Report # 15-01
January 6, 2015

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
REPORT TO COUNCIL

SUBJECT: ACE GRANT PROPOSALS - 2015

BACKGROUND: The Advisory Committee on Education recently solicited grant proposals for the 2014-2015 school year. The budget available to be allocated to ACE grants is $9500.00.

ACE solicited grant proposals for up to $500 each from the seven ACE core schools: Greenbelt Elementary, Springhill Lake Elementary, Magnolia Elementary, Robert Goddard French Immersion School, Turning Point Academy, Greenbelt Middle and Eleanor Roosevelt High School. Proposals were welcome either from the school itself or from the school's parent-teacher organization. There was no limit to the number of proposals that could be submitted from each school. The proposals were due on November 3, 2014. The proposals were for activities that will take place between February 15, 2015 and the end of the 2015-2016 school year.

This year, Council approved a $2000 increase over last year's ACE grant budget, as ACE had requested. Last year there were 17 proposals approved; this year ACE recommends approval of 20 proposals. With 4 proposals received from RGFIS (a new ACE core school), a proposal from TPA (which has never submitted an ACE grant proposal before) and continued strong interest from the other schools, ACE believes that the budget increase was well justified. ACE thanks Council for continuing to support ACE's programs and Greenbelt's schools.

The ACE Grants Program will support activities that enhance or enrich school-based activities. Some examples include supporting field trips, bringing an activity into the school, or purchasing equipment and materials for a special project. The grants are NOT intended to underwrite items that are normally supplied by the school system such as copier paper, etc.

In previous years, ACE has organized a grant-writing workshop, sometimes in partnership with the Greenbelt Community Foundation (GCF). This year, the GCF ran a workshop on their own and ACE decided not to run an additional workshop.

ACE runs clubs at two ACE core schools, with a Reading club at SHLES and Science and Reading clubs at MES. The clubs, which are not funded by the grants program, provide some balance in ACE programs between the schools in different locations throughout the city.

FINDING: ACE received 33 proposals from 6 schools for a total request of $15,992.10. Proposals were submitted from Greenbelt, Springhill Lake and Magnolia Elementary Schools, Turning Point Academy, Robert Goddard French Immersion School and Eleanor Roosevelt High School. ACE did not receive any proposals from Greenbelt Middle School. ACE notes that although TPA has been eligible to apply for ACE grants for several years, this is the first year that a proposal from TPA has been received.

Selection of the proposals for funding is made by the Greenbelt City Council based on the input from ACE. This table is a summary of ACE recommendations. The details are below.

#	School	Title	Request	Recommend
1	TPA	Growing Your Garden Along with Growing Your Child	$ 500.00	$ 500.00
2	SHLES	Bike Safety Items	$ 500.00	$ -
3	SHLES	Bike Safety Program	$ 500.00	$ -
4	SHLES	Bilingual Books Bonanza	$ 500.00	$ 500.00
5	SHLES	Patuxent Research Refuge Trip	$ 500.00	$ 500.00
6	RGFIS	Prix Filant	$ 464.51	$ -
7	RGFIS	Art for the Environment	$ 500.00	$ 500.00
8	RGFIS	Beanbags, Bears and Books	$ 457.97	$ 457.97
9	RGFIS	Green City Challenge - Lego Robotics	$ 500.00	$ 500.00
10	ERHS	9th Grade Academy	$ 500.00	$ 500.00
11	ERHS	Colored smoke effect for "Aladdin and the Jinn"	$ 410.00	$ 410.00
12	ERHS	AP Capstone Program - Human Geography Technology	$ 499.00	$ -
13	ERHS	9th Grade Academy Parent Nights	$ 500.00	$ 500.00
14	ERHS	ERHS Journalism Print Edition of The Raider student newspaper	$ 500.00	$ 500.00
15	ERHS	Victory Garden	$ 500.00	$ 500.00
16	MES	Magnolia's Outdoor Hands-On Classroom	$ 500.00	$ 500.00
17	MES	Healthy School Initiative	$ 495.83	$ -
18	MES	The Hollow Stump Performance	$ 486.00	$ 486.00
19	MES	Technology	$ 500.00	$ -
20	MES	Cultural Performing Arts School Assembly	$ 500.00	$ 500.00
21	MES	Creating Quality Small Group Centers with iPad	$ 498.00	$ -
22	MES	Phonics Blitz	$ 498.00	$ 498.00
23	GES	Read Alouds in Classroom Centers	$ 500.00	$ 500.00
24	GES	Positive Behavior Intervention Program (PBIS)	$ 400.00	$ -
25	GES	Boggle/Scrabble Tournament Fundraiser	$ 500.00	$ -
26	GES	Literacy Day May 2015 Culminating Event	$ 500.00	$ -
27	GES	Books! The Magic is Real	$ 500.00	$ 500.00
28	GES	Compost Tumbler	$ 500.00	$ -
29	GES	SMART Boards for Music Initiative	$ 500.00	$ -

