

**Winnetka Public Schools Foundation Annual Plan**  
**2009-2010**  
**(4/7/09)**

The Annual Plan for the Winnetka Public Schools Foundation embodies the visionary thinking of staff around ways in which the school district might provide unique opportunities for our students. 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 Winnetka could benefit from the generosity of the Foundation. After an analysis of the needs of the school district and setting priorities by members of the leadership team, the Superintendent proposes projects to the Foundation Board for approval and then to the School Board for endorsement. With subsequent formal approval on behalf of the Foundation Board, fund-raising begins with projects identified.

In that context, the following projects are proposed for the school year 2009-10 for consideration of the Board of the Winnetka Public Schools Foundation.

PROPOSED PROJECTS

• Teacher Initiatives	\$40,000
• Leadership and Team Building (SEL)	\$25,000
• Artist in Residence	\$40,000
• Teacher Research	\$20,000
• Homework Program	\$10,000
• After School Programs	\$15,000
• Summer Institute	\$10,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$160,000</b>

## ***Teacher Initiatives***

It is proposed that the Foundation continue their support of Teacher Initiatives next year. This project has enabled a great deal of visionary thinking on the part of teachers, unique projects for students each year, and an enrichment for many classrooms district-wide as teachers have shared their experiences and products. For a relatively small investment, these projects are the way in which every teacher and child is touched in some significant way by the Foundation. These are the projects that are continually highlighted for parents and the community. We are requesting \$40,000 this year. This will be supplemented with funds that have been unspent from initiatives the last five years. A Committee comprised of a teacher representative and Principal from each building, the Curriculum Coordinator, and Superintendent of Schools receives all of the grant applications each year (averaging 25-30 annually). After approximately 8-10 hours of reviewing the applications, each committee member sends a completed ranking sheet to the Curriculum Coordinator who collates the results and brings them to a meeting in which the criteria for decision making is discussed and grants are chosen. Those not funded are often funded through building funds, artist-in-residence money, PTO, etc.

*Budget Request:* *\$40,000*

## ***Leadership Development***

The Winnetka Public Schools has always been interested in developing the whole child, i.e. intellectual, emotional, and social. The body of research has increased as to the importance of such focus for future leaders. In addition to this, the knowledge of how to develop the necessary skills has increased. Each school in the district has its own individual way of approaching this topic and has been enhancing new ways to incorporate the latest strategies. Buildings have used the leadership development funds to have consultants come in and work on leadership initiatives with students and teachers, to allow teachers to develop curriculum to foster leadership development in students, and to send teachers to conferences and workshops that help them promote leadership development in the classroom. We are requesting funds from the Foundation to continue this focus through curriculum writing, staff development, consultants, assemblies for the students, and materials for various projects. Teachers have attended workshops and written curriculum over the summer for Peace Power at CI, Kids Leading Kids at GR, a multi-age Families program at Hubbard Woods, Project Reach at SK and Habits of Mind and Superfest at CW.

*Budget Request:*

<i>At each school</i>	<i>\$5,000</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$25,000</i>

## ***Artist-in-Residence***

The research on the brain, the studies on the impact of the arts on the process of learning in early childhood, and the broadening understanding of the nature of intelligence have intensified our interest and commitment to the arts. Though there has always been a commitment on behalf of the community to the arts, there is a growing awareness of the academic benefits of such a commitment.

The Foundation has made a commitment to support an artist-in-residence program in each of the schools over the years. This has provided opportunities for students to interact with artists with the goal of gaining a greater understanding of the creative process, its steps, and the necessary skills and task commitment that are needed. Successful examples of the activities are the frieze and tile murals around the drinking fountains at

Hubbard Woods, the 4<sup>th</sup> grade Crows on Parade project at Crow Island School, the development of a Millennium mural at Greeley School, and visits by nationally known authors. It is proposed that the Foundation continue the support of this program.

