensemble (\$4,966.79)

Teacher: Kim Finkbeiner

More than 400 students in grades K-5 will experience music through the art of drumming on a set of West African drums and instruments. The goal is an authentic experience of music- making utilizing steady beat and rhythm to create incredible music.

Hoffmann Lane Elementary School

Science Before Your Eyes (\$3,409)

Teachers: Sheila Pfeffer, James Orth, Cheryl Schmidt, Sara Hintze, Michelle Broderick, Amy Morgan, Kelly Carter, Sunshine Barker, Dawn Jonas, Mindi Wing.

“Can you measure the decibels of an airplane that flies over the school?” Science Before Your Eyes will show students just how to do that. Students in every grade level will utilize the latest technology and equipment to measure, collect, see and interpret science in their world. So the next time you want to see the magnetic field of the earth, ask one of the 442 students at Hoffmann Lane to show you how.

Canyon Middle School

Science Labs Everywhere: The answer to hand- on learning! (\$5,000)

Teachers: Hanna Brown, Darcy Titus, Denise Baughman, Robert Rutledge, Ryan Holbrook, Olivia Kennedy, Vicki Rosenwald, Vanessa Brown, Amy Luna.

More than 870 middle school students will have hands-on science experiences using FOSS kits that contain science supplies, equipment, and on-line resources that turn the classroom into an engaging lab. Students will explore and investigate the world of levers and pulleys, earth’s history, bugs and much more. Positive modeling occurs when students are read aloud to, including exposure to correct pronunciation, proper fluency and a rich, more advanced vocabulary.

Church Hill Middle School

Hey! There's An Art Museum In My School (\$895)

Teacher: Theresa Davis

If you can't take the school to the museum then bring the museum to the school. Church Hill Middle students will have an opportunity to study works of art by the masters through five traveling art exhibits. DaVinci, Picasso, Monet and Rousseau are a few of the talents being brought to the campus.

Smithson Valley Middle School

Building Strong Hearts (\$4,848.74)

Teachers: Tracie Hammond, Sarah Batey, Wayne Rushing, Brad Biesenbach, Amanda Custy, Jennifer Weir, Windi Davidson, Orlando Matta, Stephen Hopkins, Jason Chambliss

Health plays a vital role in a student's ability to focus and learn in school. More than 600 students will discover how their hearts beat and focus on heart health and wellness during PE class. Mio Drive Heart Rate Monitors are going to help school coaches integrate math, health and science into their PE and athletic classes.

Smithson Valley High School

Flippin' Over Science and Math (\$4,848.74)

Cameras aren't just for taking pictures anymore. Smithson Valley High School students will have an opportunity to experience digital technology in laboratories. Students will analyze their work habits, re-check laboratory results, measure exact angles, and provide math classes with meaningful data to analyze. Through digital recordings, science groups can save information in a relevant manner to share with math for analysis, create Podcasts for absent students to view, and trigger memories about scientific processes before assessments.

The grants awarded reflect true commitment from the community for Comal ISD students to receive quality education.

IN PHOTOS: Hoffmann Lane Elementary teacher Sheila Pfeffer can't contain her joy when presented a Comal Education Foundation grant for \$3,409 for *Science Before Your Eyes*. The grant will help students at every grade level utilize the latest technology and equipment to measure, collect, see and interpret science in their world. It was part of \$24,000 worth of classroom grants spread district-wide by the Comal Education Foundation during its Prize Patrol on March 30.

Arlon Seay Elementary principal Dr. Judy Murray and music teacher Kim Finkbeiner pose with a group of smiling kindergarten students shortly after being presented with a Comal Education Foundation grant for \$4,966.70 during the Prize Patrol on March 30. The grant, *Mande Drum Ensemble*, will help more than 400 students in grades K-5 experience music through the art of drumming on a set of West African drums and instruments.