30	GES	Supplies for the Art Program of GES	$ 500.00	$ 500.00
31	GES	I-Ready	$ 500.00	$ -
32	GES	Chess Club Games	$ 282.79	$ 282.79
33	GES	Class set of ukuleles	$ 500.00	$ 500.00
		Totals	$ 15,992.10	$ 9,634.76

Proposal Review

ACE met on Tuesday, December 2, 2014, to consider the proposals. For each proposal, the committee listed the strengths and weaknesses and assigned a numerical score on a 100-point scale. The points were assigned according to the following scale:

- Intrinsic merit (40%) – Will the proposed project enhance or enrich school-based activities? Does it meet the criteria listed in the ACE grants call?
- Budget (30%) – Is the proposed budget realistic? Is the budget well justified?
- Benefit to students (20%) – Will the program provide wide benefit to the students in the school, or will it just benefit a few students?
- Proposal format (10%) – Did the proposal follow the proposal rules, including proposal length, project schedule, requisite signatures, etc.? (Note: severe violation of the proposal rules could result in rejection.)

On the basis of this careful consideration, the committee makes the following recommendations:

Proposals:

1) Growing Your Garden Along with Growing Your Child. TPA. Recommended funding: $500 (full funding.)

Summary: Turning Point Academy has requested funds to expand its School Garden program, making the gardens larger and adding new crops, particularly vegetables that have not been grown previously in the garden. The garden serves as a laboratory where the children learn about plants, the environment, and nutrition. The children also will work in the garden, providing an opportunity for physical activity, and working cooperatively. The proposal requests funding for gardening tools, soil, and seed packets.

Strengths: The program envisioned by TPA offers a variety of benefits to the students, including perspectives on biological and environmental sciences, physical activity, social responsibility, and healthy habits. The garden affects all students at the school and gives the teachers an opportunity to incorporate the lessons from the garden into a wide variety of lesson plans.

Weaknesses: None.

2) Bike Safety Items. SHLES. Recommended funding: $0 (no funding.)

Summary: Purpose of this grant is to purchase a set of 30 bike helmets as well as chains and locks to store bikes.

Strengths: This grant would help students learn the importance of wearing helmets while riding their bicycles. The bikes used in this project would be stored at the school.

Weaknesses: The proposal did not have a budget. It was linked to a second proposal (Bike Safety Program), in violation of the ACE grant rules.

3) Bike Safety Program. SHLES. Recommended funding: $0 (no funding.)

Summary: The goal of this grant is to obtain bicycles of different sizes to be used to teach students at Springhill Lake Elementary how to ride.

Strengths: Some students at SHL do not learn to ride when they are young and are embarrassed by their peers as they age. This program would help students learn to ride bikes safely.

Weaknesses: The proposal is very short and not well focused. It is not clear how the money would be spent as no budget is given. Also, this proposal is coupled with another also asking for $500. Coupling proposals to request a total larger than $500 is not permitted by the rules of the solicitation.

4) Bilingual Book Bonanza. SHLES. Recommended funding: $500 (full funding.)

Summary: While Springhill Lake ES has a significant population of Spanish-speaking ESL students, the library contains only two Spanish-English bilingual books. This proposal will purchase an additional 30 such books for use by the school community. Students will be able to share these books with parents who do not read English. Parental involvement in reading activities has been shown to increase literacy rates. The new resources will allow families who speak Spanish at home to share in these benefits.

