



"I believe the Core Knowledge Curriculum is outstanding and challenging. Both of my kids love the Core subjects and are so enthusiastic about what they are learning. They are both teaching me and my husband things that we never learned!"

2003 Annual Report Of the Core Knowledge® Foundation





Table of Contents

“Ever since my child entered Kindergarten at Grayhawk, the information on Core subjects that he has since retained and built on now at Pinnacle Peake as a 5th grader has been amazing! . . . I love Core Knowledge.”

Bridging the Knowledge Gap.....	3
Highlights for 2003.....	4
A Message From the President.....	5-6
Building Bridges to Schools.....	7-12
Building Bridges with Words.....	13-14
Bridging the Content Gap in Teacher Education.....	15-17
Bridging the Way to New Alliances.....	18
Financial Status.....	19



Bridging the Knowledge Gap

Hawthorne Elementary School in San Antonio, one of the earliest Core Knowledge Schools, has something to be pleased about in 2003. Ninety-six percent of their sixth graders passed the TAKS reading test and 91% passed the math test. They had the highest scores overall in the district and performed significantly above the state average.

For the first time in its seventeen-year history Core Knowledge Foundation will present its annual report in an electronic format. Bridging the knowledge gap has been a favorite theme of ours and this year we're expanding it, making new connections with those who support us and those whom we serve—and using the internet to do it.

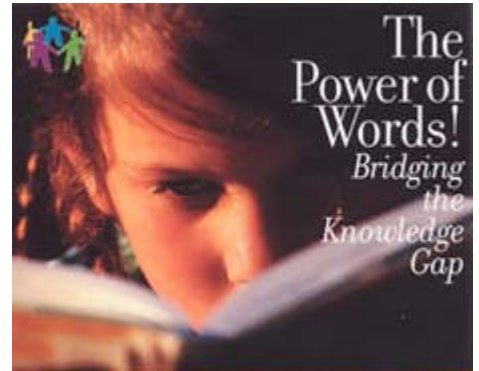
Those we serve—children, teachers and schools—guide our mission:

To offer all children a better chance in life and to create a fairer and more literate society by educating America's youth in a solid, specific, sequenced, and shared curriculum

And a motto:

Educational Excellence and Equity for all Children.

For the past seventeen years we have provided children from preschool to Grade 8 with a rich curriculum that motivates them to learn and enables them to master a shared body of knowledge that leads to success in life. We have worked to make this curriculum an instrument of change in American education, by inspiring new standards, by closing the achievement gap between advantaged and disadvantaged, and by providing a model to influence reform in American education. These were the original goals motivating our founder, E. D. Hirsch, Jr. when he established the Foundation in 1986 and they are the goals that will continue to guide us in the future, just as they have informed the projects being described in this report of our year's work in 2003.





Highlights of 2003

Three Oaks Middle School in St. Meyers Florida attributes their outstanding scores in Florida Writes! state test to "the fact that Core Knowledge provides the students with such a rich background of writing styles and vocabulary."

The percentage of students above the state standard was 95% in 2001, 97% in 2002, and 98% in 2003.

- Founder and Board Chairman E.D. Hirsch, Jr. champions education reform on several new fronts
- Barbara Garvin-Kester assumes presidency of Core Knowledge, January 2003
- Foundation adopts new constitution, laying out the strategies, values, and business principals that govern its future
- Core Knowledge steps up commitment to preschools and elementary school in the Arkansas Delta
- Official School Visitation Sites are established
- Preschool program undergoes major changes
- Foundation advances further into the electronic age, introducing several new features on its web site, notably an electronic version of its newsletter, *Common Knowledge*
- Research and development phase of a comprehensive new Reading Program initiated
- Foundation implements changes to improve management of funds, budget execution, and financial planning and estimating.



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

James M. Cooper
Commonwealth
Professor of Education in
the Curry School of
Education at the
University of Virginia,
Dean of the Curry School
from 1984-1994

Sandra Feldman
President of the
American Federation of
Teachers, member of the
Executive Council of the
AFL-CIO

**E. D. Hirsch, Jr.,
Chairman and Polly
Hirsch**
Partners in the Core
Knowledge Foundation,
which they established in
1986. Professor Hirsch is
the author of ten books,
including works of
scholarship in the
Romantic period His
views on education
reform are widely
published and include the
books *Cultural Literacy*
and *The Schools We Need and
Why We Don't Have Them*.
He is also editor of the
six-book series, *What Your
Kindergartner –Sixth Grader
Needs to Know*

Ted Hirsch
Head of the Lower School
at the South Shore
Charter School in Hull,
Massachusetts, a member
of the founding family of
the Core Knowledge
Foundation

A Message From The President



Dear Friends of Core Knowledge,

In my first year as president of the Core Knowledge Foundation I have experienced not a knowledge gap but an expectation gap. The challenges and rewards of the job have far exceeded even my most optimistic expectations. Throughout the year I have been amazed to learn how large an impact such a small organization has had on educational reform in this country. I am pleased to know that my plans for the future of this organization will be laid on the strong foundation built by those who came before me, a foundation that mirrors the curriculum itself in being: *solid, sequenced, specific, and shared*.

