



**December 8, 2025 Board of Education Meeting**  
**GPFPE Grants Awarded to GPPSS**

**1. Safe Spaces, Strong Foundations (Birth to age 5) Barnes (\$8,000)**

This grant award helps fund a ‘Sensory Cozy Corner’ at this early childhood school. It will promote emotional regulation, social interaction and cognitive and motor development for students.

*Submitted by Kelsey Nordquist, Jessica Gault, Jennifer Cameron and Gina Bordato*

**2. Modeling with Augmentative and Alternative Communication Devices (Toddler and Preschool ages) Barnes (\$6,058)**

Minimally speaking children can learn better communication skills by being able to use five iPads across various environments during their school day.

*Submitted by Melanie Baka, Kelly Vess, Kelly Martz, Kristen DeVooght and Michelle Frontiera*

**3. Slates and Scholars: Reawakening a One Room Schoolhouse (2<sup>nd</sup> grades) All Elementary Schools (\$1,182)**

Using monies from the *Lois J. Warden Fund*, this grant award will allow second graders across the district to visit the Cook Schoolhouse as they study local history. Materials such as McGuffey Readers, slates and old-fashioned games will be purchased.

*Submitted by Sarah Neely*

**4. Maire Safety Patrol Supply Refresh (4<sup>th</sup> grade) Maire (\$327)**

Worn out and outdated safety belts, flags, cones and signage will be replaced by the funding of this grant, which is important to the whole school and the surrounding community.

*Submitted by Caelin Micks*

**5. Student Stand Up Desks (3<sup>rd</sup> grade) Richard (\$1,928)**

Richard third grade teachers request two stand-up desks to accommodate the focus and alternative learning positions for students with attention challenges.

*Submitted by Andrea Finney and Jill Barron*

**6. Boots On the Ground (8<sup>th</sup> grade) Parcels, Brownell and Pierce (\$2,000)**

This grant helped fund an October author presentation to eighth graders studying the Vietnam War. Especially relevant on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the war - and prior to an 8<sup>th</sup> grade trip to Washington DC - this was in collaboration with The War Memorial and the Grosse Pointe Public Library.

*Submitted by Sara Dirkse, Rodger Hunwick, Amber Schmittiel, Meredith Hanoian, Jennifer Sutton and Annemarie Harris*

**7. Positive School Climate Initiative (5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades) Parcels (\$520)**

The principal at this middle school is requesting the purchase of a mobile speaker for enhancing school lunch and playground environments.

*Submitted by Amber Schmittiel*

**8. Math Manipulatives (5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades) Pierce (\$576)**

This grant will fund the purchase of whiteboard kits and other needed materials to enhance engagement with students during math classes.

*Submitted by Jackie Bingham, David Martin, Ben Curran, Ian Fleming, Matt Eszes and Becca Ozar*

**9. Pierce Field Improvement: Obstacle Course (5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades) Pierce (\$10,000)**

The principal and PTO at this middle school request funding to improve a school field with a permanent outdoor obstacle course designed specifically for middle school students, age 10-14. With student input and district support, they envision this obstacle course as an engaging, creative and inclusive structure that will serve a wide range of interests and abilities.

*Submitted by Sara Dirkse and the Pierce PTO*

**10. Underwater Speaker System for the GP Unified Blue Dolphins Synchronized Swim Team (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades) North and South (\$1,930)**

Coaches of this district swim team would like a professional grade underwater speaker to facilitate communication with students during practice and competition, and provide clear, safe music transmission.

*Submitted by Julie Nurse and Lisa Aouad*

**11. Keeping the Beat: Renewal for the Next Generation (8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades) Parcels and North (\$2,000)**

Much of the drumline equipment used by both of these schools needs to be replaced as it is worn out or obsolete. This grant helps purchase a portion of that equipment.  
*Submitted by Tom Torrento*

**12. General Assistance for The Gearheads (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades) North and South (\$2,500)**

This grant supports our twenty-two-year-old high school robotics team to help the purchase of brushless DC motors, planetary gear cartridges and other materials used in their *FIRST* robotics competition.  
*Submitted by Jeffrey Santrock*

**13. SIR Classroom Library Supplement (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades) North (\$148)**

A North English teacher requests the funding of books used in her Sustained Independent Reading program.  
*Submitted by Anna Fleury*

