



2024-2025 Final Grant Awards Report

Thanks to donors' generous support, Chatham Education Foundation funded the following grants in its 2024-2025 fiscal year, in the sum of \$146,337.22. Of this sum, 22 endowments contributed \$44,066.98 toward the grants.

CMS Library Media Center Redesign (CMS)

\$105,588.33

Michale LaSusa, Mary Donohue, Anthony Orsini, Jackie Chirico

The largest grant of the year will transform the existing library into a modern Learning Commons serving grades 5 through 8. With the addition of fifth grade at CMS, this reimagined space will offer flexible, student-centered zones for collaboration, independent learning, and social-emotional development. The redesign was developed with long-term adaptability in mind and will be evaluated through measures of student engagement and learning impact across the district.

This grant was supported in part by the Blue Foundry Bank Endowment Fund, the Dickson Family Endowment Fund, the Endowment Fund for Environmental Sustainability (Abbott Family), the Kuppenheimer Endowment Family Fund, the PTO Endowment Fund, the Routh Family Endowment Fund, the Voleti Family Endowment Fund, and an endowment funded by an anonymous donor.

Horticulture & Agricultural Science Grant (CHS)

\$1,187.35

Mary Donohue, Lauren LoPorto

Horticultural and Agriculture Science is a new course at Chatham High School that was created based on student and faculty interest. It is an inquiry-driven course designed to introduce students to the topics with a strong focus on sustainable practices. This grant provides funding for equipment necessary to implement the curriculum of the class and provide hands-on experiences for enrolled students. According to the grant applicants, "Students indicated they would like more opportunities to work in the garden/greenhouse throughout the year. This interest ignited the idea for this science elective. This is a unique opportunity as most agricultural courses are offered only in vocational or special education programs. There are few school garden programs in New Jersey public schools with a dedicated course offering."

This grant was supported in part by the Endowment Fund for Environmental Sustainability (Abbott Family).

NJ Symphony Partnership (LAF, CMS, CHS)

\$6,300.00

Liam Keller, Emily Gaul, Suzanne Bass, Christine Spriggs, Justin Lemley

This residency aims to provide customized, multi-week coaching for instrumental music students in grades 4-12, featuring New Jersey Symphony musicians. The goal is to supplement in-school instruction and deepen students' musical understanding. The grant applicants shared, "the musicians from the Symphony provide decades of musical knowledge at the highest level achievable which deepens the understanding and connection of our student musicians. Providing this access at a young age opens our students to possibilities in the music world that are normally reserved for college students and gives them an advantage in statewide ensembles and competitions."

This grant was supported in part by the Ryan T. Ganley Memorial Endowment Fund (Metviner Family) and the Karpowic Family Endowment Fund.

2025 Choral District Festival Featuring Jim Papoulis (LAF, CMS, CHS)

\$3,159.50

Ken Bryson, Dana Goodstein, Jared Badalamenti

CEF continues to support the annual District Choral Festival. This year's guest clinician is Jim Papoulis, who will lead a composing workshop. The grant applicants believe that "this project will help form connections between students who are just starting out their choral career and students who have been participating for a decade. Over the last four years the Choral Festival has shown first hand how this event has improved student communication, collaboration, and musicianship. CHS students paved the way for CMS students who then became role models for Lafayette students."

This grant was supported in part by the Allen Family Endowment Fund and the Battiato Family Endowment Fund.

From Seed to Seed (MAS, SBS, WAS)

\$3,682.20

Lauren LoPorto, Sarah Gutierrez

This grant allows for the expansion of an initiative started in the second-grade classes at Washington Avenue School. Classes will use Wisconsin Fast Plants to teach the "Relationships in Habitats" science unit, which provides a more hands-on, interactive learning opportunity. According to the grant applicants, "through activities such as observation, experimentation,

journaling, and data collection, students not only develop critical thinking skills but also enhance their scientific inquiry abilities and develop a deeper understanding of disciplinary core ideas.”

This grant was supported in part by the Endowment Fund for Environmental Sustainability (Abbott Family).

