**4th-Graders Separated by 225 Miles are United by their Exploration of “California’s Watershed: From the Mountains to the Sea”**

Collaborating 4th-grade classes from Sunset Ranch Elementary in Rocklin and Robert Down Elementary in Pacific Grove have partnered in a $5,000 grant project called “Our Watershed from the Mountains to the Sea.” The two teachers provide a student-centered social studies and environmental education program. Their aim is to connect students, parents, and our communities in a shared interest of studying the history and environmental impact of human activities around our watershed from the mountains to the sea. They seek to provide opportunities for joint field research and excursions, including one to the Monterey Bay Aquarium, so that the students will be inspired to lead others toward becoming better stewards of our state’s greatest natural resource.

A recent class excursion began at the Nature Center of the William B. Pond Recreation Area, American River Parkway near Carmichael. Thirty-one Rocklin students spent about an hour learning from two naturalists from the Effie Yeaw Nature Center. Their slogan, “Bringing people to nature... and nature to people” could not have been more apt.

Following some classroom-style instruction, the students then hiked a short distance to a pond area of the American River. They spent nearly an hour working with their teacher, the naturalists and with a team of seven parent volunteers learning about pond ecosystems. Following this activity, they again hiked a short distance to a different part of the river to collect data and test water samples to share with their partner school.

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**CTA Members- What is Your Dream?**

*Applications for Strength-Based Grants open on January 1st.*

*The deadline to apply for a 2018-19 IFT Grant is April 30, 2018.*
Anaheim Strength-Based Grant Project Increases Family Engagement and Enhances Student Relations

Grant recipient Jenny Hitchcock updated IFT on the progress of her 2017-18 grant project. She wrote:

“On October 18th, Guinn hosted a Family Art Day; the first school-wide classroom event that included TK-6th grade, as well as students in Special Day Classes. Families were invited into the classroom to participate with their child in a standards-based lesson in art. Teachers were provided with a wide variety of IFT-funded art supplies for students to use. **Over 133 parents participated in this event!**

Two additional Family Art Days are planned for February 21st and May 23rd.

In addition, once a month, students will participate in an art lesson led by a teacher on special assignment and supported by a grant-funded supervisor. Additionally, students will soon be able to make their art creations at lunch recess.

A Family Night Event will occur December 1st. Parents and students will be offered bussing to attend the evening event thanks to grant funding. Several art stations will be set up for families to create a winter art piece. Student artwork from the Family Art Day event will be showcased and baskets of art supplies will be raffled to parents to help make a school to home connection.

As art supplies continue to arrive, art carts will be created and organized for teachers to check out and integrate into their daily curriculum. Art supplies and accessibility has been limited in the past. Because of the funding provided by the IFT grant, teachers and students will have art supplies readily available for years to come.

The IFT Grant has greatly enhanced our school’s distinguished practice of Visual and Performing Arts. The IFT grant has provided an opportunity for 678 students to feel the joy of art through student-centered activities and enhance School-Family Relations. With each upcoming event, we strengthen our resolve to provide events that will continue Guinn traditions. Guinn School community thanks you.”