I have visited schools in New York City, Colorado, Texas, Arkansas, South Carolina, and Michigan, where I have seen first graders respond enthusiastically to a lesson on Mayan culture and fifth graders grapple with probability theory. I've heard teachers say that working with a curriculum that showed coherence from grade to grade and made connections from subject to subject has immeasurably enriched their professional lives. I know that the *Teacher Handbooks* now in preparation will enhance this positive experience. I have been pleased to know that the standards adopted in some states, notably Minnesota and Colorado, appear to have been influenced by our curriculum—a solid achievement indeed. I am delighted to see the tremendous growth of our preschool program and to see how hard our schools department has worked to identify visitation sites to showcase some of our high-achieving schools and to attract new schools with models of success.

Much of this year has been devoted to internal organization, putting in place a comprehensive business plan and, in concert with the staff, writing a new constitution to codify our values and principles and to identify those strategies and goals that will guide our future over the next several years. To view the Constitution, visit the "About" section of our website. A new performance evaluation and incentive pay plan was developed to offer the staff a sense of participatory management and creative control over their work objectives. I have also constructed a business plan and I am working with our Board of Trustees to develop a new marketing and public relations outreach that will move Core Knowledge to center stage in transforming American education. I am being guided throughout this process by the invaluable advice of the Core Knowledge board, including the four new members recently added. I look forward to their continued guidance as we pursue together new and more outward-

Marion Joseph
Member of the California
State Board of Education
from 1997 to 2003

William J. Moloney
Colorado Commissioner
of Education and
Secretary for the State
Board of Education since
1997

Diane Ravitch
Research Professor of
Education at New York
University and Senior
Fellow at the Brookings
Institution, former
Assistant Secretary of
Education

Robert J. Reid
Executive Director of the
J. F. Maddox Foundation
of Hobbs, New Mexico
since 1995. Former CEO
of several healthcare
corporations

Sandra Scarr, Treasurer
Professor of Psychology
Emerita, University of
Virginia, formerly on the
faculties of Yale
University and the
University of Minnesota,
formerly CEO and
Chairman of the Board of
Kindercare Learning
Centers, Inc.

**Louisa Spencer,
Secretary**
Retired environmental
attorney, former member,
Board of Overseers,
Harvard University,
volunteer teacher in
Harlem elementary
schools, New York City

looking challenges next year.

Lastly, I have been grateful for the support of those foundations that have been our funding partners in the great venture of educational reform. This year, as well as in past years, The Walton Foundation, the Abell and Weinberg Foundation, the Brown Foundation, the Olin Foundation and the Maddox Foundation have supported our efforts to serve both preschool and K-8 schools with curriculum and professional guidance. As a non-profit organization we dispense services and are enabled to keep the charge for these services as low as possible, in large part as a result of the generous help provided by these foundations. Their help is also crucial in developing new initiatives and funding innovative reform efforts, as you will see throughout this report.

To the teachers, administrators, and parents within our network, to our hard-working independent coordinators in Colorado and Texas, our many consultants throughout the country, to our staff in Charlottesville and in San Antonio, and to our supporters everywhere, I want to thank you for a great welcome and a great year.

Sincerely,

Barbara Garvin-Kester, Ed.D.

Barbara Garvin-Kester, Ed.D.



Building Bridges to Schools

In Glendale Arizona Challenge Charter School students outscore the state average on the AIMS test 89% compared to 71% on the third grade writing portion of the test and 82% compared to 60% on the math portion. Pam and Greg Miller started the school after being introduced to Core Knowledge as volunteer parents in the Paradise Valley School District where their two daughters attended school. Now their daughters attended school. Now their daughters have joined them as staff, making Challenge Charter very much a family affair and one that is garnering kudos in the community.

Assessment and Evaluation/ New Comparative Study of Two Schools in Virginia/ Professional Development/ A Bridge to CSR Schools/ Core Knowledge National Coordinators/ Holly Hensey: National Core Knowledge Coordinator of Colorado/ Sam Ayers: National Core Knowledge Coordinator of West Texas/ Bruce Frazee: National Core Knowledge Coordinator of San Antonio/ New Initiative in the Arkansas Delta/ New Partnership with H-E-B School District in Texas

Core Knowledge connected to our principal clients—existing and potential Core Knowledge schools—in new ways this year. Success in schools is, after all, the most important measure of our own success. We have highlighted that success with a new program that designates schools as Official Core Knowledge Visitation Sites. We will recommend these schools to educators, local board members, state-level administrators, funding agencies, and others as schools to visit to see Core Knowledge in action. As of January 15, 2004 eight schools have been designated as official visitation sites and we expect many more to be ready for designation by the time of the National Conference in March of 2004. The first eight visitation sites are:

