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NEWS FROM THE CONCORD EDUCATION FUND ISSUE 8 AUTUMN 2009

Record Results and Regional Acclaim

It was a dramatic year, marked by an historic economic downturn and challenges at every turn but thanks to the generosity of our Concord Education Fund (CEF) donors, we raised a record \$260,000. And today, things are looking up in Concord and Carlisle. The future is bright. As we go to press, the stock market is up. Our schools are thriving. Our students are achieving. Even the media has noticed.

The Boston Globe ranked Concord the number one most desirable town to live in, citing our exceptional schools, in its September "Bang for Your Buck" article.

Boston Magazine's September report on "The Best High Schools 2009," ranked Concord-Carlisle High School number three in the state.

Contributing to these stellar ratings is the recognition that the curriculum in our schools goes well beyond the ordinary. As *Boston Magazine* detailed, opportunities exist at CCHS that surpass most secondary schools. A special call-out was given to the new, CEF-funded Professional Digital Recording Studio—technology seldom seen in a high school, public or private. It's these inventive and inspiring programs that enrich our schools, invigorate our faculty and enable our students to achieve. CEF is proud to play an important role in ensuring our schools have resources to innovate and impact learning at all levels.

While some may argue that with tight budgets, enrichment and ambition should give way to minimum standards and expectations. We couldn't disagree more. Providing financial assistance to our schools so that our teachers can continue to create enriching and stimulating coursework is more important now than ever. These resources allow our students and teachers to distinguish themselves from their peers across the state and country.

As Superintendent Diana Rigby notes, "Our students continue to achieve at very high levels because educators, staff, parents, and community members invest their knowledge, skills, experience, time, and resources in improving our schools. The Concord Ed Fund has generously supported school improvement efforts for many years, and we are very grateful for the annual grants for teacher innovation, new technology tools, the Digital Recording Studio, and Hooked on Science program."

This past year, our 15th year in operation, CEF granted \$109,838 to fund 14 proposals that will impact kindergarten



CEF Board members relish the news that the *Boston Magazine* rated CCHS third in its ranking of top high schools.

through grade 12. We have gifted over \$10,000 (for a total investment of over \$61,000) for the completion of the Digital Recording Studio. We have also invested \$52,500 in, with an additional \$88,000 allocated, for the Hooked on Science program at CCHS. None of this would be possible without the generous support of our donors.

Whether it's funding the innovative programs, purchasing equipment, or subsidizing professional development, CEF is committed to furthering excellence by deepening and broadening the educational experience of our students through grants and gifts to our schools. Grant applications are currently being accepted and we look forward to seeing what inspiration and brilliance is in store for the future.

Please look inside for photos and descriptions of grants in action. You can support our mission at our Dinner Dance and Auction party at Concord Country Club on Saturday, November 14th. To purchase tickets or make an online donation, please visit us at www.concordedfund.org.

Yes, things are looking up in Concord and Carlisle. And, the future's bright.

The Future's So Bright

Buy your tickets today!
--this event will sell out--

CEF's Annual Party
November 14th at 6:30pm
Concord Country Club, Concord
Auction ♦ Dinner ♦ Dancing

Spend the evening dining with friends and dancing to *French Lick* while benefiting the Concord Public Schools and Concord-Carlisle Regional High School. Bid on one-of-a-kind auction items like vacation homes, parties and wine. Attire is casual and BRIGHT. Don't forget your shades!

To purchase tickets visit
www.concordedfund.org

/ Gotta Wear Shades

Thank You!



We would like to convey our sincere appreciation to Blue Dry Goods and Fritz & Gigi, The Children's Shop, for their generous support of CEF through their Back-to-School event on September 17, 18 and 19, at which customers could designate the Ed Fund to receive ten percent of the value of their purchases. It was a fun event for shoppers, who had a wonderful array of happening clothes to choose from. The proceeds will help us reach our ambitious goals to support the Concord and Concord-Carlisle Regional School districts.

CEF Logo and Newsletter Design: Priscilla White Sturges, Waterman Design, Concord, MA

CEF Grants Awarded for the 2009-2010 School Year



21st Century BLC Conference (\$5,360)

This July, an eight-person team of administrators, specialists and teachers attended the three-day Building Learning Communities conference in Boston.

Attendees learned about the possibilities of education fueled by new technologies including ways to engage students in their learning and prepare them for a global economy that seeks innovation, flexibility, creative thinking, collaboration, extraordinary communication and presentation skills, and authentic opportunities. In the words of one attendee from the Concord Carlisle delegation:

"It is incredibly exciting! We can accomplish so much in guiding our students toward learning about their global community, giving them the skills to become fluent in the new ways of the digital future, partnering with students and their families in looking forward and embracing the changes that are upon us."

The team will continue to collaborate on implementation ideas across K-12, which will benefit students and staff district wide.

Writing Skills Readiness (\$950)

Funds from this grant will be used to produce a classroom friendly instructional DVD to teach and improve K-2 student's writing readiness awareness and skills. The finished product will be shared across all three schools.



Alcott students from Concord and Boston use digital cameras to create cross-cultural photo essay books which document their lives outside of school. (2008-2009 Grants in Action)

Integrating Digital Art and Photography (\$2,202)

On the heels of a very successful digital program and 2008 CEF Grant "Photo Essays," this grant will purchase additional equipment for full class use in Integrated Arts, Technology and Language Arts projects at Alcott. Fourth and Fifth graders will create books combining digital photography and writing. At times, the photos taken will serve as writing "prompts," while in other projects, students will be asked to photograph an event, place, person, even a period of time and develop related text.



