

## CEEF MATH INFINITY FUND FAQ

Q. What is the Math Infinity Fund?

A. The Math Infinity Fund was created in 2007 with the \$200,000 gift to CEEF from Microsoft through district parents Nick Baker and Alice Chang who asked the funds be used to strengthen the district's math program. In accepting the gift, CEEF pledged to leverage the gift by raising additional funds to extend the math initiative over a 5-year period.

Q. Our student math test scores are already very high. Why worry about math?

A. Although district students do score well on standardized multiple choice tests, authentic assessment tests indicate that many of our students do not understand basic mathematical concepts needed to solve real world problems and success with advanced mathematics. Questions on college entrance exams have changed, now requiring students to demonstrate critical thinking and communication skills. And beyond college, employers worldwide are seeking critical thinkers and innovators fluent in discussing math concepts beyond the quick calculation.

Q. How would additional math professional development benefit our elementary school teachers?

A. Teachers in the Cupertino Union School District are among the finest in the nation; however, elementary school teachers are often generalists, rather than specialists in one curriculum area. It is important for teachers to understand the connection between arithmetic, algebra, and geometry. By deepening their content knowledge and coaching them in new instructional strategies, students ultimately will benefit from a stronger math program.

Q. What issues will CEEF's Math Infinity Fund address?

A. CEEF has created a new Math Infinity Fund to support the district's comprehensive math initiative that will include professional development for teachers, math exploration activities for students, and a math speaker series for families. In addition, the Fund will support regional efforts to expand the use of formative assessment to strengthen math instruction.

Formative assessment exams, such as the advanced placement calculus test, require students to justify their problem solving strategies, rather than merely filling-in a multiple choice bubble. The exams provide critically important information regarding student comprehension of basic math concepts, but require hand-scoring by teams of teachers. CEEF's Math Infinity Fund will provide classroom substitutes so that teachers can participate in the assessment process within their regular school day.

Q. Why can't the CEEF endowment fund the math initiative?

A. The CEEF endowment cannot provide unlimited funds. Currently, the endowment is providing \$475,000 annually to sustain classroom music in grades 4-5 and to support arts and technology resources at all district schools. In 2007, the Endowment also provided over \$500,000 in one-time funding toward the districtwide technology upgrade, Summer Technology Institute in 2008 and 2009, and innovative math pilot grants. The Math Infinity Fund will specifically support the elevated math program.