



# 2024-25 Foundation Annual Report

Annual Report presented by Jeff Condit - NWRESD Foundation President

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## Mission and Overview

**Mission:** We enhance and support learning opportunities for children with disabilities and those who are at risk from birth to age 21 in Clatsop, Columbia, Tillamook and Washington counties.

**Purpose of the NWRESD Foundation:** Northwest Regional ESD established the foundation in 2006 as a 501(c)3 as a way to support work outside the scope of typical operating budgets for public schools. This work includes awarding grants to educators and service providers in the NWRESD service area (Clatsop, Columbia, Tillamook and Washington counties) for classroom adapted tools, toys and materials, projects, outings, equipment for enhanced learning experiences. The foundation also fundraises for special projects such as playgrounds and other capital improvements and enables the ESD to receive grants for special projects from funders that require a nonprofit status.

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## Activity Highlights

- **November 2024:** The foundation received 107 grant requests worth nearly \$175,000 in funding. It was the most requested by educators in recent memory, indicating the need for additional funding for educators and their desire to do more on behalf of students and families.

- **December 2024:** The foundation board hosted a thank-you reception for NWRESD staff at the Washington Service Center. More than 50 staff attended to learn more about the foundation.
  - **February 2025:** The foundation awarded 31 grants worth \$36,000 to educators and therapists in Astoria, Beaverton, Forest Grove, Hillsboro, Nestucca Valley, Scappoose, Sherwood, Tigard-Tualatin and Tillamook. The projects ranged from \$250 to \$2,500. The majority of the projects aim to help students who are experiencing developmental, physical, behavioral and/or mental health challenges. Other projects support language development.
  - **March 2025:** The NWRESD Foundation held an in-person fundraiser on March 19 at the Miller Nash location in downtown Portland. More than 60 people attended and donated a total of \$24,000 to the foundation. Thank you to Miller Nash for sponsoring this event.
  - **May 2025:** The foundation Annual Meeting was held.
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## Foundation Awards

Since 2006, the Northwest Regional ESD Foundation has awarded an estimated 538 grants totaling an estimated \$536,356 to honor and meet its mission to make a difference in the lives of children with special needs.

- The foundation awarded 31 grants totaling nearly \$36,000 on Feb. 12. Educators from any of the 20 component school districts and NWRESD were informed and encouraged to apply for these grants. *Grant descriptions are included in Appendix A.*
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## Financial Review

- A. As in past years, Perkins & Co provided the foundation with a full financial review and tax preparation services at no cost. The in-kind value is \$10,000.
- B. Other Highlighted Incomes and Revenue
  - a. Annual Fundraiser: \$24,000
  - b. NWRESD staff payroll deductions and individual donations: \$5,125
  - c. Northwest Regional ESD In-Kind Donations
    - i. Staff hours - 144 hours
      1. Tracey Goldner - 120 hours
      2. Janet Bucio - 20 hours
      3. Kelsey Soltysiak - 4 hours

- ii. The ESD also donates various office supplies and subscription services to facilitate business activities (professional Zoom account, website hosting, news distribution, etc)
- d. Northwest Regional ESD Financial Contributions: \$10,000.

*Financial statements are available by request.*

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## Governance

Northwest Regional ESD Foundation Board of Directors (as of May 2025)

- Jeff Condit, President—Partner, Miller Nash, LLP
- Karen Foley, Past-President—Retired Executive, Orthopedic Institute; Providence Health and Services - Oregon
- Yuen Chin, Treasurer—Chief Financial Officer Willamette Dental Group
- Nancy Ford, Secretary—Retired Executive Director of Early Learning, Northwest Regional Education Service District
- Dr. Joseph Christy—Retired Director of Washington County Juvenile Department
- Grant Lawson, Member—Regional Vice President, Ricoh USA
- Miriam Meneses-Rios, Member—Regional Division Manager, Washington County Juvenile Justice Department
- Adaire Miller, Member—Retired Marketing and Development Consultant
- Dr. Katie Riley, Member—President, Washington County Kids

Northwest Regional ESD Board Liaison

- Christine Riley, Zone 1 (Gaston, Sherwood and Tigard-Tualatin school districts)
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## Plans for 2025-26

During the 2025-26 school year, the NWRESD Foundation plans to:

- host a fundraiser in March at the Miller Nash offices in downtown Portland.
- distribute grants to educators from Clatsop, Columbia, Tillamook and Washington counties during the 2025-26 school year.
- support students in the Diverse Educator Pathways program with scholarships.
- expand fundraising efforts to corporate donors.
- seek grant funding for specific projects that are yet to be determined.

