

# Creating a compelling DonorsChoose.org project

Virtual Enterprises National Teacher Conference

Katie Vallas, Teacher Success  
DonorsChoose.org

@katie-vallas

# Creating a compelling DonorsChoose.org project

**Katie Vallas, Teacher Success**  
@katie\_vallas



DonorsChoose.org



**\$480**

# Impact to Date



Dollars raised  
\$700,000,000+



Projects funded  
1,180,000+



Students helped  
28,300,000+



Schools participating  
78,000+



Teachers with projects funded  
430,000+



Supporters  
3,200,000+

Our current impact to date is always available  
at [donorschoose.org/impact](https://donorschoose.org/impact)



**\$704,035,405**

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**433,428 teachers**

**\$1,624 per  
teacher**

13 DONORS

\$542 GOAL

## Mic Check...1-2...1-2...Help Us Do the Student News

*My students need a professional broadcast microphone, a video tripod system, a tripod dolly, a jib arm, and some SD cards to help produce the school's student news show.*



**Ms. Baughman**

Grades 9-12

JUNE 3



**Amy**, a staff member at DonorsChoose.org, purchased the **resources** for Ms. Baughman's classroom and notified the school principal of delivery

**\$542**

## **Mic Check...1-2...1-2...Help Us Do the Student News**

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**\$901**

## **They're 3D Printing Up a Storm!**

*My students need a 3D printer, a Raspberry Pi microcomputer, workstation tables, and more plastic filament to print items for classes and clubs.*

**\$542**

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*My students need a 3D printer, a Raspberry Pi microcomputer, workstation tables, and more plastic filament to print items for classes and clubs.*

**\$340**

## **We Need More Whiteboard Space for Physics...Stat!**

*My students need a large and small mobile dry erase board, dry erase markers, and erasers!*

**\$542**

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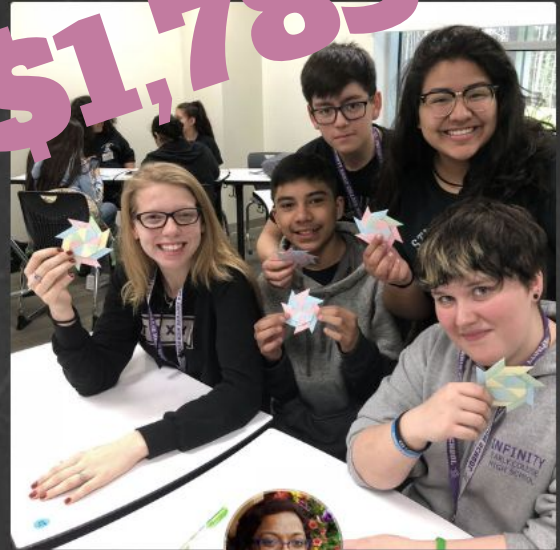
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**\$340**

## **We Need More Whiteboard Space for Physics...Stat!**

*My students need a large and small mobile dry erase board, dry erase markers, and erasers!*

**\$1,783**



**Ms. Baughman**

Grades 9-12

1. The basics
2. Your project
3. Pro tips



- 1. The basics**
2. Your project
3. Pro tips





**Classroom  
photo**



**Idea**



**Classroom  
photo**



**Idea**



**What is  
DonorsChoose.org?**



# How it works



## **Post a Project.**

You request resources your students need to learn: pencils, art supplies, lab equipment, musical instruments, or anything else your classroom needs.



## **Get Funded.**

Tap into our network, and reach out to your own. Your school already has support from funders like the Rebuild Texas Fund.



## **Receive the Goods.**

We order everything you requested and ship it straight to your school. Hello, packages!

# Why 75% of public schools use DonorsChoose.org



**It's easy** to get the exact items you need.

There's a strong **community of donors and partners** who are eager to fund projects, even from teachers they don't know.

It's a website **built for educators** to help them succeed in the classroom.

At DonorsChoose.org, **teachers are the experts.**

It works.



**\$704,035,405**  
*dollars raised*



**1,186,461**  
*projects funded*



**78,258**  
*schools participating*



**How to get started**

# donorschoose.org/teachers



Find a classroom to support

About us | Help

Sign in

Create an  
account  
affiliated with  
your school.

