



The CTA Institute for Teaching is attempting to bring a new approach to school change. Based on our work in California schools, with Foundations and from 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 Program**

### ***IFT Grant Program***

The \$5,000-\$20,000 strength-based grants are designed for pre-K-12 teachers and certificated support staff, ESP members and college instructors. Proposals are reviewed through the lens of IFT's strength-based matrix by an IFT Grant Selection committee composed of outstanding teachers. In the program's first seven years, IFT awarded 214 grants totaling over \$2.3 million.

### ***Teacher Think Tanks & the Strength-Based HUB***

IFT has organized a diverse set of CTA members to be part of IFT's Regional Teacher Think Tanks. These ten regional Teacher Think Tanks give a voice to dozens of CTA members who are excellent classroom practitioners and passionate about sharing innovative ideas and building upon what works. Please join in the conversation by registering on the Think Tank's social media platform, [www.strengthbasedhub.org](http://www.strengthbasedhub.org).

### ***Teacher Innovation Expo***

The Expo, presented as part of the pre-Good Teaching Conferences, is designed as a showcase for exemplary IFT Grant recipients to present highlights of their strength-based projects to an audience of fellow teachers. It demonstrates that teachers have the capacity to innovate their practice and profession to connect communities with their classrooms in engaging ways.

### ***Ovation! Toolkit***

Designed by IFT's South Bay Teacher Think Tank members, Ovation! is intended to celebrate the daily contributions our members make in California public schools. Through this unique recognition effort, IFT is focusing on exemplary strength-based teaching. The toolkit was created so local chapter leaders will have a framework or model for building an effective Association member recognition program.

### ***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.

### ***Positive Deviance & Other Strength-Based School Transformation Projects***

IFT is looking to engage with members in schoolwide appreciative inquiry projects based on the identified strengths of the local school community. These field-based projects are locally designed and their successful outcomes are critical in demonstrating the efficacy of strength-based teacher driven change.

### ***California School Garden Network***

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."

For more information, please visit the IFT website- [www.teacherdrivenchange.org](http://www.teacherdrivenchange.org) or join the "CTA Institute for Teaching" community on Facebook  and Twitter [@CTAIFT](https://twitter.com/CTAIFT) 