Strengths: Spanish-speaking ESL students will have additional materials to help with English language development. Spanish-speaking parents who do not read English will be able to be more involved in their child's education. The books are durable and will provide a long-lasting benefit.

Weaknesses: None.

5) Patuxent Research Refuge Trip. SHLES. Recommended funding: $500 (full funding.)

Summary: This field trip is for the 4th grade students to learn about Life Science through the daily activities of a sea otter. The 2 day trip will include a hike through marked trails at the refuge, a lesson on the day in the life of a sea otter and they will learn about the history of the park. Although entry is free, the transportation needs to be covered.

Strengths: The visit to the Patuxent Research Refuge will be a great introduction to the Life Science unit which will cover ecosystems, food chains and webs, habitats and adaptations. This is also a complement to the Social Studies content area as well.

Weaknesses: None.

6) Prix Filant. RGFIS. Recommended funding: $0 (no funding.)

Summary: The Prix Filant (Shining Star) program would recognize 32 students for good behavior, based on PBIS, and provide a breakfast for them and their parents as well as certificates for the students.

Strengths: The strength of PBIS lies in training teachers to routinely seek and recognize good behavior in their classrooms. This would recognize students who would not normally otherwise be recognized and encourage their parents to get involved in the school.

Weaknesses: The majority of the budget was allocated to providing a breakfast for the recognized students and their parents. The reviewers felt that providing food for the ceremony was not a good use of ACE grant funds, as there were other compelling proposals. The certificates were a minor part of the proposed budget.

7) Art for the Environment. RGFIS. Recommended funding: $500 (full funding.)

Summary: Students at the Robert Goddard French Immersion School would have an opportunity to paint murals on recycling bins located throughout the school. The project would have a two-fold benefit, teaching students how to use basic elements of art while enhancing the recycling program. Children in two after-school clubs would work together to create the artwork on the recycling bins. Everyone in the school would enjoy the decorative bins and observe how art is an integral part of our everyday world.

Strengths: The combined effort of two after-school clubs would emphasize the importance of maintaining our environment and demonstrate the value of art to everyone in the school. The students who are participating directly in painting the murals on the recycling bins will learn cooperation and gain perspective in the values of each of the two clubs. The public display of the importance of art and the environment will reflect the values of the school as they settle into their new facility at the former Greenbelt Middle School. The proposal included a detailed budget.

Weaknesses: None.

8) Beanbags, Bears and Books. RGFIS. Recommended funding: $457.97 (full funding.)

Summary: The media center in the former Greenbelt Middle School building is configured for a middle-school population. This proposal will add inviting spaces for the elementary school students. It will provide a start-up for programs and projects that encourage wider reading and inspire underachieving students. The idea is to make students more comfortable and relaxed with a literacy rug, beanbags and teddy bears. The grant will be used to purchase the rug and beanbags; the bears will be donated by parents. Middle school students will be matched with younger children in a book club format.

Strengths: This project will increase parental involvement supporting literacy and inspire more student interest in reading. Involvement of older children helps model good reading habits and gives support and encouragement to younger readers as they do more reading for enjoyment and as a way to improve their reading skills. Younger children are encouraged to bring teddy bears and parents also will donate teddy bears for the reading space.

Weaknesses: None

9) Green City Challenge Lego Robotics. RGFIS. Recommended funding: $500 (full funding.)

Summary: The grant will expand the Robert Goddard French Immersion involvement in the Lego Robotics league to the younger age group of 6-9 years old. The theme of the upcoming spring Lego effort is Green City Challenge, which aligns with the Green School initiative at Robert Goddard.

Strengths: Involvement in Robotics will promote STEM education and provide feeders for the High School teams. The theme this year is environmental, including solar electricity. The proposal is well-written and detailed and includes appropriate references for assertions. A project timeline is given and expected outcomes are provided. A clear budget is given as well.

Weaknesses: none

10) 9th Grade Academy. ERHS. Recommended funding: $500 (full funding.)

