By Amy Sylvestri

San Leandro Times

The fifth graders at McKinley elementary held a walk-a-thon Wednesday after school to raise money for their upcoming camp out.

As their teachers Andrew Grossman and Natasha Jacob handed out food and fruit, the kids walked and ran as many laps around the field as they could in one hour.

The kids walked with blank sheets of paper pinned to their backs and parent volunteers put a tally mark on each student's paper for each completed lap. The fifth graders spent the past few weeks collecting pledges from friends and family to donate certain amounts per lap.

Each student needs $285 to attend a camp called Walker Creek Ranch in rural Marin County for an outdoor science and education trip this January, and the walk-a-thon is one of several fundraisers so the kids can make the trip.

"It's great because it teaches the kids responsibility and how to earn something without relying on parents," said Grossman. "We've been doing this for a few years and we see a lot of growth when they participate."

Not to mention all the exercise they got. One boy ran a few laps but stopped out of breath midway through the next one.

“I should have paced myself,” he said.

Anyone interested in donating money to help the kids go to outdoor school can contact McKinley Elementary at 618-4320.

CAPTION: The fifth graders at McKinley walked and ran as many laps as they could to raise money for camp.

PHOTO BY AMY SYLVESTRI