Meadows Valley School District 11 in New Meadows, Idaho
Mystic Valley Regional Charter School in Malden, Massachusetts
Normandy Elementary School in Littleton, Colorado
Piney Woods Community Academy in Lufkin, Texas
Sierra Grande School District in Blanco, Colorado
The PEAK School in Flagstaff, Arizona
Windsor Charter Academy in Windsor, Colorado
Franklin K-8 School in Corvallis, Oregon

In connection with the Visitation Site program, we have revamped the process for defining official school status. Our interest is not to focus on growth for growth's sake, but to refine the standards for inclusion in the network so that official status signifies real quality and a real commitment to the Core Knowledge curriculum. To this end, official status requires that schools subscribe to a full range of professional development workshops and training programs offered by the Foundation, submit complete documentation regarding implementation on an annual basis, and sponsor a visit from a representative of the Foundation. In the future acquiring official status will be associated with becoming a visitation site. At the time this report is being submitted, there are 93 schools that have been designated as official. The total number

Capital View Elementary School reports that the steadily increasing scores on state tests are "due to the integration of Core Knowledge with the Georgia State standards." Capitol View's endorsement of Core Knowledge is expanding. They list one of their future goals as opening a Core Knowledge preschool. Preliminary signs point to their being a most welcoming host at the 2004 conference; eleven of their teachers are scheduled to be presenters.

of K-8 schools designated as Friends and Official Schools is 470. There are many more schools that use Core Knowledge; these numbers include only those who comply with our rigorous new reporting standards.

Bridges, of course, go in two directions and this year we have been happy to respond to a request that came directly from schools by producing a day-by-day planner. We began development in August of 2003 and expect to release the planner in CD form in August of 2004. This planner is a major improvement on the existing monthly planner and enables teachers, especially new teachers, to improve pacing, to see the streamlining of various resources into coverage of the *Sequence*, and to assess how both state standards and local subject matter can be incorporated into the curriculum.

Assessment and Evaluation

Many studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of Core Knowledge on student achievement, such as the Oklahoma City Study of 2000, two John Hopkins' studies in the late 1990's, and various comparative studies of Core Knowledge schools in Colorado. However because we believe that continual updates are important, in 2003 we commissioned Herb Walberg, an independent researcher with the Heartland Institute in Chicago, to conduct a study of eight official North Carolina schools, comparing student performance on a variety of state tests with state averages. The demographics of the North Carolina schools and the nature of their staffing will provide a valuable and representative sampling of performance outcomes. Results of the study are due in spring of 2004.

New Comparative Study of Two Schools in Virginia

In 2003 researcher Fred Smith published the results of a longitudinal study of two schools in Virginia. Smith compared students in a Core Knowledge school with students in another school in the same district with a similar demographic make-up. He tracked the effect of Core Knowledge on student achievement using a quasi-experimental, longitudinal, matched-comparison design. The most distinctive aspect of Smith's research was that it tracked students across several years of schooling, from kindergarten to sixth grade.

Smith's research, described in more detail on the website provides compelling longitudinal evidence that Core Knowledge can improve academic performance for both advantaged and disadvantaged students, and can help to narrow the achievement gap between these two groups. His findings also suggest that Core Knowledge may have certain latent effects— effects that may not be visible immediately, and may not show up in a one-year study, but begin to appear after several years of exposure to the curriculum and can grow quite large when exposure persists throughout the elementary years.

Professional Development

A renewed emphasis on professional development resulted in a substantial increase in the number of Leadership Institutes held this year as well as in the average number of attendees. Instead of the usual two institutes, five were conducted this year. Three were held in Charlottesville, one in Lubbock, Texas, and one in Denver, Colorado. The

Medill School in Lancaster, Ohio showed very impressive improvement on state proficiency tests, especially in the sixth grade. Scores in all areas improved: passing percentages in math went from 65.5% to 80.85 and reading scores went from 63.6% to 84.6%. Medill earned an "effective" rating and was the only elementary school in the district to receive this high a rating.

"My daughter has learning disabilities and I was afraid Core Knowledge might throw her over the edge. However, she enjoys the content and is doing well."

total number of principals, vice principals, and Core Knowledge Coordinators attending was 133. We also sponsored 360 days of professional development workshops at 120 different schools and other venues. Seventeen of these schools were new to Core Knowledge.

This year Core Knowledge has added a new workshop to the seven workshops already in place. The new workshop assists schools in aligning their curriculum to state standards, a process that Core Knowledge has worked on throughout the year. Alignments available through this separate workshop or as an add-on to the Getting Started Workshop are available for the states of Texas, California, Virginia, Georgia, and Arkansas.

The work of Core Knowledge has been greatly enhanced this year, as in years past, by the support of dedicated consultants from across the country. These consultants are administrators and teachers in existing Core Knowledge Schools who devote some of their time to various tasks related to recruitment and professional development. They are invaluable resources for training new teachers and assisting with conferences and workshops.

