



### PILOT UPDATE REPORT 3/30/20

The following is an update of the Teachers PETS progress between introduction in December, 2019 and March 23, 2020. The pilot served 100 teachers, with \$100 each, across three schools: Midvale (K-2), Lincoln (Elementary), and Cherokee Heights (Middle). The Foundation allocated \$10,000 in Teachers PETS supply inventory through generous gifts provided by the Evjue Foundation and an anonymous local donor. Retired teacher volunteers worked cooperatively with Foundation Staff and EZ Office Products (EZOP) to receive deliveries and route packages to teachers.

Educators included in our pilot program teach grades pre-k thru 8<sup>1</sup>. While our target was classroom teachers, participants also included limited numbers of *special education, art, physical education, music, language, and paraprofessional teachers*.

#### Teachers PETS Summary

Overall, demand for and appreciation of the supply program has been high across all three participating schools. On delivery dates, volunteers and Foundation staff continued to receive hugs, words of encouragement, and countless “thank you’s.” As of March 23, the program had received orders from 80% of eligible teachers. After the COVID-19 outbreak, the program was forced to pause, leaving nearly \$2,000 in the budget for the remaining school year.

On the impact assessment surveys, *all* participating teachers rated the program as “**very**” (21%) or “**highly**” (79%) Needed, within their schools.

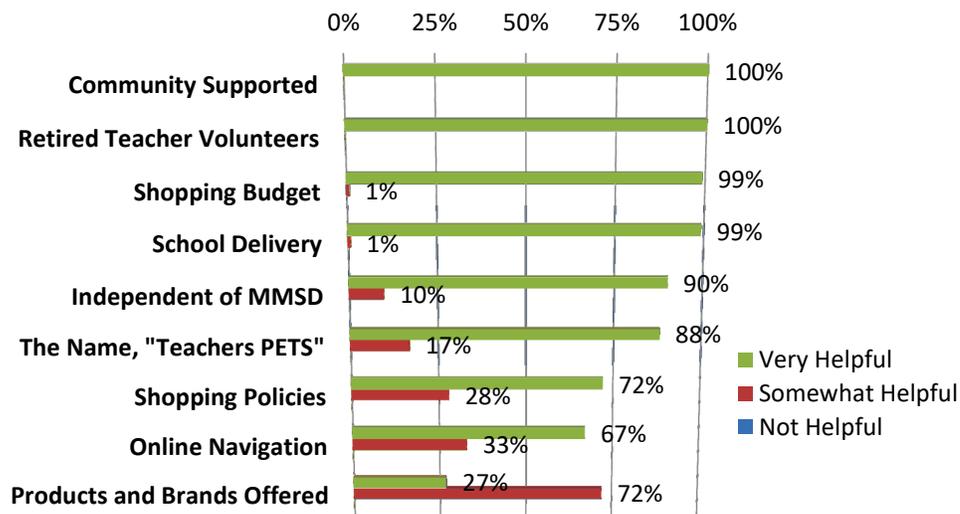
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<sup>1</sup> Teacher survey responses described past teaching experience up to 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

Teachers expressed the following thoughts about what a community-supported supply and support program means to them:

- “I won’t have to spend as much of my own money.”
- “Allow for me to not feel so financially stressed.”
- “The support will help me to do more in my classroom...with **more**.”
- “Supplies to better our projects and offer equitable resources to ALL students!”
- “The Teachers’ PETS Program will take some of the financial burden/stress off of me, while providing our classroom with a few key materials that we’re in need of that aren’t necessarily supplied or provided by the school/district.”

Teachers provided feedback on the following elements of the program. This information provides helpful guidance on what is currently working and what the Foundation can do to provide helpful upgrades for future enhancement:



Based on teacher feedback, the advantages of the program include: *community support – providing a shopping budget, being run by retired teacher volunteers and providing on-site delivery directly to schools*. Those advantages eliminate many of the pain points originally identified by teachers – time and money for shopping. The retired teacher volunteers provide an additional advantage of friendly customer service from familiar faces. Retirees are an important point link between the community and teachers with added empathy and understanding of the challenges teachers face. Overall, teachers like the fact that the store/program runs independent from the school district with limitations and variations in both classroom and school budgets commonly described as a leading challenge.

The name and accompanying acronym, “Progress, Equity, Tools and Supplies” does resonate with educators. Their feedback shows that more than 4 out of 5 teachers support the name, “Teachers PETS,” while only 17% are somewhat less enthusiastic.

