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February 18, 2011

For Immediate Release

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NEF Announces Three-Year Campaign Resulted in \$600,000 in Enhancements to Newburyport Public Schools

Newburyport, MA: The Newburyport Education Foundation (NEF) announced the successful completion of its three-year 2008-2010 Campaign for the Newburyport Public Schools. Through this campaign, more than \$600,000 of state-of-the-art technology, literacy resources, and educational resources have been added to the schools.

“We want to express our sincere gratitude to the donors who made this possible,” said Mark Wright, NEF President. “The Newburyport community is fortunate to have active and generous donors who are passionate about making a difference and enhancing the quality of education in the Newburyport Public Schools.”

The recent 2008-2010 Campaign ends a three-year focus on literacy closets, Virtual High School, and technology upgrades and renewal to enrich the learning experience for students at all the schools. In the last year, enhancements by the NEF include computers and work stations at the high school (\$65,000), a portable math lab at the high school (\$26,000), computers at the middle school (\$16,000), improvements to the high school visual arts lab (\$11,000), the Virtual High School program (\$37,000), new servers and software at the Brown and Bresnahan schools (\$6,700), assessment technology or “clickers” to be used throughout the schools (\$7,000), funding for Education Business Coalition (EBC) technology club and partnership grants between the schools and community (\$19,500), additional funding for the high school library (\$1,000), and support for the ongoing Institution for Savings Science Speaker Series (\$1,800).

The NEF will soon announce plans for its next campaign which is already underway.

“There is still a lot more to do,” said Wright. “The ad hoc committee working with the School Committee determined there are still \$1 million in technology and other needs, including literacy, throughout the district because of years of deferred projects.”

Working with the School Committee and Superintendent Marc Kerble, the NEF chooses projects that have strategic importance to the Newburyport Public Schools’ improvement plan.

“Our goal is to continue to move our schools forward,” said Kerble. “The NEF is a valuable partner and has already made a big difference in the quality of education our students receive. The continued support from the community is the key to this success.”

Since it was founded in 2004, the NEF has donated \$1.6 million dollars to the Newburyport Public Schools. At the Brown and Bresnahan elementary schools, the NEF donated funds for literacy closets, community-based education programs (bus trips), and new computer servers totaling more than \$100,000. At the Molin Upper Elementary and R. A. Nock Middle School, the NEF installed 8 state-of-the-art science labs, premier technology for each classroom, a music lab, and computers amounting to more than \$900,000. At the Newburyport High School, the NEF launched the Virtual High School Program, and donated technology including lap tops for science, a Distance Learning Lab, a photography lab, a portable math lab, and teacher work stations amounting to more than \$215,000. Throughout the district, the NEF has donated funds for partnership grants, the high school technology club, assessment and other updated technology, and the IFS Science Speaker series amounting to more than \$163,000. The NEF also facilitated a donation by EBSCO Publishing of \$200,000 worth of databases to be used throughout the district.

One of the many examples of these enhancements at work and in use is at Molin and Nock where all classrooms are equipped with state-of-the-art technology including interactive whiteboards, overhead projectors, and new computers.

“I use all of these on a daily basis, and by doing so save myself time, the school money, and I am able to deliver a much more interesting and relevant lesson to my students,” said Wendy Phillips, 8th Grade Math Teacher.

Another NEF donation, interactive assessment tools, or “clickers,” are remote control responders that students can use during class and which have been very well received at the elementary and middle schools.

“From quick polling questions to math word problems, students have the ability to answer remotely,” said Matthew Taffel, 7th Grade Math Teacher. “The students love the clickers and look forward to using them. It is a powerful tool.”

“I love the amount of data I can collect using this tool. I can check in on the student’s knowledge and understanding and easily change or alter my course of action addressing the individual and group needs of my students,” said Lisa Alexander, 6th Grade Science Teacher.

For more information about the NEF and its campaign, past and future, visit www.NewburyportEF.org or contact them at info@NewburyportEF.org or (978)463-7893.

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About the Newburyport Education Foundation (NEF) The Mission of the Newburyport Education Foundation is to bring philanthropy into the Newburyport Public Schools and generate financial resources that will enhance the quality of public education throughout the school system. Formed to enhance educational opportunities for the city’s public school children, the goal of the Newburyport Education Foundation is to supplement funding for programs which are already supported by public financing at a basic level, but which can be substantially improved by additional private sector financing, and to finance programs that might not receive funding from traditional sources such as the district budget or state aid.