

Preface

The public schools in America are in financial trouble, and teachers and administrators are feeling the pinch. The cost of providing a world-class education has gone well beyond what is provided by taxpayer dollars. In many districts, worthwhile programs such as those for music, art, physical education, foreign languages, and team sports have been curtailed or eliminated. Some neighborhood schools have been shut down. Teachers, administrators, and staff have lost their jobs. School boards are overwhelmed trying to pay for teacher and staff salaries, fringe benefits, materials, equipment, and technology, as well as for maintenance of buildings and grounds.

There are many people all over this country who want to experience the joy and elation of giving gifts to the schools, and many want to become personally involved. These people don't want just to give their money away; they want to invest in worthy causes that change people's lives. There are few causes more worthy and more life altering than public schools. Our task as fundraisers is to help people understand that their gifts can change the lives of children for generations to come. Showing how to ask for such gifts is a major purpose of this book. Colleges, universities, and private schools have been doing it for years. Now it's time for the public schools to learn how to solicit large grants and gifts as never before.

This book, written for teachers, principals, superintendents, school board members, parents, school foundation members, volunteers, and others, is an outgrowth of my original book, *How to Get Grants and Gifts for the Public Schools*, published in 2002. But it goes way beyond the original book and zeros in on practical, down-to-earth ideas and suggestions that will make your job easier as you pursue grants and gifts from corporations, foundations, the government, and individual donors. My insights into big-time fundraising at private schools, colleges, and universities, combined with my 35 years of experience working in the public schools, provided a strong basis and impetus for the approach to fundraising presented in this book.

Of particular note are a host of suggestions on how to ask for big gifts from individuals. This is key to big-time fundraising, because more than 80 percent of all grants and gifts to colleges, universities, and private schools come from individual donors. The same should hold true for the public schools!

The techniques that I have outlined in this book will enable you to pursue grants and gifts from corporations, foundations, the government, and individual donors. This is serious and demanding work, but the payoff can be enormous. Once you learn how to do it, you are well on your way to helping all children reach their fullest potential, and your budget shortfalls will turn into budget windfalls!

The book is organized into 14 chapters. Chapter 1 presents an overview of the needs of the schools and the opportunities that are out there. Chapter 2 explains what big-time fundraising is, and it describes the need for school districts to establish development offices as well as to delineate roles and responsibilities in a big-time fundraising effort. Chapter 3 concentrates on public school foundations and public education funds, describes how to establish a foundation in your school or school district, and shows the impact of such foundations around the country. Chapter 4 covers individual giving and the effect it can have on a big-time fundraising effort in the public schools. It includes a multistep approach to securing a major gift and other specific ideas on how to ask for gifts. Chapter 5 describes the differences among annual campaigns, capital campaigns, and planned giving. Also included is a description of different approaches used in raising monies in an annual campaign, such as direct mail solicitation; use of telephone, radio, and television; Internet fundraising; and special events. A matrix is provided that shows the size and number of gifts needed to achieve a campaign goal in a capital campaign, and noncash gift ideas are described for a planned giving program, including bequests, charitable gift annuities, appreciated marketable securities, real estate, life insurance, and others.

Chapter 6 will help you learn how to apply for corporate and foundation grants and describes the gains that K–12 schools have made in pursuing these funding opportunities. Chapter 7 provides an 11-step strategy for winning corporate and foundation funding and includes a list of 101 foundations and corporations interested in giving to K–12 schools. Chapter 8 teaches you how to write a minigrant and includes a blank minigrant program application. Chapter 9 teaches you how to go from the minigrant to writing a major grant application, opening doors to big federal and state dollars. This chapter provides detailed information and suggestions on how to write the sections on needs assessment, goals and objectives, and activities; these sections are included in all major grant proposals. Chapter 10 teaches you how to prepare the evaluation component of a government grant application, including both internal and external evaluations. Chapter 11 shows you how to prepare the application budget; break down each component, including direct and indirect costs; and write the budget narrative and the dissemination plan. It also includes 14 helpful hints to improve your chances of getting funded.

Chapter 12 covers what happens after you receive a grant as well as how to be a good steward of all grants and gifts received. It also covers what happens when monies run out and the options that are open to you then. Chapter 13 provides actual examples of two winning minigrants and a winning government grant that will enable you to familiarize yourself with appropriate formats and writing styles and to gauge the amount of work required. Chapter 14 provides a conclusion and summarizes the entire book. An extensive bibliography lists books, articles, grantwriting resources, periodicals, software, directories, and guides. Also included are 6 special Web sites and 28 additional Web sites that will save you much time and effort in your pursuit of grants and gifts. The resources include a comprehensive list of available grant opportunities for K–12 schools, sample ads for key positions, a sample cover letter to accompany a foundation grant request, and a glossary of terms.

With this collection of tools, a supportive school community, and a lot of work, you should be able to find the funding your schools need and your students deserve. Good luck along the way.