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**Foundation \$170,000 closer to *Bridging the Gap***

*Community is generous with funds for textbooks, an auditorium sound system,  
and technology needs in El Segundo Schools*

EL SEGUNDO, Calif., - December 3, 2004 – The El Segundo Educational Foundation (ESEF) has received more than \$170,000 in donations from local businesses and residents toward its pledge to grant \$250,000 to the El Segundo Unified School District (ESUSD) for the 2004-2005 school year. This grant will *Bridge the Gap* between the amount the ESUSD will receive this year in state funding and the amount needed to maintain a high level of education in El Segundo schools.

In addition to underwriting the cost of state-required Language Arts textbooks for ESUSD's kindergarten through eighth graders, the *Bridge the Gap* grant will cover the cost to install a new sound system for the El Segundo High School auditorium, refurbish the auditorium's grand piano, and provide equipment for the school's new science building and elsewhere in the ESUSD.

"Without this pledge, the state still would have required us to buy new Language Arts books, but we would have had to make some rather deep cuts elsewhere in our budget to pay for them," said ESUSD superintendent Bruce Auld. "We're encouraged by the community's enthusiastic response to the *Bridge the Gap* campaign. We are so grateful to the many businesses and residents who support the Foundation's fundraising efforts."

According to Susan Truax, the ESEF board member heading the *Bridge the Gap* campaign, the Foundation has long enjoyed the support of local businesses that, as Corporate Partners, contribute anywhere from \$1,000 to well over \$10,000 a year. She said during the state's recent budget crisis, when the Foundation has elected to grant funds for "essentials rather than extras," it has reached out for support from residents, especially those with children attending El Segundo schools. "If you weren't raised here,

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chances are good you moved here for the schools. It's in our best interest to pull together to help the District weather this storm, rather than let it adversely affect our children's education," said Truax, a parent of three sons in El Segundo schools.

This fall the ESEF distributed *Bridge the Gap* brochures to each family in the school district, spurring an increase in donations from parents similar to the tremendous support for last year's *Pledge to the Arts* campaign. The Foundation is tracking its progress on colorful signs located at each school by filling in bridge planks as each milestone is reached. "Thanks to our generous donors, six of the ten planks, each worth \$25,000 in donations, already have been filled in, and we're close to requiring a seventh plank," Truax said.

Foundation members remain hopeful that Corporate Partnership renewals, an appeal letter to parents, and the annual year-end letter to the community will encourage enough donations to add the remaining bridge planks to the school signs, signaling successful funding of the grant. Tax-deductible contributions to the *Bridge the Gap* campaign can be mailed to ESEF, P.O. Box 591, El Segundo, CA 90245. Sign up to receive the ESEF's new Electronic Newsletter by contacting [Leslie@CharitablePartners.com](mailto:Leslie@CharitablePartners.com).

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NOTE TO EDITORS: The colorful Bridge the Gap signs at each school make a great photo op, with or without students in the picture. ESUSD will supply a BTG photo upon request.