Sustaining IFT Strength-Base Grants? It’s as Simple as L-C-A-P

It is just a single sentence in the massive 2018-19 Fontana Unified SD Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP), but to three-time IFT grant recipient, Nicole Robinson, it is a validation of her inspiration and her hard work.

The twenty-one-year veteran dance instructor at A.B. Miller High School “has ignited a love for dance at the high school that has led directly to an expansion of the art form in schools across the District.”

More importantly, she has demonstrated that grant funds provided by CTA members’ voluntary dues contributions can lead to sustainable strength-based programs funded by tax dollars to benefit all students.

Robinson received three grants from the IFT totaling $45,000 in order to take her dance program to another level. Today, her school offers four levels of dance and 175 students take the classes five days a week.

She was also able to start the Dance Collaborative supports dance classes for 600 K-5 students once a week. It also funds professional development for classroom teachers at the school. After a year, the district stepped in to fund and expand the program. “And that is exactly what we wanted, that’s exactly why we did it,” said Robinson. She added, laughing, “And yes it was my idea, but if the community doesn’t do it, then nothing gets done.”

That is strength-based teacher driven change.

Expand access to and integration of Visual and Performing Arts

Fontana’s LCAP 2018-19

Maintain the following positions:
- Principal on Assignment, VAPA
- 4 Elementary Music Teachers

Ensure all students have access to quality musical programs by:
- Purchase and/or repair musical instruments
- Support district-sponsored field trip performances for elementary, middle, and high school

Provide in-school and extended learning opportunities for students

Maintain dance program at identified elementary and middle schools

At last month’s Region 2 Leadership Conference, the IFT staff had a discussion with respected middle school teacher and two-time grant recipient Bill Shively of the Willows TA. Bill reported that his program, River Jim’s Education Adventure at Willows Intermediate School has been included as a line item in the Willows Unified 2018-19 LCAP. Although the amount dedicated to the program doesn’t begin to cover the program’s actual cost, he will work with parents and Association leaders to increase local support and involvement in the development of the Willows Unified School District’s LCAP for next school year.

That is strength-based teacher driven change.
Creating a Union that is a Vehicle for Professional Collaboration
Seeds Planted in 2014 as part of CTA’s Long-Term Strategic Plan are Beginning to Flourish