

## Strategic Fundraising

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### What I did:

South City Community School is a young school in its third year. The school is growing rapidly, having tripled since our first year. Our goals for this year were to increase and strengthen the financial stability of the school, particularly to move us from raising support for the current year to raising support for the following year.

With advice, encouragement, and accountability from Don Distelberg, we honed a strategic plan for fundraising activities; including monthly tours, a “phone-a-thon” followed by a fundraising letter, increased awareness among the school community about our financial needs, and increased grant applications.

### What did I learn?

Most of these fundraising efforts brought impactful results, but the most impact was through the combination of all efforts. Especially given our economy and the realities of heading an inner-city private school, my position will continue to require a dedicated and broad effort towards fundraising, and will likely grow to need more staff support dedicated towards this task. Don’s suggestions were extremely helpful and fruitful. Even more than that, the accountability of “reporting in” each month was a driving factor that I tremendously benefited from and I discovered that I need to look for another mentor / advisor who can serve this role for me in coming years.

### What Difference Did It Make?

- Honed and strengthened a 3-year Fundraising Strategic Plan
- Increased grant applications from 2 or 3 in previous years to 7 this year. \$10K from one application has already been awarded, three have been denied, and three are still pending (as of 6/3)
- Initiated a phone-a-thon aimed at grandparents and previous small donors, followed by a fundraising letter, increasing our end of year giving by \$4K
- Due to increased awareness of the needs of the school within our community of board members, parents, and supporters:
  - participation increased for our Annual Trivia Night, resulting in 8 committee members, 8 event volunteers, 152 participants (up from 104 last year and 48 the previous year) and \$5K profits

- tangible item donations increased (including two iMac computers, wide laminator, and play equipment)
- Established relationships with several significant donors who will continue to be partners to the school
- Raised the \$25K needed for the current year and have currently raised \$22K for next year. This is a 165% increase from last year and represents our first shift to raise money for the year ahead.
- Due to the fundraising success and broadened needs of the school, we increased our fundraising goal for next year to \$41K to include a new laptop lab and two additional interactive whiteboard systems (grant applications for all are currently pending).
- In addition to the fundraising efforts for Annual Fund, we received notice this year that SCCS may remain in our current space long-term, and have now began work towards a Capital Campaign (likely ~\$100K) for building improvements. Have received an initial \$7800 gift towards this.