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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Five D203 Teachers Earn IEA SCORE Service Grants**

Naperville, Illinois - November 1, 2013 - The Naperville Unit Education Association has announced that five District 203 teachers have earned service-oriented grants from the Illinois Education Association (IEA) for their schools.

The grants are part of a new grant program available to educators who are in the first 10 years of their careers.

SCORE, Schools and Community Outreach by Educators, will award as many as 100 grants across Illinois in amounts up to \$1,000 to allow early career educators a chance to build service-oriented programs in their schools or their communities. Grants for more than \$1,000 may also be considered.

These grants are designed to allow educators to find ways to address unmet needs and fund helpful programs to solve them.

From after-school tutoring programs to school improvement projects, from reading programs to partnerships with community organizations, the possibilities are limitless.

The five District 203 grant winners are profiled below:

**Alexandra Morrow, Ranch View School** “We received **2 iPads to be “checked out” by parents and kids** in my class to work on the apps we have in school at home. There are a number of educational apps we do for reading, writing, and math that kids could access for practice and creation after school.”

**Regina Lackowski, Beebe School** “I am very excited about this grant!!! Basically, the gist of what we are doing is starting a **Mother/Daughter Zumba club/Book Club....in Spanish!** I hope for the program to run for 10 sessions (5 weeks) for 1.5 hrs each time. The first half hour will be spent enjoying a healthy snack while reading a mentor text with the mothers and daughters. The focus of the read alouds will be about empowering girls, making good choices, social dilemmas, etc. I hope to get all of these mentor texts in Spanish. After having a short guided discussion, the last 45-60 minutes will be spent doing a Mother-Daughter Zumba class with a certified instructor. My hope is that this club will increase interest in literacy, promote healthy lifestyle habits and encourage parent participation in other school events as we move forward. It will be geared towards mothers and daughters in our dual language program (since the book club and Zumba class will both be in Spanish!)”

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**Anonymous Score grant winner, Kennedy School** “The **Boys Leadership Program** will provide mentoring for boys who possess leadership qualities so that they may develop the skills necessary to lead with character, thereby decreasing bullying and increasing positive peer relationships. Through the study of leadership texts, videos, meaningful conversation with positive community leaders, as well as performing community outreach, the leadership program will foster the development of community and equip identified leaders with the strategies they need to become agents of change.

There are three main components that will be explored during the school year. The first component of *Boys Leadership Program* will consist of discussion, journaling, and a Character Counts leadership video series. Student-focused discussions will guide each boy to articulate how he may apply featured leadership traits to his life. Following each meeting, the boys will be challenged to actively apply the character trait to their life and journal their thoughts and experiences. Journal entries will launch activities for the following week. The second component of *Boys Leadership Program* will be dedicated to community leaders sharing their insights on leadership style and the value of leading with character. In the past, community leaders such as high school head coaches, principals, superintendents, school board members, financial advisors, private business owners, missionaries, executive character coaches, Mayors of Naperville and Lisle, and even a former Chicago Bear Hall of Famer have spoken at the leadership meetings. The final component of *Boys Leadership Program* will be devoted to each boy identifying his own leadership style and crafting his personal mission statement.

The boys will participate in several service projects throughout out the year. In an effort to continue and strengthen Kennedy’s long-standing partnership with the local VFW, boys will volunteer their help with the VFW’s fall cleanup, spring planting, and spring flower sale. Additionally, the boys will volunteer at our district’s Ann Reid Early Childhood Center. The boys will assist with several of Ann Reid’s large events, such as the Zoo Day, Winter Games, and the Duckling Dash. Lastly, the boys will design, develop, and implement a legacy project to communicate to their designated audience the importance of leading with character. Another part of our efforts to positively influence our community will be a “holiday donation challenge”. Last year the *Boys Leadership Program* was able to help donate over 5,000 children books to Book Worm Angels, a charity that provides transportable libraries to disadvantaged inner city children.

