

Hello to all,

I have been asked to tell you about my experience with the Rapid City Public School Foundation. To do this I have to tell a story about my first day at Dakota Middle School where I was introduced to the staff as the new teacher 11 years ago.

Mr. McGowen the Science Department head introduced me to the staff with a little story about how I had asked about using an electronic projector. The staff had a laugh at my expense because of my ignorance I had not known they had one electronic projector and they were not going to let the new guy use it. I laughed with them and realized that working in education was not like the world of business/ military service that I had left behind. We do not have access as quickly to the tools of the regular business world around us.

I learned that in order to obtain the tools that I needed to enhance my student's learning and to give them experiences they will need to be comfortable in the modern workplace I would have to fend for myself. This is where Mrs. Sprigler our technologist and now as Assistant Principal at Central High School comes in. She came to me one day and asked if there was any technology that I would like and I said there sure was I wanted a Flex Cam. By this time I had finagled an electronic projector even though I was the new guy. A Flex Cam is a camera mounted on a flexible neck that allows it to be positioned for optimum viewing of what the camera is pointing at. Oh, I forgot to tell you that I am a science teacher and at the time I was teaching biology and we dissected rats to understand adult mammalian anatomy. The camera would allow the whole class to see the procedures and replicate them easier than me walking around showing each group individually. I could also leave the image up so the students had a guide as they dissected. This is not the only use of the camera but was the first project I used it on.

To make this story even longer Mrs. Sprigler and I wrote a grant to the Rapid City School Foundation for the Flex Cam. Lo and behold we were given the grant, the largest that they had given up to that time. I asked why they had done this and was told that the grant application had made them laugh and decided to take a chance on me. I wasn't quite sure how to take that but I won't look a gift horse in the mouth. The Flex Cam was used by me and loaned it out to any teacher who wanted to use it. As you know we tend to gravitate towards what we know and the more the Flex Cam was used the more the teachers wanted to use it.

As of today the School District has purchased Flex Cams for the 7<sup>th</sup> grade science teachers throughout the district to use with the biology kits they teach with. I won't say that this experience was the reason for this but Dakota teachers who had used the Flex Cam were able to tell of their positive use of this technology.

All of this was made possible by the Rapid City Public School Foundation's willingness to take chances on ideas that teachers have. The Foundation is able to do something that the District can't do and that is to give someone a chance to try something new with a small investment that the District cannot do because of the way a large organization has to be run. I will always say that the foundation is one of the best partnerships with the people of Rapid City that teachers can have. My story is just one of hundreds that are out there and the Foundation has down this every year since I have known them. They allow teachers to help the students in little ways and sometimes the ideas do spread to the rest of the district. If you have any questions I am happy to talk to you about my experiences. I hope that this has given you a little more insight to what the foundation does and how it impacted my teaching and my students on a personal level.

Thank you for this opportunity to share with you.

Greg Seefeldt