

Foundation for Fort Mill Schools: It's Time to Apply for Funding

Teachers in the Fort Mill School District have a few more weeks to apply for the *Innovative Classroom Project* grants offered by the Foundation for Fort Mill Schools. Because district teachers have often suggested that the deadline for grant applications be moved to an earlier and less hectic part of the school year, the Foundation board has adjusted the timeline to allow for a deadline of April 30th instead of June 30th.

In January, the Foundation for Fort Mill Schools announced several changes to the *Innovative Classroom Projects* grants program, increasing the number of awards available to fifteen and increasing the amount of each grant from \$500 to \$750.

Each year these grants are used to fund classroom opportunities that cannot be funded through normal channels in the school district. A wide variety of educational possibilities have been explored by teachers and students through this program. In 2011, teacher Sharon Mitchell, working with the Fort Mill High School Preschool Program, used her grant to implement a literature based program called "A Sense of Science." This unit was designed to enhance science skills and introduce children to literacy using a hands-on approach for learning fundamentals in science.

Springfield Middle School teacher Florence Ramsey's "Recreational Games" unit, also funded by an *Innovative Classroom Projects* grant, was incorporated into the Physical Education program at Springfield Middle School. The "Recreational Games" unit gives students a chance to enjoy a variety of physical activities, both at school and with their families: Bocce, Badminton, Shuffleboard, Pickle Ball, Four Square, Ping Pong, Bowling, Horseshoes, Croquet and Putting.

The *TEC Dowling Memorial Grant for Technology* is a new source of funding for teachers in 2012. One grant of \$500 will fund the purchase or upgrade of technology, software, or technology training to that directly impacts one or more classrooms.

TEC Dowling served as superintendent of the Fort Mill school district from 1997 to 2005, leading the Fort Mill School District through a period of tremendous growth and economic stress. He maintained an intense focus on "putting the child first" and pushed for the establishment of the Foundation for Fort Mill Schools. His family has created this technology fund in his memory.

Each of these grants is offered to certified teachers in the Fort Mill School District and requires an application process that is clearly defined on the Foundation website at www.foundationforfortmillschools.org.