



SALINA EDUCATION FOUNDATION

community connection

ACHIEVING EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE TOGETHER

salinaeducationfoundation.com 785-309-4729

Spring 2026

Classroom grants to enhance student learning • Exceptional teachers to staff our classrooms

2026 LIFT Recipients

Salina Education Foundation is pleased to announce our newest group of LIFT Recipients. LIFT is the Loan Initiative for Future Teachers program, which awards up to \$5,000 in forgivable loans for each year a student works toward a teaching degree. For each year the recipient teaches in Salina Public Schools, \$5,000 of the loan is forgiven. The program is funded through generous giving from individuals and private charitable foundations in our community. Since its inception in 2006, the program has awarded \$515,000 in forgivable loans to students pursuing a career in teaching.

LIFT Recipients are selected in a competitive process by a committee composed of Salina Education Foundation Trustees, USD 305 staff, and community members.

Caroline Brady –

Caroline is a graduate of Salina Central High School and is a junior at Emporia State University, majoring in Elementary



Education. From a very young age, Caroline has been drawn to helping others. She values a student-teacher relationship based on trust and respect and enjoys helping students learn, explore, and discover new things. “Teaching to me is the most rewarding job. There is nothing like watching a child’s mind flourish as they begin to understand the world around them.”

Lauren Crow –

Lauren is a senior at South High School, with plans to attend Kansas State University to major in Elementary Education.

Lauren has wanted to be a teacher since a young age. She sees how teachers can impact young lives, just as she has been impacted by many teachers throughout her life. Both of her parents are teachers, and she has witnessed firsthand the heartwarming connections teachers create with their students. She looks forward to having her own classroom where students can develop the skills needed to succeed in life.



Jaelyn Gates –

After graduating from Salina South, Jaelyn plans to attend Barton Community College, then Fort Hays State University to major in Agriculture & Family Consumer Science. She aspires to lead students through the complexities of animal science, agronomy, and environmental stewardship and help them to see agriculture not just as farming, but as a blend of science, business, sustainability, and conservation. As a teacher, Jaelyn can be a bridge between traditional farming values and agricultural innovation for the next generation.



Kaylin Hornseth –

Kaylin, an Ell-Saline High School grad, is attending Hutchinson Community College, then Kansas State

University, majoring in Elementary Education. She realizes school is often more than education; it can be a safe place for many students who may feel unseen and unchosen. Kaylin believes children learn best when they feel safe, valued, and supported. She observed her own teachers modeling kindness, patience, and honesty, and she looks forward to being an encouraging presence for her students.



Adalyne Saner –

Adalyne is a senior at South High School, with plans to attend Fort Hays State University to major in Elementary Education. Inspired by teachers throughout her life, Adalyne also wants to be a teacher who challenges and cares for her students. She sees how teachers play a role in shaping a child’s future by helping them develop the skills they need to be successful. She hopes to be a strong figure for all her future students and to provide a classroom where students know that learning and fun can coexist.



From the Chair



The school year may be winding down, but SEF is already looking forward to the 26-27 school year. This spring has been filled with awarding grants to

teachers that enhance and enrich the curriculum, as well as scholarships for students, teachers, and future teachers.

This year, SEF is honored to award \$28,300 in grants for the upcoming school year. These grants will support curriculum in various ways: virtual author visits, a technology immersion experience at KSU-Salina, audio/print books for ELL learners, play-based therapy materials for



SPS preschoolers, providing the opportunity for every SPS 7th grader to attend the popular Cultural Crawl in downtown Salina, and many more! The Foundation also had the privilege to award 15 student scholarships and 8 teacher scholarships.

In addition to these exciting awards, we have chosen five LIFT recipients this year. As a member of the LIFT selection committee, it is by far one of my favorite parts of Spring. Interviewing future teachers who are committed to returning to Salina Public Schools to teach in their community not only speaks to the quality experiences these students have had in USD 305 but also exhibits how SPS grows such amazing educators.

Of course, Salina Education Foundation could not provide any of these opportunities without our



generous donors and exceptional business partners. The successful Business Partners program helps to fund the grants awarded each spring. We couldn't do what we do without our Business Partners. They support our students and staff, and we hope you'll support them in return.



YOUR support provides incredible experiences for our students and staff. Thank you!

