

Fall-Winter 2010-11

The Redding Education Foundation

...fostering the fulfillment of learning at every age...



Dear Neighbor,

In light of the holiday season, let us all reflect upon the things we are grateful for. The Redding Education Foundation recognizes the generosity of our donors who continue to support REF's mission of providing excellence through innovation in the classroom. We thank you all!

Your generous donations enabled REF to support a wide variety of innovative grants requested by teachers and administrators are as follows: Professional Development Grants: "Smart Ed Tech: Strategies for Tough Times"; "Teacher and Students Living Together: Living Literate Lives"; Participation at the AP Institute at St. Johnsbury Academy. Partnership Grants: "One Book, One Community" grant for the Mark Twain Library's purchase of paperback editions of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*; support for "350.org" event on the town green. For the classroom: Software for Announcement Software at JRMS; 2 monitors for JRMS (for previewing student announcements / performances / achievements.) For the full list of grants, please visit our website at: www.reddingeducationfoundation.org and click on the "grants funded" link.

We also want to take this opportunity to share responses to some of the grants given to our teachers and administrators, demonstrating their impact and intention. Here are some of the "gracious" reflections from few grant recipients this year.

From Jonathan Budd, English Department, Professional

Development Grant for the National Council of Teacher of English Conference in Orlando, Fla. (Nov. 2010):

"On behalf of my colleagues, Janice Garvey, Jack Powers and Alison Write, and myself, words do not exist to thank you for your generosity in sending us to the 100th Annual Convention of the National Council of Teachers of English in Orlando, FLA (Nov. 2010).

First, our own workshop entitled "Romping with Joy and Yes, Loving Poetry" was extremely well received by the participants, many of whom are seeking to do the types of thing Joel Barlow High School has done in extending its English curriculum in meaningful ways including the core literacies of synthesis and oral conversation. Again, Joel Barlow leads the way in academic excellence and forethought.

Second, each of us attended numerous workshops, demonstrations, and lectures, on topics as diverse as graphic novels, research writing skills, techniques for unpacking difficult

literature, and new techniques for teaching Shakespeare. It may be hard for you to imagine the impact of being surrounded by literally thousands of other English teachers from across the nation as interested in English as we are.

As we bring new ideas, thoughts, concepts to our colleagues and our students, we will be forever grateful to your generosity in supporting our work."



From the administrators who attended the "Change Leadership" Group training at the Harvard Graduate School of Education called "Systemic Change for Student Success"

continued on next page...

Partner to Promote Educational Excellence

REF will partner with community members, organizations and schools to achieve a shared vision of educational excellence and innovation. REF will invest in community educational and cultural arts initiatives and in programs for our schools that fall beyond the scope of the town and school budgets.

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"This training is designed to provide leaders with an overview of a comprehensive approach to systemic school and district change to improve learning for all students. To



give the system-wide focus, it is important that all administrators attend the training. As such, the new learning from the training will be used to revise and refine school and district continuous improvement plans in a format standardized for all ER9 schools. The most direct outcome from the training will be the ability for administrators to revise and/or redesign their school, department, or district continuous improvement plans.

Teams of teachers will work collaboratively to establish measurable student performance goals and design implementation action plans to support achievement of those goals. The targeting of specific performance areas such as literacy and mathematics---coupled with the ongoing monitoring of individual and group performance---will result in improved teaching and learning for all students. The strategies gleaned from the conference will be shared with the larger ER9 Community. It is a great opportunity to express the philosophy of the ER9 learning community and how students and parents could expect to see that philosophy implemented in each classroom.

Thank you for REF's continued support!"

Excerpted from The Redding Pilot:
John Read Morning Show: Middle Schoolers Deliver News (Ron Farina, Grant Recipient)

"Though the program only started at the end of last school year, students have already taken an interest in becoming broadcasters for the pre-taped show, which teachers play in their classrooms for students every Monday.

*The morning show gives students an opportunity to flex their public speaking skills as on-air anchors, said **Ron Farina**, morning show producer and a special education teacher at the school.*

Students also take a greater interest in the announcements when they're recited in front of them on the screen by their peers as opposed to only hearing them over loudspeakers, he said.

