

## Strategic Shifts: Design Prototypes for LLESD

As part of LLESD's ongoing efforts to thoughtfully innovate and evolve, these one-pagers explore **ideas—not decisions**—through a human-centered design lens. They are meant to spark thinking and invite feedback as we consider ways to strengthen engaging learning, improve student success, increase efficiency, realize responsible cost savings, and surface creative solutions in the service of our students and community.



**Las Lomitas  
Elementary  
School District**  
Inclusive. Engaging. Inspiring

The Shift	Joint LLEF and PTA Fundraising Campaign	
The Design Question <i>How might we...?</i>	How might we simplify fundraising for families and volunteers while increasing overall resources for students—by aligning our Foundation and PTAs around a shared, transparent, and community-wide fundraising strategy?	
The Idea <i>What if...?</i>	<p><b>What if</b> LLESD moved toward a <i>One Community Campaign</i>: a single, coordinated annual fundraising effort—led by the Foundation and supported by the PTAs—that streamlines the donor experience, shortens fundraising timelines, and guarantees predictable funding for PTA-led programs at each school?</p> <p>This model is used successfully in neighboring districts such as Menlo Park City School District, Los Altos School District, San Carlos School District, and Burlingame School District, where communities have shifted from multiple fundraising appeals to a single, aligned campaign.</p>	
Status & Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Early exploration</li><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Seeking feedback</b></li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Refining the concept</li><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Considering a pilot</b></li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Moving forward with the idea</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Not moving forward at this time</li></ul>	The <i>One Community Campaign</i> idea is currently in the <i>seeking feedback</i> phase. Input is welcome and is being gathered now; parents, staff, donors, and other community members are encouraged to share their perspectives. If interest and alignment emerge, a pilot could occur as early as summer 2026 for the 2026–27 annual campaign season.

### How might this idea take shape?

The Foundation conducts one unified fall fundraising campaign on behalf of the entire district. PTAs actively support the campaign through shared messaging and community outreach, without running separate fundraising drives. PTAs independently determine how PTA funds are spent in accordance with site priorities and community needs. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)—reviewed and renegotiated annually—clearly defines funding amounts, mechanics, roles, and expectations, while safeguarding autonomy. The Foundation and PTAs remain legally distinct organizations, with separate governance and fiduciary responsibility.

### Why might we explore this idea?

Prior to the pandemic, the district raised significantly more in philanthropic support than it does today. Since COVID, donor behavior has shifted: families remain generous and motivated—particularly in 2025, as they respond to the direction of new district leadership—but are increasingly asking for greater clarity about how their contributions will be used and how they align with district priorities. As part of the district's Balanced Budget Initiative, many donors appear ready to give, but are seeking clearer answers about when, how, and where their resources will be invested.

In a nonprofit landscape where volunteer capacity has declined over the past decade, a more coordinated approach

could reduce fragmentation, streamline the donor experience, and potentially increase resources available to students.

### **Potential Benefits (if thoughtfully designed)?**

- A simpler, more coherent donor experience through a single annual fundraising campaign.
- Clearer communication about how funds are raised, allocated, and used in support of students.
- A shorter, more focused fundraising season for families, PTAs, and the Foundation.
- More predictable and potentially increased funding for PTA-led programs and site priorities.
- Stronger alignment between philanthropic giving and district priorities.
- Increased transparency and trust through clearly defined roles and annual agreements.

### **Key Considerations**

- Preserving PTA autonomy, identity, and site-based decision-making, with clear assurances that PTAs retain full control over their budgets and programming priorities.
- Developing a clearly defined Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that establishes roles, expectations, funding guarantees, and communication norms, and is reviewed and renegotiated annually.
- Maintaining the legal and fiduciary independence of the Foundation and PTAs, with separate governance structures and compliance requirements.
- Addressing concerns related to perceived loss of autonomy or voice through early engagement, transparency, and shared design.
- Ensuring predictable timing of funding commitments and disbursements to enable PTAs to plan effectively for the school year.
- Aligning messaging so that donors receive consistent, accurate information about how funds support both districtwide priorities and site-based experiences.
- Monitoring implementation to ensure the model reduces volunteer burden rather than shifting it in unintended ways.

### **Financial Impact**

This concept does not have a direct financial impact on the District's General Fund and would not increase district operating expenses. Fundraising activities would continue to be led by independent nonprofit organizations, with no change to district budget authority or obligations.

If thoughtfully designed, the Foundation may be positioned to raise more overall philanthropic support through a clearer, more compelling, and streamlined campaign—potentially strengthening the district's overall financial health without increasing volunteer workload or burnout. Guaranteed funding to PTAs would provide predictable resources for site-based programs and experiences, helping offset costs that might otherwise place pressure on school site budgets.