**14. Marketing Shoe Project (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades) North (\$2,200)**

Continuing a highly successful project from last year, this marketing instructor has his students purchase materials, design a shoe brand, target a market and promote their product in teams. This project-based learning approach prepares students to think critically, solve problems and collaborate creatively.  
*Submitted by Scott Sowers*

**15. Empowering Mathematical Thinking (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades) North (\$3,530)**

Math teachers at North, targeting a goal of raising PSAT/SAT proficiency scores, are requesting iPads to enhance instructional flexibility and enable interactive and student-centered learning experiences that will provide real-time feedback and formative assessment in their classrooms.  
*Submitted by Erica Thacker*

**16. Music Technology Lab (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades) South (\$9,000)**

This grant benefits Music Technology, Piano Class and Music Theory students by helping to establish high quality digital pianos, software and other tools in a recently relocated classroom in this high school.  
*Submitted by Carolyn Gross*

**17. Future City High School (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades) South (\$375)**

A middle school instructor mentors a cross-curricular, hands-on STEM program at this high school that encourages an engineering design process and project management skills. Last year's team represented our district in Washington DC at the National Future City competition and hope to do so this year, as well.

*Submitted by Carrie Morris*

**18. Safety Eyewear Sterilization Cabinet (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades) South (\$1,585)**

This grant request would fund a sanitizing cabinet to clean and store safety glasses in the school's Metals and Art and Design courses.

*Submitted by Tom Szmrecsanyi*

**19. Accessibility for All (9<sup>th</sup>-post high school students) North (\$3,991)**

The GPPSS Supervisor of High School and Post-High Categorical Programs asks for funding to purchase touchscreen devices to remove instruction barriers and promote full participation in the curriculum for special needs students.

*Submitted by Kelly Keyes, Charles Gibson and Nikki Mehta*

**20. iPads for Special Education Testing Compliance (Kindergarten-post high school) GPPSS (\$5,824)**

As special needs testing in Michigan has been moved to an online system, this grant request allows GPPSS to comply with this new state mandate.

*Submitted by Lillie Loder and Amanda Derkevorkian*



**21. Pawsitive Connections: Bringing a Therapy Dog to Our Youngest Learners**  
(Preschool, Pre-Kindergarten and Special Education Preschool) **Barnes (\$470)**

This grant award will cover insurance costs for Charlie, a certified therapy dog, to provide young students with comfort and increase positive emotions and engagement.

*Submitted by Brandy Rokicki*

**22. BeaTWEEN the Books Therapy Dog** (5<sup>th</sup> -8<sup>th</sup> grades) **Pierce (\$380)**

Bea, who is a therapy dog at Pierce, will continue her valuable service with this award for yearly membership to the Alliance for Therapy Dogs and insurance fees.

*Submitted by Christina Michaud*

**23. GPPSS Therapy Dog Program** (5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades) **Pierce (\$350)**

Another grant request for therapy dog liability insurance will cover Birdie, a golden retriever at Pierce.

*Submitted by Marc Weaver*

**24. Wellness Activities** (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades) **South (\$380)**

Counselors at South are asking for financial support for a lunchtime student- led club that promotes mental health and wellness.

*Submitted by Ashley Hester and Jennifer Vick*

**25. KNOTS Club Funding** (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades) **North (\$700)**

The Kids Need Opportunities to Socialize Club, fostering friendships, inclusion and support for students with disabilities, requests this funding to facilitate various meetings and holiday activities throughout the year.

*Submitted by Heather Bowersox and Jill Martin*

**26. GPN Library Care Closet** (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades) **North (\$1,329)**

A high school librarian requests funding to stock a library closet with mindfulness activities, hygiene supplies and other resources to assist students who can access it privately to make their days run more smoothly.

*Submitted by Amanda Pata*

**27. Kerby ASD Categorical Classrooms Sensory Equipment (Kindergarten-4<sup>th</sup> grades) Kerby (\$2,500)**

This grant award would help fund materials these teachers feel would help their students with processing and balancing information in their environment.

*Submitted by Kelly Morawski and Kayci Veres*

In summary, the GPFPE is pleased to award a total of **\$69,783** in grants for the Fall 2025 grant cycle. This includes \$6,109 in SEED (Social, Emotional, Encouragement and Development) grants and \$63,674 in regular grants.

Our next grant cycle deadline for both SEED and general grants is March 1, 2026.