



Synergies

*The power of
partnerships
for our
schools*

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Classroom of the Future Foundation

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Synergies

Welcome to *Synergies*, a periodic newsletter of the Classroom of the Future Foundation. *Synergies* provides an overview and update of the projects and initiatives of the Foundation and profiles significant partners and supporters.

If you have any particular story ideas, we certainly welcome them. Or, if you would prefer not to receive this newsletter, we will remove your name from our distribution list. Please contact Bruce Braciszewski at (858) 292-3685 or email cffstaff@scdoe.net. ❖

CFF Sets 2004 Priorities

Helping school districts close the student achievement gap in San Diego County is one of three goals of the Classroom of the Future Foundation for 2004. Other goals include expanding the services of the TIME Innovation Office to bring school districts closer to the TIME vision and mobilizing technology resources to support the Joe Rindone Regional Technology Center and local districts.

Closing the Achievement Gap

Perhaps no other issue addresses as many of the challenges facing education today as the achievement gap.

Briefly, the achievement gap refers to the differences in student test score results

when compared by ethnicity, gender, language fluency and special education status.

Towards this goal, CFF will work with the San Diego County Office of Education and 42 local school districts to contribute to the closing of the achievement gap.

This promises to be a defining issue in local education for years to come. It is vital that everyone interested in public education understand the challenges. The following is an overview of the local initiative to close the achievement gap.

For the past year, a task force of local Superintendents collected data and analyzed the achievement gap. Not only is the gap intolerable, it is widening among poor students and students of color. In Spring 2003, 80% of Asians and 75% of Anglos pass the math portion of the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE). Yet, only about 38% of African-American and 40% of Hispanic students pass the math portion on their initial test.

San Diego's 42 school districts have signed a "CAHSEE Compact" that commits to ensure that every high school student in the county will pass the math portion of the high school exit exam in 2006.

The CAHSEE Compact is a bold, dynamic goal that will require unprecedented partnership and collaboration at every educational level. (The exit exam tests math standards principally taught in the 6th and 7th grades as well as in the first algebra classes taught in 8th or 9th grades.)

San Diego is the only region in the state to stand up and take quantifiable responsibility for closing the achievement gap. The gauntlet has been thrown down and now everyone is getting to work.

In March 2004, tenth graders will take the CAHSEE for their first time and passing it will count toward graduation. (Students who do not pass will have several opportunities to retake the test before graduation.). Passing rates will be compared with similar scores from 2003. All 42 San Diego school districts have committed to producing improvement between 2003 and 2004 and to continue progress towards the goal of 100% pass rate in 2006.

Technology will inevitably play a key role in empowering students to improve learning and achievement. Not only does it play an increasing role in today's classroom, it promises to define the richness and accessibility of their educational opportunities in the future.

CFF is working with educators, district officials, community organizations and business leaders to create initiatives that better equip teachers, students and even families in a learning context.

We welcome anyone interested in closing the achievement gap to contact CFF. The greater the partnership, the greater the power, the greater the synergy to achieve.

Contact Bruce Braciszewski at (858) 292-3685 or email cffstaff@scdoe.net.

TIME Innovation Office Expansion

The TIME Innovation Office will build on the momentum developed in 2003, working more closely with school districts than ever.

Liaison work with several districts will focus on adapting the TIME vision and

culture to individual district needs. For example, work with **Cajon Valley Union School District** focuses on implementation of their grant to upgrade technology for middle school Math and Science instruction. Work with **Encinitas Elementary School District** will focus on organizational leadership capacity for better integrating technology into learning. Several school districts will utilize the TIME Innovation Office to facilitate technology plans that better incorporate the functional requirements of the TIME vision.

Two technology innovation projects will continue in 2004, the *One-to-One @ School & Home* in **Lemon Grove** and the *Digital Locker* project in **Sweetwater High School District**. The TIME Innovation Office will seek critical success-factors that help ensure we can replicate these projects.

A key strategy will be to continue the TIME Teacher Work Sessions. This group of 40-50 teachers from across the County that initiated the TIME Functional Requirements document provides invaluable insights into what will make the TIME vision effective in improving productivity of teaching and learning.

Similarly, the TIME Innovation Office will work to broaden community leader involvement in the TIME initiative and generate wider community recognition of the TIME vision.

Technology Support for JRRTC

CFF continues our involvement with the Joe Rindone Regional Technology Center by ensuring the technology meets current needs. Our efforts will expand to assist the San Diego County Office of Education as it opens two regional centers in South County in 2004 and North County in 2005.

CFF, via a \$25,000 grant from **San Diego Gas and Electric (SDG&E)**, supported the live remote-broadcast of the ITV program, *MathVision*, from a variety of middle schools throughout San Diego County. ❖

CFF: 2003 in Review

A number of important milestones were reached and goals achieved in 2003 as CFF now turns its sights toward 2004. Among the highlights in the past year:

- The *One-to-One @ School & Home* program in the **Lemon Grove School District** was launched. It is an excellent example of how CFF can act as a catalyst between forward-thinking school districts and leaders in the business community dedicated to improving educational opportunities. Program sponsors include **San Diego Foundation, Cox Communications, and Motorola**.
- The **Economic Development Corporation** and the Classroom of the Future Foundation partnered to replicate the *Digital Locker* program at Bonita Vista High School in **Sweetwater School District**. This project builds on the innovative *eBackpack* program created by the **Grossmont High School District**. The pilot project will provide all 9th graders with 100MB of digital storage to create, transfer, and compile school assignments and develop portfolios of their work in geography. Sponsors include: **EDC, Apple Corporation, SBC, SDGE, Union-Tribune** and CFF.
- The TIME Innovation Office, fortified by a successful grant from **Nokia Corporation**, effectively worked with a host of school districts across the county, facilitating efforts to adopt and tailor the

TIME vision to local school district dynamics.

- **Pfizer** has donated 30 computers to CFF to pilot a Linux thin-client platform with educational applications. **SAIC** is assisting with the server configuration and a beta test will be created at the Joe Rindone Regional Technology Center before the computers are distributed to a local school. ❖

Education Technology Updates

Organizations and school districts across the country are embracing the potential of groundbreaking technology for the classroom and learning environment. Here are a few brief reports on the work of others:

New 'visualization technologies'

As useful as internet search engines are, they have a pretty big flaw: They often deliver too much information, and a lot of it isn't quite what students are looking for. But some intriguing new technologies are getting better at bringing order to all that chaos and could revolutionize how students and others mine the internet for information.

<http://www.eschoolnews.com/news/showStorytw.cfm?ArticleID=4833>

New software could revolutionize computer users' experience

Four primary schools are now piloting a new software program containing a few hundred thousand lines of computer code that could revolutionize the way people interact with computers, say its unlikely inventor and his backers.

<http://www.eschoolnews.com/news/showStorytw.cfm?ArticleID=4834>