



The CTA IFT is attempting to bring a new approach to school change. Based on our Foundation work and discussions with hundreds of practitioners and students, the IFT has determined that school change must include two key factors: (1) It needs to be teacher-driven and (2) It should be based on what is working and successful in our schools and classrooms. By focusing on what works in our schools, the IFT believes strength-based models for school change add a new dimension to school improvement.

Current IFT Projects

- ***IFT Grant Program***
 - The \$5,000-\$20,000 grants are designed for pre-K-12 teachers and certificated support staff, ESP members and college instructors. Proposals are reviewed, using a strength-based matrix, by an IFT Grant Selection committee composed of outstanding teachers. In the program's first five years, IFT awarded 128 grants totaling over \$1.2 million.
- ***Teacher Think Tanks***
 - IFT has organized a diverse set of CTA members to be part of the eight IFT Regional Teacher Think Tanks. IFT believes that these practitioners represent the best of our profession and their voices add a tremendous amount to the current conversations around school change.
- ***The Algebra Success Academy***
 - The program is designed to support algebraic reasoning in the upper elementary grades and lower middle grades and to prepare students for success in eighth-grade Algebra 1. It provides a forum for teacher dialogue on effective teaching and learning and engages families around math education.
- ***Positive Deviance Project***
 - The project is designed to increase the graduation rate by focusing on those students who are successfully staying in school and thriving despite such social factors as poverty, family problems, crime and gangs. These outliers are known as "positive deviants."
- ***Strength-Based School Transformation Projects***
 - Desert Springs Middle School and Anaheim's Gauer Elementary are the sites of IFT-sponsored School Improvement projects that are engaging staff and students in a joint exploration of how to build a program around what is going right on campus.
- ***Parent-Teacher Home Visit Project***
 - IFT supports home visits because they work and teachers have always done them. That practice has been enhanced with a strategic focus and collaboration dedicated to this proven strategy with positive outcomes for families, staff, and most importantly, students of all grade levels.
- ***California School Garden Network***
 - The IFT supports CSGN's mission to promote school gardens as a means "to enhance academic achievement, a healthy lifestyle, environmental stewardship, and community/social development."
- ***Early Childhood Education Alliance***
 - Established with the support of the Packard Foundation to train and inform CTA members on strength-based models in Early Childhood Education, IFT continues to work closely with the CTA ECE Committee to explore opportunities to enhance preschool education.

For more information, please visit the IFT website- www.teacherdrivenchange.org or join the "CTA Institute for Teaching" community on  Facebook