



## Sustaining Fund Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### WHAT IS THE SUSTAINING FUND?

Every year, the Sustaining Fund is Keystone's primary fundraising initiative. Since 1999, the Sustaining Fund has been a necessary and essential part of the school's annual **operating budget**. The Sustaining Fund exists to bridge the gap between the funding received from the State of Arizona and the actual cost the school incurs per student to offer a high-quality, authentic Montessori experience.

### WHEN DOES THE SUSTAINING CAMPAIGN BEGIN & HOW LONG DOES IT LAST?

Each year in the spring, the Keystone Community is asked to make a pledge to the Sustaining Fund. The campaign is launched after Spring Break and lasts until the goal is attained.

### WHAT IS THIS YEAR'S SUSTAINING FUND GOAL?

1. 100% community participation
2. \$170,000 in total community-gifted funds

### WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN SUSTAINING FUND GIVING?

Everyone should participate. All members of our Keystone community, faculty and staff, Board of Directors, and our extended community including grandparents, alumni and their parents, are asked to share in this united effort of sustaining Keystone's educational legacy.

### HOW MUCH SHOULD I GIVE?

We ask that each family with an Elementary or Adolescent student help us bridge the gap between state funding and the actual costs to run the school. For charter students, the difference is approximately \$2,500-\$3000 per child, per year between revenues and operating expenses. We recognize that all families may not be able to contribute at this level. We ask that they give as generously as they can to bridge this gap.

For families with students in our Toddler and Children's House (CH) programs, we ask that you participate at a level that is meaningful to your family. Toddler and CH families also benefit from contributions to the Sustaining Fund through capital improvements; staff training, development and retention; and timely replacement of well-loved classroom materials. Maintaining the quality of our staff, the beauty of our campus, and the excellence of our children's educational experience are only possible through ongoing support of the Sustaining Fund.

## **DOESN'T STATE FUNDING AND TUITION COVER THE FULL COST OF EDUCATING A STUDENT?**

As with most independent and charter schools, state funding and tuition does not cover the total expense of educating our students. In fact, charter schools on average receive fewer dollars per student than similar traditional public schools. Sustaining Fund contributions are critical to helping Keystone Montessori close the gap at all levels.

## **ARE SUSTAINING FUND DONATIONS TAX DEDUCTIBLE?**

Yes. Keystone Montessori is a registered Non-Profit 501(c)(3) organization. Each donor receives a thank you letter and a receipt for tax purposes.

## **WE ALREADY SUPPORT OTHER SCHOOL FUNDRAISERS. WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE, AND WHY SHOULD WE PARTICIPATE IN BOTH?**

It takes all of our fundraisers to keep Keystone Montessori at its current level of excellence. Gifts made to the Sustaining Fund are directly and immediately applied to the school's upcoming fiscal year's operating budget to offset costs not covered by state funding and tuition income. This means that your gift benefits every student, every day for the next school year.

## **DO I HAVE TO PAY NOW AND ALL AT ONCE?**

No. *You can pledge now and pay later.* Keystone Montessori is asking every family to *make a pledge NOW* and to honor that pledge using a payment option that works best for you. There are several payment options available including monthly installments. Your pledge helps Keystone determine the operating budget for the next school year. Fulfilling your promise ensures that Keystone continues to operate as our community has come to expect.

## **WHAT ARE CHALLENGE and MATCHING GIFTS?**

*Challenge Gifts* are pledges that are made contingent upon certain action being taken by the Keystone Community within a designated time frame. These gifts challenge and motivate our community to contribute to the Sustaining Fund and help Keystone meet the Sustaining Fund goal.

If you are interested in making a Challenge Gift please contact Melissa Sutton at [Melissa@keystonemontessori.com](mailto:Melissa@keystonemontessori.com). Your gift can remain anonymous.

*Matching Gifts:* Many employers will match charitable contributions made by their employees and retirees. If you don't know if your company offers a matching gift program, please ask! If they do, please check where indicated when you complete your pledge form or initiate your pledge online. Submit a copy of your donation to the relevant department at your company, and they should do the rest. The impact of your gift to Keystone Montessori may be doubled or possibly tripled! Please take the time to follow up with your employer to be sure that Keystone receives your matching funds. For more information, please email Keystone at [Melissa@keystonemontessori.com](mailto:Melissa@keystonemontessori.com).

