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Gap narrows to \$20,000!

Community is applauded for donating more than \$230,000 to Ed Foundation's Bridge the Gap campaign

EL SEGUNDO, Calif., - March 17, 2005 – Three more planks have been added to each of the colorful *Bridge the Gap* signs posted in front of El Segundo's schools, signaling the El Segundo Educational Foundation (ESEF) has received more than ninety percent of its pledge to grant \$250,000 to the El Segundo Unified School District (ESUSD) for the 2004-2005 school year.

"Thanks to corporate partnership and Superintendent's Roundtable renewals and new members, plus year-end contributions, we're within sight of bridging the quarter million dollar gap in ESUSD's budget," said Richard Lundquist, chairman of the foundation's board of directors.

This grant will *Bridge the Gap* between the amount the ESUSD will receive this year in state funding and the amount needed to maintain the high level of education in El Segundo schools. The money will purchase new state-required Language Arts textbooks for kindergarten through eighth graders, a modernized sound system and refurbished grand piano for the El Segundo High School auditorium, proper equipment for the high school's new science building, and other technology requirements within the ESUSD.

Bridge the Gap follows on the heels of the foundation's successful *Pledge to the Arts!* campaign, which raised an impressive \$140,000 for specialized elementary art and music programs during the 2003-2004 school year.

"The community's ongoing financial support for our schools has become an integral part in sustaining the level of programs and services we provide our students during California's financial crisis," said ESUSD superintendent Bruce Auld. "It's hard to

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predict the long term educational impact there will be for students in districts where substantial budget cuts have been made. Due in large part to the continued community support the ESUSD has received through grants from the Foundation, our students' education has been protected thus far.”

The ESEF has been tracking *Bridge the Gap* donations on colorful signs located at each school by filling in bridge planks as each milestone is reached. Thanks to the generosity of local businesses and residents, nine of the ten planks, each worth \$25,000 in donations, already have been filled in. “Even though the last push is always the hardest because people already have given so generously, we’re quite confident we’ll fill the \$20,000 gap by the June deadline,” Lundquist said.

Tax-deductible contributions to the *Bridge the Gap* campaign can be made online at www.elsegundousd.com/eseef, or mailed to ESEF, P.O. Box 591, El Segundo, CA 90245. Sign up to receive the ESEF’s Electronic Newsletter by contacting 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.