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## INNOVATIVE EFFORT WILL ADDRESS TRAUMA AMONG SCHOOL STUDENTS

### Franke Foundation awards \$10,000 grant to Northside Elementary School

LA CROSSE, WI, September 20, 2017– An innovative project to help Northside Elementary School students succeed in school and overcome adverse childhood experiences has received a major grant from the Robert & Eleanor Franke Charitable Foundation.

The \$10,000 grant to the La Crosse Public Education Foundation (LPEF) will pay about half of the first-year cost of a two-year pilot program at Northside. LPEF provided a separate \$4,000 grant and raised \$500 in online donations, with the remaining first-year costs covered by a state grant and School District of La Crosse funds.

*“We’re grateful to the Franke Foundation and the community for the compassion and support they are giving students,” said Laura Huber, principal at Northside. “Our goal is to enable children to feel safe, to build caring relationships with adults and peers, and to manage emotions and behaviors. This will help them thrive in school, and in our community.”*

While a few Trauma-Informed Schools exist elsewhere in Wisconsin, Northside is believed to be the first in Western Wisconsin. In addition to working closely with the state Department of Public Instruction, Northside is consulting with UW-L Professor Betty DeBoer, a recognized expert in the field. She will work collaboratively with school staff during an intensive two-year period. She will review and make recommendations on policies to create an even more welcoming community for students and staff. She will help the school partner with community stakeholders to improve the conditions for students, and provide direct training to staff on trauma-informed practices, and also self-care practices to increase staff well-being and retention.

Staff will be trained in techniques to help children who are experiencing adverse childhood experiences, such as abuse, neglect, or mental illness, or are living in a home where violence or substance abuse are present. Staff at Northside Elementary have noted some students have experienced significant trauma in their lives. The staff is excited to learn techniques that will help these students heal and then realize their dreams.

The La Crosse Public Education Foundation’s mission is to enhance learning opportunities for students in the School District of La Crosse and to promote community understanding and support for public education. For more information, contact the LPEF office at 787-0226, or email David Stoeffler at: [david@lacrosseeducationfoundation.org](mailto:david@lacrosseeducationfoundation.org).

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