

December 2, 2014

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Dear Friends,

We are once more thankful for a wonderful year of support from those who understand the vital importance of public education. During 2014, individuals and corporate partners joined their gifts to invest more than a half-million dollars in Decatur students. We *do* truly view this funding as an **investment**, one that positively impacts both their future and that of our community.

The Decatur Public Schools Foundation directs these dollars to special projects that spark student engagement in the classroom. **More than a hundred specific initiatives** in the past year helped teachers enhance, enrich and encourage learning opportunities for young people of every grade level.

Whether large-scale undertakings or individual classroom grants, each new endeavor involves two steps:

- **First**, we determine a donor's area of interest. Whether it's art, theater, music, science, math or technology, the Foundation values every voice and puts funding to work in preferred spheres.
- **Second**, Trustees consult with School Board representatives and District 61 leadership to determine pathways in each area that align properly with the DPS strategic direction.

As an example, promoting professional development at each building is one growing focus within our schools, and the Foundation has helped to push this priority forward in concrete ways. Specific illustrations are the construction of a **Technology Education Center** and a sponsorship of faculty to attend the National Science Teachers Association conference in Chicago (support provided by the **Eline Svendsen Memorial Fund**).

Whatever your passion, our organization is privileged to guide your contributions to activities that make a difference in the lives of students. All gifts are tax-deductible and may be designated for specific purposes or put to general use on Foundation activities. Either way, every gift sustains our mission.

On behalf of our Officers and Trustees, I look forward to corresponding with many of you again in 2015. We hope you continue to support our students by investing where it matters most!

Best regards,

Zach Shields
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