

The TRF Newsletter

Back to School Already?

It's not quite September, but already students in Los Angeles classrooms are embarking on another exciting school year! As always, The Riordan Foundation is here to support the efforts of their schools and teachers.

Generating Awareness about Grant Programs

You may be surprised to learn that one of the most challenging aspects of our grant giving is to market our programs to those who would most benefit from the services. While we have a large network of past grantees, partners, and friends, we constantly strive to introduce ourselves to new potential applicants.

One way that we present upcoming grant opportunities is by inviting educators to join us at awareness sessions held at various locations throughout Los Angeles. At these sessions we describe the grants we offer, their application processes, and important deadlines. Participants also have a chance to ask questions of foundation staff and interact with colleagues from other institutions.

This year, we have scheduled six of these meetings, including two online sessions for those who are unable to attend in person. The events are open to Pre K-12 educators from public and parochial schools in which at least 50% of students qualify for Free and Reduced Lunch. **For those who are interested in receiving an invitation to apply for the Instructional Innovation Grant, attendance at an Awareness Session is mandatory.**

To find a list of the dates and locations of the sessions, please visit www.riordanfoundation.org. We ask all attendees to RSVP using the form on our website or by emailing contact@riordanfoundation.org.

If you know any eligible schools that could benefit from our programs, please pass this information along!



Above: Educators attend a 2012 Awareness Session at KIPP LA Prep in East LA to learn about the Instructional Innovation Grant

Fall 2013 Calendar

September -November: Instructional Innovation Grant Awareness Sessions

September 27th: RRMG Application Opens

November 15th: Instructional Innovation Grant LOI Available Online

November 29th: RRMG Applications Due by Midnight



Riordan Foundation to Pilot Grant Programs at Preschools!

In the beginning, The Riordan Foundation's grant programs focused on improving early childhood literacy by providing resources to K-5 classrooms. As the education landscape changed, we opened some grant programs to schools serving K-12. After thorough research, and at the direction of The Riordan Foundation's Board of Directors, both the Instructional Innovation Grant and the Recreational Reading Mini-Grant will be open to preschool and early childhood education institutions for a pilot year.

The reasons for this decision are many, especially since mounting evidence shows that many skills that lead children to be successful are developed before they reach kindergarten; print knowledge and phonological awareness (ability to recognize that words are made up of a variety of sound units), important building blocks of literacy, can be introduced before the age of five, and studies show that the number of words children hear up to age three is closely related to academic success. Moreover, high quality preschool is linked to less time in special education, less criminal activity, even when its effect on academics are less clear. As a result, investments in early childhood education pay off with fewer social and economic costs down the line.

We are excited to continue researching the early childhood education landscape in Los Angeles and to partner with the amazing schools working in this field.

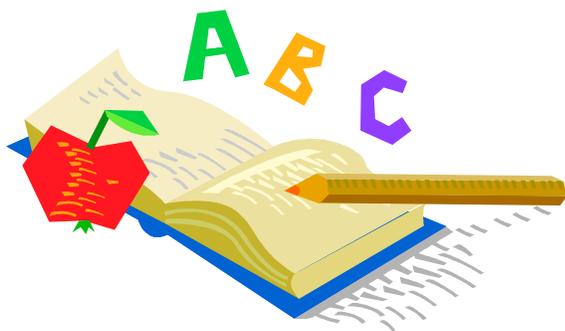
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Above: A 2013 RRMG-winning classroom thanks The Riordan Foundation for their new library

Recreational Reading Mini-Grant Enters its 32nd Year

Our most popular grant, the Recreational Reading Mini-Grant (RRMG), provides \$1,000 worth of books to Pre K-5 classrooms. Applicant teachers get to choose the books that best fit their students' needs with the help of our three bookselling partners: Barnes & Noble, Perma-Bound, and First Book. These vendors provide substantial discounts for RRMG-winning teachers, further amplifying the impact of the grant funds.

The application for RRMG will be available from www.riordanfoundation.org on September 27th and will be due on November 29th. We ask applicants to tell a unique story from their classroom that shows how they foster a love of reading in their students, both in and outside of the classroom. As a part of the program, the awarded books must be available for students to take home. In this way, the impact of RRMG spreads to students' families, encouraging parents and siblings to share in the experience of reading a good book.

Winners of RRMG will be announced in the first weeks of January 2013 and books will be delivered in February. More details about eligibility guidelines and the application process can be found at http://www.riordanfoundation.org/grant_initiatives/initiatives_campaigns.html.

We look forward once again to fostering a life-long love of reading that will serve the students of Los Angeles well into the future!

