

**Essex Fells  
Foundation**  
for Educational  
Excellence

**A Personal  
Commitment  
to Public  
Education**

**Annual Report  
Fiscal Year July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019**

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Essex Fells School District  
102 Hawthorne Road  
Essex Fells, New Jersey 07021

Dear Officers and Trustees of the Essex Fells Foundation for Educational Excellence,

I am writing this letter as a parent of three current and former Essex Fells School students, and as a Board of Education Member for the past 5 and a half years. During these years I have seen that Essex Fells School is a special school because of the way the administration, staff and parents work together as a community to provide everything the children need. The parents' generous financial support of the EFFEE allows for the addition of programs that would not otherwise exist for the students of Essex Fells School. Each spring, the Board of Education prepares the budget for the upcoming school year, utilizing town tax dollars. The reality is, the Board budget would not be able to afford many of our school's activities, without support that comes from the EFFEE.

The Foundation allows the students to participate in the Variety Show and School Musical, which are free for everyone in the community to attend. These events provide an amazing opportunity for our children to get involved in the arts through either performing on stage, preparing scenery, working backstage, assisting in the tech department, or merely supporting their friends through watching them perform.

In addition, the Foundation has provided grants for innovative teacher ideas and various clubs. The annual Art and Tech show showcases our students' artwork created throughout the school year. The type of artwork displayed has evolved over the years with the addition of the STEAM program. It was the Foundation that first supported the pilot program. After an overwhelming positive response in just the first year, the Board incorporated the program into the School Budget. The collaboration between the Foundation and the Board of Education is invaluable as innovative programs are imagined and strategized as how to best implement them.

The TREP\$ entrepreneur program has been another amazing addition to the school since my time as a parent in Essex Fells. It has been inspiring to see what the children have created to sell, and the community engagement at the annual shopping event is unparalleled.

The younger students have received their own support from the Foundation in the form of the Booknic, where students present a visual book report and book-related picnic snack for their families and classmates.

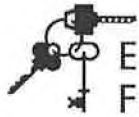
The variety show, school musical, clubs, study hall, enrichment opportunities, field trips, assemblies and countless other programs and opportunities provided by the Foundation are a huge asset to our students. With the support of our community, our students have enjoyed high levels of achievement and that fact was recognized recently as our school received the National Blue Ribbon Award in 2016.

The Board of Education wants to thank the Essex Fells Foundation for Educational Excellence and the entire school community for all of their generous support in making the Essex Fells School such a special place for our children to learn and grow. We look forward to another successful school year.

Sincerely,

Kris N. Huegel  
President-Essex Fells Board of Education.

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**Essex Fells  
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P.O. Box 174  
Essex Fells, NJ 07021  
973-226-0505

September, 2019

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Dear Friends and Neighbors,

The Trustees of the Essex Fells Foundation for Educational Excellence and I thank you for your continued generosity and support of the Essex Fells School.

In my first year as President of this esteemed organization, I focused the Foundation's efforts on working hand-in-hand with the school and others in the community to promote and to build upon the legacy of this organization that does so much good for our children. We are all very fortunate to live in such an incredibly caring and philanthropic community. Our Superintendent/Principal Michelle Gadaleta, the school faculty and administration, the PTA, the Board of Education, and so many other members of the Essex Fells community come together to support our children's experience in so many wonderful ways; we are grateful that they are our partners and allies in all that we do.

During the 2018-19 school year, the Foundation supported many important initiatives including the school's debut production of *The Lion King, Jr* – a beautifully-produced show that showcased the talent of our children and our faculty. As a music educator myself, I was thrilled that our children could participate in such a polished production, and more importantly, that they could be part of something bigger than themselves in what for many was a brand new arena.

Additionally, Essex Fells School students leapt at the opportunity to participate in the annual Variety Show as well as the TREP\$ marketplace, Broadcasting Club, assemblies, study hall, and many other programs and special initiatives that we support - including the installation of a new lighting system in the gym – all of which (and more) are described in detail within the pages of this annual report.

We're also excited to share that **2019 marks the Foundation's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary!** To celebrate, we will hold a "College Night!" fundraiser on Friday, October 18 at the Essex Fells Country Club that will help raise funds for this year's clubs and programs – which, as usual, include some that are old favorites and some that soon will be. We invite you to join us for what will be a memorable evening for a very worthy cause. For details and to purchase tickets or make a donation, please visit [www.effee.org](http://www.effee.org).

On behalf of the Foundation, I thank you for your support of this worthy organization and its mission. We look forward to the experiences that this school year (and the next 25) will bring.