"If they see a friend up there, they're definitely more attentive to it," Mr. Farina said.

Mr. Farina said he has dedicated students who take part regularly, although he's still looking for a core group of students to be broadcasters.

"The kids love to see themselves, but it's hard for them to stay committed," he said.

The program was proposed by Mr. Farina when he realized many students don't pay attention to the loud-speaker announcements recited every morning while they travel to class.

"It just seemed like a flawed system," he said. "Kids could not hear it and it wasn't really effective."

Mr. Farina received a \$500 grant last year from the school's PTA and the Redding Education Foundation to pay for software and equipment. He uses Adobe Communicator to edit the show.

Mr. Farina meets with students two or three times a week before school starts to tape it. "Our studio is a classroom so by default we can only use it when there isn't class," he said.

The goal is for students to learn to edit the show on the computer themselves. "My plan was to have kids totally absorb all of it, and I think that's still the plan," he said.

Since its inception, the show has hosted special guests, including teachers, administrators and Schools Superintendent Dr. Michael Cicchetti.

As for their in-house production, Mr. Farina said he's happy with the progress so far, and it's opened up his classroom to different students throughout the school."



Another grant from REF proliferates Mr. Farina's efforts: Look for the 2 monitors that will be installed in the front hall and cafeteria at JRMS...they will stream other media and announcements in the New Year.

On a final note, it's not too late to make your end-of-year donation. The form is on the last page of this newsletter.

We wish you all the best in the coming year!

With thanks and gratitude,

Alice Smith

President, Redding Education Foundation
...fostering the fulfillment of learning at every age...

Projections for 2011

We (REF, ELF and the Region 9 school system) believe that excellence is dynamic and constantly moving forward. To ensure the legacy of excellence in the Region 9 and Redding/Easton schools, the administration has asked REF and ELF to continue to invest in our professional educators. The Redding Education Foundation (REF) pledges to focus on the long term commitment to the Redesign Team at Joel Barlow High School and support the work done through the Harvard Leadership Change program.

Together with the Easton Learning Foundation, REF sent the first team of four teachers in 2006 to Harvard Graduate School of Education with several more teams to follow over the next four years (as well as other professional development opportunities: visit the REF website at www.reddingeducationfoundation.org, see “grants funded”).

This past fall, Dr Cicchetti requested and was awarded a large grant from both REF and ELF (nearly \$10,000.00) to send 8 (administrators and teachers) representing each of the the ER9 schools to the Harvard Leadership Institute to (reflections are previously mentioned on page one and two).

REF’s long term commitment to invest in the highest

quality professional development that will inform Redding’s educational leaders on 21 century teaching and learning is steadfast. Together with your continued support, REF will continue to invest in the Administration’s strategic vision to redefine the boundaries of the classroom—perhaps digitally—and support our professional educator’s application of 21st century teaching for the benefit of our students.



Creative and thoughtful discussions on learning laboratories have commenced at JBHS. Principal Tom McMoran will be introducing the topic over the next few months. REF will provide some video feed on REF’s website sometime in January 2011, describing some upcoming “innovative” practices.

We invite you to learn more about upcoming grant requests. Be on the lookout for invitations to discussions in January and February 2011. Please do not hesitate to contact us and become an active participant in the conversation!

“Kids Give Back” The perfect teacher / administrator recognition gift!

The program: “Kids Give Back”

REF hopes that “philanthropy” is something taught early on: one is never too young to learn about and engage in giving! And it feels great to give recognition to someone who has made a difference in one’s life. The program allows your child to make a donation to REF (\$25 per certificate) in the name and honor of a teacher or administrator—the “gift” is a certificate of recognition (see next page)—which is created by REF and sent directly to the recipient. Please visit our website at http://www.reddingeducationfoundation.org/programs_kids.asp and follow the instructions (there are a few styles to choose from).



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new webmaster, Vin Rosa
who is truly a lifesaver!!!
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*Whether you have an hour or a desire to embrace
a project, we can put your talents to great use!*

Please contact us at:

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Donations may also be made online using our secure server by pushing
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If you are interested in becoming more involved in the Foundation,
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