

Family Fun and Learning: School Grants Make It Possible!

National research has shown that active and effective parent involvement is essential in assuring students' academic achievement. Recognizing this need, San Diego City Schools invites parents and schools to participate in its non-competitive Parent Involvement Matching Grant program. The school board has set aside funds for schools to use to increase their parent involvement efforts to improve student achievement, promote literacy, and encourage large numbers of parents to work together with staff. Schools can apply for a matching grant for a minimum of \$1,000 or 1% of their Title I school funds.

At a school pajama party, families enjoyed good books, hot chocolate and meaningful conversations with a guest author. Using the *Passport to Literacy Program*, parents and children at many elementary schools have "traveled" together to the "land of literacy", taking home souvenirs of specifically learned strategies and skills. Other schools have used grant funds to plan fun learning events, combining pizza parties with Family Math, Family Reading, technology workshops, reading with celebrities, or learning "hot tips" on managing homework events. Through the *Literacy Survival Kit: Dynamic Mini-Study Skills for Creating Strategic Learners* parents and teens at secondary schools learn how to use reading response journals to discover and savor tempting morsels of writing. They also learn successful note-taking strategies through the use of graphic organizers. Other grant schools have focused on strengthening parent centers, providing quality-parenting classes, helping parents learn to motivate their children, publishing informational newsletters, and recruiting parent leaders and trainers.

From September 1999 through March 2000, thirty-three schools have received grants. Elementary schools include **Chavez, Ericson, Freese, Grant, Hamilton, Hancock, Jefferson, Jones, Kimbrough, Knox, Lafayette, Linda Vista, Longfellow, Marshall, Marvin, Miramar Ranch, Nye, Oak Park, Pacific Beach, Penn, Rosa Parks, Rowan, Toler, and Wegeforth.** Secondary and atypical schools include **Farb, Garfield, Kroc, Memorial, Mission Bay, O'Farrell, Riley, Wangenheim, and Wilson.**

If you are interested in joining or forming a school team to apply for a grant, contact your school office or principal. A representative team should be composed of parents, administrators, teaching staff, support staff, and possibly business partners or community organizations.

Proposals can be submitted at any time throughout the year and are considered monthly by the Review Committee of parents, administrators, teachers, and community representatives. The grant funds are available for three years.

At the end of the funding period, school programs will be reviewed and effective parent involvement practices shared districtwide. Contact your school office or the San Diego City Schools Parent Involvement and Support Department for grant applications and an "Idea Bank" of resources at (619) 725-5615.