

OPERATION ROUND UP TEACHER MINI-GRANT PROVIDES NEW TECHNOLOGY



A BIG THANK YOU FROM JENNIFER RODRIGUEZ

"I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for the grant you provided my students and me at the beginning of the school year. To say we really appreciate it would be an absolute understatement."

WHAT ARE TEACHER MINI-GRANTS?

The Operation Round Up Board of Directors initiated a program offering small, \$500 grants to teachers. Grants were available to K-12 teachers in math or language arts for the 2016-2017 school year. The funds are made available by South Plains Electric members who ask to have their monthly bill rounded up to the next dollar. The extra change, averaging only \$6 per year, funds projects like the teacher mini-grants, scholarships and much more.

Operation Round Up was established in 1993 to help communities and individuals needing a hand up, not a hand out. The program's tagline, "neighbors helping neighbors," is at the heart of why South Plains Electric Cooperative exists.

During the past 24 years, Operation Round Up has helped hundreds of individuals and organizations. Many donations go unpublicized out of respect for the individual recipients. Operation Round Up, under the guidance of a 10-member board, sometimes works quietly to improve members' lives.

Nine teacher mini-grants were awarded for the 2016-2017 school year. The other recipients were: Amy Drake, Lubbock ISD; Amanda Dunn, Lubbock-Cooper ISD; Kara Gibson, Shallowater ISD; Ollie Hart, Abernathy ISD; Morgan Hisey, Lubbock-Cooper ISD; Lisa Sanders, Cotton Center ISD; Jana Simmons, Lubbock-Cooper ISD; and Carol Trent, Shallowater ISD.

The Operation Round Up board approved continuing funding the teacher mini-grants because it's been such a successful program. Applications are available at www.SPEC.coop for the 2017-2018 school year in reading and social studies. The application deadline is May 15.

HOW YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE

If all of our members were participating in Operation Round Up, we would have over \$200,000 a year to give back to our local communities. You can sign up for Operation Round Up online or call 806.775.7766. You may also sign up by checking the Operation Round Up box on your monthly bill.

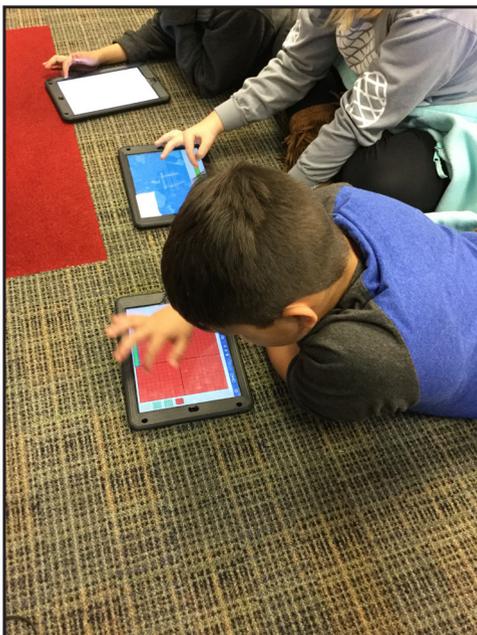
INTEGRATED LEARNING

MRS. RODRIGUEZ'S STORY

Jennifer Rodriguez is a fourth grade teacher at Lubbock-Cooper ISD and is a 2016-2017 Operation Round Up Teacher Mini-Grant recipient. Rodriguez feels, as an educator, if she is not striving to make learning fun for her students, she is failing them. With the grant money she received, Rodriguez purchased iPads, and the students utilize them on a daily basis. This integration of technology, Rodriguez said, has aided in creating a fun, interactive learning environment for her students. Because of the mini-grant, Rodriguez has achieved her goal.

“It is not a surprise that the future of the children in my classroom is absolutely infused with technology,” the fourth-grade teacher said.

To get better use of the new equipment, Rodriguez has incorporated the iPads in a few subjects within her classroom curriculum, such as math and social studies. Occasionally, the iPads are even used during classroom free time. The students have since adapted to a new, engaging way of learning and interacting.



CLASSROOM USE

Rodriguez's students use the iPads daily in math stations. After learning a new mathematics concept, the classroom uses a downloadable app on the iPad that fosters their learning and encourages a deeper understanding of the concept. Math stations also include partner work between the students, Rodriguez said, which the kids are very fond of because they are able to play against one another.

“*There are many reasons why students need technology in the classroom, but the most important is to make learning fun.*”

The iPads also serve as a great way to get a better understanding of a certain topic, such as the geography of Texas. Rodriguez said her students have used their iPads for social studies research when she was

teaching about the four regions of Texas, and they are preparing to use them for more research toward the end of the year to complete their “Famous Texans” projects.

TEACHER USE

Rodriguez utilizes the iPads to project information off of the smart board in her classroom using Airplay. She can also set up Kahoot! games, where students must answer her questions correctly to receive points. The iPads allow Rodriguez and her students the ability to utilize all of their Google tools with ease due to the district's recent transition to all things Google.

“We are able to take what would normally be on a sheet of paper or within a workbook and bring it to life through apps and features,” Rodriguez said. “It is absolutely amazing to see their interests sparked when utilizing the iPads to complete a task. Thank you, thank you, thank you.”

MAKING THE MOST OF IT

(Left) Mrs. Rodriguez's students utilize every opportunity to use and learn from the classroom iPads. The integration of this technology has taught her students to be active, engaged learners.



ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES