Richmond Heights Local Schools was pleased to receive the annual Teacher Innovation Grant from the ESC of Cuyahoga County. These funds are used for new, innovative and creative ideas in the classroom.

The first grant of $750 was used towards the purchase of 15 Amazon Fire tablets. The goal is to eventually provide each student with a tablet. “By incorporating technology into the classroom, it should lead to higher achievement in the classroom and on state and district tests,” said LaKisha Davies, eighth grade intervention specialist.

The second grant of $750 was used to purchase a digital recording device, green screen unit, microphone, and video lighting. With the use of these tools, students will begin to create quarterly and eventually monthly news broadcasts from the digital media classroom. The goal is help bring students into a more modern digital age and help improve school pride.

The fundraising committee at the ESC Rose-Mary Center School has been raising money for the last three years to answer the call for more swings for its students at its school located in Tremont. Fundraising efforts included movie nights, bowling night, walk-a-thons, raffle and funday cafes at school. In August, new equipment was added to the playground—a typical swing seat and a supporting seat for ambulatory students. Several school staff volunteered to get the work done. Labor, the base of gravel, and playground grade mulch were donated by Terrace Construction, Independence Excavating and Cigar Club Members.

The ESC of Cuyahoga County's State Support Team Region 3 in collaboration with The Arc of Greater Cleveland, the Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities and the Northeast Ohio Parent Mentor Project hosted the “17th Annual Summer and Beyond Fair” for families of students with disabilities in the Greater Cleveland area on Saturday, February 21st at the ESC building in Independence.

The familiar task of planning support activities throughout the school year and summer is often challenging for families of children with disabilities. “Families want their children to experience all aspects of childhood,” states Terri McIntee, a Family and Community Involvement Specialist with the State Support Team for Region 3 at the ESC of Cuyahoga County. “The Summer and Beyond Fair offers opportunities for community integration of children with various abilities.”

The 2015 Summer and Beyond Family Directory can be found at www.esc-cc.org.
Students from Independence Primary School helped create a whimsical Snowflake Garden to raise awareness about autism this past fall. The installation of more than 2,000 snowflakes created in a variety of art media, including foil, beads, and clay, were displayed outdoors at ETON Chagrin Boulevard Shopping Center during the winter season. More than 500 of the snowflakes included colorful mandalas composed of recycled plastic bags exhibiting vibrant color, radial balance and pattern. Proceeds from this charitable event benefited Monarch Center for Autism to raise autism awareness and to demonstrate the positive benefits of art as a form of expression.

“Independence Primary School students were excited to be a part of this worthwhile project,” said Art Teacher Mike Gruber. “They enjoyed making their unique snowflakes and I know many families were excited to visit ETON to see their child’s artwork.”

“It was especially heart warming to see the Independence Primary School students place others before themselves,” said Principal Cindy Ipsaro. “The snowflakes were a part of our humanitarian projects, which focused on creating an awareness of the needs in our communities.”

“Speaking to Win: How Mastering the Art of Public Speaking will Help You in School and Life” was led by Lisa Ryan of Grategy, Inc. She taught the students fear reduction, skill development, preparation tips, winning style, and presentation design. The students will now be able to use these techniques in various projects in their high school settings.

Once again this year, the ESC of Cuyahoga County presented an opportunity for area students to participate in career exploration activities by attending the Hyland Software field trip on April 24th. Students toured the Westlake company and shadowed employees responsible for either software development or quality assurance.