



boise public schools
EDUCATION FOUNDATION



Newsletter | Winter 2011

BPSEF: HELPING STUDENTS REACH HIGHER, GO FURTHER

www.boiseschoolsfoundation.com

Your donation at work:

Teacher Grant helps transform students, lowers drop-out rates

Everything about Breezy reminds you of a summer's day: her name, her sparkling eyes, her bright smile. It's hard to imagine that such a bright, self-assured 16-year-old girl was a school drop-out just last year.

Breezy is one of hundreds of students in the Boise area who struggle to succeed in traditional public school settings due to a variety of factors in their personal lives. Mental or physical disabilities or illness; family dynamics (a jailed parent, parental abandonment, or sibling head-of-household); physical, mental or sexual abuse; or poverty are just a few of the factors that can lead to poor academic performance, low attendance, high drop-out rates and behavioral issues. For many of these kids, Frank Church High School, Boise's alternative high school for ninth through twelfth graders, is their best hope.

"These kids are excruciatingly destitute," says



Jess Hawley

Jess Hawley, a social studies teacher at Frank Church, where Breezy is a sophomore. Established in 2008, Frank Church is designed to help at-risk kids graduate and develop

the necessary skills to become contributing and productive members of the community. Thanks to a unique program developed by Mr. Hawley and funded by a teacher grant from the Boise Public Schools Education Foundation, kids like Breezy are not only succeeding, they are thriving.

Mr. Hawley's program is simple: students are rewarded with items they need or want for good academic performance. A student must explain in writing why they want something and describe exactly how they will improve academically. For example, a winter coat in exchange for an A in English; a new pair of tennis shoes for improved attendance.

At the beginning of the school year, Breezy wanted a flat iron to tame her naturally curly hair in exchange for an A in English. She says that the iron helped straighten her out in more ways than one.

"When he gave it to me a few weeks later, I started crying," remembers Breezy. "I'm so used to being disappointed and people not following through on promises that I couldn't believe it." That simple promise along with a new winter coat has set Breezy on a new path. Once a self-described drug-dealing dropout, Breezy is now a straight-A student and National Honor Society member who will graduate early thanks to night school. She is planning to attend a local college and become a registered nurse.

"Mr. H gave me more than a coat," says Breezy. "He gave me love in my heart."

When Mr. Hawley started the program two years ago, nearly 50% of his freshman and sophomore students would drop out of school by the end of the year. Today, the dropout rate has been reduced to 30%. The program has been so successful that Frank Church will adopt it school-wide with a goal of increasing graduation rates at the school from 55% to 90% within five years.

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In two years, Mr. Hawley has spent about \$7,000 to fund the program and leveraged about \$20,000 worth of in-kind donations and discounts. From a stockpile he administers in his classroom, Mr. Hawley distributes such necessities as food, shoes, coats, gloves, blankets and crock pots along with bonus items such as gift cards, ski passes, skate boards and fashion items. In addition to funding from the BPSEF, Mr. Hawley has benefited from the generosity of the community including Bogus Basin Ski Resort, the YMCA, Computers 4 Kids, Boise Bike Project,

Sports Authority, Play-It-Again Sports, Robie Creek Race Committee, Idaho Youth Ranch, Wal-Mart, Vista Pawn, Target, Fred Meyer, Caldwell Transportation, East Junior High Honor Society and private donors.

"I can't give them everything they need," says Mr. Hawley. "But what I can give them can help these kids profoundly."

Reach! donations

Mr. Hawley was the recipient of a Teacher Grant from the BPSEF. The Teacher Grant program is funded by **Reach!** donations.

If you would like to contribute to the Teacher Grant program, please designate your donation as a Reach! donation. Reach! donations are vital to the long-term success of the BPSEF and great teachers like Mr. Hawley. 🍎

Save these dates



BPSEF's **Movies Under the Stars** at the Julia Davis Park bandshell in downtown Boise kicks-off in June. Mark your calendar for this free, family-friendly event!

June 18
Megamind

July 16
Diary of a Wimpy Kid

August 20
Chronicles of Narnia:
Voyage of the Dawn Treader



Donation Form

BPSEF
 8169 W. Victory Rd.
 Boise, ID 83709
foundation@boiseschools.org
 ph. 208-854-4065
 fx 208-854-4004
www.boiseschoolsfoundation.com

Teacher Appreciation Week is May 2-6

If you'd like recognize your child's teacher in a special way, make a tax deductible **Go! donation**. Check Go! donation and write the name of your child's teacher in the box below. Your student's teacher will be able to access funds immediately for educational materials that will help your child reach higher and go further!



Type of donation

Reach! donation
 Teacher Grant program - grant requests are evaluated by the BPSEF board and awarded annually.

\$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 \$1,000 Other

Amount: \$ _____

Go! donation A specific teacher, school, sport or club, PTO/PTA, District-wide programs

Teacher name(s), school, program or club :

Amount: \$ _____

Your information

Name: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Please contact me about planned giving.

Please make my donation anonymous.

Payment method

Check/money order enclosed with this form made payable to Boise Public Schools Education Foundation

Visa Debit Card Master Card

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Card number

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security code
 (three digits on back)

cardholder's signature

Please increase my contribution to include a Merchant Service Fee (about 3%).