

FLITE continues to soar in T/E

To the Editor:

The generosity of the T/E community opened doors of opportunity for over seventy students in the School District this year. It has been very gratifying to watch children flourish in the various programs started this year.

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with the help of FLITE.

FLITE (the Foundation for Learning In Tredyffrin/Easttown) started in the spring of 2006 as a way to support excellence in the T/E schools. Its mission has a special emphasis on supporting programs that reach students who need extra assistance in order to excel – assistance that some families are presently unable to provide. During the course of this first year for FLITE, four pioneering programs were started with the cooperation of the School District to help those kids.

The first FLITE-supported program was Homework Oasis at Valley Forge Middle School. This is an after school tutoring and support program involving about twenty students. School counselor Andy Mullen, organizer of the program said, "The program has been remarkably successful. Classroom teachers are reporting striking examples of improvements in academic performance, attitude toward school, and self-esteem."

After-school programs are also now running at T/E Middle School and all five elementary schools. New Eagle Elementary School Principal Beth Ann Kob stated, "Children who had been struggling are now completing their homework daily because they are getting help on a small group basis, and the parent connections with the school have been strengthened. We couldn't have offered this program so successfully without FLITE's help."

FLITE has also approved a program that will assure that any District student who wants to try a musical instrument will have access to that instrument "It's hard for some students to even consider joining the band or orchestra because they can't afford to buy an instrument. This program will give all students the chance to participate in T/E's music activities," said Jim Joseph, Conestoga High School music teacher.

FLITE has been busy in its inaugural year! Future plans include enrolling some TESD students in a summer reading program, supporting a preschool initiative to start in the fall, and others. Strong and generous community involvement has made it possible for FLITE to get off to such a rapid start. Support for FLITE has come in the form of monetary donations, donations of services (legal advice, accounting support, printing, and scholarships), snacks for some of the after-school programs, and hours and hours of volunteer time. FLITE has no paid employees – it is an all-volunteer organization, and all donations go right to programs that help the kids!

We thank the entire community for their support of FLITE in its first full year - your generous donations were spent wisely and are making a difference for children right here in T/E! We look forward to your continued support as our efforts expand to help even more students. Be sure to check us out at www.FLITE-pa.org. Tax-deductible donations can be mailed to: FLITE, PO Box 806, Southeastern, PA 19399-0806.

Julie Ferguson, Vice Chair of FLITE