



October 2008 Sequoyah Elementary Foundation Update

Dear Parents:

One of my goals this year as Chair of the Family Committee of the Sequoyah Elementary Foundation (SEF) is to keep communication flowing between parents and the SEF Board. This is the first of many letters that will update you on the SEF's plans and accomplishments.

In its first two years the SEF raised over \$200,000 with your generous support. Those funds were invested in the SEF's first initiative: Upgrading the technology at our school. Specifically, we purchased:

- Five new IMacs for each classroom
- A laptop for each teacher
- A color laser printer for each classroom
- An interactive ActivBoard for half the classrooms
- Twenty-three new IMacs for the library

In addition, an IT instructional plan was developed with the faculty to develop foundational technical skills like keyboarding and to integrate technology into the curriculum.

In the spring of 2008 the SEF began a Strategic Planning Process to identify our next fundraising priorities. Focus Groups were conducted with four groups of randomly selected parents and one group of teacher representatives from each grade level to identify the school's pressing needs. At the same time, the school was conducting an extensive School Improvement Plan. Over the summer and fall, the SEF Board considered the results of those two efforts as well as the mission statements of the SEF and Sequoyah School to identify four immediate fundraising priorities that parents and teachers believe are needed to improve the education of our children. In order of priority, those four areas are: (1) Supplemental Education (personnel); (2) Supplemental Education (equipment and physical space); (3) Safety and Security; and (4) Playground.

The Board is currently identifying specific items (with associated costs) under each area which will allow us to set priorities and make spending decisions promptly. This process involves obtaining a professional security assessment, identifying candidates for supplemental education needs, and pricing and prioritizing equipment needs for classroom instruction and playground upgrades. You can expect a supplement to this letter informing you of the spending decisions when they are made. In the interim, if you have any questions please feel free to contact me or any member of the Board.

We thank you for your continued support and look forward to working hard with you in fulfilling the SEF's mission of "financially supporting a complete academic environment within which Sequoyah School's students will receive a high-quality education exemplified by academic achievement and excellence."

Warm regards,

Maria Gillen, Chair, Family Committee
(865) 566-7336
maria_v_gillen@yahoo.com