

Innovative Teacher = Engaged Classroom

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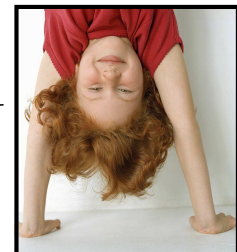
The IT=EC program funded \$50,000 in middle school teaching tools and support. In 2009, the Education Foundation for Billings Public Schools received a gift from the Senator Burns Foundation for Scholastic Excellence. A portion of this gift was used to fund the IT=EC (Innovative Teacher = Engaged Classrooms) program in the spring of 2011. The goal of the program is to provide teachers with an opportunity to learn about and use interactive technology in their classrooms. This program is more than an acquisition of equipment rather it is developing a learning model for teachers to implement in their daily teaching. Four teachers at each of the four middle schools received interactive teaching tools including a laptop, Mimio Teach, projector, Mimio Pad and accessories. Teachers were provided with instruction and support in using the teaching tools effectively in their classrooms. Through the IT=EC program, teachers will be able to share ideas and information on effective strategies for engaging students and enhancing curriculum.



Bobbi Poser, Castle Rock Middle School Health Enhancement, shared, "The residual effects of using the technology in my classroom were amazing. Student discussions, engagement and interaction with the subject material increase when I use the Mimio Capture to teach and review lessons." The IT=EC program is making an impact on classrooms beyond those of the 16 educators currently in the program. "The IT=EC program has been a great fit for my classroom because of the training we receive. The training is relevant to our classrooms and curriculum. We have time to gather a collection of tools and resources that we can implement immediately into our classrooms," shared Sean Hale, Riverside Middle School teacher. The teachers in the IT=EC program are able to share with and demonstrate how to effectively use interactive technology to others in their school building. "Through the implementation of this program, collaboration is happening within a school building, cross-curricular, and across middle schools district wide," shared Desiree Caskey, SD2 coordinator.

Thank You BPS Educators, Staff, & Administrators

The Foundation is thrilled by the generosity and support we received from Billings Public School employees this year. We are excited to announce with you that 285 individuals pledged \$13,100.00 in the form of a one time donation or payroll deduction during the 2011-2012 school year. The generous support given by BPS educators, staff, and administrators during the Education Foundation's payroll deduction drive this past spring will directly support the 2012 Classroom Grants program. The support given by educators, staff, and administrators provides direct benefit to our students, classrooms, and teachers. Interested BPS employees are still able to give a one time gift or enroll in the Foundation's payroll deduction program by downloading a payroll deduction form on our website, www.efbps.org.



The Foundation is looking forward to increasing the dollar amount and number of grants awarded for the Classroom Grants program in 2012. We appreciate your support.

Reading Rocks

We had a rockin' good time this summer reading in the parks! Reading Rocks just completed its eighth year and provided more books to kids than ever before. The Education Foundation offered literacy activities four days a week for six weeks in four Billings area parks. Reading Rocks is held in conjunction with the school district's free lunch program in the parks. The purpose of the program is to encourage children to read during the summer months. The widening gap during the elementary years in reading levels between middle and low income students can be attributed to the severe reading achievement losses that low income students experience during the summer months.

This summer 2,282 books were given to children who attended Reading Rocks with an average of 67 children attending the park each day. This is an increase of 700 children from the prior year. Throughout the summer volunteers gave a total of 450 volunteer hours to read with children. Reading Rocks 2011 was a tremendous success for all individuals involved. We are so fortunate to be a part of a community that supports reading!