## Welcome to DonorsChoose.org!

Registering for an account takes a few minutes and consists of these steps:

- 1 Read and agree to our user agreement
- 2 Find your school
- 3 Enter teaching details
- 4 Enter contact information
- 5 Review
- 6 Take a brief tutorial

Already have an account? [Sign in](#)

Set up a teacher account



**Log in and  
create a project.**



## Welcome

*What type of project would you like to create?*

Standard

Student-led

Professional Development

Start here to request classroom materials or experiences for your students. You'll create a project for supplies, a class trip, or a visitor.

**Tell us about  
your students  
(and upload a  
classroom photo)**

### **Describe your students**

What makes your students special? Specific details about their background, your neighborhood, and your school are all helpful.

★ [See some good examples](#) ★

My students are awesome!

76 words to go

### **Classroom photo**

Make sure your photo captures the spirit of your classroom.

[Photo safety guidelines](#)



# Go shopping.

Most teachers  
keep it under  
\$600.

HI WHO WHAT WHY REVIEW

✓ ✓ ○ ○ ○


## Go shopping


*What do you need for your classroom?*


Supplies Class Trip Visitor(s)

This is just like online shopping! Click a link to one of the sites below to shop through our vendor directory.

[Where to find commonly requested items](#)

 **AKJ Education**  
Classroom libraries, books & collections, hands-on STEM, digital resources, makerspace, PD, and Spanish

 **Amazon Business**  
Education & teacher supplies, books, DVDs, CDs, furniture, eReaders, toys, computers, office supplies

 **Best Buy Education**  
Computers, tablets, eReaders, Apple products, projectors, a/v equipment, 3D printing, appliances



**Explain how  
these materials  
will make a  
difference.**

HI WHO WHAT **WHY** REVIEW

✓ ✓ ✓ ○ ○

Project details

*Make your project stand out from the crowd.*

---

**Project title**

Make it exciting and Capitalize It Like a Book Title.  
★ [See some good examples](#) ★

2 words minimum

---

**About your project**

How will these materials make a difference in your students' learning and improve their school lives?  
★ [See some good examples](#) ★



**That's 30 minutes.  
Then what?**

# What happens next?

Your project  
is reviewed  
and posted.

# What happens next?

Your project  
is reviewed  
and posted.

You share your  
project and we  
do, too.

# What happens next?

Your project  
is reviewed  
and posted.

You share your  
project and we  
do, too.

Your project  
gets funded,  
and we ship  
your items.

# What happens next?

Your project is reviewed and posted.

You share your project and we do, too.

Your project gets funded, and we ship your items.