- visit schools, special programs or local community events to learn, share information and develop stronger relationships with the educators who work with children with special needs in the NWRESA region.
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## Appendix A

Grant Title: Accessible Audio Learning for Diverse Needs in Social Emotional Learning and Language Development

**Total awarded:** \$1,710

**County:** Columbia and Washington Counties - Northwest Regional Education Service District

**Educator:** Ray Johnson

**Grant description:** This grant will provide six special audio players for students who attend a social emotional learning school in Beaverton. Students with disabilities such as autism, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder and other similar conditions can become easily distracted or overwhelmed with typical classroom technologies such as Chromebooks or smart devices.

Audio-only players help minimize those distractions while offering students content created specifically for them. The audiobooks, meditations, music and other educational resources on these devices will help students focus and improve their listening, language and comprehension skills.

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Grant title: Adapted Toys for Children with Motor and Communication Delays

**Total awarded:** \$2,500

**County:** Washington County - Northwest Regional Education Service District

**Educator:** Rikkie Schley

**Grant description:** When children with disabilities such as cerebral palsy, sensory impairments, autism, cognitive delays or neurological conditions are able to play with toys that are adapted for them, those experiences improve their ability to move, communicate and interact with others. Adaptive toys are cost-prohibitive for many families, so this project will build a library of loaner items such as bubble machines, fans and sing-along toys with large or touch-free switches.

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Grant title: American Sign Language Learning Tools for Spanish-Speaking Families

**Total awarded:** \$400

**County:** Clatsop, Columbia, Tillamook and Washington Counties - Northwest Regional Education Service District

**Educator:** Alex Hutchings

**Grant description:** The majority of children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing are born into families who can hear. In Clatsop, Columbia, Tillamook and Washington counties, many of those families speak Spanish at home. This grant will provide 20 copies of a book that teaches American Sign Language (ASL) in Spanish. The book is called ¡Dígalo en señas! (Say It In Signs) and includes descriptions and photographs so that families can learn how to communicate with their children and help them practice ASL.

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Grant title: Assistive Technology Tools for School-Based Students

**Total awarded:** \$863

**County:** Columbia County - Scappoose School District

**Educator:** Carli Tedford

**Grant description:** This grant will provide students with severe physical disabilities with specialized tools so they can participate in more activities at school. Children with physical disabilities have difficulty gripping classroom items such as scissors and pencils and playing with toys. This project provides adapted versions of those items so that children can participate in activities, explore new sensations and build their independence.

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Grant title: Bicycles Help Students Learn Work Experience and Mechanic Skills

**Total awarded:** \$1,500

**County:** Clatsop County - Astoria School District

**Educator:** Melissa Kinzig Utterback

**Grant description:** This grant will help support a bicycle maintenance program for students in Astoria High School's transition program. Funding for this grant will provide five new bicycles so the program can retire some of the oldest bikes in its fleet. The students will learn about basic bicycle maintenance and will service bikes that tourists rent out when visiting the region.

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Grant title: Bilingual Books Resource Bags

**Total awarded:** \$2,000

**County:** Clatsop, Columbia and Tillamook Counties - Northwest Regional Education Service District

**Educators:** Eva Manderson

**Grant description:** This project will provide bilingual and culturally diverse board books to about 120 child care programs in Clatsop, Columbia and Tillamook counties. Along with the books and a bag, child care providers will receive information about our Child Care Resource and Referral program and the free training, technical expertise and professional development the program offers.

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Grant title: Books for Buddies: Building Community, Connection and Literacy Skills Between PreK and 6th Grade Students

**Total awarded:** \$1,500

**Counties:** Washington County - Tigard-Tualatin School District

**Educator:** Daniel Seward

**Grant description:** This project will establish a read-aloud program between Kalapuya Early Learning Center and nearby Twality Middle School in Tigard. The program has the twin goals of helping preschoolers gain early literacy skills like recognizing letters and sight words and giving middle schoolers the opportunity to practice reading aloud while being role models for younger students. This grant will establish a library at the center and provide additional funding to maintain it over time.

