



"Enhancing the Quality of Education in
Ridgewood Public Schools Since 1989."

P O Box 575
Ridgewood, NJ 07450
201 652 2903; FAX: 201 444 5565
www.ridgewoodeducation.org
A New Jersey Non-Profit Corporation

REF Funds & Programs, 2009

Classroom mini grants. Established in 1989, this is REF's founding program. To date, REF has funded over \$420,000 in mini-grant awards. A few important facts about the mini-grant program are as follows:

- a. Grants are awarded in two cycles each school year; application deadlines are in January and in September – please check application for deadline date and complete instructions.
- b. Applications are available at www.ridgewoodeducation.org.
- c. Teachers, parents, and/or administrators may submit mini grant applications.
- d. REF trustees review each application. They look at the following criteria:
 - i. How is the project tied to the curriculum;
 - ii. Is the project original/innovative, and does it actively involve the students;
 - iii. What is the total cost and cost per student;
 - iv. Does the application include a complete budget and timetable/schedule;
 - v. Is there support/co-funding.
- e. Award amount for each grant is usually under \$5000. Most grant awards are under \$1400.
- f. REF can't fund teacher salaries or stipends, but can fund assemblies and workshops.
- g. REF tends not to fund after-school clubs or activities.

Arts Fund. This designated fund was established in 2006 with a generous gift from RHS alum Frank Nicklus. Most of the money was used to improve the sound quality in the RHS Campus Center. Remaining funds were used to purchase equipment for the RHS Fine Arts department, as well as for a classroom mini grant in 2006-7 to RHS Band Director Jeffrey Haas for the "Music Matters" Speaker Series. The Arts Fund continues to receive designated donations, which are distributed based on the district supervisors' priority lists.

Health & Wellness Fund was established in 2007 with the proceeds from REF's involvement in the NJ Masters Track & Field Club's Memorial Day Run. About a dozen REF trustees woke up *very* early on a holiday to staff the registration table, and the district used REF's share of the proceeds to purchase heart rate monitors and other equipment. In 2007, REF co-sponsored the Book Chat at Ridgewood Public Library by the young author Leslie Lipton, who discussed her novel, *Unwell*.

North Star Classroom Library Campaign was begun in 2004 as part of literacy component of the federally mandated "no child left behind" program. To date, REF has established 16 classroom libraries in Ridgewood elementary schools. Each library is created with a donation of \$2,500, and donors include local businesses as well as individuals.

Reel Voices Film Festival. REF co-sponsors this fall event at the Ridgewood Public Library with the Friends of the Library. The Library reported that about one quarter of the total attendees at this year's festival were students. Many RHS teachers give extra credit to students who attend then write about a film.

The College Speaker Series at RHS brings speakers into RHS to discuss the college admission process. RHS guidance counselors work with REF to choose the speakers, and this program is co-sponsored by the RHS HSA. The College Speaker Series offers a speaker in the fall, then another speaker in the spring. The event is held in the evening, and is usually attended by both parents and high school students.

The McKeon Scholarship was established a couple of years ago by RHS alum David Madden with some of his "Jeopardy!" winnings. This \$1000 scholarship is named for retired RHS English teacher Jack McKeon. For information on this scholarship, please contact the RHS Guidance department.

Alumni Teacher Development Fund (ATDF). This fund has three separate scholarships for professional development, and was originally established by RHS reunion classes. All tenured teachers are eligible for regular ATDF grants. REF also offers the \$500 Van Huyck Scholarship, as well as the Lois Vedder Gray World Languages Scholarship. For any of the three scholarships, interested teachers must submit a proposal, which is reviewed by the REF Alumni Committee. Complete instructions for all three scholarships are available on the REF website, www.ridgewoodeducation.org.

The Mission of the Ridgewood Education Foundation is to enhance the quality of education in the Village's public schools. The Foundation receives no government funding and is solely supported by its members. 100% of all donations go to support our grants and programs – expenses are paid from Foundation investments. The Ridgewood Education Foundation is an IRC § 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit corporation. All contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

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