Your students thank your supporters

# To summarize:



**1** Post a Project



**2** Get Funded



**3** Receive the Goods

1. The basics
- 2. Your project**
3. Pro tips







**Before you start  
thinking of your  
classroom...**

# What do you need for your classroom?

Notebooks

Seat sacks

Small group table

Soccer balls & nets

Printer

Books

Lab kits

Calculators

Field trip

Pencils

Standing desk

iPads



**Ideas?**

1. The basics
2. Your project
- 3. Pro tips**





A compelling  
project is  
**specific**

“

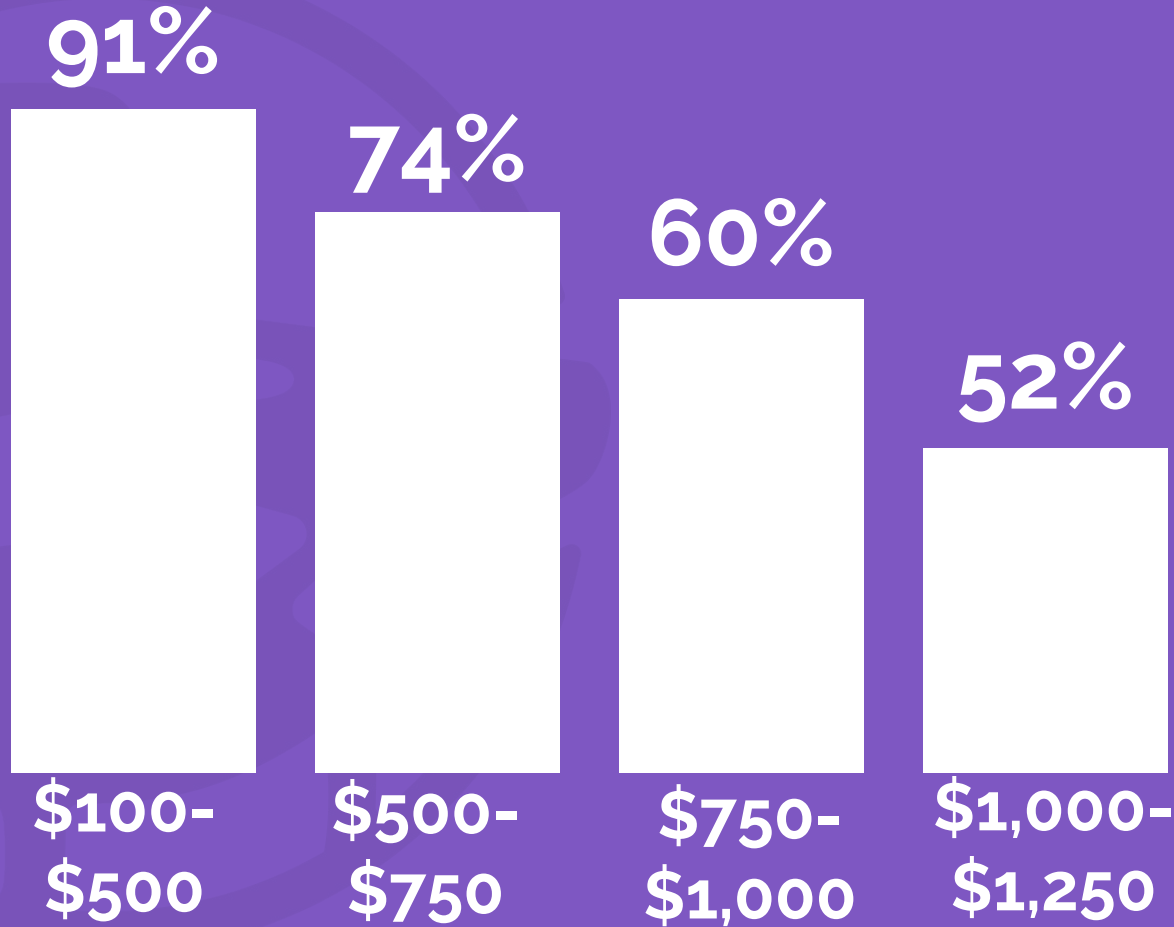
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Figure out how to break  
up your biggest-vision  
classroom needs down  
into **smaller projects.**

”

---

Mr. Stuart, 9th grade teacher  
47 funded projects



**Success  
Rate at  
Different  
Project  
Costs**



# The Mr. Stuart Strategy



“

**Comparison shop.** Shop around for classroom items (especially big-ticket items) just as you would for a major personal purchase.

”

Ms. Gionti, 11th grade teacher  
159 funded projects



### CDW-G

Computers, tablets, eReaders, audio/video equipment, software, projectors, cameras, electronics and more



### DICK'S Sporting Goods

Sporting goods equipment, team sports gear, apparel, footwear, and more!



### Frey Scientific

Science materials including lab equipment, subject-specific supplies, and elementary science kits



### Grainger

Tools, gardening supplies, sports, lab supplies, safety equipment, hardware, cooking supplies, and more



### Kaplan Early Learning Company

Books, textbooks, eBooks, digital courseware, audio books, teacher & study guides, Leapfrog products, games



### Lakeshore Learning Materials

Preschool & elementary materials including furniture, leveled readers, manipulatives, software, games

# \$4.29

# \$5.83

# \$13.79



### AKJ Education

Print, digital, audio books; collections & classroom libraries; digital courseware, teacher resources, games



### Amazon Business

Education & teacher supplies, books, DVDs, CDs, furniture, eReaders, toys, computers, office supplies



### Best Buy Education

Computers, tablets, eReaders, Apple products, projectors, a/v equipment, 3D printing, appliances



### Blick Art Materials

Art supplies including paints, ceramics, drafting & architecture, art books & media, printmaking, and more



### Britannica Digital Learning

Digital encyclopedias, dictionaries, almanacs, research guides, and non-fiction titles



### Carolina Biological Supply Company

Science & math materials for K-12 including AP resources, lab equipment, living & preserved specimens



