

# Media Release

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## Bronson Schools Receive Educational Grants

Bronson, MI – Bronson Community Schools educators were recently selected to receive a focus grant of \$4,750 and a \$750 mini grant from the Guido A. and Elizabeth H. Binda Foundation administered through the Calhoun Intermediate School District. A committee of educators from Barry, Branch, and Calhoun school districts selects the grants through a competitive process.

Bronson's "Focus on Vocabulary" project was awarded the one focus grant in late November. The program supports the principle that for students to be successful in almost any subject they need to be proficient in reading and understanding the text. With the funds, the school purchased 21 Chromebooks to be hosted by 5 teachers in various subjects: language arts, science, social studies, and foreign language. Along with the Chromebooks, the online software Quizlet is being utilized to create quizzes, games, flashcards, and other tools for students to use in the classroom and anywhere they have an internet connection.

Language Arts teacher Sarah Medema began using the Chromebooks two weeks ago. Students in her class are leading literature circles, in which they choose 40-60 vocabulary words from books they are currently reading. The students use the Chromebooks to review the vocabulary words and discuss the text. "In the short time we've been using the technology, the depth of conversation has changed. The students are excited to use the technology available, and they have a better comprehension of the text they are reading because of it."

"Our Chromebook host teachers have unlocked a new level of educational opportunities for students," says Principal Wes McCrea. "Not only is this a tool for students and teachers, but parents can encourage their student to log-on and work on vocabulary in a range of subjects. If we expect our students to be able to read and digest difficult texts we must give them the ability to decode and understand what they read. Ideally this project will impact all of our students in grades 6 through 12, and students will graduate with a mastery of vocabulary and a powerful tool they can use the rest of their lives."

The mini grant “Reaching Readers Through Sports” was awarded to Medema to help students become better readers by purchasing more than 70 sports-related texts for her classroom library. “My students are excited to be able to have access to sports-related texts since so many of them are involved in or follow sports around the world. Students are more likely to read something they are interested in. This project will help them become better readers and develop the problem-solving skills necessary for more complex reading as they progress through school.”

About the Binda Foundation: The Guida A. and Elizabeth H. Binda Foundation is a private foundation. Guido was an architect specializing in school design. For over 40 years he invested his time and resources throughout southwest Michigan, improving education and the quality of life for many. Elizabeth was a former educator who was passionate about enhancing learning for all children and youth, exemplified in the Foundation’s accomplishments. The Bidas lived in Battle Creek. One focus grant and 22 mini grants were provided by the foundation, totaling just over \$25,000.

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*Photos: Students in Sarah Medema’s Language Arts class use the grant-purchased Chromebooks to review vocabulary and lead literature circle discussions.*