*Boys Leadership Program’s* culminating activity will involve boys and their families. As described above, each boy’s final assignment is to craft a sentence that serves as their personal mission statement. Prior to the last meeting, these sentences will be printed on certificates to remind boys of their commitment to lead with character. Additionally, families will receive invitations to write a letter explaining how their sons’ character has developed throughout the year. Parents and family members will share these letters with their sons at the final meeting, sure to be an extraordinarily meaningful culminating event.

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By challenging boys who have leadership abilities to “lead with character,” this project creates a unique touch point during middle school that could be a catalyst for creating the character-driven leaders of today and into tomorrow – leaders who are trustworthy, respectful, responsible, fair, caring, and who believe in the importance of citizenship.

**Zachary Gibson- Prairie School** Students at Prairie will create a **new school vegetable garden** to be jointly maintained by Prairie Elementary students and their families as well as teachers and local community members. The purposes of the garden are to construct a pathway for the school to reach out into the community by providing food to a local food pantry, promoting healthy eating, and offering authentic, hands-on learning experiences for students by teaching them about organic gardening. Furthermore, learners will be given opportunities to investigate how gardening is related to literacy, math, and the content-area when aligned to the learning standards.

The Prairie Community Garden has excellent potential to meet current needs in our city, bring the surrounding community together, and provide opportunities for students that are not only academically beneficial but philanthropic as well. It supports the district mission statement by providing valuable opportunities for our students to be community contributors.

**Goal # 1 – Develop the Garden**

The plot of land that we have selected for the location for the garden will be developed by implementing a plan that designates specific growing areas as well as paths that provide access to the plants. In addition, the pre-existing soil will be enriched by introducing compost so that the final stage of sowing organic vegetable seeds as well as planting young vegetable plants can be completed.

**Goal # 2 – Refresh and Establish Community Involvement**

Community involvement is established at the following levels: faculty and staff, families of students, and the greater surrounding community. This project will allow our students to interact with staff and parents to design, create and maintain an edible garden. During the summer months, a collaborative schedule of maintenance will allow children and their families to water, weed, harvest and deliver crops to a local food pantry. This will keep children connected with the school environment and foster a collaborative school environment that is built on shared leadership.

**Goal # 3 – Provide Nutrient Dense Food to Children and Adults throughout DuPage County who are Food Insecure (Not receiving 3 meals a day.)**

We expect to be able to provide our community partner, Loaves and Fishes Community Pantry, with a significant amount of high-quality, organic food throughout the summer months as well as into the fall.

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**Goal # 4 – Provide Authentic, Hands-On Learning Experiences for Students**

Having a garden on school grounds gives teachers the ability to incorporate many high-interest, student-centered learning activities that can complement and enrich our current curriculum. Many authentic science and math concepts can be enhanced through this school-wide project. In addition, this project allows all students in grades K-5 to actively participate in differentiated learning activities to enhance their learning and support our district mission.

**Goal # 5 – Support the Healthy Eating Initiative through Garden-related Lessons and Activities**

Educating students about nutrition and making wise food choices at a young age can have a life-changing impact. There is great value in equipping children with this information, particularly as diseases such as obesity and diabetes are on the rise in children as well as adults.

**Cindy Lopez, Mill Street School** “We are very excited about our **Reading Round Up Program**. Reading Round up is a Reading Homework program at Mill Street School. Students can go to the closets and choose a book at their guided reading level to take home and read with their parents. Our grant will provide our Dual Language families with appropriate leveled books to take home to read in Spanish and in English. Our plan is to continue this program in both English and in Spanish as long as we have books to send home to our families in both languages.” Below you will find the link to our video submission. <http://youtu.be/rQCjAb9N4a8>

NUEA Information: The Naperville Unit Education Association represents about 1300 certified staff members working in District 203, including teachers, nurses, and specialists.

Further questions may be directed to:

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