Foothill PTO Meeting Notes – 18 April 2025 Meeting Minutes

The first order of business was to acknowledge that the land upon which we gathered is the occupied and seized territory of the Ute, Cheyenne and Arapaho Peoples.

Here are the agenda items.

- 📊 Transparency in Budgeting: Clear communication regarding where various fundraising monies are allocated is essential for community trust.
- 📅 Phased Fundraising Change Implementation: Changes to funding practices will be researched thoroughly before application.
- 🤝 Collective Support: Fundraising efforts should benefit the entire institution rather than individual students.
- 💵 Budget Insights: A current projected budget of $91,805 might grow to as much as $108,000 as it addresses rising costs.
- 📈 Community Engagement: Strategies proposed to increase parent participation in fundraising activities.
- 💔 Funding Disparity: A $60,000 shortfall was highlighted, which means the PTO must work on a new approach to fundraising efforts.
- 🎓 Scholarship Reintegration: Scholarship funds for needy students were discussed.

Key Insights

- 📝 **Importance of Transparency**: The need for transparent budgeting reminded the PTO in start terms of the value of community trust. Stakeholders (ie: SAC, the Foothill Elementary Administration, and the PTO) have found a new urgency with regard to clarifying how funds under initiatives such as “Fund the Fox” will be utilized. The PTO needs a marketing message that reinforces to the above-mentioned stakeholders and Foothill Families alike what Fund the Fox's finances do cover and what they do not cover. Each subsequent funding effort needs to describe where the various monies that it collects will be allocated (eg. education needs, community events, etc.)

  This transparency aims to foster a sense of inclusivity among parents and community members, ensuring they are well-informed about where their contributions are going.

- 🛠️ **Resolution on the Proposed Grant Program**: A proposed Grant Funding Program, made possible by funds saved by the PTO over previous years and administrations, has been put on hold. While SAC has recommended taking these monies and putting them to use in short order, the PTO believes that Foothill requires a prudent approach to changing funding practices. This is despite the serious interest in the Grant Funding Program. The PTO recognises that by deferring the Grant Funding Program's establishment until further research is conducted on the details, the school demonstrates its commitment to sound financial planning. The PTOs reported $70,000 reserves are a once-in-a-generation opportunity to make lasting changes to Foothill Elementary. The rare nature of this opportunity requires that the PTO take a meticulous approach. The PTO officers wish to emphasize the need to analyze funding feasibility, and, if feasible, work in concert with Foothill Elementary Faculty and Administration in an attempt to protect the school from hasty decisions that could adversely affect its educational quality in the long run.

- 🙌 **Collective Institutional Support**: Discussions surrounding the utilization of funds emphasized that financial requests for individual tutoring would not be supported. This decision strengthens the ethos that fundraising and financial support should aim to uplift the educational community as a whole. The

PTO wants to ensure that resources are allocated in a way that maximizes benefit for the largest possible number of students.

Put another way, this means that other than Fund The Fox, monies collected by the PTO on behalf of Foothill are focused on solving institutional concerns. Put another way these funds might not solely benefit the exact student body that is present at Foothill when they are collected.

- 📊 **Insight into Budgetary Needs**: The projected budget of 108,500 (up from $91,805) represents the educational expenses that have increased due to inflation, cost-of-living adjustments, etc. The PTO believes that it is crucial for Foothill Elementary families and other stakeholders to recognise that this updated understanding of the financial landscape for School Year 2025-2026 is crucial to covering Foothill Elementary's fundraising needs. In an effort to make it easier for Foothill Families and other donors to comprehend the new financial goals, the PTO will focus on highlighting distinct budgetary needs that Foothill Elementary faces.

  Put simply– the PTO, where possible, will market to the specific items that need additional budget/resources directly to the Foothill Elementary community.

- 👥 **Boosting Community Engagement**: Despite the relatively healthy Family Fundraising Participation Rate ("FFPR") of about 60% of the school's families, the PTO has identified at least one area for improvement. The PTO seeks to grow the FFPR by exploring new and varied outreach strategies, including utilizing the new Room Parent Program and informal coffee meetings, the PTO will attempt to enhance community involvement.

  Increased participation not only helps in achieving financial goals but also strengthens the school's community fabric, creating "new opportunities" and spaces to foster relationships among parents and teachers. These "new opportunities" will be made possible by scaling back or eliminating those events that do not draw parents and families while amplifying those events that do draw the most parents and families.

- 💸 **Addressing Funding Disparity**: The acknowledgment of a $60,000 shortfall illustrates a significant challenge that needs immediate attention. This financial gap points to the importance of community engagement in fundraising efforts. The new strategy is to stress that every contribution, no matter how small, can make a significant difference. Addressing this disparity ensures that all Foothill students have access to essential resources, creating a level playing field for educational opportunities.

