

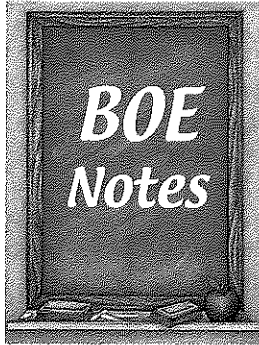
BOARD OF EDUCATION NEWS

By Joanne Colella



IN THE SCHOOLS

At the December 16 Board of Education meeting, Doreen DeMarco, Chairperson of the Holmdel Foundation for Educational Excellence, gave a presentation about the Foundation's plan to have a special fundraising initiative to purchase a World Language Lab for the school district. The presentation was actually an update, following up on the original proposal which had been presented to, and endorsed by, the Board at their October meeting.



The Foundation is committed to their mission of enhancing the educational experience of every Holmdel student through innovative programs. This year, the Foundation explained in a statement, the organization has agreed to embark on a major fundraising campaign that would raise \$150,000 to bring the Sony Virtuoso All-Digital Language Lab into the district, for use by the schools' World Language program. This unanimous decision by all Foundation members was made after numerous discussions with school administrators and faculty from all levels, as well as independent research conducted by the Foundation itself.

The introduction of the World Language Lab would be aligned with several Holmdel district goals:

- To enhance and enrich the World Language Program
- To enhance and integrate technology into instruction
- To continue with opportunities for differentiated instruction

The World Language Lab utilizes state-of-the-art technology, combined with cutting-edge instructional tools to create a perfect environment to totally immerse students in the foreign language learning experience. The Foundation chose the World Language Lab as a special gift initiative to the district because the magnitude of foreign language proficiency cannot be overemphasized as Holmdel's students prepare to enter an extraordinarily competitive and global economic marketplace.

The World Language Lab will offer the following enhancements to the students' education:

- It will energize and invigorate the district's current methods for fulfilling New Jersey State mandated foreign language core curriculum requirements for high school graduation, as well as motivate and encourage students to learn beyond those requirements.
- It will better prepare students for college, given that many universities now have language requirements built into their degree programs.
- It will enhance students' education by making them more marketable, should they choose to enter directly into a quickly evolving, global workforce upon graduation.

This proven method allows students to tremendously progress with foreign language proficiency in an environment that is pleasant, motivating, and challenging. As other area schools such as The Ranney School and Rumson-Fair Haven Regional High School have already done, the Holmdel school district needs to ensure that the next generation of graduates, and leaders, is well equipped to succeed in a competitive global environment.

Ms. DeMarco noted that the Foundation's overall mission remains unchanged, and that the organization will still be offering its usual gifts to the district, such as the mini-grant program for teachers and students. The Foundation is optimistic about the funds to be raised through its

Annual Giving Campaign, which kicked off in November, the Dinner Dance scheduled for April 17, and several other creative fundraising opportunities.

One new program that Ms. DeMarco presented at the December Board of Education meeting is the Foundation's Commemorative Plaque Fundraiser for the World Language Lab, which will offer supporters the opportunity to make various levels of contributions, with special plaques to honor their donations, each of which will support the purchase of items for the new lab. The

plaques will be inscribed with messages of the donors' choosing and prominently displayed in the schools. Donor levels will range from \$100 up to \$10,000.

Ms. DeMarco explained the timeline that the Foundation has planned for the initiative through 2010, with a kickoff letter being distributed to the community by January 15, the plaques being highlighted and samples available for viewing at the Dinner Dance on April 17, a final reviews of funds raised (hopefully having met the goal of \$150,000) by June, and a completion date, which the World Language Lab installed, teachers trained, and the system up and running, by the start of the new school year in September.

More information about the Holmdel Foundation for Educational Excellence and about the World Language Lab, including the complete and detailed Power Point presentation that was made in October, is available on the Foundation website at www.hfee.org.