

“Project Your Spirit”: Classroom Projector Fundraising Campaign at Paly Frequently Asked Questions

Here are some answers from Paly’s Administrative team to some common questions about fundraising for classroom projectors at Paly:

Paly is raising money for classroom projectors? What is the overall goal?

The goal is to equip every classroom so every teacher will have access to a projector every period. To reach this goal, we need to purchase and install approximately 80 projectors.

There are lots of needs at Paly. Why should I care about funding LCD projectors?

Thanks in no small part to funding from the Paly PTSA, every teacher at Paly currently has a laptop computer. The laptops have been very helpful, but teachers often can’t use their laptops for classroom instruction because they don’t have good access to projectors. Projectors in every classroom would allow teachers to better use their laptops as a instructional tool.

Using PTSA and PiE funding, Gunn High School purchased and installed projectors in every classroom. Administration and teachers at Gunn report that the installed projectors are an invaluable addition to their classrooms, well worth the money spent.

What kind of projectors will Paly be getting?

Several teachers at Paly serve on a Technology Committee. This Tech Committee is responsible for Paly’s technology. Working with Information Technology services at the District, the Tech Committee will make sure the projectors we purchase are appropriate for Paly’s needs, and at the best price.

What will the cost be?

Initial estimates are that each projector will cost approximately \$1000, with installation costing another \$1000, so the total cost of the projectors is about \$160,000. It is possible that costs may be less, depending on whether we are able to get volume discounts and/or savings resulting from doing the installation in tandem with Bond measure renovations.

We just passed a Bond measure. Why doesn’t that pay for the LCD projectors?

We are using Bond money to purchase some computer technology. For example, we are purchasing some badly-needed new computers to replace some very old ones in our inventory. Unfortunately, money from the Bond cannot be used to pay for peripheral technology such as projectors, so we must fund these needs another way.

Is all the money for the projectors coming from PTSA?

As with many needs at Paly, we hope to pay for the projectors using several sources. Paly PTSA is one source, and we are extremely grateful for their support! If funds are available, we also hope to use PiE funds, funds from rental income at Paly and money from technology grants. To the extent that Bond money can purchase computers and other technology that would otherwise come out of Paly’s “regular” budget, we may be able to redirect those funds to purchase projectors.

How soon will the projectors be purchased, and how long will it take for every classroom to get one?

If we have the money to do it, we will start to purchase and install projectors as early as Spring 2009. For some classrooms, it will make sense to wait to purchase and install the projectors in tandem with Bond measure renovations. However, for many classrooms, we don't have to wait until renovations are complete; we can start to get projectors into classrooms right away. We just need the funds to do it.

How will the new projectors get distributed? In other words, how will Paly prioritize who gets them first?

Some departments already have LCD projectors. The Ed Council, Paly's teacher leadership team, will decide what the next priorities will be. Projectors may be distributed by department or by building to make installation more cost-effective. Planning for how and when projectors will be installed will be done in tandem with planning for Bond measure renovations.

Why can't we purchase portable LCD projectors so teachers can share?

Paly already has portable LCD projectors that teachers can sign up to use. However, shared projectors mean that teachers often can't secure a projector during high demand periods or when they need projectors on short notice for things like student presentations. In addition, shared projectors are subject to damage or theft during transit. Equipping every classroom with an installed projector also saves teachers a great deal of set up time.

Not every teacher knows how to use an LCD projector. Will there be training?

Paly currently has on staff two TOSA teachers (TOSA = teacher on special assignment). One TOSA devotes two periods per day training and otherwise assisting teachers to use technology as an instructional tool. The other TOSA reserves one period per day to professional development and training. These two teachers will be responsible for training teachers on how to use the projectors. Generally, teachers receive this kind of training during their prep periods. Paly also has two technical support staff members to assist teachers with their technology needs.

Aren't we worried about the technology changing, and then we've spent all of this money on obsolete equipment?

This is a risk with any technology, such as buying computers and PA systems. Working with Information Technology Services at the District, Paly's Tech Committee will determine what type of projectors will best suit Paly's immediate and long-term needs. Although the technology is changing, advances also mean that prices on projectors in general are less than they were even a year ago. We can take advantage of these price savings when purchasing the projectors.

Do we have funding to buy replacement parts and to do required maintenance work?

By purchasing projectors in bulk, instead in our current piece-meal fashion, Paly is more likely to be able to purchase parts and maintenance services at a discounted rate. As with all our technology, Paly expressly budgets for this type of maintenance costs. Whenever possible and feasible, PAUSD tries to include a maintenance contract whenever it makes a technology purchase, which can significantly reduce unanticipated maintenance expenditures. As for parts, LCD bulbs are expensive, so money will have

to be set aside for replacements as part of Paly's regular budget. PiE funds can be used to support the technology, so that is an option.

Can I give a projector to a specific teacher?

Parents are welcome to donate a projector in honor of a teacher; however, to be fair to all the teachers and students at Paly, donors cannot donate a projector to a specific teacher. The Ed Council will determine how the projectors will be distributed based on construction schedules and specific department needs. We hope to do this as quickly as possible so there is not a significant delay for any of the departments.

This sounds exciting! How can I contribute?

Paly PTSA is doing its part to help raise funds for projectors at Paly. To contribute, please send a check, payable to Paly PTSA, 50 Embarcadero Road, Palo Alto, CA, 94301. Be sure to put "Paly Projector Project" in the memo line.