



Castro Valley parents surpass \$10,000 in donations for schools

By Kristofer Noceda
The Daily Review

Posted: 06/08/2009 04:41:21 PM PDT

CASTRO VALLEY — More than \$10,000 in donations has been raised in the past month by a parent group formed to help the Castro Valley Unified School District battle millions in cuts from the state.

"We're very pleased by the reaction of the community to the effort, but there's still a long way to go," said Allen Mueller, president and co-founder of Save Our Schools Castro Valley!, or SOSCV. "We need more volunteers and for the community to realize that this is a communitywide crisis that extends to more than just families with children in schools."

Most of the fundraising efforts by the nonprofit were held in May, where organizers began to promote their cause at community events such as the Rowell Ranch Rodeo parade and the Castro Valley Farmers Market.

The organization's goal is to raise at least \$3 million in funding for the district.

Most of the donations have been made through installment plans featured on the organization's recently launched Web site.

Mueller and Brett Pletcher, both fathers of students attending Castro Valley schools, founded the nonprofit in March, shortly after district officials announced that state funding reductions would prompt massive cutbacks at area schools.

The latest projections have district officials bracing for more than \$5 million in cuts to next school year's \$70.6 million general fund budget, said Mike Bush, assistant superintendent of business.

The district this school year already absorbed \$3 million in midyear cuts by tapping into reserves.

"We need to take control of our children's educational future and ensure that our local community schools continue to provide the same quality of education," Mueller said.

Organizers plan to continue their fundraising efforts during the summer and fall, while also expanding their list of volunteers. For more information, visit www.soscv.org.

Kristofer Noceda covers Castro Valley and Cal State East Bay. Reach him at 510-293-2479 or knoceda@bayareanewsgroup.com. Follow him at twitter.com/Noceda_Reports.

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