A Bridge To CSR Schools

Since 2000 Yolanda Van Ness has represented Core Knowledge interests as a staff member located in San Antonio, having worked many years before that as a Consultant and Core Knowledge teacher. From this location she oversees schools operating under a CSR Grant (Comprehensive School Reform Grant) that have chosen Core Knowledge as one of the reform models approved by the U.S. Department of Education. She executes the training and evaluation tasks required under the terms of the grant and provides training and advice to non-CSR schools convenient to her location. Currently, Yolanda works with 37 schools, helping them with the yearlong plan, conducting model lessons, assisting with annual reports, and in general doing whatever is necessary to implement Core Knowledge. In 2003 Yolanda conducted over 20 workshops and follow-up visits to CSR schools. In addition to working directly with schools, Yolanda promotes Core Knowledge by attending various educational fairs and meetings sponsored by state education departments.

Core Knowledge National Coordinators

In this annual report we also want to recognize the excellent work of our National Coordinators. National coordinators commit even more time to the work of the Foundation. Not directly paid by the Foundation, they raise their own funds to further our mission, often introducing Core Knowledge to new schools and training teachers in using the Core Knowledge Curriculum.

Holly Hensey: National Core Knowledge Coordinator of Colorado

When the Core Knowledge Regional Center in Colorado was disbanded in 2002 for financial reasons, its director, Holly Hensey, secured funding to develop her own coordination program to enhance and extend the presence of Core Knowledge in Colorado. Currently she coordinates the work of 54 schools in Colorado and in 2003 provided them with the following services:

Liberty Common School in Fort Collins, Colorado outscored their district and state averages in every category of the SCAP tests. They are also Core Knowledge enthusiasts, being not only consistent attendees at workshops and conferences, but also holding two public information nights and a Mayfest celebration of Core Knowledge every year. Plaudits to Liberty Common!

- Colorado Core Knowledge Website-includes a calendar of events and provides access to a resource library and to hundreds of lesson plans.
- Annual Conference-the 2003 conference held in Denver was attended by 850 people from over 90 schools who were offered over 150 sessions.
- Summer Writing Institute-80 teachers from over 26 schools attended and produced 67 units, which are now posted on the website.
- Resource Library-over 3000 volumes, which support the Core Knowledge curriculum, have been collected with the help of Colorado Department of Education and offered through the Department of Education's website for interlibrary loan to Core Knowledge teachers.
- Standards alignment-the alignment between Core Knowledge topics and the Colorado standards has been completed by Holly and is available at no expense when professional development is scheduled through the Core Knowledge Foundation.
- Teacher Roundtable-the networking roundtable, formerly held twice a year for three hours, was changed to one all-day roundtable. This roundtable, connecting teachers to their grade-level colleagues from other schools, is funded by a grant and free to teachers.
- Leadership Institute-the Leadership Institute, usually held only in Charlottesville, was also offered for the first time in Colorado on April 15. Seventy-five Core Knowledge Administrators attended the program featuring training by Gerald Terrell and Cyndi Wells. The institute was funded by state grant money.

Core Knowledge Schools in Colorado continue to outperform the state average on standardized tests as shown by this sampling of schools in the chart below:

Schools have scored above the state average.

School	3rd Gr. Reading			4th Gr. Reading			4th Gr. Writing			5th Gr. Math			7th Gr. Reading			8th Gr. Science		
	01	02	03	01	02	03	01	02	03	01	02	03	01	02	03	01	02	03
Jefferson Academy	96%	98%	91%	86%	89%	88%	59%	87%	75%	62%	78%	86%	78.5	79%	77%	60%	64%	59%
Littleton Academy	98%	94%	96%	83%	98%	92%	63%	92%	85%	89%	94%	94%	90%	90%	96%	73%	83%	86%
Liberty Common School	100%	95%	96%	93%	96%	95%	70%	88%	77%	79%	75%	82%	93%	95%	87%	63%	90%	88%
Monument Academy	95%	97%	100%	88%	80%	83%	73%	64%	65%	73%	81%	81%	77%	85%	78%	73%	67%	88%
Platt River Academy	84%	90%	98%	87%	73%	80%	62%	71%	83%	68%	92%	77%	81%	73%	77%	NA	71%	70%
State Average	72%	72%	74%	63%	61%	63%	38%	50%	52%	51%	55%	56%	63%	59%	61.5	49%	50%	49%

(Scores for each school shown are the percentage of students at Proficient or Advanced)

teachers in Colorado. Besides the projects listed above, Holly publishes a newsletter for Colorado teachers and fields many phone calls and e-mails seeking information about the Core Knowledge curriculum.

Sam Ayers: National Core Knowledge Coordinator of West Texas

Sam Ayers is the coordinator for 20 Lubbock area schools. In addition to conducting monthly programs, holding an annual regional conference, and participating in training workshops, he helped to organize the following activities in support of Core Knowledge schools and teachers.