*Budget Request:*

<i>At each school</i>	<i>\$8,000</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$40,000</i>

***Teacher Research***

Winnetka prides itself in standing apart from other school districts in the quality of teachers we hire, the on-going engagement of our teachers in research and reflection about practice, and the provision of a rich intellectual environment for our teachers. This has been true since the time of Carleton Washburne, and remains so today. When Elliot Eisner, nationally known expert in the field of assessment from Stanford University, visited our schools, he challenged the whole staff to document what we are doing and share it with the rest of the world.

We are requesting that the Winnetka Public Schools Foundation support some of the teacher research and documentation efforts that are taking place within the district. These efforts are happening throughout the district on an individual or collective basis either through explicit research practices or through the documentation of the learning process. The results of the efforts are designed to impact all teachers and students in the district. We have developed an explicit research protocol that requires researchers to submit proposals to a committee for review. Researchers will be required to follow stringent research procedures, share their findings with all staff and publish their work, either locally or nationally.

Projects that have emerged from research have been the New Teacher Retreat and Induction Program, the study of the use of pre-packaged math materials in a progressive setting, the enhancement of our teacher mentoring program, the study of our student advisory programs, and the introduction of Froebel Blocks at all of our elementary schools. In addition, through teacher research, The Winnetka Public Schools played a leadership role in the reestablishment of the Progressive Educators Network.

Research projects also support the development of qualitative measures that serve many of the following purposes.

- Enhancement of teachers' own learning as they reflect on and analyze their own teaching.
- Enhancement of students' learning as teachers carefully analyze and grow in their understanding of teaching and learning.
- Engagement of students' metacognition about their own learning.
- Provision of feedback for parents about their children in a meaningful way.

A small part of this budget would also be used for a stipend (\$1500) for a Teacher Research Facilitator. The role of the Facilitator would be to provide support, training and development for teachers during the research process and to uphold the integrity of the research process throughout a project. Teacher researchers would be required to attend several professional development sessions throughout the lifetime of their grant. In addition, the facilitator would also be available to educate teachers and parents about teacher research in general.

<i>Budget Request:</i>	<i>\$20,000</i>
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## ***Homework Program***

The homework program fills a need that has been expressed by parents, teachers, and students at The Skokie School. This is a designated area for students to gather and receive assistance with research, organization, long-range projects, daily homework assignments, etc. In past years we have worked with approximately 40 students annually who are committed to attend on a regular basis.

*Budget Request* *\$10,000*

## ***After School Programs***

Currently, the after-school program at Washburne School provides activities that are inviting for students at the middle school level. Thanks to the Foundation we have been able to provide several offerings that have been very popular, enrollments continue to grow, and teachers are generating more offerings for students. Some of the past offerings include dance, cardio, golf, Dungeons and Dragons, debate club, chess club, cross-country, track and field, web-design, future cities and a drop in homework club. In fact, this year, the CW Future Cities Club won the Midwest Regional Championship and advanced to the nationals in Washington DC. Currently, there are 213 students involved in After School Clubs at Washburne. We would like to continue this successful program and are requesting funds for materials, potential use of buses, and cost sharing for stipends.

In addition, we would like to continue for a second year a club for students in grades 4-6. The purpose of this club will be to help students establish connections with other students. This initiative is intended to provide the opportunity and the skills needed to develop age appropriate relationships and a sense of belonging. Activities and outings will be planned to provide the experiences needed to foster success. Initial membership will be via nomination from staff and every effort will be made to accommodate all students who might benefit from such an experience.

*Budget Request* *\$15,000*

## ***Summer Institute***

The success of our Summer Institutes over the last twelve years has been overwhelming and its impact on the district has continued throughout the year. Teachers, administrators, and School Board members work together on various topics that will significantly enhance the way in which we understand and work with our students. 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, and differentiating instruction to meet the needs of all students. We are requesting \$10,000 for preparation, consultants, and materials for the next Summer Institute, as well as follow up staff development for all teachers that builds on the momentum and work of the Institute.

*Budget Request:* *\$10,000*