Summary: The 9th Grade Academy is a newly established program at ERHS which serves 9th graders identified as being at risk of not progressing from the 9th to the 10th grade. Students are provided with both academic and social support. This proposal will help fund a trip to Terrapin Adventures, a team-building ropes course, for all 50 members of the 9th Grade Academy. The course is designed to encourage teamwork and improve group communication and cohesiveness. It will give the students a chance to work together in creative problem-solving.

Strengths: As many of the students in this program come from low-income families, this will be a unique experience for them. This type of activity helps students learn that they can succeed at difficult tasks. Enhanced communication and trust will provide additional benefits in the classroom. The grant will fund 40% of the cost with the remainder of the money coming from ERHS and the students, who will be asked to contribute a small amount to make sure they are invested in the program.

Weaknesses: None.

11) Colored smoke effect for "Aladdin and the Jinn." ERHS. Recommended funding: $410 (full funding.)

Summary: ERHS has a very active drama department. The drama 3 class includes advanced acting techniques and technical theatre, which will culminate in a performance of "Aladdin and the Jinn" in March. The show is a modern retelling of the classic story of Aladdin, incorporating references to conflicts in the modern Middle East. The show also includes a genii and elements of magic, which will be enhanced with a combination fog machine and changing colored lights, purchased by this grant.

Strengths: the inclusion of advanced technical theatre provides synergy between the drama department and the school's Science and Technology program. The purchased fog machine can also be used in future productions. The proposal includes a well-documented budget. The show itself incorporates elements of literacy, current affairs and research, as well as acting and technical theatre.

Weaknesses: none.

12) AP Capstone Program- Human Geography Technology. ERHS. Recommended funding: $0 (no funding.)

Summary: This grant is for the purchase of an iPad to be used with the AP Human Geography classes.

Strengths: There are many classroom activities that would be simpler to do with an iPad instead of a PC, and which would enhance the learning of these AP students.

Weaknesses: Although more convenient, the iPad will not provide any lessons not already available with a PC. The iPad was primarily for the use of the teacher and would not directly benefit the students. AP Human Geography, as a challenging course, has a limited number of students who will benefit from this purchase.

13) 9th Grade Academy Parent Nights. ERHS. Recommended funding: $500 (full funding.)

Summary: Eleanor Roosevelt High School plans to organize meetings between school staff and parents of students who are at risk of repeating ninth grade. To facilitate the meetings and provide a positive experience for the parents, ERHS proposes to purchase food to be served at the last two quarterly meetings of the 2014 – 2015 school year.

Strengths: The proposed effort addresses an at-risk population of students. Parents can contribute significantly to their child's success, but some parents lack the necessary resources or knowledge. Parents of students in the 9th Grade Academy program have asked for help from the school in areas of homework, technology, and preparing for college. Providing food at these meetings increases the likelihood that the parents will attend, which will increase the overall effectiveness of the program.

Weaknesses: The proposal lacks a detailed budget, although the amount requested is reasonable to provide food for the two meetings. Some reviewers were skeptical of the use of an ACE grant primarily to provide food for parents and students. However, after discussion, the committee concluded that encouraging parental involvement for this particular at-risk population justified this use of the grant money.

14) Journalism Print Edition of *The Raider* Student Newspaper. ERHS. Recommended funding: $500 (full funding.)

Summary: The journalism program which produced *The* Raider student newspaper is now a class. This class provides students with experience in writing, photography, web design and management. The grant would be used to publish a printed edition of the paper as a supplement to the weekly online editions.

Strengths: On-line journalism and printed journalism have substantial differences, and this grant would give the students experience with both. The paper edition would give student writers tangible clips for their college application portfolios as well as valuable experience of layout design for a print format. College and major newspapers usually have both print and online editions so *The Raider* print edition would be excellent experience for students who plan on journalism as a career. Students are affected by this publication directly as regular writers and photographers, layout designers, and editors but also are involved as part of numerous features and stories throughout the year covering sports, student life and many school events.

Weaknesses: This project supports only a small part of total school-based activities and it does not directly impact most of the large school population.

