



Grant Success Story: Wyomissing Elementary

Stacey Hughes, the STEM Coordinator for Wyomissing Elementary, and the help of the District's Administration wanted to start a STEAM program, but were in need of funding for materials. The original goal was \$15,000 in grant funding. Stacey began researching different grants and ways to get the community involved in fundraising.

First, Wyomissing Elementary received a small mini-grant from their local PTA last fall to purchase one Wonder Pack to determine if the robotics solution was the right fit for their students and school. Dash and Dot were utilized with the Gifted and Talented students in small groups and were exposed to the rest of the school for their Science Day. Following the "trial period" with the Wonder Pack, Wyomissing Elementary decided that these robots would be a perfect fit to their STEAM program. Stacey Hughes and the Wyomissing Area Education Foundation grant writer worked together in the Spring to finalize a grant application. They were awarded the \$8,000 from a local company, Schneider Electric Company. The entire process took about a month from planning to writing to submitting the grant.

Now Stacey's goals are focused on how to implement and adapt their vision of what STEAM looks like in their elementary school to meet the needs of their students and to plan for future funding to extend and support the STEAM program.

Stacey said the challenge in grant writing isn't necessarily the actual application, but finding the right grant and/or the right company to fund the project. "There are so many companies that will graciously give money to help with STEAM initiatives, but it's important to find the right company to fit the goals of your school and students in the 21st century. Writing the grant takes time, but is not hard. There are companies, especially engineering firms and startups, looking to donate to STEAM initiatives, finding the right one is the difficult part," said Stacey.