

## West Springfield business-education partnership funds school programs

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By

WEST SPRINGFIELD – The **West Springfield Partnership for Education** this past academic year donated thousands of dollars to fund innovative programs in the city’s public, private and parochial schools, according to an announcement issued by the organization.

A nonprofit organization formed in 1991, the partnership consists of educators and members of the business community who work to enhance educational opportunities for students.

“Their support is integral to the work we do and helps us support innovation,” School Superintendent **Russell D. Johnston** said Thursday. “It helps us make the essential curriculum even more interesting and innovative.”

One of its programs that Johnston singled out for praise was the creative days for teachers. They allow teachers to take a day off to work together to come up with new programs and ways to enhance the curriculum, according to Johnston. The program provided 24 \$300 grants for teachers.

Among the other programs the partnership supports are the following:

- Grants of \$150 each to three students to use creatively on such things as a club or extracurricular activities.
- Admission for third and sixth graders to a performance of the Springfield Symphony Orchestra. This project is also funded by the West Springfield Arts Council.
- A total of \$560 for a program with high school students and local banks on managing money.
- A grant for a classroom projector for use with a laptop and a SmartBoard at St. Thomas School.

The partnership held fund-raising activities that included the follow, a spelling bee, Mother’s Day craft fair, a coupon book and a bus trip to the Mohegan Sun.