CCHS students take advantage of the newly renovated fitness center. (2008-2009 Grants in Action)

Walk a Mile in your Shoes (\$10,000)

This creative approach seeks to increase students' learning and expand on global education initiatives set by the school district. CCHS students will research and serve as "experts" concerning various cultures represented by Thoreau families. They will work with educators, the Thoreau School Global Education Committee and Thoreau School families to design multimedia presentations to share with the Thoreau students. These presentations will reflect the diverse culture and experiences, beliefs and traditions that have connections to the Thoreau School community. The program hopes to present between five and ten cultures of past, present and future Thoreau students to the current Thoreau student body.

Classroom Math Enrichment Centers (\$2,368)

This grant will fund the creation of math enrichment centers to provide quality, differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all students K-5 as well as ensure opportunities and challenges for those students seeking further enhancement in their math studies. Each center will consist of a mobile cart equipped with challenging and enriching mathematical materials that go beyond the regular mathematics curriculum in the form of activities, problems and games.

Intergenerational Literary Lunch at CMS (\$1,500)

Through a literary luncheon group, Ms. Stockwood plans to instill a passion for reading in 6th grade middle school students. This grant will be used to purchase books and lunch for the parent-student participants. Ms. Stockwood will be recruiting volunteers as well as seeking out those students who might be reluctant readers. Approximately 20 different students will sign up each month with their parents or guardians for a total of six book groups throughout the year. They will meet to discuss the selected book of the month and have a simple but appetizing lunch.

This program is modeled after a highly successful literary lunch program that Ms. Stockwood was involved with at McCall Middle School in Winchester.

Making Ecuador a Touchstone of the Sixth Grade Latin American Curriculum (\$5,110)

This grant funded a three week trip in June 2009 to Ecuador for Rachel Plante, a Concord Middle School Art teacher. While in Ecuador, Ms. Plante met with artists, political officials, archaeologists and ecologists to identify ways to engage CMS students in the lives and history of Ecuador. In addition, Ms. Plante taught at two Ecuadorian schools—one urban and one rural. While in those schools, she studied the approaches that Ecuadorian teachers use to engage their students in learning about their culture.

This Fall 2009, Ms. Plante will meet with the 6th grade Art, Social Studies and World Languages teachers to develop curriculum that will give tangible expression to the insights that Ms. Plante brought back from Ecuador.

Moodle Software for Website Development (\$11,750)

In recent years, there has been tremendous growth in the array of digital curricula and online learning experiences. This grant will provide funding for a team of teachers to become trained in the use of Moodle software and to develop a template for teachers to use in developing interactive, online learning environments. It is projected that the websites developed will eventually benefit all students at CCHS and CMS.

Sophomore Writing Enrichment Technology Cart (\$29,831.74)

With CEF funding, 25 Mac Book laptops were purchased for the Sophomore English class. This yearlong, writing-intensive course teaches students the craft of the written word. Engaging in writing and revising during class time requires electronic word processing. Students now will be able to make extensive progress during class, which will improve overall performance and, ultimately, ensure that they advance through high school with a command of the writing skills necessary to succeed in the 21st Century.

CCHS Advance Multi-Media Production (\$26,000)

Great things are in-store for CCHS students and faculty interested in video production. This grant funded the purchase of video, digital and audio production equipment to produce high-quality video suitable for television broadcast. A key element of this grant is the development of a professional learning community



Talented CCHS musicians enjoy full benefit of the state-of-art digital recording studio. (2008-2009 Grants in Action)

(PLC) for educators interested in incorporating multi-media into their curriculum. Faculty interested in using multi-media in their curriculum stem from virtually every department at CCHS. The broad range of projected uses of the new equipment include production of CCHS Weather Broadcasts, use within Meteorology and Earth Science classes, and collaboration between students enrolled in digital video courses and CCTV to name a few. Additionally it will provide a dynamic forum for cross-curricular discussion and professional development.



Fourth Grade students explore the scientific artifacts and activities from the Curiosity Carts. (2008-2009 Grants in Action)

Focus on your Footprint – A Home Energy Analysis (\$7,075)

During Peter Nichol's Honors Earth Science class this spring, students gained a sobering understanding of the impact of their respective households on the environment. Using the CEF-funded ThermoHAWK Touchless Infrared Thermometers and drawing inspiration from the new textbooks, Low Carbon Diet – a 30 Pound Program to Lose 5000 Pounds, students determined the total energy consumption of their homes. They then planned ways to be more efficient, save energy, reduce their carbon footprint and even save money! This pilot program will be available to all CCHS Earth Science Students as one of the quarterly program projects.

CCHS Global Literacy Program Consultant (\$5,000)

Think globally; communicate effectively. This grant funds a coordinator to work along with Iolanda Volpe, CCHS Foreign Language teacher, to create and implement a CCHS Global Literacy Program for students in grades 9-12. The goal of the Global Literacy Program is to help CCHS students foster global awareness through travel abroad, traditional foreign language studies and multi-cultural community service. The program is modeled after similar programs in Needham, Burlington and Belmont Public Schools and is expected to provide students with essential skills for our increasingly global society.

Document Cameras for Use with Promethean ActivBoards (\$3390)

This grant funds the purchase of two Document Cameras to be used in math and foreign language classes at CCHS. The Document Cameras will help students and teachers share work-in-progress as well as project 3D items on ActivBoards, many of which were funded by CEF in previous years.

