

Agassiz Elementary School

Strategic Plan for Fundraising

Agassiz Elementary School is an engaging and involved community that offers academically rigorous education with a focus on fine and performing arts. Agassiz prides itself on cultivating inquisitive, academic, and strong character traits in its 475 Pre-K – 8th grade students. Sixteen percent of Agassiz's student population has special needs and receives special education services. It is Agassiz's mission to provide a warm and enriching environment that meets every student at his or her own level.

Agassiz Elementary School's fundraising goals are all directed towards supporting the school's mission, as set forth above. Given the financial and political uncertainties facing CPS, the city, the state, as well as the country overall, Agassiz must brace itself to face the potential challenges lying ahead and to put ourselves in a position that ensures we have the resources necessary to fulfill our promise to our students.

There are two distinct components to Agassiz's fundraising efforts. Friends of Agassiz accounts for the lions share, but there are other activities funded through various sources. This strategic plan reflects those distinctions.

Friends of Agassiz

History

Over the last five years, Friends of Agassiz has raised over four hundred sixty thousand dollars. Friends of Agassiz is an independent, non-profit organization that is dedicated to raising money for Agassiz's long-, medium-, and short-term financial goals, as directed by the Continuous Improvement Work Plan (CIWP). It has an independent board of directors and works to fundraise through a pledge drive, as well as social events, walk-a-thons, and other volunteer-based opportunities.

Over the past four years this money has been used to cover staff positions, purchase smart boards for grades K-8; iPads, laptops, and Chromebooks; literacy and math adaptive learning technology software for classrooms; and ongoing teacher professional development in alignment with the CIWP.

Overall Fundraising Goals

Our goal is to raise one hundred ten thousand dollars each year for the next two years. Funds raised will go towards securing academic, art, and athletic materials and equipment; an auditorium renovation; supporting fine arts programs; acquiring and maintaining technology; funding teaching positions; ongoing teacher professional development; and improving school facilities and student-focused services. The funding will be allocated between three priority groups: immediate goals, short- to mid-term goals, and long-term goals.

- **Immediate Goals.** Our immediate fundraising goals are focused on having reserve funds available for necessary projects as they arise. Examples include emergency facility repairs, immediate

technology repair/replacement needs and other day-to-day expenses that are not covered by the CPS budget. Fifteen percent of fundraising dollars will be allocated to these projects.

- **Short- to Mid-Term Goals.** Our current short- to mid-term goals fall into four categories: facilities and grounds upkeep, staffing positions, technology and enhancing our fine and performing arts programs. Seventy percent of fundraising dollars to these goals, including:
 - *Playground Maintenance and Renovation.* Our playgrounds get a lot of wear tear and their upkeep and maintenance is integral to the safety of our community. Repairs, upgrades, and maintenance are frequently cut from CPS budgets so in order ensure the safety of all of our kids we would like to upgrade the current equipment. We are currently reviewing plans to redesign both playgrounds and potentially repurpose sections of them, including resurfacing all of the existing blacktop with soft surface and replacing one or both play structures. While we are hopeful that we will be able to fund the renovation of the North Playground (estimated cost of four hundred thousand dollars) through city grants, the estimated cost for one new play structure to complete the project ranges from twenty-five to fifty thousand dollars..
 - *Staffing Positions.* To date, our fundraising dollars have allowed Agassiz to staff teachers that were not fully covered by the budget Agassiz received from CPS. CPS’s class size analyses and staffing budgets do not necessarily reflect those of our administration and school community. To ensure ideal class sizes, enrichment teachers and auxiliary staff, we must continue to help fund these positions on our own, during periods of extreme budgetary pressure. It is important to remember that the loss of a teacher does not impact just one classroom or one grade. The reality is that even one less teacher in the building results in all teachers being spread thinner as they plug gaps in school wide schedules and absorb more communal responsibilities. This is a varying expenditure each year, and should be determined on a case-by-case basis.
 - *Arts Programs.* Agassiz is a fine and performing arts magnet cluster school. As funding across the city and state is cut, arts funding is often one of the first things to go. Agassiz is committed to supporting our arts program through funding supplies and resources. Additionally, staff and parent volunteers are committed to writing grants and pursuing arts partnerships that increase our students’ exposure to and development in the arts.
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 - *Technology and science supplies.* Technology is an ongoing need, as we constantly need to update technology to stay current and to provide students and teachers with access to current innovations. Our ongoing technology funding needs include:
 - Projectors
 - SMART Boards
 - Chromebooks

- Staff Professional Computers
- iPads
- Software and licensing

See “Agassiz Technology Plan” for itemized and detailed plan and needs.

- **Long-Term Goals.** Our long-term fundraising goals are focused on significant facilities improvement projects. Fifteen percent of fundraising dollars will be allocated to these projects. Since 2013, we have allocated almost sixty thousand dollars for long-term goals.

School/Fiscal Year	Total FOA Funds Raised	15% Allocated to Long-Term Savings
2013-14	\$88,750	\$13,313
2014-15	\$65,235	\$9,785
2015-16	\$102,000	\$15,300
2016-17	\$142,386	\$21,358
TOTAL	\$398,371	\$59,756

- *Auditorium Renovation.* The auditorium/gymnasium need to be renovated to include a sound system gymnasium that works with auditorium seating as well. Draft plan will be provided with estimates for funding. Contractor finalizing draft plans for review.

These goals will be reviewed bi-annually by the LSC, and would require a two-thirds majority, to reallocate monies committed to long-term goals. The long- and mid-term reserve funds will be held in appropriate investment accounts and managed by Friends of Agassiz. Friends of Agassiz leadership will provide quarterly reports about the growth of the funds in the investment accounts.

Other Fundraising Arms

Monroe Levie Field Trip Fund. This fund was endowed with a generous initial donation, continues to receive annual donations from outside donors, and is also funded by parents self-selecting to donate more when paying for their own children’s field trips.

Grade Level Specific Field Trips: Continue to support student council in raising funds for families who would not otherwise be able to send their child on field trips, including 7th and 8th grade 2018 class trips to Washington, D.C. (DC is not part of this fund...if we want to combine efforts we need to talk about that. Student council has done fundraising for DC separately so we should separate this out.) In new CIWP we are writing goals to establish annual trips in 6th – 8th grade .

Unnamed new scholarship fund. The Agassiz LSC is currently reviewing plans to set up a separate scholarship fund, to help cover the costs of extra-curricular activities that benefit the educational experience, potentially including but not limited to music, arts, athletics, enrichment, and test prep.

Agassiz has always prided itself on developing all facets of a student's growth and needs, beyond traditional classroom curriculum. Supporting these other activities is consistent with that mission.

Our fundraising goals are significant but we are confident that with your help, we will continue to succeed. Agassiz has thrived as a supportive, engaging, and academically rigorous environment that meets every student at his or her level by working together as a community. It is the strength of this team of teachers, staff, parents, students, and community that will work together to raise the funds necessary to keep Agassiz successful, competitive, and propel it to a new level of excellence.