In June 2003, he sponsored a Unit writing institute at the Lubbock campus of Wayland Baptist University for 27 teachers. Ten of the units written during the week were accepted for presentation at the Atlanta conference.

Alignments for the state standards tests (TEKS) have been correlated for kindergarten through 6th grade and are posted on the website. This year a set of grade level correlations were delivered to all Lubbock area schools for use in planning Core Knowledge lessons and units.

Training activities for preschool were expanded. Training was initiated one year ago at two campuses. A larger training session for 22 area preschool teachers was held in August 2003.

Administrators from the Lubbock area Core Knowledge schools attended a one-day condensed version of the Leadership institute sponsored by the Foundation. Gerald Terrell, Cyndi Wells, and Yolanda Van Ness presided over the sessions.

Work on the Resource Library continued. Established four years ago with 200 books, library now offers 1400 volumes for use by Core Knowledge teachers. They are housed at Lubbock Christian University where they are also used by students in preparing Core Knowledge lessons for their practice teaching assignments.

Bruce Frazee: National Core Knowledge Coordinator of San Antonio

This year has been very active for the 17 Core Knowledge Schools in the San Antonio area (SACK). The first SACK event, attended by 100 people, was held on October 14 at Hardy Oak Elementary School. An overview of Core Knowledge was presented to teachers and administrators interested in implementing it in their schools. Much time was also spent preparing for the "Core Knowledge Mini-Conference" to be held at Coronado Village Elementary School on Feb. 10, 2004. At this event teachers who wrote Core Knowledge units to present at the National Core Knowledge conference will preview them for teachers and administrators who will not be attending.

SACK also sponsored several Core Knowledge meetings for coordinators and principals to arrange SACK events, to share ideas, and to develop a support network for the area's Core Knowledge schools. These meetings were attended by an average of 20 people.

Twenty teachers attended the June 2003 Core Knowledge Writing Institute, which

"Recently my class had Dr. Sam Ayers of Lubbock, Texas address the class on Core Knowledge. He did a wonderful job and has shown my students a new way of teaching. We really appreciate his work in West Texas and sincerely hope that more schools begin to use the enriched Core Knowledge Curriculum. Dr. Sam is a treasure and one hard working guy. Thanks again for your supporting him and his work!"

Fourth grade teachers at Clinton Hills School (PS20) in Brooklyn took on many Core Knowledge initiatives in 2003 and said they helped "the scores to soar" on several state tests. Math, for example, went from 50.7% to 79.8% scoring above level 3 on the CTB tests.

was co-sponsored by Trinity University.

SACK also held a SACK Teacher of the Year competition. Teachers and administrators were encouraged to select nominees who exemplify outstanding traits as Core Knowledge teachers. All teachers nominated had written Core Knowledge units, presented at the national conference, and displayed great enthusiasm and ability in the classroom. The winners of this year's competition were Patricia Shaughnessy and Debra Mentzer of Hawthorne Elementary.

Grant funds were raised to send 56 people to the 2004 Core Knowledge National Conference in Atlanta. Nine of the people attending will present units written during the Core Knowledge Summer Writing Institute.

Finally, the SACK website has been updated to provide new information about participating schools and about new resources on the web available for use in the classroom.

New Initiative in the Arkansas Delta

Core Knowledge is developing a new pilot program for the K-8 schools in the Arkansas Delta. The program, which is envisioned to be a model for the future, will feature an intensive training program and the guidance of a full-time director. In July, Judy Sisson was hired to direct the program from her base in Arkansas. The phase-in of the curriculum will take place over a longer time period than usual and will be guided by the newly developed day-by-day planner. Accommodations will be made for under-prepared students and special attention will be directed at involving parents or compensating for absent support. To date two schools have committed to adopting the Core Knowledge curriculum. Coordination with the Core Knowledge preschool program, already in place in Arkansas, is expected to be advantageous. Judy Sisson and her in-school consultants will meet in Charlottesville in the summer of 2004 to assess progress and develop any new strategies necessary for success.

New Partnership with H-E-B School District in Texas

Core Knowledge is partnering with the Hurst-Euless Bedford Independent School District in applying for a federal grant to support enrichment training for teachers of American history. The proposal establishes a collaboration among Core Knowledge, the HEB School District, the University of Texas at Arlington, and several Virginia Historic Sites, specifically, Colonial Williamsburg, Historic Jamestown, Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, and James Madison's Montpelier. Through American history courses and the use of distance learning technologies like video conferencing, teachers will be able to participate in programs offered by university professors and by experts at historic Virginia institutions. The Core Knowledge staff will assist participants in adapting information and materials to classroom settings.



