



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Nov. 19, 2021

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**SELCO COMMUNITY CREDIT UNION AWARDS 64 SPARK! CREATIVE LEARNING GRANTS WORTH MORE THAN \$54,000, INCLUDING 24 TO EUGENE/SPRINGFIELD SCHOOLS**  
**Annual program awards grants of up to \$1,000 to K-12 educators; recipients to be celebrated via virtual ceremony on Friday, December 10, at 3:30 p.m.**

(EUGENE, Ore.)—Through its annual [SPARK! Creative Learning Grants](#) program, SELCO Community Credit Union has awarded more than \$54,000 to 64 educators at 55 schools across Oregon, including 24 programs at 20 schools in Lane and Douglas Counties. The program, which funds innovative educational and extracurricular projects, provides grants of as much as \$1,000 to K-12 educators across the 27 Oregon counties that SELCO serves.

SELCO's SPARK! Creative Learning Grants have long supported teachers who have creative classroom ideas but lack the funds to get those projects off the ground. This year's grant funding represents an increase of more than \$11,000 from 2020, when 47 grants were awarded to 38 schools.

This year's recipients will be celebrated on Friday, December 10, at 3:30 p.m. via SELCO's virtual grant ceremony, which will be hosted live on Instagram ([@selcoccu](#)).

"The basic premise behind SPARK! is in the name — spark creativity, imagination, and learning through unique programs in search of funding," said Craig Carpenter, SELCO's

senior vice president of lending and business banking. “As students and teachers return to in-person learning this school year, we felt it was more important than ever for SELCO to be a strong advocate in the classroom.”

Among the many notable Lane and Douglas County project highlights are a salute to salmon anatomical art project; a program to equip students with the tools needed to learn the language and trade of moviemaking; and a portable outdoor classroom to encourage mask-free, socially-distanced learning. A complete list of statewide recipients and project descriptions can be found [HERE](#).

The committee’s goal is to fund innovative projects that will have the largest possible impact on students and the greatest opportunity to leave a lasting impression.

One recent example is from Elizabeth Skenzick’s classroom at Elmira Elementary, a grant recipient for its “Squiggle Art for Growth Mindset” program. Skenzick and her first-grade class used their SPARK! Grant to create a children’s book called “The Magic Garden,” which allowed every student to become a published author by writing about and illustrating what they would plant in their own magic garden. “These past two school years have been especially hard for families, students, and staff,” said Skenzick. “But this grant has been a bright spot through it all.”

For more information on SELCO Community Credit Union’s SPARK! Creative Learning Grants or to follow the progress of some of the grant recipients, visit [www.selco.org/spark](http://www.selco.org/spark).

**About SELCO Community Credit Union:**

Founded 85 years ago by a group of fiscally minded teachers, Springfield-based SELCO Community Credit Union today serves more than 143,000 members as the third-largest Oregon-based credit union. A not-for-profit, federally insured, member-driven financial cooperative with \$2.5 billion in assets, SELCO provides its member-owners with exceptional rates and low fees on a full range of financial products and services, including banking, mortgages, personal and business loans, investments, and insurance. Membership is available to anyone who lives or works in one of the 27 Oregon counties SELCO serves. For more information or to become a member today, stop by one of SELCO's 14 branches, visit [selco.org](http://selco.org), or call **800-445-4483**.

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