

Jogathons bring in over \$450,000 for Del Mar Schools Education Foundation



Sage Canyon students took part in a jogathon on Feb. 6. (Judy Turnbull)



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In the first two months of the year, Del Mar Union School District students raced, jogged, walked and logged laps of laughter at school jogathons, raising a little over \$450,000 to benefit the Del Mar Schools Education Foundation's efforts to support and expand the district's STEAM+ program.

The first jogathons took off at Ocean Air and Ashley Falls schools Jan. 28 and the last were held at Sycamore Ridge and Del Mar Heights schools on Feb. 10. Each school had their own lofty goal that if they reached, their principal had pledged to do something fun—Torrey Hills Principal Jacob Ruth got slimed while Ashley Falls Principal Karly Pecorella rode a scooter through the halls of the school handing out Valentine’s Day treats.

The DMSEF helps provide funding for weekly STEAM+ classes for every student, including science lab, art studio, music, technology, and PE, all taught by credentialed teachers, according to Kate Ditzler, executive administrator of DMSEF.

“These hands-on learning opportunities are not guaranteed,” Ditzler said. “They exist because our families choose to fund them year after year. Our community believes students learn best by doing: building, creating, testing, exploring, and discovering.”

As of Feb. 10 the DMSEF has so far raised \$1,015,000, enough for 6.3 full-time teachers funded out of goal of 9.7, Sheena Sahni, president and chairman of DMSEF reported at the board’s February meeting. A total of 54% of families have donated so far this year, meeting the participation rate achieved at the end of the last school year.

Sahni said some of the schools have struggled in the past to meet their fundraising goals but this year they were helped by a true partnership with each school’s PTAs, who helped ramp up the enthusiasm for the event on campus.

“It has been a very tough fundraising environment and we are so grateful,” Sahni said. In addition to dollars contributed by families they have benefited from corporate matches and local business sponsors such as Angela Meakins and Associates, The Coder School, Sidecar Doughnuts, Jimbo’s, Ike’s, Drawn 2 Art, Dr. Dixon’s Cali Kidds, Melo Melo, Super Dumpling, Cinopolis and Handels.

“The generosity of the community has been immense this year,” Sahni said.

The foundation’s work is not yet done—they still have a shortfall of about \$150,000 and will be working to close that gap by April to ensure that all students are able to receive the same level of STEAM + instruction next year and the same amount of joy, curiosity and wonder.

Learn more about DMSEF at dmsef.org

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