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## Grant title: Boom Cards in Action: Enhancing Communication and Social Skills for Special Education

**Total awarded:** \$250

**County:** Washington County - Beaverton School District

**Educator:** Margo Svendsen

**Grant description:** This grant provides funding for dozens of interactive, digital task cards for special education students in Beaverton. These cards help students improve their ability to express themselves and understand what others are saying by taking them through various scenarios. The exercises help students build self-advocacy, collaboration, problem-solving and decision-making skills.

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## Doggie Deli by the Community Transition Program

**Total awarded:** \$448

**County:** Washington County - Forest Grove School District

**Educator:** Jennifer Cullers

**Grant description:** Forest Grove High School's Doggie Deli project gives students in a transition program the opportunity to make, package and deliver dog biscuits. The students learn how to go shopping, follow a recipe, package goods and deliver items to local stores. The proceeds from the biscuits will help pay for field trips and activities for the students throughout the school year.

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## Empowering Accessibility and Innovation: Bringing 3D Printing Technology to Our ESD

**Total awarded:** \$339

**County:** Washington County - Northwest Regional Education Service District

**Educator:** Ashley Schoonover Haq

**Grant description:** Adaptive equipment such as keyguards, mounts, grip support and braille labels are typically expensive, but 3D printers can significantly lower the cost. This grant will provide funding for materials so that specialists at NWRESA's early learning center in Beaverton can print custom-made items for students using an already-existing printer.

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Grant title: Enhancing Sensory Success: Providing Tools for Children with Sensory Processing Needs to Thrive in Early Learning Settings

**Total awarded:** \$2,496

**County:** Washington County - Northwest Regional Education Service District

**Educator:** Jasmine Choquette

**Grant description:** Children with sensory differences have trouble processing information from their senses (aka light, sound, taste, touch and smell). Giving children with these challenges access to sensory items made just for them significantly improves their ability to focus, self-regulate, interact with teachers and friends and participate in preschool activities like cutting and drawing. Funding for this grant will provide items such as a platform swing; resistance tunnel; foldable trampoline; scooter ramp; cuddle box and washable sensory spirals, stars and balls.

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Grant title: Family Connections and Shared Language

**Total awarded:** \$680

**County:** Washington County - Northwest Regional Education Service District

**Educator:** Lee Ann Banning

**Grant description:** This grant will provide funding for children who attend a Deaf and Hard of Hearing program in Hillsboro to visit the Oregon Zoo along with their families. The children will practice new signs related to the animals they are viewing and their parents will learn more about American Sign Language and how important it is for their child's development.

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Grant title: Gym Play Items

**Total awarded:** \$727

**County:** Washington County - Northwest Regional Education Service District

**Educator:** Sarah Buswell

**Grant description:** A gym at an early learning center in Beaverton will get new items so that preschoolers who attend the program will have more opportunities to play and explore together. Funding will provide sports balls and pumps and a net; floor mats and tiles; and a toddler gym set with a slide, climbing wall, ladder, net, bars and rings.

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Grant title: Height Adjustable Changing Table

**Total awarded:** \$1,747

**County:** Washington County - Northwest Regional Education Service District

**Educator:** Keri Esser

**Grant description:** This grant will provide an adjustable changing table for an early learning center in Beaverton. Having a table that is adjustable will enable a safer diaper-changing experience for the children and educators at the center.

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Grant title: Improving Formative Assessment for English Language Learner Students

**Total awarded:** \$400

**County:** Columbia County - Scappoose School District

**Educator:** Dawn Cowan

**Grant description:** This project will provide funding for eight licenses for a formative assessment called Flashlight360, which monitors English language development for students who are learning English. The students attend Sauvie Island School in Columbia County and the school doesn't currently have the ability to monitor their progress throughout the school year.

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Grant title: Indoor Gym

**Total awarded:** \$300

**County:** Washington County - Northwest Regional Education Service District

**Educator:** Youa Steffan

**Grant description:** This grant will provide three swivel chairs so children with autism, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder and other sensory issues can spin and satisfy their need to move in a safe way. The chairs also help children develop balance and coordination.

