



# SONOMA VALLEY EDUCATION FOUNDATION

*Inspiring young learners*



## What we do:

The foundation provides funding for programs and projects in the Sonoma Valley Unified School District (SVUSD) to enrich the student experience.

The Sonoma Valley Education Foundation only funds programs that support SVUSD strategic goals and are aligned with their mission: “Together with the support of parents, teachers, and the community, students will graduate from SVUSD prepared for success in college, career, and life.”

SVEF also engages community volunteers in our schools at both the middle and high school levels. We believe great schools must have strong community support.

## A single story:

Jake had faced transitions and three preschools, encountering unsuccessful experiences each time. He was diagnosed with sensory processing disorder and ADHD. The mother of this active, impulsive little boy felt as though she “was just going to crumble and break.” Day after day, she was called to pick up her son early from the previous preschools, often hearing him say: “Mommy, I don’t know what I did. Am I in trouble?”

Jake needed a preschool “home,” and his mother needed to find a safe, warm environment where he could thrive and learn what he needed in order to be prepared for kindergarten. She learned of the new Sassarini Preschool, and enrolled her son in the preschool’s first class in August 2014.

The staff embraced Jake and the family, never once expressing judgment or dismay about his behavior. Danielle, the Preschool Director, told his mother that he was a gift, and they felt fortunate to have him in class because he could teach other kids so much about getting along. The staff received special professional development on behavior management from the Early Learning Institute, and welcomed the strategies and techniques to help this little boy succeed. Looking forward to a successful transition to kindergarten, SVUSD has begun the process of assessing Jake for additional help beginning when he starts kindergarten. Because his preschool is part of the school district, Jake will have a much smoother transition to kindergarten, with a “circle of support” and tools to help him succeed in school.

## Our future:

The Sonoma Valley Education Foundation continues to raise funds to sustain school-based preschool classrooms and early childhood literacy. We hope to ensure solid futures by providing access to STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) and summer learning opportunities – all leading to success in college and career.

## Our start:

In 1993, a small group of concerned parents and citizens, who were alarmed at the rate and potential damage from state funding cutbacks, formed a 501(c)(3): the Sonoma Valley Education Foundation (SVEF).

The goal of the group was to spur community investment in local schools and to supplement and safeguard vulnerable school programs, including the arts, literacy, science, and technology.

For 21 years, SVEF has continued to partner with the community and with the Sonoma Valley Unified School District (SVUSD) to enhance public education, supporting both enrichment and intervention programs.



**Impact100 Sonoma awarded a \$100,000 Impact Grant to Sonoma Valley Education Foundation for the Smart Start: Preschool for All in Sonoma Valley program (2013).**