

The Annual Winnetka Public School District #36
Foundation Plan
2015-2016

Each school year, the Superintendent of Schools confers with members of the Winnetka Public Schools Foundation Board, members of the School Board, and members of the District Leadership Team about creative ways in which the students of District 36 could benefit from the generosity of the Foundation. After an analysis of the needs of our individual schools and the District as a whole, a plan is developed that includes three tiers of enrichment, including “Core Plus”, “Creativity & Innovation”, and “Summer Institute”. Upon formal agreement and approval of the Foundation Board, fund-raising begins to grant these proposals.

Plan Components

C O R E P L U S

The District provides all curriculum, materials and resources for its “core” programs. These include all traditional academic areas (math, science, social studies, language arts), but also the arts, kinetic wellness, social emotional learning, and the like. The District implements a six-year curriculum review process to ensure curriculum and instructional materials are systematically reviewed and updated. While the District will continue to provide all necessary, foundational resources and training, the curriculum review committees also identify extension resources and staff development that allow teachers to take lessons to “the next level,” offering students greater personal connections, deeper understandings of the outside world, and integration of technology in a variety of learning modalities.

The review cycle creates a predictable plan for funding and support:

2013-2014: Math & World Language

2014-2015: Language Arts

2015-2016: Science, Social Emotional Learning, Kinetic Wellness & Health

2016-2017: Social Studies

Examples of Core Plus resources might include the following: a special software program or app to help students compose their own music; math extension kits that provide hands-on, experiences; a nationally-recognized instructional specialist who provides on-going training to teachers in their classrooms; and authentic field experiences for students learning another language.

CREATIVITY & INNOVATION

Grants

As explicitly stated in the District's Strategic Plan, *creativity* and *innovation* are regarded as core values for staff and students. The Foundation supports these values through a grant process that affords staff the opportunity to write grants to pilot new initiatives, extend current learning experiences, or develop research projects that further school and District initiatives.

This process involves a committee, comprised of a teacher representative and a Principal from each building, the Curriculum Director, and Superintendent of Schools, who all receive the annual grant applications. After reviewing the proposals, each committee member sends a completed ranking sheet to the Curriculum Director who collates the results and brings them to a meeting in which the criteria for decision making is discussed and grants are chosen.

Examples of Creativity and Innovation grants include the Butterfly Garden at Greeley; resources for Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math (STEAM) education; the study of our student advisory programs; and the introduction of Froebel Blocks at all of our elementary schools.

Artists-in-Residence

Moreover, the Foundation also supports the Artist-in-Residence program at each of the schools. This is a program wherein students are provided the opportunity to interact with artists with the goal of gaining a greater understanding of the creative process and how to play it out to fruition.

Examples of the activities are the frieze and tile murals around the drinking fountains at Hubbard Woods; the 4th grade Crows on Parade project at Crow Island School; the development of a Millennium mural at Greeley School; and visits by nationally known authors, poets, dancers and musicians.

SUMMER INSTITUTE

The success of our biennial Summer Institutes over the last twelve years has been overwhelming in terms of on-going impact. Teachers, administrators, and School Board members work together on various topics that significantly enhance the way in which we understand and work with our students. This is a voluntary staff event with a relatively high participation (on average, 80 staff members attend). This has assisted in bringing our community of learners together with a common vision. Many staff development activities have emerged from the experiences of the Summer Institute and continue throughout the year. A few of the past topics have included the role of the arts in education, brain research, teaching for democracy, looking at students' work, differentiating instruction to meet the needs of all students, examining the profile of a 21st

Century learner, The Teachers College Reading and Writing Project Writing Institute, and Defining our Identity as Progressive Educators in a Public School.