

## Ed Foundation at \$921K of \$4MM goal

By David Mark Simpson / Special to the Malibu Times | Posted: Saturday, November 22, 2014 1:00 pm

The Santa Monica-Malibu Education Foundation is just under a quarter of the way to its \$4 million fundraising goal after passing the midpoint of its 17-month campaign.

The Vision for Student Success had raised more than \$921,000 as of Oct. 30, Ed Foundation officials told the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Board of Education at a recent meeting.



Ed Foundation Fundraiser

The centralized fundraising effort started on Feb. 1 and will end on June 30 of 2015. This year's campaign is longer than a year because Ed Foundation officials recommended that its start and end dates be aligned with the school year.

Last year, the campaign to fund learning programs evenly across the district brought in \$3.2 million over 15 months. The Board of Education covered the \$800,000 gap, allowing the Ed Foundation to reach its \$4 million goal. District officials made clear that this was a one-time contribution.

In November 2011, the board designated the Ed Foundation as the sole organization to raise money for personnel and professional development at all schools.

The Vision for Student Success was borne out of that policy and was enacted this year. The program focuses on reduced class sizes in second and third grade, training for aides, literacy coaches, art instruction for every elementary grade and teacher professional development.

The switch to centralized fundraising was controversial, with some parents upset that money donated would not necessarily go directly to their child's school. Some said they would stop donating altogether and instead provide supplies or other materials not subject to the new policy.

Supporters said centralized fundraising will even the playing field across the district by pooling resources.

About 15 percent of families in the district have contributed to the campaign this year, Ed Foundation Associate Director Rachel Faulkner told the board.

By the end of last year's campaign, more than a third of all families had contributed.

Contributions from families in the district make up 61 percent of the current total, Faulkner said. Ten

percent comes from the community and 4 percent comes from corporations and businesses. One fifth of the total contributions comes from events and investments.

The Pier Party, the Ed Foundation's kickoff fundraiser held in April, brought in almost \$125,000, Faulkner said. Because of the elongated year, there will be a second Pier Party during the campaign, on April 26.

There will also be a concert fundraiser at Barnum Hall on Feb. 7.

Dun & Bradstreet Credibility Corp contributed \$100,000 to the campaign and have challenged the community to match the donation.

Despite the Ed Foundation's June 30 deadline, district officials will have to make staffing decisions in March. This was one reason why the initial fundraising deadline was Jan. 31; to give the superintendent time to determine what could be supported by the Vision For Student Success campaign.

Faulkner made the point that the end of the calendar year is typically when the highest volume of contributions come in to the Ed Foundation.

*This story originally appeared in the Santa Monica Daily Press.*