

**SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMUNITY FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES \$1,948 FOR TEACHER PROJECTS  
Grant Program Funds Two Innovative Proposals That Aim to Benefit at Least 1,000 Students This School Year**

NORTH HUNTINGDON — This school year, Hillcrest Intermediate School plans to start its own in-school news broadcast, and Norwin Middle School music students will experience all the enhancements of technology, thanks to a fourth year of educational funding from the Norwin School District Community Foundation.

The Norwin School District Community Foundation announced \$1,948.80 in *Educator Innovations Grant* awards for two educational projects that will benefit at least 1,000 students in the 2014-2015 school year. The Foundation is a non-profit group affiliated with Norwin School District.

The Foundation's competitive *Educator Innovations Grant* program challenges District teachers to dream up an innovative classroom project that might not otherwise be funded by the school budget. An independent review team scores applications without knowing the identities of those who applied. This year, teachers could ask for up to \$1,000, and five applications were submitted.

Here are the two projects being funded this year:

**iPads in the Music Classroom at Norwin Middle School.** Teacher Ms. Denise Bilott is being awarded \$978 for a program that will use iPads to enhance the band curriculum. Students will learn how to apply technology outside of checking social media or listening to music. For general music, the iPad will provide an outlet for students to create their own music as opposed to passively listening. We learn best by doing, and the iPad will give those students the chance to experience the creative and problem-solving process of composition. This will also give students a real-world connection to the careers in music that use both old and new technologies every day. In band, students will be using iPads as tuners, metronomes, music theory training and real-time assessment. This program will benefit approximately 200 students per year.



**Ms. Bilott**

**Student News Broadcast at Hillcrest Intermediate School.** Teachers Ms. Paula Giran and Mr. Thom Swenson are being awarded \$970.80 to start a student news broadcast. About 40 students from the gifted class, and possibly other interested students, will take turns working as members of a news production team. They will help plan, film, and edit a news broadcast highlighting students and events in the school. They will also have the opportunity to be on camera as interviewers, reporters, and news anchors. With this broadcast, the entire school will get to learn about news and announcements, highlights of student achievement, highlights of class, grade level, and school-wide activities, and public service announcements. The broadcast will be viewed by the 800-member student body during the last few minutes of each lunch period.



**Ms. Giran**



**Mr. Swenson**

Since the inception of the Educator Innovations Grant program in 2011 through today, the Norwin School District Community Foundation has distributed a total of \$9,735 in grants for projects that have benefitted about 2,400 students.

The Foundation exists to provide enrichment to students of the Norwin School District. It does this by maintaining more than a dozen scholarship funds created by local families, and also by supporting innovative educational programming that might not otherwise be funded through the School District budget. It is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors and has a Web site at [www.norwinsd.org/foundation](http://www.norwinsd.org/foundation).