



September 2009

Natick Education Foundation donates \$40,000 to fund iNatickPS: Empowering Teachers and Students through Technology

The NEF Board of Directors voted earlier this fall to dedicate its entire NEF 2009-2010 Grant budget to support Natick's Professional Development in Technology. Under the program title of "iNatickPS: Empowering Teachers and Students through Technology", \$40,000 has been awarded to the Natick Public Schools to further the technology training of teachers. The program was announced at the start of the teacher development day held on September 25, 2009 at the Crowne Plaza in Natick.

Over 500 Natick teachers, staff, and administrators participated in the first ever day-long training where the participants completed multiple workshops such as using iPass (the new student information system for attendance, grading and progress reports), creating Podcasts for classrooms, and Nettekker (how to maximize searching and organizing digital information).

The decision to direct NEF's annual grant budget to support "iNatickPS" was an unusual and one-time decision of the Board. Suspending NEF's traditional grant program for the academic year 2009-2010 consolidates our funding to support this professional development effort. The commitment from the school administration, the Education Association of Natick (EAN), teachers and staff to improve the technological competencies of teachers and students throughout the Natick school system was an important reason for the NEF Board decision.

This decision reflects the strong partnership between NEF and the Natick Schools. We are all looking forward to seeing the results of these training efforts in Natick classrooms. The technology available today has the power to bring enhanced content, creativity, and excitement across all curricula programs in our schools.

The NEF unified grant will support an after-school training curriculum for teachers and staff which will be held in all school buildings beginning in January. In addition, the funding will be used to provide an expanded summer technology training program for interested teachers as well as supporting the second annual full-day training day in September 2010.

For those interested in applying for future grants, NEF is exploring some sources of incremental grant funding through special gifts. We encourage interested teachers, staff, and members of the community to check the NEF website after the holidays to see if we are able to offer some Rolling Grant opportunities later this year (www.natickedfoundation.org). Please remember that the traditional NEF Focus Grant and Rolling Grant Programs will return next year stronger than ever with a more streamlined application process and more support to teachers and staff along the way.

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