Darla Hassler, Chair

New Trustee

As we said goodbye and gave a heartfelt thank-you to former school board member and Trustee **Jim Fletcher**, we also welcomed **Dana Johnson** as the USD 305 Board of Education representative to the Salina Education Foundation. Dana graduated from the University of Denver with a BS in Molecular Biology and a Master's in Business Administration and holds a BSN from Mid-American Nazarene University.



Dana and her husband, Braeden, have called Salina home since 2011 and are proud to raise their family here. Daughter Meryl can be found frequently at Theater Salina or the Salina Youth Symphony, while son Wells is usually at practice for the sport of the season. Both attend Meadowlark Ridge Elementary, where Dana has chaired the School Marathon program to support student fitness and build community. Dana has also served as a substitute school nurse for USD 305 for the past 4 years. She is passionate about empowering the next generation and appreciates the community she calls home.

Match Madness

Thank you to everyone who supported Salina Public Schools' students and teachers with a gift to the Salina Education Foundation's endowment at Match Madness on March 13. You helped raise \$9,147.55 for our permanent endowment at the Greater Salina Community Foundation. The matching portion of those gifts comes to us immediately. SEF trustee Jacob Yarochowicz represented SEF in the Bill Grevas Free Throw and Be Wealth Half-Court Shot contests and earned us additional funds! Thank you for making an impact today and helping to transform tomorrow!

Nuss Teachers of the Year

Janelle Stelter is a high-incident special education teacher at Coronado Elementary and this year's recipient of the Nuss Teacher of the Year Award for Elementary Teachers. Ericka Cain, an adaptive special education teacher at South High School, is the recipient of the Nuss Teacher of the Year Award for Secondary Teachers. Janelle and Ericka were recognized by the Board of Education at the March 10th meeting. The Nuss Teacher of the Year award was established in honor of H.E. and Erma Lee Nuss, who were long-time educators at Salina Public Schools. Lawton Nuss is a retired Chief Justice



of the Kansas Supreme Court and the son of H.E. and Erma Nuss. He provides the funds to honor his parents and celebrate the accomplishments of USD 305's Teachers of the Year. The Salina Education Foundation facilitates the award, and each recipient receives a \$1,000 gift.

Student Scholarships

Class of 1933 Scholarship

Ashlyn Krob
Central High School

Class of 1940 Scholarship

Brenden Fitzpatrick
Central High School

Owen E. Hodgson Scholarships

Jillian Bicknell
South High School

Addilyn Jagodzinske
Central High School

Eloise Hodgson-Lynch Scholarships

Gabriel Freeland
Central High School

Gannon Cole
Central High School

Samantha Dominguez
South High School

Gavin DeVoe
South High School

Reuben Montoy Scholarships

Samantha Dominguez
South High School

Rashad Thompson
Central High School

Loan T. Nguyen Scholarship

Kalliauna Johnson
South High School

Ethan M. Sankey Scholarship

Lawrence Underwood
South High School

Millennium Scholarship

Sophia Cape
Central High School

Rick O'Neill Legacy Scholarship

Addison Hansen
Central High School

'Miss N' Art Scholarship

Makayla Halferty
South High School

Teacher Scholarships

Owen E. Hodgson & Eloise Hodgson Lynch Teacher Scholarship

Tia Westling



NEA-Salina Teacher Scholarship

Erica Morgan



Mary & A. Jay Andersen Scholarship

Rachael Wilson



Nancy Whitehair Ribble Memorial Scholarship

Ethan Casey



Lenkiewicz Teacher Scholarship

Tabetha Hiser



Nuss Teacher of the Year Elementary

Janelle Stelter



Pam McIntyre Teacher Scholarship

Dalton Peters



Nuss Teacher of the Year Secondary

Ericka Cain



Terry Shaffer Memorial Teacher Scholarship

Kristen Fox



Jett Family Excellence in Teaching Award

Megan Alley



Our Mission

To promote & support educational excellence by providing resources to enhance opportunities for the students and staff of Salina's Public Schools.

As part of its mission, the trustees of the Salina Education Foundation:

Manage and grow endowment funds, grants, and gifts for specific schools, programs & scholarships

Award grants to teachers seeking to enhance instruction

Identify and support, through forgivable loans, outstanding Saline County residents seeking to become teachers in USD 305.

Build community awareness and support of the Salina Education Foundation

Our Vision

Unite the community to support excellent public schools.

