

SAMMAMISH HIGH IN BELLEVUE IS FINALIST FOR \$4 MILLION FEDERAL i3 GRANT AMID RIGOROUS NATIONAL COMPETITION

September 8 Deadline to Secure 20% in Private Matching Funds

Editors Note: For interviews, please contact Principal Tom Duenwald at 425-456-7604.

Bellevue, Wash. Aug. 6, 2010 – Sammamish High School in Bellevue has been named as one of 49 highest rated finalists out of nearly 1700 applicants nationwide to receive a \$4.1 million federal grant under the Investment in Innovation (i3) program. The purpose of the i3 program is to provide competitive grants to applicants with a record of improving student achievement, as well as to invest in innovative practices.

The Sammamish proposal represents a fundamental shift in the education experience: a five year plan for implementing problem-based learning across all subject areas focusing on the skills students will need to be successful in the 21st century. The proposal calls uses the theme of “Engineering Global Solutions” to encourage growth and interest in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM). To receive a share of the \$650 million in i3 grants, a 20 percent private sector match must be secured by September 8.

Sammamish is using this opportunity to respond to today's challenge of preparing all students for success in a competitive global environment. Doing so requires increasing college and career readiness by closing achievement gaps and increasing rigor and equity in a comprehensive high school. The fundamental shift in the classroom experience is founded in a problem-based learning curriculum, to be developed in collaboration with Bellevue’s curriculum department and the University of Washington's Institute for Math and Science Education. Sammamish also plans to leverage partnerships with businesses and academia to establish mentorship programs.

Sammamish principal Tom Duenwald was clearly enthusiastic. “We’re extremely excited. It’s a highly competitive, rigorous grant. We thought we put together a solid proposal with the UW partners and the College Board. I think it may have helped to also have letters of support from nationally recognized leaders in the areas of education transformation.” The letters of support came from Bellevue College, Pat Wasley, EdD, Dean of the UW College of Education, David Conley, Director of the Center for Educational Policy Research (CEPR), Educational Methodology, Policy, and Leadership at the University of Oregon, John Bransford, EdD of the Learning in Informal and Formal Environments (LIFE) Center at the University of Washington and noted biologist Dr. Leroy Hood.

“I am thrilled that we were selected for this very competitive grant. The Sammamish staff has worked hard to develop a STEM plan that will support all Sammamish students in deepening their knowledge and application in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics,” said Bellevue Superintendent Amalia Cudeiro. “I am very hopeful that our business and corporate community will be supportive and help us identify the matching funds. Our School Board should be commended for their leadership and support of this grant proposal.”

The competition was open to school districts as well as nonprofit organizations and institutions of higher education working in partnership with public schools. Partners in the proposal include the College Board and the Bellevue Schools Foundation.

Partners:

The College Board:

The College Board is a not-for-profit membership association whose mission is to connect students to college success and opportunity. Founded in 1900, the College Board is composed of more than 5,700 schools, colleges, universities and other educational organizations. Each year, the College Board serves seven million students and their parents, 23,000 high schools, and 3,800 colleges through major programs and services in college readiness, college admission, guidance, assessment, financial aid and enrollment. Among its widely recognized programs are the SAT[®], the PSAT/NMSQT[®], the Advanced Placement Program[®] (AP[®]), SpringBoard and ACCUPLACER. The College Board is committed to the principles of excellence and equity, and that commitment is embodied in all of its programs, services, activities and concerns.

Bellevue Schools Foundation:

Founded in 1979, Bellevue Schools Foundation's mission is *to promote and help fund the best possible learning opportunities for all students in the Bellevue School District*. The Bellevue Schools Foundation (BSF) raises funds to improve student learning through district wide academic initiatives, curriculum material and book purchases, training opportunities for teachers, and an array of programs that meet students' special needs. BSF also helps bridge the gap between the basic funding provided by the State of Washington and what Bellevue Districts students need to truly excel.