With gratitude,

Laura Z. D'Avella  
President

**Financial Summary**  
*July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019*

**Income:**

Gifts Received	\$ 23,132.32
After School Enrichment	\$ 90,311.69
Musical: The Lion King	\$ 3,585.00
Fall Fundraiser	\$ 38,848.10
Amazon Smile and Other	\$ 155.30
Interest Income	\$ 12.37

**Total Income** **\$156,044.78**

**Expense:****Grant Disbursements:**

Arts and Culture Grants	\$31,552.66
Character Education Grants	\$4,711.72
Communication Grants	\$6,968.60
Entrepreneurship Grants	\$6,575.65
STEAM Grants	\$5,492.70
Study Hall Grants	\$7,300.00

<b>Total Grant Disbursements</b>	<b>\$62,601.33</b>
Afterschool Enrichment	<b>\$44,202.67</b>
Administrative Expenses	\$ 8,013.26
<b>Special Projects</b>	
Stage Upgrade Initiative-Lighting	\$11,312.69
Fall Fundraiser Expenses	\$11,343.65

**Total Expenses:** **\$137,473.60**

**Net Proceeds (Expenditures) for the Year:** **\$18,571.18**

**Fund Balance June 30, 2018:** **\$33,377.00**

**Fund Balance June 30, 2019:** **\$51,948.18**

## Grants Approved

### **Arts & Culture Grants**

#### **First Grade Book Nic — D. Hromoko**

The Foundation approved an Arts & Culture grant, which helped first grade students conduct a Book Nic. Each student selected a book, created a small display about the book, and brought a food associated with the book to the event.

#### **Annual School Musical — D. Banek**

The Foundation approved a grant to fund the annual school musical, which included participation from grades 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>. This year's marked the school first ever production of *The Lion King, Jr.*

#### **Poetry Club — J. Franzi**

The Foundation approved a grant request to fund Poetry Club that met during lunch/recess to explore poets' styles and writing of their own. Students in grades 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> created verses, styles, and artwork of their own.

#### **Variety Show — N. Buonomo, J. Trogani**

The Foundation approved a grant request to fund the annual Variety Show with participants from grades 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>. Students show off their best talents either in a solo act or with a group: singing, dancing, comedy, gymnastics, and more! This event helps build student confidence through performing.

#### **Art Club — K. McNish & J. Trogani**

The Foundation approved a grant request to fund an Art Club for sixth graders to create an art present as a graduation gift to the school. This year the students created individual tiles to be placed on the ceiling of the library.

#### **Book Club Grades 4<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> — D. Reynolds**

The Foundation approved a grant request to provide a maximum group of twenty students to participate in a weekly lunch book club for 10 weeks. Students were introduced to the writer's craft, especially character development and figurative language. Students had the opportunity to work on reading aloud with focus on specific prosodic features. Students wrote their own responses and generated examples of figurative language. The novel, *Ramona Quimby*, was selected for the session.

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**Book Club Grades 2<sup>nd</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> — K. MacKenzie**

The Foundation approved two grant requests due to high demand for two sessions of a weekly book club for 10 weeks. The students met during lunch/recess on Fridays to read-aloud the book *Ramona Quimby*. and partake in discussion and journaling.

**Author Visit/Carmen Rubin — M. Gadaleta**

The Foundation approved a grant request for children's author Carmen Rubin to provide an interactive one-hour assembly for the entire school. Grade 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> enjoyed a book signing for students purchasing books.

**Music Program Expansion — J. Trogani**

The Foundation approved a grant request to implement 5 band/orchestra instruments into the general music curriculum in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. The following instruments were purchased: 4 clarinets, 4 trumpets, 4 drum kits, 4 violins, 4 cellos. Plus 4 clarinet mouthpieces, 4 trumpet mouthpieces, 4 drumstick sets.

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## Character Education Grants

**Character Education Assembly — M. Gadaleta**

The Foundation approved a grant request for a Character Education assembly. Students in K – 2<sup>nd</sup> grades saw Aesop Bops, and students in 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grades saw Mad Dog & Me.

**Books for Class Meetings — K. Codella/R. Santin**

The Foundation approved a grant request to purchase books and supplies for class meetings for grades PS – 6<sup>th</sup> that were needed to help foster conversations regarding diversity and differences.

**Sixth Grade Sleepover — K. Codella**

The Foundation approved a grant request to fund the annual Sixth Grade Sleepover. This event is an important part of supporting students in developing strong foundations in their relationships through team building and group activities.

**Character Education Supplies – K. Codella/K. McNish**

The Foundation approved a grant request to provide supplies for the 2018-19 character education theme – A Road to Success. Students PS-6<sup>th</sup> grades created team flags during art/class meeting that were used throughout the school year at Spirit Meetings, building up to the Olympics.

**“Stories with Holes” — J. Whitman**

The Foundation approved a grant request to fund Stories with Holes for grades 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>. Stories with Holes are short stories that inspire imagination, increase cognitive functioning, and develop listening skills. They allow students to think in

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creative ways to find the answers to the riddle-like challenges in the activities. Students work together to find the missing part of the story.