Building Bridges with Words

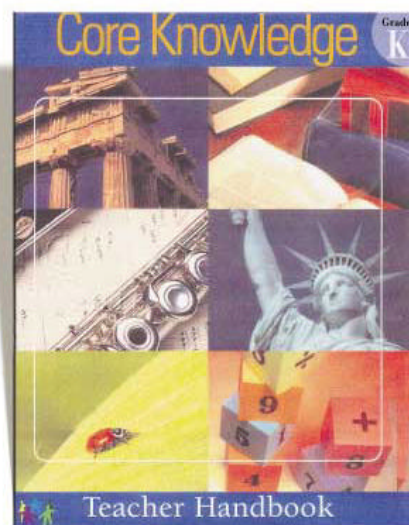
Teacher Handbooks/ The Grader Series/ New Teacher Guides to the Core Classics®/ New Parent Brochure/ New Publishing Partnership Being Explored

In 2003 Creativity Research Journal published a recently completed study on creativity conducted by John Baer of Rider University. The study examined various creative writing projects and found that, far from being confined to rote memory and "mere facts," 540 students in the Core Knowledge middle schools exhibited as much creativity as their peer control groups.

Teacher Handbooks

In 2003 Core Knowledge transferred some of its attention to web-based communications and launched an electronic version of *Common Knowledge*, the Foundation Newsletter. The subscription base grew from an initial readership of 4,300 to 10,300 and the annual cost of production dropped from \$24,000 to approximately \$4,000.

Our flagship project in publications came closer to completion this year with six *Teacher Handbooks* now in draft form for grades K through 5. This project, which is designed to support classroom teachers with lessons, materials, and background information related to the *Sequence*, was begun in 2000 with a grant from the Walton Foundation.



During 2003 teacher reaction to the first drafts was sought in two venues. Sixty teachers, administrators, and consultants were asked to review a sample draft, answer an in-depth questionnaire, and participate in a focus group discussion at the conference in Phoenix. The same process was repeated in Little Rock in May with a special session held for Arkansas K-5 teachers. Reports generated from these two sessions indicated a very favorable reaction to the *Teacher Handbooks*. Based on a 1-5 scale, no score for any aspect went below 4.

The first volumes in the Handbook series are expected to be available in 2004.

The Grader Series

In December of 2003, complete revisions for *What Your Fourth Grader Needs to Know* were turned over to the Doubleday Publishing Company and the revised version is

Millard Core Academy has a waiver from compliance with state standards as their district's standards exceed in Nebraska state standards, but by any standard, Millard Core scores high and continues the dedication to excellence that won it the \$25,000 prestigious Milken award last year.

scheduled for publication release in August of 2004. Fifth grade has been scheduled for release in August 2005 and Sixth Grade in 2006.

The Spanish translation project was also completed in 2003 and translations of the texts of four books, *What Your K through 3rd Grader Should Know*, were posted on the website in April. This project, funded in 1999 by the Brown Foundation of Houston, Texas was intended to help non-English speakers in elementary school acquire fluency in English. The translations enable Spanish-speaking parents to read along with their children as the children study the illustrated English versions of the Grader books.

New Teacher Guides to the Core Classics®

Teacher Guides for six of the Core Classics were also posted on our website this year, after being reviewed by classroom teachers and edited. The response from teachers has been extremely positive. A teacher at St. Joseph's School in Greenville, South Carolina remarked the Guide to Washington Irving was "the best teacher's guide she's ever used." A fifth grade teacher at Angelus Academy in Springfield, Virginia, claimed that encountering the *Don Quixote* teacher guide on the website convinced her to teach this text for the first time.

New Parent Brochure

This year Core Knowledge also produced a brief "Guide to Core Knowledge" for parents. This is presented as a tri-fold brochure that can be downloaded from the website "as is" or in a form that can be customized by each school and used to inform parents about various features of the Core Knowledge curriculum.

New Publishing Partnership Being Explored

This year we explored the possibility of partnering with Scholastic Books on a number of projects. Meetings with executives of Scholastic's school division were held in Charlottesville and in New York, and a number of common interests were given priority ranking. The highest priority was given to the development of classroom libraries bearing the Core Knowledge endorsement. This would be a package of books, a combination of Core Knowledge publications, Scholastic publications, and titles from other publishers, which would relate to topics recommended in the *Sequence*. We are excited about the possibility of working with a publisher with such a large marketing arm who would be able to supply many worthwhile classic titles, ours included, to our Core Knowledge classrooms. If this project goes forward next year, we anticipate that the classroom libraries will appeal to schools outside the Core Knowledge network, thus extending our reach.



Bridging the Content Gap in Teacher Education

**Connecting to Core Knowledge Teachers: 2003 Conference/ The Reading Program:
A Bridge to Literacy/ Preschool: Paving the Way to the Future/ Preschool Training
and Development/ New Grant Funding/ New Assessment Tool**

For the third year in a row Cheyenne Mountain Charter Academy, located south of Colorado Springs, received top scores in statewide tests, making it the number one middle school in the state.

Work on the course outlines for teacher education was completed in November. This project, funded by the Olin Foundation, began in 2001. Three ads were sponsored in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, pointing to the free course outlines posted on the web and inviting educators to seek more information about restructuring their syllabus to include more specific preparatory work in the fields to be taught in elementary schools. Several direct responses came from interested educators and from students wanting to know if any schools were offering the courses described in “What Elementary Teachers Need to Know.” Many inquires also continue to come in through the CoreKnow feature of our website.