15) Victory Garden. ERHS. Recommended funding: $500 (full funding.)

Summary – Funds are sought to buy compost bins for the Victory garden at ERHS and to purchase materials to grow flowers.

Strengths – The compost bins would be available to all students in the cafeteria. The Victory garden club involves over 100 students in after school activity. The proposal details the expenses well for the compost bins.

Weaknesses – more detail could have been provided on the costs for the flower materials.

16) Magnolia's Outdoor Hands-On Classroom. MES. Recommended funding: $500 (full funding.)

Summary: This grant will enable students at MES to expand their existing outdoor garden classroom to allow more students to use the space. The additions will include outdoor seating for instructional use, more raised vegetable beds so more classes can adopt a garden, a growing tower for the strawberry patch and a storage box for gardening tools. The grant will also be used to establish a Monarch Peace Garden to attract Monarch butterflies during migration. Students will be able to study butterfly migration and will establish a sister school in Mexico to learn about the butterflies' overwintering grounds.

Strengths: The gardens are providing lessons in agriculture, math and science record-keeping, art, creative writing, business, and service learning for the entire school. Providing a more useable outdoor space will make it easier for the school to derive maximum benefit from the gardens. The addition of the Monarch Peace Garden will provide not only instruction on the life cycles of butterflies but also cultural interaction with students in the Mexican sister school.

Weaknesses: None.

17) Healthy Schools Initiative. MES. Recommended funding: $0 (no funding.)

Summary: The grant proposes to purchase food, water, supplies and prizes for the Walk for Education fundraiser, the Walking Club and the Turkey Trot race.

Strengths: The activities are part of the Healthy Schools Initiative, promoting walking and running for fitness.

Weaknesses: The Walk for Education is a fundraiser and prizes are already planned within that program. If additional prizes are appropriate, then they could be funded by the money raised. The Turkey Trot can be done without costumes and prizes. Supplies for the Walking Club were the best justified part of the proposal, but were a very minor part of proposed budget.

18) The Hollow Stump Performance. MES. Recommended funding $486.00 (full funding.)

Summary: This grant would provide two performance of a puppet show by Beech Tree Puppets' Ingrid and Ole Hass. Each show will be attended by 142 K-3 students, and there would be Art and Writing projects to reinforce the concepts.

Strengths: Beech Tree Puppets has a proven record of success. These performances would reach many students, and the accompanying activities would be beneficial.

Weaknesses: None

19) Technology. MES. Recommended Funding: $0 (no funding.)

Summary: Request for an IPad for usage during the school day with ESOL (English Second Language) students. The idea is to download educational applications in order to further enhance the daily activities.

Strengths: The students able to access the technology would benefit from reading, writing and other applications to support their classroom activities.

Weaknesses: The request for one IPad is not conducive to an entire class of students, or even to share with other teachers and their students. This type of technology could potentially be provided by the school through the school's budget.

20) Cultural Performing Arts School Assembly. MES. Recommended funding: $500 (full funding.)

Summary: ACE grant funds would help bring Step Afrika to perform at the school. This would be a highly interactive 50- minute performance that highlights rhythm, physical movement, and the history of Afro-American culture.

Strengths: This performance introduces the concepts of teamwork and discipline and it incorporates world traditions to educate students about a different culture. Since students are actively involved they get more physical activity. They will also have follow-up activities such as writing about what they experienced and learned from the performance.

Weaknesses: Two shows are needed for full school participation, so the ACE grant will only partially fund the performances. The remainder of the $1,330 will be raised through school fundraisers.

21) Creating Quality Small Group Centers with iPad. MES. Recommended funding: $0 (no funding.)

Summary: Funds are sought to purchase an iPad to be used as an instructional aid in a 4th grade teacher's classroom.

Strengths: iPads are easy to use.

Weaknesses: The class already has computer. Only 17 students are impacted. Computers are one of the items that schools buy for classrooms. There was concern over how much a single iPad would benefit a classroom of students.

22) Phonics Blitz. MES. Recommended funding: $498 (full funding.)