Board of Trustees, 2025-26

Darla HasslerChair
Jeff MaesVice Chair
Austin Hoppock Past Chair
Julie RichardsonSecretary
Crystal StuartTreasurer
Kate Lindsay Executive Director
Heath Hogan ..Superintendent, Ex Officio

Megan Dupy Erin Smith
Eric Holmes Tiffany Snyder
Dana Johnson Bonnie Welty
Lisa Mahler Marcie Wentzel
Sharlene Ramsey Jacob Yarochowicz
Samantha Romey



1511 Gypsum
P.O. Box 797
Salina, Kansas 67402-0797
785-309-4729

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

NON PROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
SALINA, KS 67401
Permit No. 140

Friend us on Facebook!



We're also on Twitter.



And Instagram too!



Help Make A Difference. **Join Salina Education Foundation Today!**



YES! I want the BEST for all students in the Salina School District! Gifts are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

- \$3000 or more **21st Century Club**
- \$1000-2999 **SEF Benefactor**
- \$500-999 **SEF Patron**
- \$100-499 **SEF Supporter**
- \$10-99 **SEF Friend**
- Please send more information

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

EMAIL _____

PHONE _____

Make checks payable to:

Salina Education Foundation
PO Box 797
Salina, KS 67402-0797

Contribute via PayPal:



Create a lasting legacy and include Salina Education Foundation in your estate plan.



SALINA Education Foundation

Our Kids - Our Future

Thank you to our business partners who have made a commitment to making USD 305 Schools exceptional by supporting the work of the Salina Education Foundation. When you support them, you support the work of the SEF!

SEF Grants and Programs

21st Century Advantage Grant: awarded annually for creative and innovative classroom projects

Sudden Opportunity Grant: quick turnaround grant for projects that come up unexpectedly

LIFT Program: awards up to \$5,000 per year for Saline County residents who wish to become teachers

Outside-the-Box Grant: awarded annually for projects that take students outside the typical classroom setting

Business Partners 2025-2026

Donations from 7/1/25 through 5/15/2026

21st Century Club

\$3,000 +

Anonymous Donation
Earl Bane Foundation
Great Plains Manufacturing, Inc.
Greater Salina Community Foundation
Harry J. & Ann Lee Jett Designate Fund -
Greater Salina Community Foundation
Horejsi Charitable Foundation, Inc.
Mahaska
Milton & Frances Stiefel Foundation
Salina Regional Health Foundation
Verla Nesbitt Joscelyn Foundation
Zimmerman Family Foundation

Benefactor

\$1000 - \$2999

Roy and Donice Applequist
CGN Advisors
Clark, Mize, and Linville, Chtd.
Kansas Gas Service
Greg Vahrenberg Raymond James

Patron

\$500 - \$999

Bank of America Employee Match
Bank of Tescott

BE Wealth - Brandon Ebert
Bennington State Bank
Blue Beacon
Exline, Inc.
JRI Hospitality
Bill and Dana Kossow
L&S Building Contractors. Inc.
Larry and Barbara Marshall
McCownGordon Construction
Morrison Foundation
Pathway Financial Solutions - John and
Kelli Webb

Supporter

\$100 - \$499

Advantage Trust
Arrow Printing Company
Bank of the Plains
Benson Accounting
Mike and Debra Berkley
Central Plains Diesel and Repair
Champion Seminars - Phil Coleman
ComPro Realty, LLC
Jim and Becky Cram
Design Central
Drs. Cooper & Banninger, LLC
Drs. Driver & Clark

Equity Bank
Exline, Inc.
Dave Freeland
Hannebaum Grain Co., Inc.
Heritage Real Estate Advisors
Key Rexall Drugs
Kroger Community Rewards
Marietta Dental Care
Mowery
Norton, Wasserman, Jones, and Kelly LLC
Pestinger Heating and Air Conditioning
Pronto Print
Mike & Susan Ramage
Ryan Mortuary
Salina Surgical Center LLC
Smoky Hill Construction LLC
Solomon State Bank
Watson Electric
Woods and Durham

Friend

\$1 - \$99

Big C Gambino's Pizza LLC
Century Business Systems, Inc
McAlister's Deli

Grant Awards

Salina Education Foundation's Board of Trustees is pleased to announce that it has awarded \$28,300 in grants for the 2026-2027 School Year. Your generosity makes these grants happen. Because of you, students have opportunities to be active and engaged while developing skills like critical thinking and problem-solving. Your gifts provide our teachers with the opportunity to work together and try new things! Thank you for continuing to support our students and staff and for creating enhanced educational experiences.