Core Knowledge is partnering with the Boston University School of Education to apply for a FIPSE grant to design their coursework in compliance with the suggestions offered in our reform guidelines. The Chelsea Independent School District will be the laboratory for seeing how the new teacher training would prepare teachers for real classroom settings. Although grant dollars were declined in November of 2003, we were invited to reapply and are doing so.

Connecting to Core Knowledge Teachers: 2003 Conference

“Thirsting for Knowledge” was the theme of the 2003 Annual Conference, which was held in Phoenix from March 6-8 and was preceded by two days of preschool institutes. Tom Horne, the Arizona Commissioner of Education and a supporter of Core Knowledge was a featured speaker at the welcoming session. Dozens of well-known educators and researchers apprised teachers of the latest developments in their fields and provided guidance in interpreting them for elementary students. The 2284 attendees enthusiastically received the keynote address by famed math educator, Jaime Escalante. The popular movie, *Stand and Deliver*, based on Escalante’s work with disadvantaged students in inner city Los Angeles, was shown on Thursday evening.

Six schools received recognition at the 2003 conference for earning official Core Knowledge status. They received certificates on stage at the general session where

each school was also awarded a free registration to the 2004 conference. The schools are:

Medill Elementary in Lancaster, Ohio
The Pinnacle Charter School in Federal Heights, Colorado
Graysville Elementary School in Graysville, Georgia
Houston Elementary School in Houston, Texas
Capitol View Elementary School in Atlanta, Georgia
Millennium Charter Academy in Mount Airy, North Carolina

This year over 32 volunteers, half of them Core Knowledge Consultants, helped to staff the conference working in the registration booth, moderating sessions, stuffing tote bags, and helping with many other arrangements. As in every year past, their efforts were crucial to the success of the conference. Evaluation forms continue to include comments both on the benefits of the conference and the impressive quality and scope of an event managed by such a small staff.

This year Karen Baggiano, a staff member since 1997, was appointed Conference Director and has spent the year surveying future conference sites and preparing for the March 2004 Conference in Atlanta.

Philadelphia has been chosen as the 2005 Conference site.

The Reading Program: A Bridge to Literacy

In June of 2003, Matthew Davis, a Core Knowledge staff member since 2000, was appointed Director of the Reading Program. The goal of this program is to develop a comprehensive language arts program for grades K-3, which will combine research-based instruction in skills with an innovative oral language component, including frequent reading aloud, discussion, and vocabulary-building exercises.

The main accomplishments for this project in 2003 were the development of a business plan and the production of a prototype. Both of these elements are essential to the pursuit of grant funding.

Preschool: Paving the Way to Future Learning

Preschool is increasingly recognized as an important element in overall success in school especially for disadvantaged children. More and more states are embracing universal preschool as an educational goal. The Core Knowledge preschool program has benefited from this recognition and tried to capitalize on it in several ways in 2003.

Preschool Training and Development

This year Core Knowledge further refined its preschool database to track schools and communicate with them more effectively. There are currently 349 preschools in the preschool database, compared to 330 last year.

The existing 10 preschool training modules were updated and a new leadership-training module for preschool directors was added. New delivery options were instituted, including one that invites preschools to host a training session for several

Two Core Knowledge schools in Hawaii, Solomon Elementary and Kauluwela Elementary, were the only two out of 100-high poverty schools to achieve annual progress four years in a row, garnering major stories in the state's newspaper.

other preschools in their locality. The host preschool receives free registrations for their teachers, proportionate to the number of other paid participants.

The Foundation has developed a comprehensive consultant manual to formalize training procedures and ensure consistent, high quality preschool professional development. Participation in preschool training, including the conference related and regional Preschool Institutes, increased by 30% this year. Core Knowledge anticipates further growth since it is now offering a regional institute in October, in addition to one traditionally offered in July.

New Grant Funding

In September, the Preschool program was awarded a three-year grant by the Walton Foundation to expand the availability of Core Knowledge preschools to low-income families in the Arkansas Delta. This work builds on the accomplishments of two prior grants given for the same purpose and on the work of Susan Smith, the Preschool Coordinator in the Arkansas Delta. The total number of preschool sites in the Arkansas Delta now stands at 82 classes. This grant will also include a longitudinal evaluation to track the impact of Core Knowledge preschool education on later student performance, as well as to compare the performance of former Core Knowledge preschoolers with a control group. In addition, Core Knowledge will develop a new summer literacy support program for parents and preschoolers. The Arkansas program will be used as a model to show how a content-rich preschool education can close the achievement gap for disadvantaged students everywhere.

In July, the Abell and Weinberg Foundation awarded a grant to Core Knowledge to continue funding the implementation of its curriculum in the Head Start classes of Baltimore County, Maryland. These classes, ably coordinated by Heather Callister, were lauded in Federal review documents for their implementation of the Core Knowledge curriculum, and, in particular, for their use of the *Core Knowledge Preschool Assessment Tool (CK-PAT)* that was field tested in these classes.

