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# **NOVATO FOUNDATION FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION**

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## ***Introduction to the NFPE's Fundraising Plan***

The NFPE Interim Board and Support Group have been working to develop a general fundraising plan that, once finalized based upon our work with the Advisory Committee, can be used as a blueprint by the First-Term Board and the Fund Development Committee to assist them in their development and implementation of the NFPE's initial fundraising plan.

### **What is the Goal?**

As part of our preparation for putting together this general fundraising plan, we located several school districts around the greater Bay Area that shared similar characteristics with the NUSD, and additionally that were located in cities that shared similar characteristics with those of Novato (based on the information available at [www.bayareacensus.ca.gov](http://www.bayareacensus.ca.gov)), and we reviewed the fundraising efforts of the LEFs that support each of these districts.

We found that there was a very broad range in funds raised on an annual basis, from a high of \$1.2 million per year, to low of \$80,000 per year. The success of these LEF's fundraising efforts seemed to be directly related to the level of professionalism displayed by each LEF; from the size and apparent diversity of their Boards and Advisory Groups, to their use of executive directors, to their presentation on the Web, to their apparent prestige in the community. All indications that our effort to take the time to build the NFPE as a broad based, widely supported, professionally governed and operated organization, will pay off when we (finally!!!) get started.

Based upon our research, and our conviction that in a community the size of Novato, there can and should and will be much greater community involvement in the public education system than currently exists, the NFPE Interim Board has set the initial annual fundraising goal at \$350,000 to \$500,000 per year, with the express hope and desire to see annual funds raised exceeding \$2,000,000 per year by our 5<sup>th</sup> year of operation.

### **What is the Plan?**

Although we have been continually referring to the fundraising plan, the Interim Board believes that the NFPE should be committed to more than just fundraising. As such, our general fundraising plan actually includes three main components of "support" raising, as follows:

1. The NFPE intends to raise dollars to support Novato Public Schools through six main channels:
  - One large fundraising event per year
  - A Sustaining Donors Program (i.e., similar to the EEF effort)
  - A Business Partnership Program (i.e., businesses, all of which are directly or indirectly benefited by the strength of the public education system in Novato, are encourage to support Novato Public Schools through donations to the NFPE in exchange for recognition in the community as a proud "partner" of the Novato public education system)
  - Grant writing (i.e., applying to other local, state and national foundations for grants to support either the NFPE's operations or specific programs at each school site)

- Establishing an Endowment Fund (i.e., building an asset base through a charitable giving drive aimed at securing large one-time donations from wealthy individuals, either during their life or as part of their estate plan).
  - Other efforts as deemed viable and possible given time constraints (i.e., escript, directory, Target, community events, auctions, etc.)
2. The NFPE intends to raise volunteer support for each school site by implementing a program whereby the NFPE provides the community (in particular non-parents, parents of non-school aged children, and local businesses) with a central place to learn about where volunteer help is needed, and how to provide that help. The intent here is to actively engage the broader community with the public education system in Novato...to get them out to the school sites and let them see what is happening with the children in our community...and to turn them into champions for public education in Novato.
  3. The NFPE intends to build a bridge between the NUSD and the community of Novato by working with the NUSD to provide information to the community regarding the operation and finances of the NUSD, in a regular, systematic, and understandable way. The intent here is to work towards (a) encouraging the NUSD to share information with the community that has not previously been shared, and (b) using the NFPEs stature as “partner” with and a “watchdog” of the NUSD to break down the inherent distrust of the NUSD that exists in the community today.

### **How will the NFPE coordinate its efforts with those of the PTAs/PTSAs/Boosters?**

The NFPE Interim Board has been working to develop a “fundraising landscape” in Novato for the purpose of determining (1) how to best coordinate the NFPE’s fundraising efforts with the already large number of fundraising events being undertaken by the PTAs/PTSAs/Boosters, and (2) how to differentiate the NFPEs fundraising efforts from those of the PTAs/PTSAs/Boosters. This fundraising landscape has two main components, (1) the collection and presentation of general financial information regarding the efforts of every PTA/PTSA/Booster club operating for the benefit of Novato Schools, and (2) the preparation of a fundraising calendar showing the types of events currently being put on by the PTAs/PTSAs/Boosters, and in which month of the year they occur.

Following is a general discussion of both components of the fundraising landscape project.

#### **General Fundraising Information:**

The NFPE Interim Board has been attempting to gather fundraising information from the PTAs/PTSAs/Boosters for the purpose of understanding (1) how much money is currently being raised by these groups on an annual basis, (2) from whom it is being raised (i.e., x% parents, x% businesses, etc.), and (3) at what times of year, and in what types of events, it is being raised. We view this information as critical to the NFPEs ability to integrate its fundraising efforts in the least disruptive way as possible with the fundraising efforts of the PTAs/PTSAs/Boosters. We requested this information from the various PTAs/PTSAs/Boosters on May 7, 2003, and to date have received partial and/or complete information from the following sites/organizations: San Ramon, Olive, Pleasant Valley, Hill, Sinaloa, San Jose and the Sports Booster Clubs from both high schools.

In the interim, however, we have been able to gather quite a bit of information from [www.guidestar.org](http://www.guidestar.org), and have been working to develop a spreadsheet using this information to assemble very general fundraising information (basically using financial information from each organization’s Form 990 - the nonprofit

information return required to be filed with the IRS), with the hopes that we can add the more specific information that we have requested as it is provided to us. Our research to date indicates that, collectively, the PTAs/PTSAs/Boosters are raising just over \$1 million per year for the benefit of Novato Public Schools (bravo!!!), broken down as follows:

Elementary School PTAs (8 schools, 3,703 students) - \$495,000 (\$134 per student)  
Middle School PTAs (3 schools, 1,870 students) - \$155,000 (\$83 per student)  
High School PTSAs and Sports Boosters (2 schools, 2,163 students) - \$365,000 \*\* (\$169 per student)

\*\* - Only includes PTSA and Sports Booster Clubs... information regarding the other Booster Clubs (i.e., Music, Drama, Academic, etc.) is not available on Guidestar.

### The Fundraising Calendar

Attached is a partially completed calendar of school fundraising events. It shows the events we have been informed of and it indicates which events heavily solicit businesses in our community and which events are directed at each school parent/neighborhood community. This calendar is intended to be utilized as a guide to assist the Fund Development Committee and the First-Term Board in scheduling the NFPEs fundraising events around the community-wide events currently being put on by the PTAs/PTSAs/Boosters, therefore it is extremely important that it be as accurate as possible. Please review the fundraising calendar and inform Joyce McCarron at [joycem@nfpe.org](mailto:joycem@nfpe.org) or (415) 898-1758 if there are any errors or omissions.

### Where do we go from here?

At this point, given the size and number of tasks that still lie before us in our effort to get the NFPE up and running, we are hopeful that enough volunteers can be gathered to form the Fund Development Committee immediately (i.e., instead of waiting until the First-Term Board chairs and staffs it), and that this committee can then take on the task of completing the fundraising spreadsheet and the fundraising calendar and beginning to work on a more detailed fundraising plan.

Jeff Belingheri will be the Interim Chair of the Fund Development Committee. Anyone interested in working on this committee is encouraged to contact him for more details. Jeff can be reached at (415) 883-4262 ext 113, or via e-mail [jeffb@nfpe.org](mailto:jeffb@nfpe.org).