Summary: MES has a number of students in the upper grades (3-6) who are currently scoring below grade level in reading. Many of these children are lacking in basic phonics skills. Phonics Blitz is a program designed specifically to help older children (4th grade and above) who struggle with reading multisyllabic words and words with advanced vowel patterns. The lessons are targeted and age-appropriate to ensure that students see quick improvement. The grant money will be used to purchase teaching manuals and student materials adequate for use by 50 students.

Strengths: Reading is a fundamental skill. Children who lack phonics skills in the 4th grade and beyond cannot cope with the increasing complexity of texts as they move on in school. This program will help those most at risk of falling behind.

Weaknesses: None.

23) Read Alouds in Classroom Centers. GES. Recommended funding: $500 (full funding.)

Summary: the grant would be used to purchase audiobooks on CD to be used as read-alouds in classroom centers. With the complex curriculum, it is not always possible for the teacher to find time to read to the children every day.

Strengths: It is well documented that reading to small children is aids in cognitive and literacy development. Audiobooks give the teacher flexibility to differentiate within the classroom, and to challenge students to follow-along with books that are above their current reading level. The audiobooks will be stored in the professional section of the library and will be available to all of the teachers within the school.

Weaknesses: The proposal would have benefitted from a more specific budget. A list of audiobooks to be purchased along with prices would have been helpful.

24) Positive Behavior Intervention Program (PBIS). GES. Recommended funding: $0 (no funding.)

Summary: This grant would provide funding for the continuation of the PBIS program, which is used school-wide. It would be used to purchase the items for the school store, plus a movie night for 100 students.

Strengths: The strength of PBIS lies in training teachers to routinely seek and recognize good behavior in their classrooms.

Weaknesses: PBIS requires a continuous source of funds to provide awards. ACE grants helped initiate the PBIS program at GES several years ago, but there were higher ranked proposals this year. The budget section of this grant proposal did not include specifics on how the money would be spent.

25) Boggle/Scrabble Tournament Fundraiser. GES. Recommended funding: $0 (no funding.)

Summary: Greenbelt Elementary School is planning to host a fundraiser to promote literacy. The fundraiser event will include a games tournament using Boggle and Scrabble. The school is requesting funding from ACE to purchase the games as well as books to be given away as incentives.

Strengths: The proposed games night would raise money to increase literacy in the school population.

Weaknesses: The funding requested from ACE would have at best an indirect impact on literacy. The tournament would be part of a larger community fair event, and the contribution from ACE would be diluted relative to other programs. The proposal did not include a budget and was not clear how funds from the ACE grant would be used. If the proposed event is a fundraiser, it wasn't clear why the grant was required.

26) Literacy Day May 2015 Culminating Event. GES. Recommended funding: $0 (no funding).

Summary: This would be the culminating event celebrating commitment to implement intermittent literacy initiatives that include authors as guest speakers, book giveaways, book clubs and academic initiatives that support the PGCPS literacy initiatives.

Strengths: This event will involve the community and rally support for raising every student's awareness about the significance and promotion of literacy.

Weaknesses: The descriptions of the event and the role of the ACE grant were inadequate. The proposal did not include a budget or indicate how the grant money would be used at the event.

27) Books! The Magic is Real. GES. Recommended funding: $500 (full funding.)

Summary: Funds are sought for two performances of "Books-the Magic is Real" by Joe Romano. The performances involve magic in telling the stories from such books as the Harry Potter series. Story endings are withheld to motivate students to read the books.

Strengths: All students at the school would be able to attend one of the two performances.

Weaknesses: Evidence of the cost of the performances ($795) not provided. Firm commitment for the additional funds needed not demonstrated.

28) Compost Tumbler. GES. Recommended funding: $0 (no funding.)

Summary: GES is establishing an Environmental Green Team made up of 5th graders. The Green Team will work to improve the environment of GES. The grant requests funds to purchase two composting tumblers and to fix the nature path located behind the school's sport field.

Strengths: The composters will compost school food waste and teach students the benefits of reducing and recycling trash. Fixing the nature path will make it more usable for all of the students at GES.

Weaknesses: The grant did not include a budget or a plan for what would be done with the nature path. The requested funds were not justified by the description of the program. A list of items to be purchased would have improved this proposal.

