Stephens Public High School Students Small Grant Fund
Established 2017/18 School Year

Thomas M. Stephens was born in Youngstown, Ohio. A graduate of Youngstown’s East High School, Dr. Stephens earned a bachelor’s degree from Youngstown College (now Youngstown State University), a master’s degree from Kent State University, and a doctorate from the University of Pittsburgh.

He is a pioneer in direct instruction of the social behavior of children and youth and basic academic concepts and skills. He authored thirteen textbooks and over 100 related research and professional journal articles. He has been an occasional correspondent to the New York Times, The New York Review of Books, and the Columbus Dispatch.

Dr. Stephens was the first director of the Ohio Department of Education’s Gifted and Talented program, including the annual Martin W. Essex School for the Gifted and Talented serving Ohio’s high achieving, gifted, and talented rising 12th graders. He was also Ohio’s first director of President Lyndon Johnson’s Title One ESEA program. He advised the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare during the early years of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

Dr. Stephens began his professional career as a classroom teacher in the Warren, Ohio public schools. Later, he was a school psychologist in Niles and Montgomery County (Dayton) Ohio. He was a clinical psychologist at Dayton State Hospital prior to his employment at the Ohio Department of Education.

Dr. Stephens was a Professor of Special Education and Rehabilitation at the University of Pittsburgh; a consulting psychologist at the Winchester Thurston School in Pittsburgh; professor and department chairman in the College of Education at Ohio State University and the founder of that university’s Center for Special Needs Populations. At his retirement from OSU, he was the College of Education’s Dean for Research and was awarded the title of Professor Emeritus.

Later he was a Clinical Research Professor at the University of Dayton and, for many years, the Executive Director of the School Study Council of Ohio. His final professional work was with the Buckeye Association of School Administrators where he provided psychological support services to school administrators.

He was the recipient of numerous professional awards. And consulted nationally and internationally as a tireless advocate for public schools and for students of all exceptionalities.
He worked as a psychologist for over 60 years and holds the Ohio Board of Psychology’s license 244.

Dr. Stephens and Mrs. Stephens (Evelyn) have established student scholarships in their names at Ohio State University and Youngstown State University. In 2017, they started a special grant for high school students in need of a "hand up". Five students were granted $1000 each in the Youngstown, Ohio area. Two of the recipients are attending East High School.