

November 2008

# ProVISIONS

ST. JOSEPH PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER



A 2008 teacher grant gives kindergarten and Young Fives students new cubbies/mailboxes to help teach them responsibility and organization.

## Mission:

*The purpose of the St. Joseph Public Schools Foundation is to raise, steward and distribute resources to enrich the education of students in the St. Joseph Public Schools.*

## Vision:

*Increase opportunities for students in curricula, facilities and various learning options by securing resources from diverse sources of funding through broad community involvement.*

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ST. JOSEPH PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
FOUNDATION

*Enriching the education of students.*

3275 Lincoln Avenue  
St. Joseph, Michigan 49085  
Phone (269) 926-3252  
Fax (269) 926-3103

## What's happening in the community?

# A SIGN OF THINGS TO COME



A new sign keeps locals and visitors current on community and school events.

We live in a vibrant community. There is always something to do. But one of the biggest challenges we face is how to let everyone, whether a lifelong resident or someone visiting for the weekend, know what is happening in our community so people can join the fun.

Thanks to the collaborative efforts of the St. Joseph Public Schools Foundation (SJPSF) and the City of St. Joseph we now have a dynamic way to communicate what is going on at our schools and around town. As you travel on Lakeshore Drive you'll see a new, 4'x12', full-color digital sign at the bend near the St. Joseph High School athletic fields. Each day the sign informs commuters and visitors entering the city what is happening in the school district and around town that day as well as about upcoming events.

"Both the city and the school district wanted a timely way to communicate important

messages," said SJPSF President Bill Marohn. "The collaboration made it possible. The school district will primarily use the board from September through May to talk about school news and the city will use it to inform residents and visitors of all of our year-round activities."

**Funding for the sign and landscaping came entirely from private donations.**

Special thanks go to the St. Joseph Improvement Association, Schalon Foundation, Frederick S. Upton Foundation, Erik and Irene Fiskars and numerous other donors. One anonymous donor gave money for landscaping that was designed by Lori Nye-Bolt, a former SJPS student, who created the maize and blue floral theme.

So if you're wondering what there is to do around town ... or what is happening at our schools ... just go out Lakeshore Drive. Our new sign will keep you in the know! ✨

*We can offer no greater gift to our children than to dedicate ourselves to educational excellence. To realize this ambition and to carry St. Joseph Public Schools into the future, we ask for your trust and active support.*



**A NOTE FROM  
OUR PRESIDENT**

October 24, 2008

Dear Friends of St. Joseph  
Public Schools Foundation,



The Board of Directors of the St. Joseph Public Schools Foundation is working diligently to raise, steward and distribute resources to support the St. Joseph Public Schools tradition of excellence. In these difficult times, state budgets are getting tighter. Our schools need financial assistance from other sources to retain those programs that make our school district special.

Our foundation's vision is to continue to lend support to school projects in areas of technology, reading/literacy, mathematics, fine arts, after school enrichment and teacher grants. Through the generosity of many individuals and businesses in our community, we have been able to fund one demonstration "Classroom of Today" in each of our five school buildings. Please make a point to visit one of these classrooms. It has been proven that this technology enhances student learning.

In order to achieve our vision, we need your financial support. A Special Activities Fund, as well as an Endowment Fund, have been established. It is our hope that you will consider a gift to the foundation in your year-end philanthropy. We believe that we can offer no greater gift to our children and our community than to dedicate ourselves to educational excellence.

We appreciate your ongoing support!

Many thanks,

Bill Marohn, President  
St. Joseph Public Schools Foundation

P.S. – This time of year we all look for ways to reduce our family's and business's tax burdens. To make a year-end donation, please return the card on the back of this newsletter by Dec. 31. Please call Christine Waterhouse, foundation coordinator (at 269-926-3252), if you have any questions.



**WHAT IS THE  
SJPS FOUNDATION?**

Your St. Joseph Public Schools Foundation is a hearty band of dedicated people from a broad cross section of the community. Both private and public sector leaders are represented, including business people, educators, non-profit agency personnel, government leaders and more. To a person, these people are committed to the Mission, Vision and Goals included in this publication.



**HELP MAKE WISHES  
COME TRUE**

Do you love to read? Enjoy choral music or the challenge of solving problems? We want to foster that same life-long learning with our students, but we need extra funding. Please make these wishes come true with a donation to the foundation.

<b>Elementary Schools</b>	
Guided Reading Program	\$2000/school
Digital Cameras	\$200 each
5th Gr. Honors Choir	\$1000
<b>Upton Middle School</b>	
White Erase Boards	\$300/board
Math Tutor Program	\$2000
Guided Reading Program	\$1200
<b>High School</b>	
ACT Prep.	\$2000
Summer Scholarship	\$2000

**"CLASSROOM OF TODAY"  
UPDATE**



*"The new interactive board keeps our attention and makes the lessons more interesting."*

– SJ HIGH ALGEBRA STUDENT

We talked with math teacher Carol Morris, now using the new interactive technology.

**How has it improved student learning?**

I teach Algebra 2, 1-5<sup>th</sup> hours. With the interactive board and its unlimited space I can cover more examples. The software and different multimedia make learning more interesting. Students pay closer attention.

**How does it change how you teach?**

It takes more prep time because I use more examples. But once I create the charts and graphs, I save them in the software instead of recreating them every hour. That gives me more time to teach and answer questions.

