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U.S. Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) Awards Wheatland Elementary School District \$750,000 Grant to expand STEM programming

November 12, 2020, Wheatland, CA – The Wheatland Elementary School District is excited to announce its recent awarding of a \$750,000.00 grant from the U.S. Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA). According to the Committee on Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Education of the National Science and Technology Council, it is critical to our national security that our students spark interest in essential and fast-growing careers in STEM and our PreK-12 education system is poised to increase and sustain student engagement in STEM. This grant will provide the Wheatland Elementary School District with the college and career ready resources necessary to successfully build and expand the district’s STEM programming. The District was awarded this grant to establish a school-wide project, called Play And Learn Squad (PALS), for its eligible schools: Lone Tree Elementary School, Wheatland Charter Academy and Bear River School.

“DoDEA’s investment in the proposed PALS project is crucial to advancing our systematic approach to the next level by providing seed money to kick start the physical activity and social-emotional learning components, which will help to decrease the number of incidents of negative behaviors during school time, which has become a growing challenge.”, said Craig Guensler, Superintendent.

The PALS project aims to increase Transitional Kindergarten through 8th grade students’ educational continuity, build life-long social-emotional skill sets and develop healthy physical activity habits by:

- building on the previous sustained success, from a prior DoDEA grant, by expanding our current multi-tiered systems of support with a new focus on social-emotional learning,
- integrating a new CATCH physical activity component into our STEAM initiative and replacing some recess and free-play in-class time with structured physical education and nutrition.

The DoDEA awarded \$22 million across 21 grants as part of its 2020 Cohort. These grants will serve more than 100,000 students across 13 states. DoDEA’s Education Partnership and Resources Division strives to ensure all military-connected K-12 students have access to quality educational opportunities through engagement in partnerships with school districts and professional organizations. The division provides school personnel and stakeholders with evidence-based resources and supports to increase understanding and awareness related to the unique challenges faced by military-connected students and families.

About the Wheatland School District www.wheatlandsd.com

The Wheatland School District, serving Transitional Kindergarten through 8th grade students, was established in 1871. The city of Wheatland is valued by its residents for its small town atmosphere and rural setting. Located in Northern California's Central Valley along State Route



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65 in Yuba County, Wheatland is approximately one mile north of the Bear River and the tri-county boundary of Sutter, Placer, and Yuba Counties and 40 miles north of Sacramento. Beale Air Force Base is located eight miles to the northeast, and many students from the base's military families attend Wheatland School District schools. Two schools are located on Beale Air Force Base (i.e. Lone Tree Elementary School and the Wheatland Charter Academy) and two schools are in the city of Wheatland (i.e. Bear River School and Wheatland Elementary School).

About DoDEA

The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) is a field activity of the Office of the Secretary of Defense. DoDEA's mission is to plan, direct, coordinate, and manage the education programs for eligible dependents of U.S. military personnel and civilian personnel of the Department of Defense. The DoDEA has congressional authority to provide resources to public schools to support the continuity of education for military-connected students through a competitive grant program. DoDEA's vision of "Excellence in education for every student, every day, everywhere" is realized through this partnership with public school districts.