

## Elderton Elementary Receives Fitness Grant

ELDERTON: Recently employees Marsha Dimmitt (School Nurse) and Amanda George (PE Teacher) of the Elderton Elementary School applied for, and received a fitness grant. The name of this grant is Project Fit America, which is in its 28th year. This initiative is a national nonprofit organization that creates sustainable and innovative broad based fitness programs in schools. PFA programming includes state-of-the-art outdoor fitness equipment specifically designed to address the deficit areas where children fail



*Heather Reed, IHF Exec. Director, Dave Brown, students Melia Mellish, Marlo Mellish and Maggie Byers, EE Principal Paula Kijowski, School Nurse Marsha Dimmitt, and PE Teacher Amanda George.*

fitness tests; indoor fitness

equipment; a dynamic curriculum with games, activities and challenges; on-site teacher training and in-class instruction on subjects such as smoking intervention, nutrition and understanding your body. According to PFA, physically active children benefit from better thinking skills, more confidence, better moods, and sounder sleep.

Elderton's grant was awarded through the Indiana Healthcare Foundation. This foundation has been granting schools for this initiative since 2006, and currently over eleven different schools are using the

PFA program, effecting over 5,000 children. According to Executive Director Heather Reed, *“At Indiana Healthcare Foundation, we’re passionate about improving wellness in the communities we serve, and we especially want to do our part in the fight against childhood obesity...we’re thrilled to partner with Elderton Elementary and the community to empower these children and their families to learn healthy habits and enjoy healthier lives.”*

In addition to the equipment that the grant provides, the program also teaches character development, sportsmanship, team work and leadership skills. The academic emphasis is to create “physically educated” children and to empower them to take personal responsibility of their health with enthusiasm. PFA also provides support to the schools for two years along with on-site training with each PE Teacher.



*Students Skyleigh Lamison and Marlo Mellish demonstrate a cup stacking portion of the fitness equipment.*



*Paula Kijowski, Dave Brown, and Jill Tedesco present Mr. Brown with the dedication of the outdoor facility.*



*Paula Kijowski is joined by teachers Allison Wiles and Pat Brown in a teacher hula-hoop competition.*

According to building Principal Paula Kijowski, “*Our students do not have any other local facilities for use for physical activity and will benefit greatly from the Project Fit America program and equipment. We are located in a low socioeconomic area where even getting transportation can be an issue. This grant provides these children and*

*their families with a new and exciting source of community experience.*”

On the afternoon of October 11, 2017, Elderton Elementary officially began the program with a Ribbon Cutting ceremony. This ceremony included students demonstrating the indoor activities involved, recognizing individuals who helped install the outdoor equipment, and a dedication ceremony. The outdoor equipment area was officially named in the honor of life-long Elderton resident Dave Brown, who routinely helps with various things at the building.



*Elderton Elementary students demonstrate various indoor activities associated with their recently awarded grant.*