New Assessment Tool

A major accomplishment of the year was the development and field-testing of the *CK-PAT*, a comprehensive curriculum-based assessment tool that will enable preschool teachers and directors to measure the success of their students in mastering the specific goals of the Core Knowledge preschool curriculum. The software based management system generates easy-to-read graphs and a variety of detailed reports for individual students, for the class as a whole, and for an entire center or agency. It will also assist teachers in communicating student progress to parents and to those involved in program evaluations.

In September, Mary Miller, a member of the Department since May of 2002, was promoted to Assistant Director of Early Childhood Development. At that time, the Preschool Department also added Mike Parisi, a part-time employee, as Early Childhood Coordinator.

Gretna Elementary in Gretna, VA has shown consistent improvement in SOL scores in the last four years and has moved up from the "Meet State Standards" category to being "Fully Accredited." The report that, despite some turnover problem, their new teachers have "eagerly accepted the challenge of learning more about Core Knowledge." Congratulations Gretna!



Bridging the Way to New Alliances

The Classical Academy of Colorado Springs, a K-6 Core Knowledge School, was one of five schools in the country selected by the Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education for its 2002-2003 Creative Ticket National School of Distinction Award. This program recognizes schools that have an outstanding arts education program. This school was also one of five charter schools accredited by the American Academy for a Liberal Education. It has a long list of students waiting for entry.

Founder and Board Chairman, E. D. Hirsch, Jr. continues to be our roving ambassador, promoting educational reform and seeking like-minded allies in many places around the country. In February he appeared on an educational panel in



Washington, D.C. where the book *Our Schools and Our Future*, published under the auspices of the American Federation of Teachers, was discussed.

March saw the usual enthusiastic response to his address before the annual Core Knowledge Conference in Phoenix. In April he addressed the White House Forum on Civic Literacy in Washington, D.C. where he and Polly were feted at a dinner hosted by Vice President and Mrs. Cheney.

In May Professor Hirsch addressed an audience at Boston University on the rationale for a coherent early curriculum.

He continued his association with the Hoover Institution at Stanford University and in September attended a meeting there of the Koret Task Force on Education. December found him in Chicago for an address before the educational leaders of Cleveland Conference, explaining the educational theories behind the development of Core Knowledge. In October he was back in Washington, D.C. for a celebration of reform progress sponsored by the Center for Education Reform and attended by Secretary of Education Rod Paige, Governor Jeb Bush, Senator Eugene Hickok of New Hampshire, John Walton of the Walton Foundation, and others.

Professor Hirsch was awarded one of two "Excellence in Education" prizes given for the first time in 2003 by the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation of Dayton, Ohio. The prize, honoring his work in education reform and bearing a cash award of \$25,000, was presented in February at the Capitol Hilton in Washington, D. C.



Financial Status

Mystic Valley Regional Charter School of Malden, MA the first visitation site in the new Core Knowledge program, has recorded some impressive improvement in the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. A study of the scores from Fall of 1998 to Fall of 2003 shows that after the third grade, (and in some cases before then) scores in vocabulary, reading, language and math were consistently at least a year above grade level and in many cases two years or more. Congratulations to Mystic Valley. They have been one of the most faithful supporters of Core Knowledge, attending many, many conferences and professional development workshops. All that hard work has paid off for their students.

The Core Knowledge Endowment Fund was established in 1995 through the generous donation of royalties generated by the sale of E. D. Hirsch's Grader Series published by Doubleday Books, now part of the Bertelsmann Publishing Group. E.D. Hirsch receives no monetary compensation for his work as Founder and Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

During 2003, the Core Knowledge Foundation contracted with an experienced financial management professional, John P. Lindermuth to ensure that the management of Foundation finances is consistent with its strategic goals and objectives. Monthly financial data was reviewed and analyzed, and, with departmental participation, in-depth analysis was conducted quarterly. Also, a long term financial strategy was formulated and implemented to ensure the long term financial viability of the Foundation. Finally, a structured planning process was implemented for 2004, resulting in both an Operating Budget (what the Foundation earns and buys) and a Performance Budget (how the dollars relate to strategic goals and objectives). These steps provide a solid, integrated financial management architecture for the future.

The Core Knowledge Foundation's financial position remains stable. Total Net Assets at the end of 2003 were approximately \$4,600,000, an increase of approximately \$4,000 over 2002. The Unrestricted Asset Balance (Operating Funds and the Foundation Endowment) increased by over \$136,000 to almost \$4,000,000. The Restricted Asset Balance (Grant Funds) decreased by approximately \$132,000 to approximately \$600,000, but this is consistent with the varying allocation cycles for grants. In 2003 total Core Knowledge expense activity, including grant expenses, exceeded \$4,700,000. Cash Flows remain stable and sufficient to meet the day-to-day needs of the Foundation.