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Grant title: Let's Support Students with Communication and Meet Their Sensory Needs

**Total awarded:** \$2,500

**County:** Clatsop County - Astoria School District

**Educator:** Liz Visser

**Grant description:** This project will provide three iPads with cases and licenses for assistive technology software called TD Snap for a special education classroom at Astor Elementary School in Astoria. The specialized software is designed to help children who cannot verbally communicate verbally express their needs in other ways. Students will gain a new avenue to express themselves, which will improve their independence and reduce frustration.

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Grant title: Making Music Accessible for All

**Total awarded:** \$1,410

**County:** Columbia and Washington Counties - Northwest Regional Education Service District

**Educator:** Jennifer Allen

**Grant description:** Students who attend NWRESA's social emotional learning school in Beaverton do not have access to the same array of electives as peers who attend neighborhood schools. This grant will fund keyboards, keyboard stands, acoustic guitars and sheet music stands. In addition to learning how to play musical instruments and performing in front of others, students will learn about music theory, analysis and composition; creative expression; and critical listening.

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Grant title: Multi-Sensory Letter Boxes

**Total awarded:** \$370

**County:** Washington County - Northwest Regional Education Service District

**Educator:** Sara Wright

**Grant description:** This grant will provide an estimated 70 students who experience blindness or visual impairment with access to sensory-rich letter boxes for every letter in the English alphabet. Boxes will include large-print laminated letters, Braille symbols, a diverse range of objects beginning with that letter, highlighted wrapped letters to support students with cortical vision impairments and more. The boxes will be available to all teachers of the visually impaired at NWRESA and also teachers in our region.

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Grant title: Multilingual Library

**Total awarded:** \$1,500

**County:** Tillamook County - Nestucca Valley School District

**Educator:** Heidi Schultz

**Grant description:** This grant will provide funding for multilingual books and multimedia resources for the Nestucca Valley Early Learning Center. It will also provide literacy supports such as classroom anchor charts, which help reinforce key points and lessons for students by acting as visual reminders. The Nestucca Valley community is growing more diverse, so having books for children in various languages is important for all students -- both for those who speak languages other than English and students who are learning alongside English language learners.

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Grant title: Not All Flag Poles Are Alike

**Total awarded:** \$331

**County:** Washington County - Beaverton School District

**Educator:** Pat Carley

**Grant description:** The Beaverton STARS is a color guard team made up entirely of students with disabilities. This grant will provide new flag poles and glittery pom-poms for the team. The Beaverton School District has offered this free program for the past 18 years and much of the group's equipment is old and worn out.

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Grant title: Reading Academic Station - Out of this World Literacy Project

**Total awarded:** \$468

**County:** Washington County - Sherwood School District

**Educator:** Courtney Minor

**Grant description:** Funding for this grant will provide a reading curriculum for a special education classroom at Sherwood High School. The curriculum offers differentiated instruction for students at various levels and will help them improve their reading fluency (words per minute and accuracy) using independent work time, collaborative lessons and small group instruction.

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Grant title: Reading for Success

**Total awarded:** \$1,171

**County:** Washington County - Hillsboro School District

**Educator:** Eddie Lavelle

**Grant description:** This grant will create a high-interest library of graphic novels for freshmen who are part of a reading support program at Century High School. Students in the program struggle to read because of disabilities, language barriers and/or other challenges. The books cover relevant topics and feature culturally and linguistically diverse characters. Graphic novels like these are beneficial for two reasons:

- diverse students are more engaged with content when they see themselves and their own experiences represented in the stories they are reading and
  - reluctant and/or struggling readers or those with disabilities like attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder or dyslexia are more likely to find success with alternative book formats
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Grant title: Sensory Regulation Tools for School-aged Students

**Total awarded:** \$970

**County:** Columbia County - Scappoose School District

**Educator:** Carli Tedford

**Grant description:** This grant will provide sensory regulation tools for about 100 students in the Scappoose School District. Students with anxiety, autism spectrum disorder or sensory processing differences benefit from tools that help them expend energy and manage their emotions. When they have access to these items, they are more likely to stay on task, make safer choices and feel calm. Items for this project include sensory boards, bouncy bands, wobble chair feet attachments, sequin walls, weighted blankets, weighted animals, vibrating pillows and wobble stools.

