

Elmer G Biddick

CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

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Rachel J. Biddick - Vice President
Theodore D. Biddick - Secretary

Peggy J. Biddick
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GRANT APPLICATION

*Must be received in our office on or before the due dates below

Due Dates April 15th and October 15th

Date: April 12, 2024

Name of Organization (must match IRS 501(c)(3) designation) Mineral Point Unified School District

Address 705 Ross Street

City, State, Zip Mineral Point, WI 53565

Phone 608 987 0740

Person Responsible for the Grant Livia Doyle, livia.doyle@mp.k12.wi.us

Position in the Organization Micki Uppena, micki.uppena@mp.k12.wi.us

Organization's Purpose 4th Grade Teacher and Library Media Specialist

Grounded by our history as one of the oldest publicly supported schools in Wisconsin, MPUSD is the heart of a small community that educates and inspires our students for a bright future in a big world.

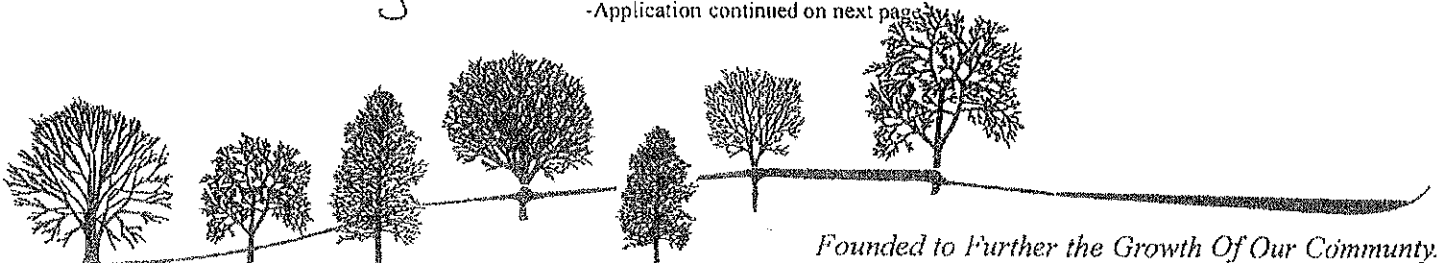
This application must include your organization's latest IRS Letter of Determination showing exemption and public support status. (Not required for units of Government & public schools).

Grant Request \$ \$3345.00

Describe the reason for this grant request in the space below:

The grant will be used to purchase three Tower Garden Growing Systems to create an indoor gardening program at Mineral Point Elementary School.

-Application continued on next page



Founded to Further the Growth Of Our Community.

Grant Application for Elmer G. Biddick Charitable Foundation

From Mineral Point Elementary School

Contact Persons:

Micki Uppena, Library Media Specialist, micki.uppena@mp.k12.wi.us

Livia Doyle, Fourth Grade Teacher, livia.doyle@mp.k12.wi.us

A. Supporting Information

1. Specific use of grant.

Grant funds would go towards the initial purchase of three Tower Garden Growing Systems and dollies. Each system comes with a reservoir, tower, seedling starter kit, mineral blend plant food, pump, timer, pH test kit, pH adjusters, LED grow lights, and water monitor.

Purchasing these growing towers for our students has been a goal of our school for quite some time. The initial investment of this project is big, but we believe the learning outcomes and level of student engagement far outweigh the investment. The use of these towers and learning how to grow food indoors is a project that will continue year after year, lasting the entirety of the school year from September through May.

This project will directly impact the learning of 360 elementary school students (4k-fifth grade) each year by providing them with hands-on lessons and learning opportunities so that young students have a better understanding of the life cycles of plants, how produce is grown and harvested, and how technology is used in agriculture. Staff will work closely with students in harvesting the produce that is grown from our towers. Students will learn to wash, cut, and prepare the produce so that it is ready for consumption. We plan to have the produce available in our school's cafeteria to supplement our school's lunch program. Students and staff will be able to sample fresh herbs, lettuce, and other veggies that the students will grow and harvest from these growing systems.

