

SMMUSD Education Foundation provides quarterly report

By [Angel Carreras](#) on February 24, 2018 in [News](#)



SANTA MONICA-MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Santa Monica-Malibu Education Foundation has seen donations and participation rise in the past year as the local organization continues to reach out to local parents and corporations to fund schools.

On February 15, SMMEF provided their quarterly report to the school board, an update on money fundraised and future goals to the Board of Education.

Established in 1982, the Education Foundation was “organized by a dedicated group of parents, community leaders, and local business owners to enhance and supplement the curriculum of the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District,” according to the foundation’s website.

Associate Director Rachel Faulkner presented the item to the board, highlighting that participation and donations with the foundation have risen in comparison to last year.

For this school year, as of January 31, the Foundation has raised \$2,316,673.

Parents of students in the district comprised a large number of donations, with 2,557 parent donors at an average of \$590 per household. However, this is with only around 36% parent participation and donation.

Faulkner adds money raised by the Foundation via fundraising campaigns, endowments, and event proceeds provide funding for many things, \$500,000 for scholarships, endowments, and programs at sixteen schools in the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified District.

Recorders for third graders, additional library books, money allocated to hire instructional assistants, even ballroom dance for 5th graders have all been program benefits.

Faulkner was touched by the donations thus far, sharing a personal anecdote with the Board of how beneficial these donations have been for students.

“We hear from teachers and principals about the Education Foundation and its impact on students,” Faulkner started. “I recently got an email from an art teacher, there’s one child that comes to her class before school just to say, ‘hi.’ The one day a week he has art he comes in and he’s excited about the project he’s working on. What’s striking is, the student is homeless. School is a constant for this child. The art class brings him joy. It’s one of many ways donors are impacting our kids.”

Faulkner outlined fundraising goals through June 30, naming parent renewals, foundation and organization fundraising, and corporate partnerships as goals. Corporate partners have donated over \$186,000 so far this year. “This is the time companies sign on as sponsors, we expect a 10% growth in donations this year.”

Faulkner also listed “two big events” as fundraising opportunities, The Greg Coote Concert for the Arts on March 10 as well as The Santa Monica-Malibu Wine Auction on May 6.

Boardmember Maria Leon-Vazquez thanked Faulkner, adding the foundation “does a lot.” A key thing, for Leon-Vazquez, was boosting percentage in parent participation, saying corporate partners look for participation. “The higher percentage, the more they’ll give. Back to the parent engagement. The more parents feel a part of this district, the more they’ll participate. It’s not the amount that’s important, it’s the participation.”

Faulkner commented that over 1,000 calls in the month of January alone happened through parent volunteers. “Corporate partners do pay attention to the number of families that donate,” Faulkner said.

“To tell families their donation matters, they felt more compelled to give. They know it goes to the betterment of the community.”