**Gap Summary**

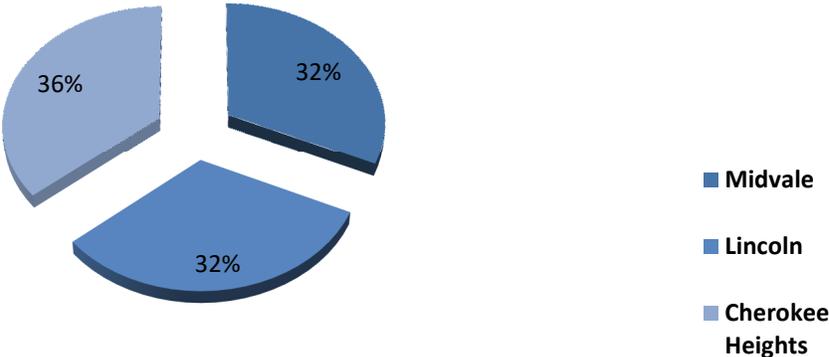
Teacher feedback is also central in identifying areas needing “more” options, including *products and brands offered* in the online store as well as *shipping dates that bring supplies into the schools throughout the year*. We also heard that online navigation was a challenge to some, underscoring the need for additional clarity and organization for the online interface.

The pilot store is offering basics but not covering all the bases yet. Specific requests centered on adding inventory that was addressed in early February. For example, feedback led the Foundation to bring in additional art supplies, colored paper, STEM equipment, healthy snacks, and cleaning supplies. However, there are other common requests that we are unable to fill through EZ Office Products’ vendor network, including: *books (for library classrooms), additional art supplies, winter clothing/gear for kids, sensory items (fidget spinners), flexible seating, balls of all kinds (e.g., ping pong, tennis, volleyball, basketball, kickball), and Frisbees.*

**Sales**

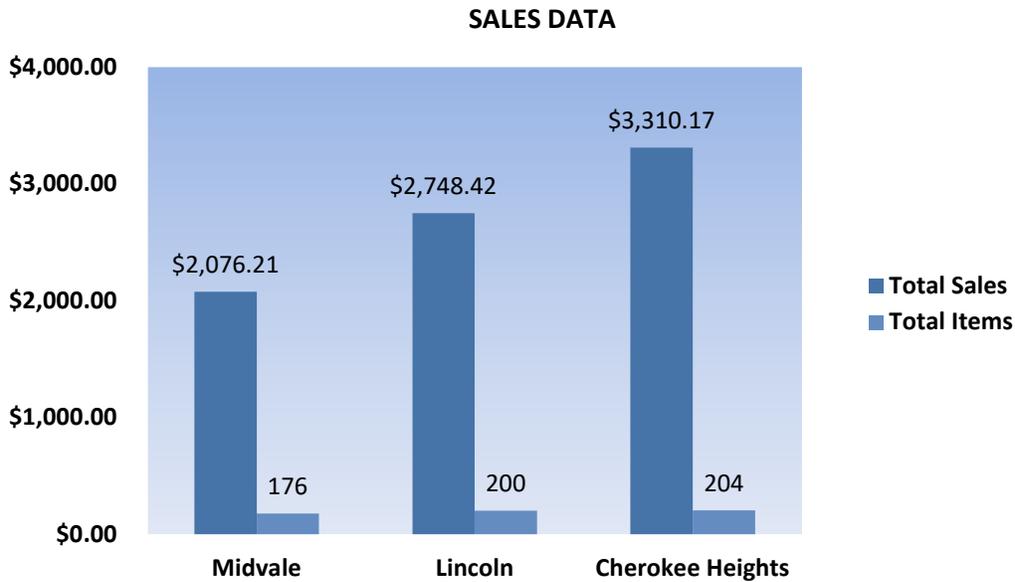
To date, Teachers PETS reached total supply ‘sales’ of **\$8,134.80** representing **81% of the total \$10,000 pilot budget**. At the time of the ‘COVID-19 pause,’ 80% of eligible teachers across all three pilot schools had placed orders with Teachers PETS. Below is per-school breakout:

**Proportion of Ordering Teachers Across all Schools**



Per-teacher spending at each school has brought orders right up to budgeted thresholds of \$100 per teacher. Specifically, per teacher spending at Midvale reached \$99, \$95 at Lincoln, and \$97 at Cherokee

Heights. This underscores both the utility and interest in a support and supply program for teachers. The chart below provides a summary of total sales and items ordered at each school.



**Order Summary**

*“Not only does this program provide supplies that are especially in short supply towards the latter half of the school year, it also demonstrates that the community cares about us and our students.”*

After adding additional items to inventory, selection of available inventory went up to 95% - meaning teacher orders touched on the vast majority of items within the online store. Themes from sales emerge looking across schools. For example, heavy influence of art/active learning at Midvale and Lincoln is followed by Cherokee Heights that has a bit stronger traditional/academic focus. The following chart shows the items in highest demand across schools:

<i>Top Items</i>		
<b>Midvale</b>	<b>Lincoln</b>	<b>Cherokee Heights</b>
Markers (multi-cultural)	Markers (all kinds)	Markers (all kinds)
Headphones	Headphones	Pencils (pre-Sharpended)
Acrylic & Watercolor Paints	Pencils (Pre-Sharpended)	Healthy Snacks
Glitter Glue	Colored Paper	Dry Erase Marker/Eraser Caddy
Sand	Disinfecting Wipes	Headphones

