

Bennett-Hemenway Elementary School

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To Whom it May Concern:

We are writing in support of the NEF grant application for the installation of a Weatherbug system at Ben-Hem. While this weather monitoring station will be physically located at Ben-Hem, the data it collects and all of the associated resources will be available for all teachers and students in kindergarten through fifth grade in the Natick Schools. As school leaders, we believe that this tool and its associated resources would add tremendous value to the educational experience of our students.

First, and foremost, the Weatherbug system provides a broad array of learning opportunities for our students that span all content areas. Data collection and analysis, weather patterns and climate characteristics, scientific observation and journaling, etc. The applications of this tool in the elementary classroom are both broad and engaging.

Secondarily, the Weatherbug system will engage our students in developing critical skills for success in the twenty-first century. Weather bug gathers data from thousands of locations (many of them are other schools) across the country. Connecting to this network provides our students with opportunities to engage in dialog and learning with students and teachers across the country through various web applications like Skype and Google Chat. Conducting research, identifying resources, scanning information, and working collaboratively are all key skills that our students need to develop. Weather bug provides another great opportunity for Natick children to do so.

Finally, Weatherbug comes with awesome resources for our teachers. Lesson plans, activities, and content based information are all included with the package we hope to acquire through this grant. These resources are easily accessible to all K-5 teachers in Natick. Beyond providing our teaches with great materials and tools, the Weatherbug continues to support our efforts to build common experiences and learning opportunities throughout the school system.

We hope that NEF will give this grant application strong consideration.

Sincerely,

Ian P. Kelly, M.Ed.
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