# The Ms. Gionti Strategy

- 
- 1. Break it up**
  - 2. Get the best deal**



[donorschoose.org/match-offers](https://donorschoose.org/match-offers)



A compelling  
project is  
**persuasive**

“

---

To write about my project, I start by imagining a perfect day in my classroom. What are students doing? What are they learning? And finally, **what are the resources that got them there?**

”

---

Ms. Kind, 1st grade teacher  
10 funded projects



Do you remember the first book you just couldn't put down? You didn't care what was on TV, what was for dinner, or what time your bedtime was: you needed to finish the chapter. My students are bright, curious, and love to learn about new places and ideas--but so many of them don't have the basic literacy skills they need to be able to get really immersed in an author's world.

Most of my second-grade students are learning English as a second language, and they don't have many books at home. These phonics workbooks might not be Harry Potter, but they're the building blocks my students need so that they can one day get lost in the worlds of Hogwarts--and from there, unlock a passion for reading that will help them get to college and beyond.

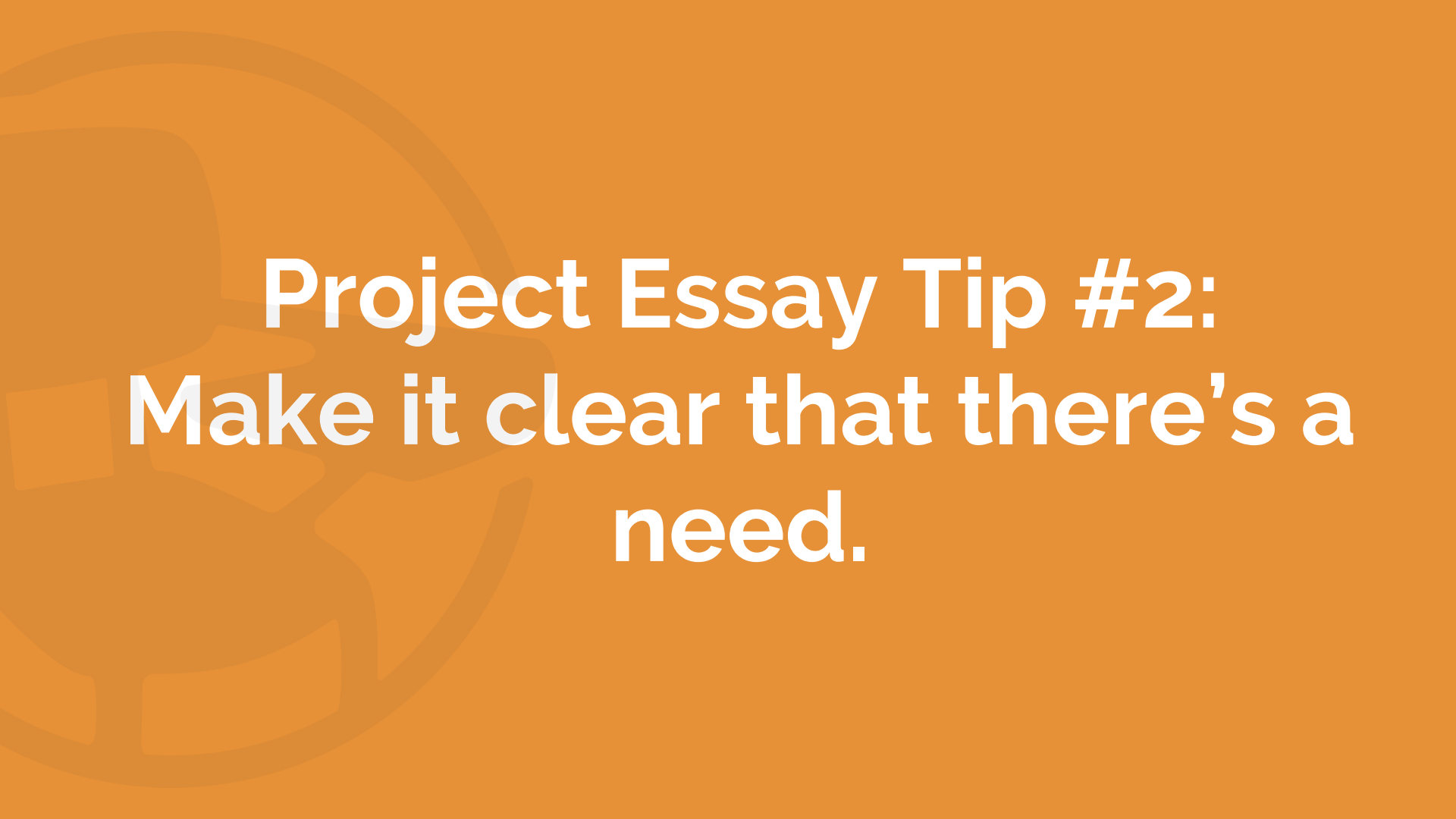


**Project Essay Tip #1:  
Tie it to the donor's  
classroom experiences.**



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**Project Essay Tip #2:  
Make it clear that there's a  
need.**



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**Project Essay Tip #3:  
Explain how this will make  
a difference.**



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# The Ms. Kind Strategy

“

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Sometimes the boring things are the most necessary. Rather than shying away from that fact, **I emphasize it**. I stress the necessity of basic items and explain: ‘This is why I need it, why it’s important to me, and why it’s important to my students.’

”

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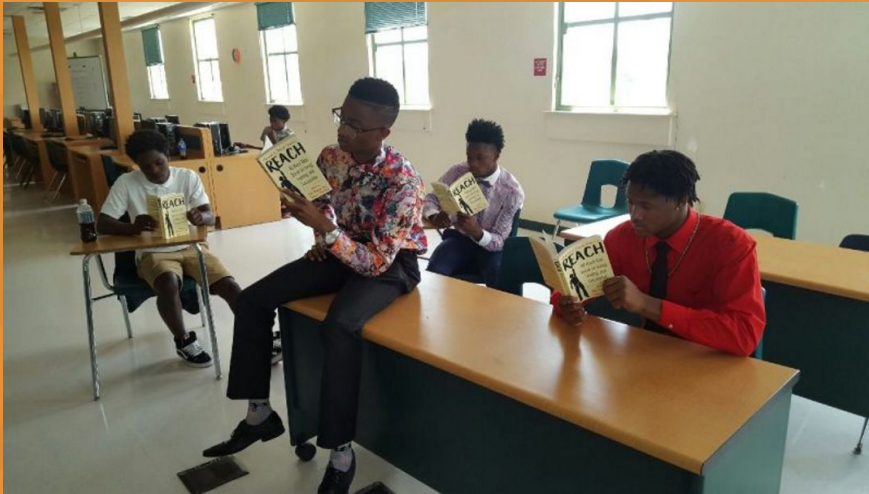
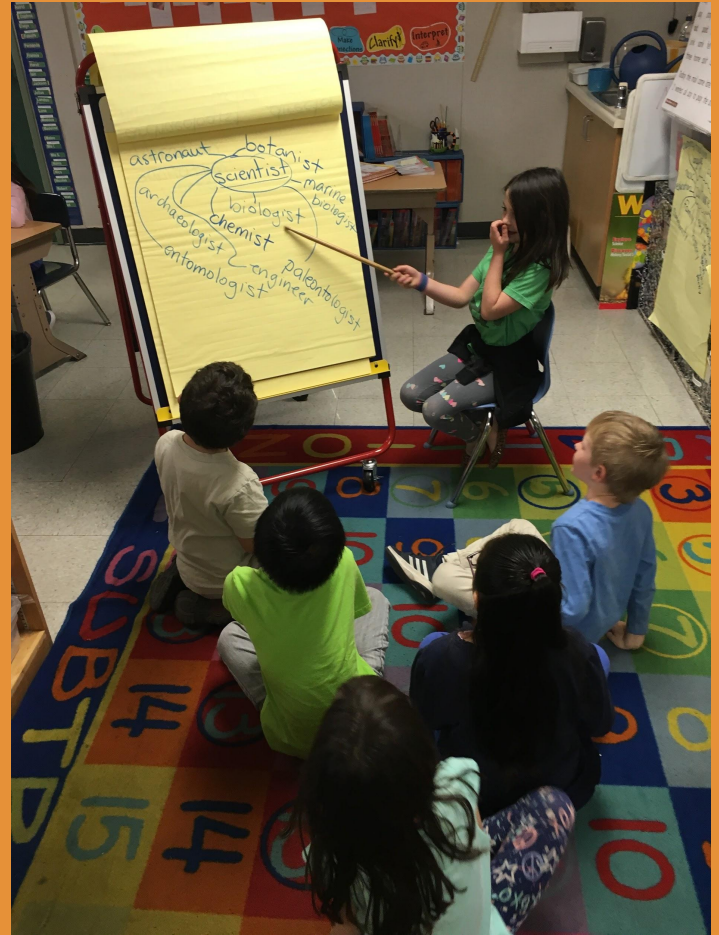
Ms. Lee, 2nd grade teacher  
14 funded projects