Desktop Hole Puncher	Clay	Plastic Clipboard
Brushes	Acrylic paint	Poster board & Easel Pads
Pencils	Highlighters	Calculators
Crayons	Brushes	Drawing Paper
Paper Plates	Craft Supplies	Colored Pencils/Glitter Glue
Learning Games	Colored Paper	Scissors

The following teacher comments describe the ways supplies assist in teaching by promoting academic focus and creative learning in our classrooms:

- *“I couldn't say enough thank-you's to this support program. You are validating some very basic needs that we have for our students and classrooms. Papers, rulers, markers, tape, headphones, etc. go a long way for projects and activities in the classroom!”*
- *“These supplies help me incorporate more art into my classroom.”*
- *“I will be able to create more projects and add resources to my shared classroom supplies.”*
- *“Bringing in more creative supplies for arts integration projects.”*

### **Partnerships & Coordination**

Much of the success of this pilot is due to the strength of its partnerships, particularly those with EZ Office Products, school leadership, and dedicated volunteers. The Foundation was fortunate to find a solid partner in EZ Office Products, which made the initial online ordering process and supply of inventory quite simple. However, if EZOP continues to be our partner moving beyond the pilot phase, we will need to find ways to expand inventory offered in a way that is not burdensome to their operations. We will also need to find ways to more easily track usage data that is useful to the Foundation, as its reporting needs differ from those of EZOP's standard sales reports.

As the program grows and potentially expands to service more teachers in additional schools, the Foundation must ensure that EZ Office Products is able to continue its generous practice of delivering supplies directly to each school on the same day, or to find a suitable solution for faster turnaround, if not.

Partnerships with school principals and their staff has been strong throughout the pilot. Principals are enthusiastic about the program. However, communication is critical and we will need to further

explore ways to communicate directly with school secretaries and teachers about logistics and details of the program in the most effective ways possible. Without full principal support, this would be a significant obstacle, so clear and consistent communication must continue to be a priority.

Logistics, such as delivery schedules and locations, must also be communicated clearly to avoid not meeting teacher expectations. With school activities often subject to change at short notice, the Foundation must take the lead in established a clear channel of communication with each school, understanding that each school may have different needs. As the program expands, the Foundation must work to solidify District commitment to help build a centralized management system for efficiency and effective operations.

Finally, high customer service can be maintained with the on-site presence of our friendly and experienced volunteers. They offer a wonderful, multi-pronged benefit to operation of the PETS program. Their presence, along with responsive Foundation staff, will continue to build awareness, respect and utilization of the program, which is so important to the Foundation's mission.

### **General Observations & Next Steps**

- 1.** The Teachers PETS program pilot has been favorably met by teachers, expressing strong needs and high demand. Their feedback reveals a common sense of declining efficacy along with supply shortages in the classrooms. The PETS program can be a stop gap measure by filling needs, efficiently, when they are needed at key points in the school year. Teachers also commonly shared descriptions of both classroom confidence loss and inability to reach "all students" which harkens back to efficacy and equity. This can be an expected outcome of PETS and measured through future evaluations.
- 2.** Retired teacher volunteers are a treasured asset and bridge between the Foundation and teachers. They are widely recognized and are like "rock stars" entering each school. Their commitment is high and we've heard from most stating they want to remain involved. The Foundation can leverage volunteers by broadening their role within schools, at the Foundation, and out in the community.
- 3.** Future funding should be used to expand the program to more schools, add specific items to inventory, increase shopping budgets and continue to provide in-school deliveries. Teachers appreciate the convenience of the program but look for additional inventory items to meet student needs (personal needs along with books, equipment for physical education, art, music).
- 4.** Learnings from the pilot operations can help pave the way for future structuring. When school principals support the program and promote it with teachers, internally, shopping traffic and usage increase significantly. We had great luck with highly supportive principals in these schools. Successful expansion will depend on solid partnerships.

5. Smooth ordering and delivery coordination at each school depend on strong partnerships and high communication/contact with (and within) the school. Throughout the process, we have worked closely with principals with cc's going to school secretaries. This has produced mixed results, at times. The Foundation will need to work on tackling [uncontrollable factors] rapidly changing circumstances at school. Direct contact with teachers is preferred but not totally realistic under current model.
6. Foundation branding must be stronger to build associations between the PETS program and the Foundation. Current associations are made with EZOP and the district. Address this by wearing Foundation branded shirts, ordering brand pens, and magnets/stickers for teachers to include with orders.
7. The Foundation can leverage teacher appreciation events to share pilot offerings and results with attending teachers. Work with teachers to continue building ownership and advance pilot scaling through direct school partnerships. The Foundation will work with district partners along with American Printing Company to create signage, informational brochures and opportunities to showcase the program and pilot schools – along with future opportunities.