



Education Foundation's inaugural Pledge Days raises \$439,950 for SMMUSD schools

Staff Report

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The Santa Monica-Malibu Education Foundation announced last week that Pledge Days, an inaugural district-wide event to raise funds and awareness for SMMEF, raised \$439,950 to support programs in all schools in the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District.

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The funds raised include donations from 702 SMMUSD families, employees and other community members and a \$100,000 match from an extremely generous anonymous donor. As a result of the success of Pledge Days organizers said annual campaign donations are now 70 percent greater than this time last year.

“We are thrilled that the community came together so positively for our first Pledge Days event and we are grateful to our anonymous donor for such a generous and inspirational match,” said Kathleen Rawson, president of the SMMEF board of directors. “The donations will not only support extraordinary programs for all our students, but will also show potential corporate and major donors how committed this community is to providing an outstanding education to each and every child in our schools.”

As part of Pledge Days, which ran from Sept. 28-Oct. 9, SMMEF and PTA representatives were on campuses at all SMMUSD elementary schools to thank donors and encourage others to support SMMEF-funded programs in Santa Monica and Malibu public schools.

Proceeds from the event and the match will fund programs for every school in the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District. SMMEF-funded staff and programs include arts education for the district’s 4,900 elementary students, 87 instructional assistants, and enrichment grants for all 16 schools in the district. Many schools use these grants to provide science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) or visual and performing arts programs. Some schools also use these funds to hire additional health clerks, augment on-site counseling programs, or run other programs focused on student wellness.

Due to a donation from the Pacific Park amusement park on the Santa Monica Pier, one donor from each SMMUSD elementary school will win a family pass for four to the park.

All such donors from July 1-Oct. 9 this year are eligible.

“We are ecstatic about this enthusiastic response,” SMMEF Executive Director Linda Greenberg said. “Donors were inspired by the wonderful \$100,000 match and are committed to seeing that our students receive the best education possible. We are thrilled by the success of our fundraising efforts to date and invite SMMUSD families, community members and business who haven’t yet donated to join our efforts by donating today at smmef.org. We still need to raise \$1.7 million more by June 30 in order for the district to provide all SMMEF-funded programs for next year.”

Established in 1982 by a group of parents, community leaders and local business owners, SMMEF raises funds to enhance and supplement the curriculum of the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District.

SMMEF’s mission is to engage the community to invest in a vibrant educational experience for all students in the Santa Monica and Malibu public schools.

SMMEF raises funds through its annual campaign, endowment earnings and special events.

For more information about SMMEF, visit www.smmef.org, follow on Twitter [@smmef](https://twitter.com/smmef) or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/smmef.