



Partner in Education Launches \$2 million Schools Campaign

Funds necessary to maintain vital services in the school

September 20, 2005 – Palo Alto, California – Palo Alto Partners in Education today announced the launch of its 2005-06 Schools Fundraising Campaign, seeking to raise \$2 million to augment the 2006-07 budget of the Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD). Donations made to the foundation will be allocated directly to the principals at each of the district's 17 schools.

Partners in Education funds alleviate critical needs in our schools. The money goes directly to the classroom, funding teacher aides, electives teachers, reading tutors, teacher support and technology upgrades. Many of these services were reduced in the past few years because of district budget shortfalls. Partners in Education donations allow the most vital of these programs to remain in place.

"This is a crucial year for Partners in Education," said Susan Bailey, Partners in Education board president and a parent at Addison Elementary School. "Although the Measure A parcel tax restored some needed funds, the PAUSD budget is still reeling from the cuts of the past few years, which have not been fully replaced. And the continuing growth in enrollment puts increasing demands on the budget. Our fundraising efforts support essential programs that affect all children in the Palo Alto school district."

How the Funds are Used

Partners in Education funds are allocated to the district schools on a per-student basis. The principals use their discretion to direct the funds to the most-needed programs at their schools. With its planned \$2 million donation, Partners in Education expects to grant \$100,000 on average to each of the 12 elementary schools and between \$120,000 and \$180,000 to each of the five secondary schools.

This year's \$2 million campaign by Partners in Education follows a total grant of \$1.8 million to the district in 2004-05, the first year that a districtwide campaign was conducted. Under school board policy, most donated funds must be raised by March 1 of the school year preceding the year in which the funds will be applied.

Last year's \$1.8 million grant from Partners in Education is now helping to pay the salaries of essential staff -- from classroom aides to teachers of elective courses. Next year, the elementary principals will again use the Partners in Education donation to fund classroom aides, reading and math specialists, Spectra art and supplemental science instruction. For middle and high schools, the Partners in Education funds will not only underwrite key staffing needs but also upgrade out-of-date technology infrastructure—a major priority for secondary school principals.

The Schools Campaign

The Partners in Education campaign kicks off with a direct appeal solicitation to all Palo Alto Unified parents. 7,600 letters were mailed today to the parents of the 10,706 students enrolled this year. Several families and organizations have already pledged to contribute to a \$150,000 challenge grant to Partners in Education, promising to match any contribution above \$500 per child made by October 28, 2005.

Partners in Education encourages parent participation, regardless of contribution amount. For example, the foundation seeks to increase participation at the elementary level from 47% last year to 60% in 2005-06.

“What’s important is family support and participation,” says Alyssa Erickson, the Partners in Education representative for Ohlone Elementary School. “At Ohlone, our community steps up to support its kids, and we know that Partners in Education is the most effective way to fund supplemental staff and other key programs for Palo Alto schools. Any gift will help our kids.”

Partners in Education is also reaching out to the local community, businesses and Palo Alto schools alumni. Direct appeal letters will be mailed to them later this fall.

Partners in Education

Palo Alto Partners in Education is a nonprofit 501(c)3 foundation dedicated to sustaining extraordinary public education in Palo Alto. In addition to the Schools Campaign, the foundation raises money for its Teacher Grants program. This year, Partners in Education plans to award \$100,000 in individual grants of up to \$3,000 each to teachers at all levels throughout the district who propose innovative classroom projects. For more information, please visit www.papie.org or contact simone@bando.com, 650-326-8884.

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