**Who else is using the "Classroom of Today" at the high school?**

I'm the only one. I spent four days this summer being trained by the manufacturer. The district is training more teachers. Our hope is that the community will support future bond issues so this technology can go in every classroom.

**THANK YOU PROFESSIONAL  
HEARING SERVICES!**



A special thank you goes to Gyl Kasewurm and Professional Hearing Services for donating the sound systems (\$5400) in four of our "Classrooms of Today!"

*If our American way of life fails the child, it fails us all.*

– PEARL S. BUCK



# BULLETIN BOARD



## TEACHERS' WISHES GRANTED IN 2008

- “Fun Decks” materials to promote continued understanding of communication skills for SLI (Speech and Language Impaired) students as well as students identified with ASD (Autistic Spectrum Disorder)
- Materials for the “Circle of Friends” program – third and fourth grade students in the district will be trained to act as peer models, helpers and leaders, with an emphasis on disability awareness
- One classroom set of dictionaries – to help students understand and utilize the grade-level content expectations for our fourth grade district and state curriculum
- New cubbies/mailboxes for both kindergarten and Young Fives classrooms to help teach responsibility and organization
- Fiction and non-fiction trade books for grades one and two to meet a wider range of reading levels
- Social studies magnet boards to help students in the class who are autistic and need visual aides
- “Singapore Math” materials to help those students struggling in math
- Materials and children’s books that correspond with 6+1 Traits of Writing and Writing Strategies That Work!
- Literature Circles/Guided Reading materials (fourth grade)
- Boardmaker Program – a teaching tool for the communication development of all students, especially those with ASD
- A set of student dry-erase boards and markers for foundation-level math students so instruction can be modified to fit the students’ needs
- Science class materials
- Writing Mentorship Program - a high school writing student works with fifth graders as writing mentors
- New life jackets for the third grade swimming and water safety program
- Kindergarten literacy materials
- MEAP Jumpstart Test Prep materials for math and Language Arts
- Elementary media department to sponsor a nationally recognized author or illustrator to present at all three buildings
- DVDs, World Music Resources and percussion instruments for the classroom, plus DVD player and digital camcorder and accessories for the orchestra students
- Two digital cameras for classroom use and two video iPods to be used by the science, English and social studies departments
- Field trip for all fourth graders in the district to the Heritage Museum and Cultural Center to view a new exhibit, “Working Waterfronts: Planning and Preserving the Maritime Traditions of St. Joseph and Benton Harbor”
- “Stress Out” kits – these kits are an interactive way for the counseling staff to work with “at risk” students
- “Read Naturally” Masters Edition Fluency Program sequenced series – to improve fluency, comprehension and build vocabulary for Upton students in the special education department
- Mat board cutter and mat board to provide a professional look and quality feeling to student artwork
- The purchase of 20 copies of *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens* to be used in this Academic Achievement class
- Picture books to engage students (for all elementaries) in the interactive processes necessary to create meaning during reading

### Your year-end gift can be worth up to 3x its value!

Your financial gift to the SJPS Foundation by Dec. 31 can be worth up to three times its value by virtue of Michigan’s Tax Credits. Learn how you can reduce your taxes and help our schools get stronger at [www.berriencommunity.org](http://www.berriencommunity.org).

### Big Thanks

Anne and Bob Gottlieb opened up their home to thank our foundation members and major donors for helping to make our schools some of the best in the nation.

Tara Florist and Tabor Hill Winery donated flowers and wines to the festive evening.



### Alumni Alert!

Wish you could reconnect with friends you had in school? SJPS has contracted with Harris Connect to start a new alumni program that will help you renew friendships. Harris may contact you by mail to get more information or go to [www.sjschools.org/alumni](http://www.sjschools.org/alumni) to make updates and learn about alumni programs.



**YOUR GIFT WILL MAKE OUR SCHOOLS  
AND COMMUNITY STRONGER**

*Although we have been able to enrich the education of the St. Joseph Public Schools,  
there is still so much more to do.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

I am a St. Joe Graduate: \_\_\_ yes \_\_\_ no

Please let us know how you would like SJPS Foundation to use your donation:

\_\_\_\_\_ Endowment Fund (Tax deductible/eligible for 50% state tax credit)

\_\_\_\_\_ Special Activities Fund (Tax deductible/eligible for company match programs)

\_\_\_\_\_ Grant the following wish on the SJPSF list: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed:

\$25 \_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_ \$75 \_\_\_ \$100 \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_



**Berrien**  
community foundation™

My employer will match this gift: \_\_\_ yes \_\_\_ no

Contact a board member about planned giving.

For good For ever.™

Please make checks payable to: **St. Joseph Public Schools Foundation**

The St. Joseph Public Schools Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Our funding comes entirely from generous individuals, organizations, businesses, civic groups and foundations.

The Foundation works in cooperation with Berrien Community Foundation.



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Sixth graders in Rachel Cabanilla's general music class learned not only how to go to the beat of their own drums, but also how to make djembes. Funding for materials came from a SJPS Foundation grant.



**Whetting appetites for reading**

As you can imagine, we have many different reading levels and needs with our students. A recent SJPS Foundation grant provided guided reading books for a Response to Intervention program being piloted this fall at Lincoln School. These second graders in Jenny Laukus's class are getting a taste of how much fun reading fiction and non-fiction can be. And second grade teacher Gayle De Schaaf wrote us to say her students are hungry to read more!



**THIS NEWSLETTER IS  
AVAILABLE ONLINE ...**

... just go to [www.sjschools.org](http://www.sjschools.org) and click on "Foundation."