21st Century Advantage

Grants: Support creative and innovative classroom projects.

Amanda Araujo, Heusner Elementary - Learning and Lockboxes. Using lockboxes in the classroom is a fun, hands-on activity that can boost engagement, teamwork, and critical thinking. Lockboxes will become puzzle containers that students must unlock by solving clues. Through teamwork and collaboration, all students will be involved in opportunities for communication, curiosity, and embracing challenges.

Lindsay Carlson, Central High School - Read, Respond, Respect.

The CHS Book Club offers students the opportunity to develop critical thinking, communication, and reading skills by discussing diverse, equitable, and inclusive literature with peers. Students get to read challenging literature from a wide array of authors, giving them an opportunity to respond and respect one another while collaborating and conversing about books that would not otherwise be read in a regular classroom setting.

Lisa Hall, Meadowlark Ridge - Fun with Fact Fluency. These hands-on materials will allow students to engage in meaningful math practice. The materials are colorful and engaging, and they help students practice challenging skills rather than completing another worksheet. The resources this grant would provide can help increase math fluency, increase time on task during independent work, and build students' confidence in learning.

Hernan Hernandez & Jennifer Kay-Higgins, Salina South Middle School - Listen, Look, and Learn with VOX Books. Vox Books offer an innovative solution that supports literacy growth, helping ELL students (English Language Learners) to strengthen vocabulary, pronunciation, comprehension, and overall confidence in reading. Vox Books provides students access to both printed text and built-in audio in each book. Students can practice independently by listening to fluent reading and following along with the printed text.

Katie Lidgett, USD 305 Libraries.

In 2026, all elementary school libraries will participate in the Book Break Author Visit program. These virtual author visits create excitement among students and enhance their reading experiences.

Outside the Box Grants:

Rewards creativity that aims to expand students' understanding of their community and the world.

Scott Chrisman and Dustin Dooley, Lakewood Middle School and South Middle School - Cultural Crawl. All district 7th graders will participate in Salina's Cultural Crawl. Students will visit arts and cultural locations in Salina and learn about our community's unique arts and cultural experiences.

Megan Alley (on behalf of SMS 6th-grade ELA teachers), South Middle School - Technology Immersion Experience. 6th-grade students at SMS will travel to KSU Salina for an all-immersion technology day. Instead of only reading and writing about how technology impacts our lives, students will step onto a college campus and see innovation firsthand. By combining literacy, hands-on learning, and community partnerships, this project goes beyond a typical field trip to create a meaningful, future-focused learning experience.

Elizabeth Burke, South High School - "Open Book" Initiative: Learning Beyond our Walls. This grant funds "First Page Friday," a school-wide initiative in which students listen to the first page of a new book. The page will be displayed on the daily slides during advisory time. Hints and clues will also be provided to boost curiosity for the book and entice students to seek it out.

Additionally, funds will support the "Overbooked" Book Club by providing sets of titles for members to read the same books, discuss them, and complete a fun activity together.

Jamie Hoff, Cottonwood Elementary - WAW Ceremony Trip to Emporia.

Funds will be used to send 3-5th graders from five elementary schools to the William Allen White Award ceremony in Emporia, where they will meet the nominated authors, participate in educational activities, and hear each author speak. Students will also visit the historic home of William Allen White and Peter Pan Park, a space donated by William Allen White and his wife in memory of their daughter, allowing students to connect literature, history, and community legacy through place-based learning.

Joan Barhydt Special Education Grants:

Benefit students receiving special education services.

Brandon Befort, Coronado Elementary School - Sensory Support. Access to a variety of sensory tools in classrooms would enable students to receive instruction for academic growth. Benefits include but are not limited to stress reduction, enhanced focus, sensory skill development, learning support, emotional regulation, and motor skill improvement. Sensory tools provide controlled sensory experience with processing challenges. It creates a calm environment that eases stress and anxiety in a safe, structured setting, along with promoting sensory integration and skill development.

Ashley Huber, Central Kansas Cooperative in Education. Developing Communication Through Play.

This grant would provide toys, games, books, and materials to support our students' communication development. Play-based therapy is key to working with early learners, and diverse materials help teachers apply evidence-based strategies that strengthen students' communication skills as they grow.

To contribute to these funds or any other funds held at Salina Education Foundation, or to establish your own fund, please contact Kate Lindsay at 785-309-4729.