

The Las Lomas Education Foundation is excited to announce the 2009-2010 school year **Challenge Grant** of \$150,000, made possible through the increased and generous contributions of a group of 43 District families who are committed to ensuring educational excellence for all our children.

In this difficult economy, state and local funding has declined substantially while our enrollment continues to grow, so the Foundation's support is more critical than ever to help the District **maintain** its historically high standards for educational excellence. The Challenge Grant can help us sustain these high standards by maximizing our donations.

This year's Grant challenges each and every one of us to make a **greater** donation than we did last year.

Here are the specifics of the Grant:

- All new and incremental donations will be matched dollar-for-dollar up to \$120,000. Specifically, for repeat donors, the Grant will match every dollar which **exceeds** your contribution last year. For new families and first time donors, your entire donation will be **doubled**
- An additional \$30,000 will be granted once 575 families (80%) contribute to the Foundation.

Given this powerful incentive to increase our previous donations, the Challenge Grant can **nearly double to \$270,000 to benefit our schools. Let's do it!**

Thank you to those of you who have already pledged or donated to the Foundation. As of December 31st, the Annual Giving Campaign has raised \$757,180 for our schools. However, fundraising levels are lagging last year's by 15%, and the current participation rate of 29% is 21 points lower than this time last year. As you can see, we are not there yet, and this year, we need to raise **even more than in previous years.**

To rally support, we are declaring a **Challenge Grant Drive** during the week of February 22nd. Foundation Board members will be calling all the families who have not yet contributed in order to secure their support. Please consider your family's commitment, and make your donation now. We urge you to be generous as possible and give more than last year, so that your contribution will be eligible for Grant matching. You can go to www.llef.org to make your contribution today.

Here are the primary reasons for why we need to continue to increase our support:

- Local property taxes, the District's primary revenue source, are **flat** and possibly **declining**
- Our student population continues to **grow**, on average, by about 45-50 students per year over the past several years and for the next several years.

- Public funding for our District is not adjusted for student enrollment. The District receives no additional funding as our student population continues to grow, and existing funds are spread across more students.

Without increased Foundation support this coming year and into the future, we will have to reduce per student spending significantly as enrollment grows.

Contemplate, for a moment, what our schools would look like without the Foundation's support:

- Class sizes of 27-30 students, due to the loss of 12 District teachers paid for by the Foundation.
- Reduced or eliminated funding for almost 30 electives and non-state mandated programs.
- Less individualized attention and differentiated instruction
- Reduced instruction by specialists including library, PE, art, music, and computer lab hours

Such changes would certainly affect our children's ability to produce the highest API scores in the state, as they have done for the past two years; and would threaten our schools' exemplary status as California Distinguished Schools and National Blue Ribbon award winners. It is sobering to contemplate how such changes might affect the District and the community in general.

And make no mistake, this year's Grant is entirely **conditional** and must be **earned**. The sponsors have all increased their financial commitment and wish to motivate others to increase and broaden their support across all families in the District. Our schools need this funding to provide the superior education we desire and our children deserve. Please help us earn it!

Your support of the Foundation is crucial. Please join us, today, and support the Foundation's longstanding efforts to ensure the superior education we desire and our children deserve. Make the extra investment in our children's future. Rise to the Challenge!

Sincerely,

Bob Shepard
2009-2010 President
Las Lomas Education Foundation

Diana Sunshine
2009-2010 Vice President
Las Lomas Education Foundation