A person and a child are sitting on a colorful, patterned carpet. The person is holding an open book or project folder, and the child is pointing at it. The carpet features large, stylized letters in various colors, including 'F', 'G', 'H', 'M', and 'N'. The overall scene is brightly lit and colorful.

A compelling  
project is  
**personal**

**Pick a colorful, engaging  
classroom photo.**







**Choose a unique title.**



# The Mr. Helbig Strategy

**Stick to the  
Facts:  
Post-Its,  
Please!**

*vs.*


**Help a  
Classroom  
Get Basic  
Necessities**

**Straight  
Outta  
Comp-Time**

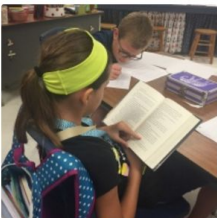
*vs.*

**We Need  
Chrome-  
books**





**Make sure your resource  
summary shines.**



## Real World Reading

“My students need a magazine subscription to Scholastic News.”

**Mrs. Baker**

*East Clarendon Middle High School • Turbeville, SC*



7 DONORS SO FAR

\$20 STILL NEEDED

7 DONORS

\$20 STILL NEEDED

\$255 GOAL

expires Dec 20

\$

Give



## Read to Succeed

“My students need books to improve their reading skills.”

**Ms. Lyons**

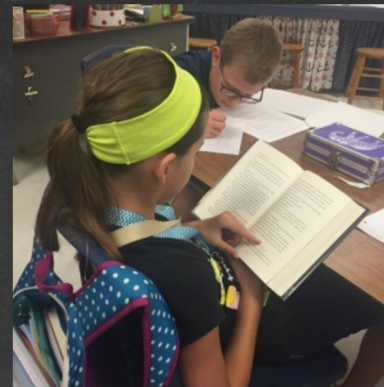
*Rolling Green Elementary*

## Real World Reading

*My students need a magazine subscription to Scholastic News.*

### My Students

I teach a variety of learners in a small, rural community. Unfortunately, being in a small district means that funds are often very restricted so we as teachers have to be creative in how we prepare and find supplies. My students are creative, exciting, and love a challenge! My students come



## Drama Technology Audition Videos

“My students need iPads to create college audition videos, audition reels, and Young Arts videos.”

**Mr. Cacciola-Price**

*Frank Sinatra High School of the Arts • Astoria, NY*

\$175 STILL NEEDED



**Thank every donor.**



**A donor** from New York gave

History is a subject that has a magic quality, because it will give you answers to questions you did not know existed.



**Mrs. Vanderslice** responded

"The deepest craving of human nature is the need to be appreciated." William James Thank you... for making me feel appreciated. My students will be happy and grateful that somebody believes in them. Thank you for your donation!

---

“

That network that surrounds you talks to each other and spreads that word that, for example, “Ms. Jones is in need of a class set of *The Outsiders*. I loved *The Outsiders*!” **It’s as simple as that.**

”

---

Mrs. Rzodkiewicz, 10th grade teacher  
13 funded projects



**Make your project stand  
out: with photo, title,  
resources, and thanks.**



A compelling  
project is  
**specific**  
**persuasive**  
**personal**



# Questions



# Teachers We Talked About

Mrs. Baugher

Ms. Gionti

Mrs. Rzodkiewicz

Mr. Stuart

Mr. Helbig



# [share.donorschoose.org/m3BDG](https://share.donorschoose.org/m3BDG)

Post a project with the link above by **July 17** to receive a first \$25 donation.

Katie Vallas, Teacher Success  
DonorsChoose.org

@katie-vallas