

# T/E school district takes FLITE

Residents formed nonprofit foundation to reach out to children

By RYAN RICHARDS  
Special to the Local News

To reach out to all children in the Tredyffrin/Easttown School District, a group of residents are placing its trust in a top FLITE foundation.

Residents formed FLITE — Foundation for Learning in Tredyffrin/Easttown — last fall and debuted the new foundation in March. The independent, nonprofit organization will help students who are unable to take full advantage of what the district offers.

Sandi Gorman, the communications committee chairwoman and a T/E School Board director, said FLITE will strive to create opportunities and enhance achievement for students.

“We want to create opportunities for kids who don’t necessarily have a chance to take advantage of everything the school district offers,” said Gorman, “and therefore hopefully enhance their achievement in the school district and subsequently in life.”

Assistance may include funding preparatory and supplemental programs. Gorman said one initial program in the planning stages is to provide funding for bus transportation to a proposed after-school tutoring program at Valley Forge Middle School.

Thomas E. Colman, chairman of the

Board of Trustees, said FLITE is a funding organization, not an operational organization. Its mission is to provide funding where needed to ensure that all children have equal opportunity.

“We want to kind of fill in the cracks,” he said. “Our major priority is to try to address getting everybody access to this wonderful educational program.”

There are currently 25 voting members and three nonvoting members of the Board of Trustees. The voting members represent a cross-section of the community — including teachers, parents, alumni, retirees, bankers, lawyers and doctors. The nonvoting members are Daniel Waters, district superintendent; Mike Azzara, the district’s chief operating officer; and school board

member Gorman. In addition, the organization maintains an advisory board.

Forming FLITE involved talking with members of other area foundations, including the Radnor Education Foundation, for inspiration. Although not affiliated with the school district, FLITE will work closely with district teachers, administrators, guidance counselors, support personnel, parents and community leaders.

Gorman said FLITE has made an initial appeal for funds in a newsletter inserted in the district’s newsletter, “Insight,” which is now being published. A separate appeal will be mailed to residents in the fall. Other options for fundraising are now being considered, said Gorman.