The HOME Growing System from Tower Garden will easily grow greens and herbs indoors through all seasons. Students will learn how Aeroponics can increase produce production by 30%, three times faster, and with 98% less water! As an advanced form of hydroponics, aeroponics is the process of growing plants in an arid or moist environment rather than in soil. Aeroponic systems use water, liquid nutrients, and a soilless growing medium to quickly and efficiently grow more colorful, tastier, better-smelling, and incredibly nutritious produce. Because there is no soil, students will not need to dig in the dirt, worry about weeding, and there are no concerns about ground pests or contaminated soil. Each Tower Garden HOME Growing System can grow up to 32 plants at a time.

The Tower Garden's vertical design uses 90% less space than traditional gardening. Our library and loft areas in the elementary school were built in 2021. The building design contains a main street area with a roofline of skylights. These open and beautiful spaces are utilized by all students and staff in our school and will serve as the perfect space to house our towers so that everyone can enjoy and learn about growing food indoors.

Our students will have hands-on lessons with the Tower Gardens exploring the areas of plant growth, plant research, mineral nutrition, plant fertilization, pH, and much, much more. Students will also be able to practice proper food science and food preparation techniques such as safety and sanitation, and proper harvesting techniques. Students will be recording data on plant growth success

and failures. It is also our hope to connect our students with students from other school districts to learn together through Zoom. We plan to have our students share their learning through many digital platforms. This project lends itself to many community agriculture connections. Community leaders will visit to share their expertise in the areas of gardening, food preparation, and food marketing and sales.

2. Time schedule.

This project will start at the beginning of the 2024-2025 school year. Students will work together to build, assemble, and set each grow tower up for production. Vegetables and herbs will be ready for harvest within 4 weeks after planting. Daily maintenance and record-keeping will provide students with many leadership opportunities. The gardens will be in use throughout the entire school year and will continue to be utilized year after year.

3. Other sources of funding.

We have applied for another grant hoping to fund the equipment needed to harvest and make the vegetables ready for consumption in the school cafeteria. Sustaining the Tower Garden Systems financially has been a priority. The maintenance costs are low. Many community members support our outdoor garden and we are confident that their support will benefit the indoor garden by providing seeds. The school library budget will be used to purchase any necessary materials we may need to run this project year after year.

4. Describe the effect of postponing your request to another time.

Starting an indoor garden is a priority for us. We believe continuing our efforts at growing food indoors will complement the work of our outdoor school garden perfectly. If our request isn't funded, we will continue to look for grant opportunities.

5. Describe who, when, how, and where will the effect of this grant be felt.

Students in our school thrive with hands-on learning. This project will do just that. Students will be able to grow lettuce, herbs, and other small vegetables in the library, a common shared space among everyone! Students and staff at the elementary school will be able to eat fresh herbs, lettuce, and other veggies that the students grow and harvest from the growing systems through the school lunch program.

B. Your organization's history, activities, services, and composition.

Grounded by our history as one of the oldest publicly supported schools in Wisconsin, Mineral Point Unified School District is the heart of a small community that educates and inspires our students for a bright future in a big world. Mineral Point Elementary School educates 360 students in grades 4K through fifth grade. Teaching students about the importance of the agriculture industry is very important to our school. Listed below are some of the things our school has done or is currently doing to incorporate agriculture into the classroom.

1. In 2017, Mineral Point fourth grade students spearheaded the idea of making cheese the State Dairy Product of Wisconsin. This idea became a bill which was signed into law four months after becoming a bill by Governor Scott Walker.
2. Each spring and fall students are involved in a garden day. The days give students opportunities to prepare the garden for planting, learn about composting, plant seedlings, learn from garden experts, and prepare the garden for the winter months.

3. A summer garden schedule is sent out to school families and community members so that the garden is maintained and food is harvested when ready.
4. Our school has our very own worm farm! Students learn about the importance of worms and the many benefits they provide in creating healthy soil.
5. Many teachers in our building team up with Wisconsin Farm Bureau's Ag in the Classroom Project. Teachers find creative ways to incorporate agriculture lessons and activities into the subject areas they are teaching.
6. Currently, we are incubating eggs in our school's library so that all students can experience the chicken life cycle firsthand.