Virginia Rural Elementary Schools Receive Leonore Annenberg School Fund for Children Grants

New Playground and Technology for Rural Students

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Contact: Robert Mahaffey
(202) 822-3919 x117
Robert.mahaffey@ruraledu.org
www.ruraledu.org

WASHINGTON, DC–Two rural public elementary schools in Virginia will receive grants of $50,000 each from the Leonore Annenberg School Fund for Children, which provides educational resources to underfunded schools in rural communities.

The Leonore Annenberg School Fund’s 2015 grants provide resources such as interactive whiteboards and playground equipment; programs to increase proficiency in math and science; and an initiative using the arts to improve reading skills. The schools are chosen in consultation with the Rural School and Community Trust (Washington, D.C.).

Including the current group, the Leonore Annenberg School Fund has awarded more than $5.9 million over the last eight years to public elementary schools that are in financial need and serve a high concentration of children from families living in poverty.

“For several years, as a very grateful partner with the Leonore Annenberg School Fund for Children, the Rural School and Community Trust recommends deserving, high-need rural schools for these grants,” said Doris Terry Williams, Executive Director, Rural School and Community Trust. “Few programs are as intentional and generous in providing support for rural students and schools.”

The rural schools receiving 2015 grants are:

● **Central Sussex Elementary School**, Sussex, VA: A playground. An outdoor playground that would provide students with a safe space for structured and free play has long been on the wish list of Central Sussex, located in rural, south-central Virginia. The playground is seen as part of a broad fitness and healthy living agenda with outreach to families. More information about Central Sussex Elementary School may be found here: [http://www.edlinesites.net/pages/Sussex_Central_Elementary](http://www.edlinesites.net/pages/Sussex_Central_Elementary)
- **Totaro Elementary School**, Lawrenceville, VA: Classroom sets of Kindle Fire and Dell Pro tablets. Rural Brunswick County has little Internet access except through dial-up service. Kindle Fire tablets will let students download books and other applications for school or home; Dell Pro tablets are for in-school use. More information about Totaro Elementary School may be found here: [http://tos.brun.k12.va.us/](http://tos.brun.k12.va.us/)

“Through her legacy fund, Leonore Annenberg envisioned a gift that would keep on giving,” said Gail Levin, Ph.D., director of the program, administered by the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania. “For this reason, each award provides a resource that enables students to ‘shine brightly,’ and creates an engaging and inspiring school environment.”

The school fund is part of the Leonore Annenberg Scholarship, Fellowship and School Funds, which also provide four-year college scholarships to high school students who have overcome challenging circumstances, and career development support to emerging artists. As of June 2015, the Leonore Annenberg Funds will have committed more than $17 million to public schools across the United States, college students, and arts fellows. The 10-year program is in its eighth year.

**The Leonore Annenberg School Fund for Children**, a project of the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania, provides educational resources of immediate and direct value to schools serving children with great need. Visit [www.leonoreannenbergscholarships.org](http://www.leonoreannenbergscholarships.org).

**About Leonore Annenberg**: Leonore Annenberg (1918-2009) was U.S. Chief of Protocol for President Ronald Reagan and wife of the late Ambassador Walter H. Annenberg. Mrs. Annenberg established the grants to support her lifelong commitment to public service, education, and the arts. All grants are made on an invitation-only basis, in consultation with a partner organization. Visit [www.leonoreannenbergscholarships.org](http://www.leonoreannenbergscholarships.org) for more information.

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The **Rural School and Community Trust** is a national nonprofit organization addressing the crucial relationship between good schools and thriving communities. Our mission is to help rural schools and communities grow better together by involving young people in place-based learning linked to community and economic development; conducting research and advocating for appropriate educational policies and equitable funding for rural schools; improving rural access to highly effective educators; and increasing rural capacity to design, implement, and support appropriate innovations.