Biotechnology in the Biology Classroom (CHS)

\$3,975.00

Kelly Baumle

Funding was requested by Chatham High School biology teachers for materials supporting a new and an existing lab experience for the biology classes at CHS. Kelly Baumle, the grant applicant, shared “these labs will not only increase student interest but also provide valuable hands-on experience with real scientific equipment. These labs can be adapted for various biology courses, and the purchased equipment will be a long-term investment for the science program.”

This grant was funded in part by an Endowment funded by an anonymous donor.

3D Scanning Technology (CHS)

\$2,598.00

Jason Mariano

The funding for this grant was directed towards providing students in engineering & design courses at Chatham High School with real-world 3D scanning & modeling tools. The availability of these tools enhances critical thinking, spatial reasoning, & CAD skills through hands-on reverse engineering & prototyping. This grant also promotes interdisciplinary collaboration with potential applications in robotics, art, & beyond. “This project will benefit all participating students by expanding their technical skills, aligning with current curriculum goals, and preparing them for advanced studies or careers in STEM fields,” shared grant recipient Jason Mariano.

This grant was supported in part by the Asian Community Endowment for Chatham Schools, the Bojanowski Family Endowment Fund, and the Epstein Family Endowment Fund.

Podcasting Class: This Cougar Life (CHS)

\$2,893.67

Katie Harms, Bryan Starchman

Chatham High School will launch a new course focused on the technical & creative skills of podcasting in Fall 2025. This course is designed to prepare students for careers in media, journalism, & digital marketing. The funding provides professional-grade recording equipment for student use. According to applicant Bryan Starchman, “with these resources, students will not only develop technical skills in audio recording and editing but also find their authentic voices as digital storytellers. The podcast series 'This Cougar Life' will become a powerful platform for student expression that extends beyond our classroom walls, creating a lasting archive of student creativity while building valuable communication skills for their futures. I'm incredibly grateful to the Chatham Education Foundation for investing in this innovative program that merges traditional literacy with modern media production.”

This grant was supported in part by the Rooney Family Endowment Fund.

3D Printer and Chompsaw (LAF)

\$5,988.96

Kyle Kermick

Funding from this grant allows for the replacement of an aging 3D printer at Lafayette Avenue School to support hands-on design & STEM challenges. It also funded the purchase of a Chompsaw to allow students to safely cut materials without instructor intervention. Kyle Kermick, grant applicant, shared, “These remarkable additions, 3D Printers and Chompsaws, to our classroom are more than just a tool—it's a gateway to creativity, innovation, and hands-on learning. Thank you for investing in our students' futures and for supporting education in such a meaningful and forward-thinking way. Your generosity is shaping not just what they learn, but how they learn—and for that, we are truly grateful.”

This grant was supported in part by the STEM Endowment Fund.

Implementing Meaningful Reading Interventions with Decodable Readers (MAS, SBS, WAS)

Beth Paulson, Amy Kerr, Jamie Zidle, Peggy Herr

\$8,380.80

This grant expanded access to decodable texts for K–3 reading intervention programs and builds on prior support for kindergarten literacy. The availability of the decodable readers will strengthen foundational reading skills through targeted, small-group instruction.

This grant was supported in part by the Guerrero Family Endowment Fund, Prael Family Endowment Fund, and the Quon Family Endowment for Diversity, Inclusion and Special Education.

Large Format Plotter (CHS)

\$2,583.41

Jason Mariano, Julie Ryan

The equipment purchased through this grant enables high-quality printing for architecture, engineering, design, & fine arts and fosters design thinking, spatial reasoning, & professional presentation skills. The equipment is also available to support student projects, school clubs, & promotional needs across the Chatham High School community. “We're excited to see the impact this grant will have across our technology and design programs,” said Julie Ryan, grant recipient. “This grant will ensure students have continued access to professional-grade tools that elevate the quality of their work, support real-world skill development, and enrich learning across our technology and design programs.”

This grant was supported in part by the PriVikNik Endowment Fund.

Submitted,
Suzanne David
Grants Chair 2024-2025