

## Donors Choose

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**Overview:** DonorsChoose.org is an online charity that makes it easy for anyone to help students in need. Public school teachers from every corner of America post classroom project requests on their site, and donors can give any amount to the project that most inspires them.

**Targeted Grades:** PK - 12

**What is DonorsChoose.org?** *DonorsChoose.org lets you share your classroom needs with a thriving community eager to help. Public K-12 teachers can apply for funding various projects such as materials, trips, PD and more.*

**How does it work?** DonorsChoose.org is an online charity that makes it easy for anyone to help students in need. Public school teachers from every corner of America post classroom project requests on their site, and donors can give any amount to the project that most inspires them.

When a project reaches its funding goal, Donors Choose will ship the materials to the school. Donors get photos of the project taking place, a letter from the participating teacher, and insight into how every dollar was spent. If Donors give over \$50, students in the project are expected to make and send hand-written Thank You notes.

**Standards:** *Below are the CCSS connections to a student-driven funding campaign. There are many other potential connections, based on your grade-level and curricular goals. Check your grade-specific standards for others.*

Common Core Math Standard(s)	Common Core ELA Standard(s)
<b>5.NF.6 Numbers and Operations</b> <b>5.G.2 Geometry</b>	<b>W.5.2 and 5 Write informative/explanatory texts; Revise and edit</b>

**Procedure:**

- Students decide which materials are needed for their project.
- Students research the best prices on materials that are needed and create a list of materials, prices, and sources. **(5.NF.6 Numbers and Operations).**
- Projects are funded in 3 steps:

- 1) Students should explain the exact items that are needed and describe how they'll benefit from them (**W.5.2 and 5 Write informative/explanatory texts; Revise and edit**). Keep in mind:
  - Write an **original** essay for your project. The more unique the idea, the faster the project receives funding.
  - The requested resources should meet school and district guidelines. (This step will likely require additional help from the teacher).
  - The project will be available for funding on the site for four (4) months, so find ways to spread the word!
- 2) Funding may be solicited from private sources such as people, companies, and foundations.
- 3) Once funded, Donors Choose will send the resources directly to the classroom.  
**\*\*\*Materials funded through DonorsChoose.org belong to the classroom.**
  - Students should track the funds raised each week, calculate the percentage reached toward their goal, and chart the progress on a graph (**5.G.2 Geometry**).
  - Students may also develop a plan to spread the word about their projects (i.e. School's Social Media, flyers, word of mouth...etc.).
  - Once funded students should write Thank You Letters to the funders (**W.5.5 Revised writing**).

**Here is a sample essay Mary Servino wrote to fund her project "[Blending Up Healthy Eating](#)":**

*The school includes the district's commitment to students' health, with daily activities, curriculum, partnerships, and messages to our families. We want to enhance that with having kids participate in healthy cooking classes.*

*Our Inter-district Discovery Magnet School serves 524 students from PK to grade 8. One hundred percent of our students receive free breakfast and lunch. Located in Bridgeport, one of the poorest urban areas in Connecticut, the school offers students a learning environment that is rich in outdoor and field experiences. Much of our curriculum is held outdoors, including Project Learning Tree lessons. Classes also work with local master gardeners, learning about food growing in our sustainable garden.*

*Students grow plants indoors using a hydroponics system. They also participate in helping manage an outdoor garden. We plant a variety of plants in both and are excited to bring them into the classroom to try new recipes, especially smoothies. We need a strong blender, such as the Vitamix, to help blend our variety of veggies.*

*Classes grow vegetables and maintain our sustainable gardens, harvesting vegetables for eating and to be sent home to Discovery families. The bumper crop of radishes, lettuce and tomatoes last year turned into a salad celebration, with all classes experiencing picking, cleaning, cutting, and sampling these vegetables. It's even better to show kids how to make simple and tasty veggie recipes other than salads.*

### ***Her “Thank You”:***

Mrs. Bella (Discovery Magnet School principal) and Mrs. Servino (science specialist) made a guest appearance in the 6th grade today!! Together they demonstrated how to make hummus and discussed healthy eating. The 6th graders enjoyed the fresh hummus with pita chips.



Every month I go into classes and blend up healthy eating in the classrooms. We are currently growing basil and Swiss chard, preparing for our next 2 months of healthy eating... making a basil watermelon drink and veggie smoothies! We invite you to try these delicious recipes at home too!

### **Hummus Recipe:**

1 can chickpeas (rinsed)  
1 lemon  
1 tbsp. tahini paste  
2 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil  
2 tbsp. water  
salt to taste  
Blend all ingredients in a blender until smooth.



### **Basil Watermelon Drink:**

1/2 cup fresh basil leaves, blanched for 30 sec, remove immediately and place in ice  
3 lbs watermelon, seedless, peeled, dice into small pieces  
1 tbsp. Honey or agave nectar (optional)  
Place all in the blender and blend on high. Pour over ice and enjoy!

*Photos by Jan King*

**Standards** *Navigate the Next Generation Science Standards (<http://www.nextgenscience.org/search-standards>) and Common Core State Standards (<http://www.corestandards.org/>).*

*These suggestions are examples only, and may require adaptation. Check your grade-specific standards to determine whether or not the suggestions provided meet your individual curricular needs.*

*For more information, contact [ctgreenleaf@ctgreenschools.org](mailto:ctgreenleaf@ctgreenschools.org)*

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