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Grant title: Sensory Room Support for Students With Unique Needs to Help Them Better Access Their Learning

**Total awarded:** \$1,250

**County:** Washington County - Beaverton School District

**Educator:** Samantha Minter

**Grant description:** William Walker Elementary School will receive funding to create a sensory room for students who are experiencing various disabilities. The goal of the project is to provide a safe space for children to calm down when they are feeling overwhelmed. The grant will provide collapsible mats, sound-proof pads, weighted blankets, sensory chairs, crash pads/bean bags, LED color-changing lights, sensory wall and mats, headphones, foam floor pads, pool noodles and dry-erase boards.

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Grant title: Social Play Opportunities & Funding for THPRD Passes

**Total awarded:** \$310

**County:** Washington County - Northwest Regional Education Service District

**Educator:** Rain Daniel

**Grant description:** This project will sponsor two field trips to the Conestoga Recreation Center for 20 families whose babies or toddlers receive Early Intervention services from NWRESD. The families regularly attend an informal play group with other families in the program, but this outing gives them an opportunity to visit a public indoor gym with NWRESD specialists.

In her application, speech-language pathologist Rain Daniel wrote: "Some parents report that they have explored play groups in their communities (parks, paid indoor play spaces, music & art classes), but their child often runs away, does not play safely around other children or they feel judged by other parents with typically developing children. Cost is also a barrier for many. We want parents to feel confident in taking their children to public play spaces that are safe and supportive and offer opportunities for their children to play alongside typically developing peers."

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Grant title: Story Boxes: A Hands-On Literacy Experience

**Total awarded:** \$250

**County:** Washington County - Northwest Regional Education Service District

**Educator:** Melissa Nazal

**Grant description:** Story boxes will bring stories to life for children with vision loss. Every story box will include a story paired with a stuffed animal, toy or other sensory object that corresponds to the narrative. They'll also include instructions and a QR code to a read-aloud version of the story. The goal of the project is to create an immersive reading experience that will stimulate creativity and a love of books for children who are blind, deafblind or visually impaired.

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Grant title: Supporting Spanish Literacy and the Joy of Reading in Our School Libraries

**Total awarded:** \$2,000

**County:** Columbia County - Scappoose School District

**Educator:** Keely Nudo

**Grant description:** The Scappoose School District has very few Spanish-language books for students to check out. This grant seeks to change that. This project will provide 20-50 new books at all five schools in Scappoose. The books will be a variety of titles that support the curricula at the schools. When students see themselves in the stories they read, they are more likely to stay engaged and interested in the narratives.

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Grant title: The Play's The Thing

**Total awarded:** \$1,500

**County:** Washington County - Forest Grove School District

**Educator:** Juliet Prosser

**Grant description:** This grant will support 100 high school students who are learning English and are part of a theater class in Forest Grove. Funding will cover the licensing fees for some one-acts, which are 20- to 40-minute plays performed back-to-back. Other acts will be original plays written by the students. The grant will also provide funding for costumes and publicity for the performance. The goal of the project is to encourage creativity, leadership, confidence and culture-building all while helping students practice English.

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Grant title: Unified Performers 2025 Spring Production

**Total awarded:** \$2,500

**County:** Washington County - Forest Grove School District

**Educator:** Jill Carey

**Grant description:** Two hundred students who are part of a unified performance group at Forest Grove High School will take part in virtual and in-person theater performances. It can be difficult for students with disabilities to express themselves publicly, so the unified performers' experience offers students that outlet. Funding for the grant will cover script royalties and technical assistance with lighting and video.

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Grant title: Zen Den Wellness Center

**Total awarded:** \$1,455

**County:** Washington County - Tigard-Tualatin School District

**Educator:** Fawn Morosky

**Grant description:** This project seeks to create a comprehensive wellness center for students at Durham Elementary School in Tigard. The behavioral support team will manage the space and teach students and staff how to use the items and resources available there. Funds will cover

sensory items such as kinetic sand, a weighted blanket, a jellyfish lamp, lights and light covers, therapy putty, noise-canceling headphones, magnetic tiles and a liquid activity mat.