- 🎖️ **Reintegration of Scholarships**: By discussing the need to incorporate scholarship funds into our budgeting strategies, the PTO addressed the vital support that these funds provide for financially needy students. With anticipated costs for scholarships ranging from a few hundred dollars, up to $2,000, it's clear this financial support plays an essential role in enabling students to engage in extracurricular activities. This move reflects the school's commitment to inclusivity and providing equitable opportunities for all students.

Event Notes

- Fun Run
    - Fun Run is not a fundraiser; it is an event meant for the kids. Parents do not need to attend but should be available to help Mr. B.
    - Parents should avoid distracting staff during school hours as this is a school event.
    - T-shirt design has been selected.
    - Volunteers are needed, especially for end-of-day activities including a drone shot of all kids outside.
    - Request: Does anyone have a drone to assist?
    - Food trucks will arrive at 3 PM.
    - School photo is scheduled for the morning after announcements but with specials involved.
    - Photos will be taken the day before at 3 PM; shirts will be removed for the photo. All t-shirts will be handed out on Thursday at 3 PM by teachers.
    - Photos taken at 3 PM.
    - Fun Run Activities
    - Hula hoops, hay bales, and bubbles will be part of the event.
- Bike Bonanza
    - Raffle baskets are being assembled by parents; goal is six baskets.
    - Peggy and Frannie need a designated spot to collect items for raffle baskets.
    - Bike raffle at 5 PM; the bike is donated.
    - Questions about raffle procedures remain.
    - Rodeo activities will run continuously with volunteers needed.
    - Discussion on whether to include a bike wash.
    - Inquiry about the source of bike decorations—possibly from Tim; Chiara and Tiffany to be asked.
    - Four volunteers needed: two for the rodeo and two for other activities.
    - Drawing for six baskets at 6 PM; one basket per grade.
    - Children each receive a raffle ticket for the bike.
    - Raffle baskets require ticket purchases; raffle tickets are already available.
- Partnerships and Sales
    - Emphasis on partners, not sponsors.
    - Discussion on whether partners can sell items on campus and if a 10% fee applies.
    - Foothill parents are motivated buyers.
    - Plan to gather unused bikes to donate to others.
- Financial and Budgetary Notes
    - SAC expressed discomfort with a $60,000 bank balance; concerns about donations when reserves are high.
    - Discussion about using snow equipment and custodian cooperation.
    - A $15,000 grant is available for special teacher needs.
    - Ideas sought for reducing the bank balance, including durable goods and capital expenditures such as soccer goals.
    - Emergency fund exists separately; “Fund the Fox” funds go to Hubbard and are spent annually.
    - Non-Fund the Fox funds come from other activities like dine-outs.
    - Larger building needs include rug replacements.
    - Excess funds beyond Fund the Fox go to community events: staff appreciation, teacher meals, Bike Bonanza, emergency fund.
    - Need to publish financial details on the website.
    - Possible future grant program to be considered.
    - Revenue sources are from past fundraising events unrelated to Fund the Fox.

Budget Breakdown

Line Item	Amount
Kinder Paras	$2100
Classroom allocation (25 rooms)	$8400
Classroom budget (rug replacements)	$4000
Subscriptions (Accelerated Reading, Pebble Go)	$95,000
Classroom budget (additional)	$2,000
Net profit	$1,000
New Fund the Fox goal	$108,500

- Goal is 75% parent participation, including those parents not physically on campus.
    - Grade-level classroom PTO “Coffees & Friday Folder” events can help.
    - Room parents involved in messaging
    - Focus on small donations rather than large ones.
- State Funding Impact
    - Current state funds cover half a nurse and no librarians.
    - Need a one-sheet summary explaining these changes to shift culture.
    - PTO to be given an extra 10-15 minutes for discussion.
    - Acknowledgment of well-intentioned people and varied feelings about these changes.
- May Meeting Logistics
    - Proposed date change to Friday, May 9, at 1:30 PM.
- Communications
    - Jen/Communication coordinating Sweetcow stickers.
    - Email communications planned for tomorrow and April 22.
    - Pop-up video and parent packets (similar to a parent handbook) under consideration.
    - Possibly a one-sheet directing parents to resources.
- Additional Notes
    - Inflatable mascot planned for Fun Run.
    - T-shirt design to be shown at the event.

Conclusion

A renewed focus on meaningful communication and community involvement is pivotal in addressing the changing financial needs of the school while fostering a cohesive and engaged community. By emphasizing fundraising transparency, and proactive engagement, Foothill stakeholders are poised to create a more supportive environment for students, teachers, and parents. As we adjust to the new fundraising challenges, the collective efforts of the PTO and the Administration should focus on enhancing fundraising and budgetary practices with the purpose of building the type of campus that results in a resilient institution. Delivering upon these goals will build a stronger foundation for Foothill’s future as a place of community and academic excellence.