

The White Dove Bilingual School in Santa Clara was the site of the first meeting of the Advisory Group with Suyapa and Arturo on March 12. The meeting focused on financial needs for the 2014 school year and adopted a first annual budget and financial plan for the school.

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Advisory Group Meeting

The White Dove Advisory Group ("WDAG") coalesced last year after several donors met to share concerns about financial support for the rapid growth of the school. Everyone wanted the school to succeed. Each donor had a vision of what was needed and what should have higher priority. But no one appeared to have the full picture, so we sometimes wondered if we were working at cross purposes. Debts were growing. Donations were obscure and uncertain. Expenses seemed to pop up randomly and unexpectedly. After comparing notes, we agreed that coordination and communication of needs was essential for the school to survive financially.

A first step was to identify and eliminate the accumulated debt. As that became known and communicated, responses to special funding appeals enabled the school to enter the 2014 school year unencumbered by debts.

While the debt elimination was underway, a second step was to work with Suyapa to set up a simple financial accounting and reporting structure to clarify the income and expense patterns for school operation. Amounts of funds such as school registration, tuition, and support from United Way were available to show the gap between revenues and expenses. With that information, a budget structure emerged. That budget structure was a primary input for the meeting last week.

Coming out of that meeting, we now have a 2014 budget for White Dove Santa Clara. Total operating expenses are projected to be about \$104K; total income is projected to be about \$82K. As the year progresses we will be able to sharpen the numbers and we will probably identify some additional expenses not yet recognized. But for now, the gap between income and expenses for the remainder of this year looks like \$20-25K. More specifics will be described in a future newsletter.

Long Range Financial Picture

What's the long-range financial picture for White Dove Santa Clara? It's encouraging to take a longer view of funding patterns. White Dove started a few years ago with nothing more than a vision that attracted startup funds. A few structures were built as that vision took hold. Then Arturo submitted a project that generated funding by United Way to construct some more classrooms and provide partial support for teachers and staff. So the school continued to grow.

Now registration and tuition provide additional funding, but still not enough. Various donors have come forth to fill the funding gaps as they became known. With the 2014 budget now in place, there is reasonable hope that donors will continue to support the continued growth of White



Featured Article



Teachers--
WE NEED TEACHERS

If you believe something good is going on in White Dove Santa Clara, and if you would like to provide financial support to help it continue, here is how you can do that:

1. Make out a check to the Honduras Agape Foundation.
2. On your check, designate the donation as "Support for White Dove Santa Clara" or a more specific purpose
3. Mail it to this address:

Friends of White Dove
P.O. Box 5483
Aiken, SC 29804

Every penny of your donation will be forwarded to White Dove school.

White Dove isn't a specific mission initiative of the Honduras Agape Foundation, but the foundation has the infrastructure in place to facilitate financial transfers to Honduras for mission purposes, and has graciously agreed to allow us to benefit from that convenience.

Dove for the next few years. But how long will it be before donor fatigue sets in? Then what?

The good news is that some donors have purchased property in Santa Clara with the intention of growing cash crops to enable White Dove school to be fully funded beginning in 2019. Crops are being planted with the expectation they will mature by then to yield a profit. For example, initial planting includes 600 cacao trees, 50 lime trees, 13 papayas, and 2045 plantains. The full story is yet to be revealed, but it seems that there are various agricultural support groups who are pitching in with their expertise to improve the chances of success.

Wherever you turn, when people witness what's happening at White Dove, they want to help it succeed.

Teachers--We Need Teachers

The last newsletter stated that books are the first need. That need has been met. Now the highest priority need is teachers--especially teachers whose first language is English.

The A BEKA curriculum used at White Dove is excellent; students in the United States who are home-schooled or enrolled in Christian schools using the A BEKA curriculum typically excel in comparisons with public school students.

But when the English version is used in a bilingual school such as White Dove, the curriculum is increasingly challenging as the students progress. It assumes familiarity with American culture and vocabulary. Students are expected to understand idiomatic English as if it were their first language. Those of us who have been trying to learn Spanish can understand how difficult that would be. For instance, a recent story in a White Dove class included the phrase, "We've got it licked. Our neighbors jumped in to help and now we have it licked." These kinds of phrases roll in by the dozens, and increase each year.

For the teachers whose native language is Spanish but who came up through a bilingual school, the vocabulary and cultural influence are likely to be challenging to them also. Each additional year is likely to become more and more challenging for teacher and student because of limited comprehension of the English vocabulary and idioms.

So there is a crucial need for teachers whose first language is English. Good comprehension of English is essential for success with this curriculum. Short of that, the White Dove students are fighting an uphill battle that only gets worse with each passing year. It could be expected to show up as progressively lower scores as they move up in grade level. So if you are a teacher looking for a way to make a positive difference in the lives of these bright students, White Dove may be where God is calling you.

For more information on White Dove Santa Clara, you can call either Suyapa Perdomo at the school in Honduras [011-504-2625-1300], or Allen Blancett [803-295-7395]. If you prefer, contact us by email at whitedovesantaclara@yahoo.com or WDFriends@gforcecable.com

Sincerely,

*Allen Blancett
Friends of White Dove Santa Clara*