**Project Wisdom — M. Gadaleta**

The Foundation approved a grant request to fund the renewal of Project Wisdom, one of the oldest and most respected character education/social-emotional programs in the nation.

**Yearbook Club — S. Christopher**

The Foundation approved a grant request to continue Yearbook Club for the 6th Grade students as they work together to produce the yearbook.

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**Communications Grants****Newspaper Club — K. MacKenzie**

The Foundation approved a grant request to fund the school newspaper. Students gathered to capture the relevant and interesting topics of their choice. Newspaper Club gives students in grades 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> another opportunity to share their voice with the EFS Community.

**Postal Club — M. Truchel**

The Foundation approved a grant request for the EFS Postal .The club met before school once a week and was open to students in third grade. However, all of the EFS staff members and students were encouraged to use the Postal Club mail service to keep in touch with people in the school community. Club time focused on obtaining, sorting, organizing, and delivering mail.

**Broadcasting Club — J. Castellano**

The Foundation approved a grant request for the Broadcasting Club. The students write, direct, and produce weekly segments, which air on bimonthly on Monday mornings during announcements.

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**Entrepreneurship Grants****School Store — J. Whitman**

The Foundation approved a grant request to fund the Sixth Grade Student Store. This program allows students to develop communication and people skills as well as develop positive self-image.

**Stock Market Club — S. Christopher/J. Castellano**

The Foundation approved a grant request to fund a stock market club for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grader students held during lunch time once a week for three months. The club teaches students the important aspects of economics, investing, and personal finance with the goal of preparing them for financially independent futures. The

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students are given a virtual dollar amount and set up portfolios, selecting stocks to purchase and monitor throughout the length of the club. Guest speakers are also brought in to discuss investing strategies. The portfolio that makes the most amount of money receives a prize.

**TREP\$ Marketplace — S. Christopher/ S. Hacker/ M. Craveiro**

The Foundation approved a grant request to fund TREP\$, the Award Winning Entrepreneurship Education Program for Grades 4<sup>th</sup>- 6<sup>th</sup>. The TREP\$ program teaches students how to start their own businesses in 6-8 weeks. They learn the lessons in the weekly lunch workshops, and apply them at home as they build their businesses with the help of their families. The whole school community comes out to enjoy the TREP\$ Marketplace, held at school, where the young entrepreneurs launch their businesses together.

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**STEAM Grants****Quiver Farms — S. Christopher**

The Foundation approved a grant request to enrich the biology unit for the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Quiver Farms came with necessary materials for chick hatching (12 incubated eggs) and enable a chick hatching event for the students to watch. Other grades may be invited to join.

**iFly Field Trip — Third Grade Team**

The Foundation approved a grant request to compliment the science unit on forces and motion. Students experience flying in a ...

**Buehler Challenger & Science Center 2018 — M. Craveiro**

The Foundation approved a grant request to fund the annual trip for the 5<sup>th</sup> Grade to visit Buehler Challenger & Science Center. The program offers a simulated space mission and rendezvous with Comet Halley, where a scientific probe is launched into its tail. The students will work in teams to problem solve and demonstrate scientific decision-making.

**Burple, Fizz, Kaboom – Box of Light Assembly — M. Gadaleta**

The Foundation approved a grant request to fund a STEAM assembly entitled "Burple, Fizz, Kaboom" for Grades K – 6<sup>th</sup>. Rand Whipple combined chemical reactions, solutions, molecules, and phase changes with a great sense of humor. Students helped make liquid lasagna, shatter a marshmallow, and had an informative introduction into the life of a scientist.

**Keyboarding Club — J. Castellano**

The Foundation approved a grant request to fund a new Keyboarding Club which focused on proper finger placement while typing and typing speed. The club met during lunch and was open to grades 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>.

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## **Study Hall Grants**

### **Study Hall**

The Foundation approved a grant request to continue funding Study Hall for the 2018-2019 school year. Study Hall provides a time for students in Grades 4th – 6th to make up school work they are unable to complete during class time, and to study for upcoming tests and quizzes

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## **Stage Upgrade Initiative**

The Foundation supported an initiative to replace the lighting in the gymnasium for use during the annual musical, Variety Show, assemblies, concerts, graduations, and many other events in the gym.

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**The Essex Fells Foundation for Educational Excellence thanks the following patrons<sup>1</sup> for their generosity and continued support during the 2018 – 2019 fiscal year (July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019).**

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Veeva Systems Matching Gift  
Matthew Voliva  
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Frank and Loretta Zupa

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\* This list has been prepared with great care. However, despite our sincere efforts to avoid omissions we know they can occur. If any omissions are noted, we hope you will accept our apology and advise us of the error by emailing [info@effec.org](mailto:info@effec.org)

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