



COURTESY OF AVON EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Avon Elementary School first-grade teacher Teri Cioffi was recently awarded a \$1,000 grant from the Avon Education Foundation to help fund the purchase of new keyboards that are suitable for first-graders.

School receives \$1,000 grant

THE COAST STAR

The Avon Education Foundation recently awarded a \$1,000 mini grant to Avon Elementary School first-grade teacher Teri Cioffi for use in digital writing.

Mrs. Cioffi said there is a "significant need for digital writing skill development" in today's education.

Different from traditional writing, which focuses on producing text to express and record what people are thinking, digital writing uses developing communication technologies to connect text, sounds and images and to in-

teract and collaborate with people all over the world.

"Students will continue to communicate and collaborate by way of all four crucial mediums [listening, speaking, writing and digital] in their lifetimes," Mrs. Cioffi said. "Digital writing skill development must be part of daily instruction."

Mrs. Cioffi wants to make digital writing more than just an element of the broader technology curriculum. However, she does face some obstacles, including the fact that most keyboards are not built for first-graders to use.

The \$1,000 grant will enable the purchase of ergonomically correct keyboards and mice for the first-grade class.

"Our goal is to ensure that students are not only being taught touch typing correctly, but that they are not physically harmed using a keyboard that is not designed for their small hands," Mrs. Cioffi said.

In her argument for the grant, Mrs. Cioffi pointed to the future of standardized testing, which will begin to require a digital response from students beginning with the next school year.