

Parkside Elementary Robotics Grant

The Parkside Elementary Library desires to increase student opportunities for hands-on learning and exposure to robotics by incorporating a variety of robotic devices into their Makerspace where students will have the opportunity to explore robotics and apply concepts learned in the classroom because student's 21st century skills such as technical literacy, creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration are needed to be competitive in the future workforce.

Parkside Elementary is located in the suburbs of Austin, Texas. Many families from our school have at least one parent working in the technology industry. The school 960 students enrolled speaking more than 30 different languages. The school does not receive district funds for the Makerspace tools housed in the library. Funding this project will help our students attain and expand necessary technology application skills through a variety of robotics tools in order to be more knowledgeable and competitive in this area.

The school is requesting \$7,000 to purchase 6 Botley robots, 6 Dash & Dot sets, and 6 Ozobots. The request also includes funding for 16 substitute days so the staff (one teacher from each grade level, a principal, and the librarian) can have two dedicated days to explore and plan ways to incorporate the robots into curriculum using state standards. All of the robots requested are highly rated on multiple educational technology websites and have been recommended by our district technology advisors. The robots will be used during weekly Makerspace time in small groups of 3-4 students to complete lessons developed by the teacher group.

It is our goal for students to be able use the robots independently before sixth grade in order to master state technology standards. Adding robots to the MakerSpace will be a chance for our learning community to be exposed to new ideas, especially in terms of future careers, and a chance to develop new technological skills while learning to communicate with peers individually and in teams. We will be able to gauge the success of the robotics addition using student, teacher and parent surveys.

The project director and point of contact will be the Parkside Elementary school librarian, Chante Dennis. She can be contacted at 512-471-4000 or chanteb@hotmail.com. All of the robots acquired will be housed in the library and inventoried through the library system.