29) SMART Boards for Music Initiative. GES. Recommended funding: $0 (no funding.)

Summary: The grant would contribute to the cost of installing a Smart Board in the music classroom.

Strengths: All students at GES have music, and would benefit from the installation of a Smart Board in the music classroom.

Weakness: The installation of a Smart Board would require $3000, and the proposal did not indicate where the additional funding would come from. The proposal would have also benefitted from a clearer description of how the technology would be used.

30) Supplies for the Art Program of GES. Recommended funding: $500 (full funding.)

Summary: This grant would be used to purchase various supplies and tools for printmaking, clay, and painting, to be used in art classes.

Strengths: The School System has recently provided for a full-time Art Teacher, allowing GES students to have Art every week, instead of once per quarter as in previous years. However, the funding for Art supplies is very limited within the school budget. Art materials were purchased with an ACE grant in 2010 and have been used in the past few years, but they are nearly used up.

Weaknesses: The proposal would have been better if the budget section had more detail.

31) I-Ready. GES. Recommended funding: $0 (no funding.)

Summary: Greenbelt Elementary School proposes purchasing additional licenses of the I-Ready program, which is a diagnostic program that can be used to identify and track the needs of students in reading and mathematics at a detailed level. The program is currently used by PGCPS for some special education students. The school proposes purchasing licenses to aid students who are not identified as special education students but who are struggling in the classroom.

Strengths: The proposal addresses an at-risk population.

Weaknesses: The proposal does not identify the number of students who would be included in the program, nor how the school would determine which students would benefit most from the program. The total amount of money needed for the program is $1,800 to provide licenses for 30 students in reading and mathematics. This is more than 3 times the maximum ACE grant and the proposal does not provide any information on how the additional money would be raised.

32) Chess Club Games. GES. Recommended Funding: $282.79 (full funding.)

Summary: A chess club was implemented last year, but the chess boards used were the personal property of a teacher that is no longer at the school. In order to continue the club, the grant will be used to purchase 20 chess sets for the school to maintain and a demonstration board for the instructor to use for modeling.

Strengths: Research shows that the games of chess helps young people to learn concentration skills, to think logically, overcome obstacles and categorize information. It is also good when teaching self-discipline, planning, patience, focus and problem-solving skills. This club would be providing both educational and social enhancements.

Weaknesses: None.

33) Class set of ukuleles. GES. Recommended Funding: $500 (full funding.)

Summary: The ukuleles being requested will be an enhancement to the intermediate music classes. Infusing the ukuleles into the music curriculum will be instrumental to the students during the unit on song writing.

Strengths: A ukulele has just 4 strings and is smaller in size than a standard guitar, providing a better fit for the younger students. The students will have the opportunity to learn simple chords and to accompany their own voices on popular tunes and folksongs. In addition to musical ability, the students will gain confidence and a feeling of accomplishment as they learn to navigate the ukulele.

Weaknesses: None.

RECOMMENDATION: This is the sixth year that ACE has solicited grant proposals. The ACE grants to schools program has been highly successful. The final grant reports received from the schools document the positive impact on education in Greenbelt that the program has had. The continued interest of the schools and the creativity of the proposed projects are a testament to the success of the program.

In this report, ACE recommends that the City Council approve funding for 20 proposals, totaling $9,634.76 with the following distribution per school:

School	Proposals Submitted	Proposals Recommended	Amount Recommended
Turning Point Academy	1	1	$ 500.00
Springhill Lake Elementary School	4	2	$ 1,000.00
Robert Goddard French Immersion	4	3	$ 1,457.97
Eleanor Roosevelt High School	6	5	$ 2,410.00
Magnolia Elementary School	7	4	$ 1,984.00
Greenbelt Elementary School	11	5	$ 2,282.79
Greenbelt Middle School	0	0	$ ----
Total	33	20	$ 9,634.76

This year ACE budgeted $9500 for ACE grants. ACE proposes to re-direct an additional $134.76 into the grants program from other funds within the ACE budget.

Approved by ACE on 12/2/14 with a vote of 7-0 with two members absent.