

Minutes- Manhattan Middle School PTO Meeting
January 11, 2016, 6:30 pm
Manhattan Middle School Library

- I. Welcome and Introductions, Michele Marshall, Chair (michelemarshall@comcast.net)**
- a. Meeting participants included: Amanda Wember, Michele Marshall, Nicole Wobus, Jenn Hardee, Mary Dineen, Sarah Blackford, Julie Chang, Loli Hudson, John Riggs, Karen Gall, Shannon Collier, Darcy Fan, Kristin Kusmierek, Troy Thornberry, Jenn Dingman, Jenn, Reiger
 - b. Michele welcomed everyone and noted the need to pick date for the winter social. The group selected February 9, a Tuesday. This will work because of the late start on Wednesdays.
 - c. Darcy provided a clarification to the December meeting minutes, explaining that Destination Imagination (DI) is open to all BVSD students. She noted that there can be many DI teams in a school. This week is the deadline for new teams to enter the competition.
- II. Principal's Report, John Riggs**
- a. Mr. Riggs attended an event at the state capitol in support of school funding. A group of 200-300 people attended. Bruce Messinger spoke.
 - b. Mr. Riggs requested that parents participate in a mission and vision statement revision. Feedback from a meeting on Jan 27 meeting will determine how much the current mission and vision will change. The new version of the mission and vision will be used as reference when making decisions going forward. Troy Thornberry suggested that Mr. Riggs note the district-wide District Accountability Committee (DAC) vision at that meeting too.
 - c. Open Enrollment closes on Jan 15. No information is available yet.
 - d. PARC Testing- The number of tests and testing dates has decreased. This year's testing schedule will be more like TCAP- 3 days in length. There will be math and LA (writing) tests every day for 3 days and then the testing will be done. The testing will all be online so Mr. Riggs is trying to get more Chrome books. Manhattan may share Chrome books with other schools. The district hopes participation rates will go back up. Last year the participation rate was 60%.
 - e. CMAS Testing- Mr. Riggs doesn't know all the details of the testing plan yet for this year. The district will randomly select schools for participation in the social studies testing. The timeframe will be mid-March to the end of April.
 - f. This Wednesday the scores from last year will go home. Kids who historically did well on TCAP did well on last year's test. And kids who historically struggled on TCAP tended to struggle. Many top students opted out of the testing.
 - g. Since the results took so long to come out last year they were not of use for purposes of placement. This year the plan is to get scores back by the end of the school year.
 - h. At the District Accountability meeting there was discussion about how it would be helpful to have a growth metric back.
 - i. Mr. Riggs is working with kids on improving interpersonal skills, greeting them as they enter the building.

III. Teachers' Report- Sarah Blackford

- a. The teachers are very appreciative of the Magic Phoenix purchases. For her class she purchased a couple of standup desks and Chrome books. Ms. Blackford is an Intensive Learning Center teacher. Her kids have been honing math skills through sorting milk caps for the school.
- b. Mary Ellen Steele sent something around to teachers about requests for spending surplus Magic Phoenix funds.

IV. Treasurer's Report (Erica couldn't come but provided a report)

- a. About \$7k of Magic Phoenix funds need to get spent, since we raised roughly \$37,000. By Friday the 15th teachers are supposed to spend their Magic Phoenix funds. Of the \$7000 excess, almost half of this money just came in at end of December.
- b. Outstanding bills include \$675 for Trip Tracker. Checks from California Pizza Kitchen and from Pizza Rev events still have not been received.

V. Committee Reports

- a. Magic Phoenix (Amanda Wember):
 - i. Teachers were asked what they would like to spend the surplus on (PTO has already fulfilled all initial requests).
 - ii. Goal was to support students this year, and hit as many kids as possible.
 - iii. Some requests for spending the surplus include: stand up desks (\$450 per stand up desk), Wobble Chairs, additional Chrome books. Considering buying another Chrome cart with 30 Chrome Books. It would cost \$9,000 for this cart. Social Studies has a set of Chrome books, Science has 2. If an additional set were purchased it would go to the arts and PE. They could be used for testing too. The school would have a total of 6 Chrome Book carts. Standup desks and wobble chairs will help kids who struggle with attention. Stand up desks are on wheels and raise / lower so they can move as needed.
 - iv. Manhattan will have \$400,000 for use on "Innovation" as part of the Bond process. Some of the furniture could be part of that.
 - v. Technology funds get a refresh every 2 years. It used to be issued every four years. Recently the district cut the money in half and now gives it out every 2 years instead of every 4 years.
 - vi. One parent noted the importance of making a distinction between consumable things vs. things that will stay in the building for future use.
 - vii. Another parent suggested giving a certain amount of money to each department to decide how to spend. It could be distributed based on the number of students affected.
 - viii. Mr. Riggs' preference with one-time funds is to do something big. Last year the school used extra funds to pay for a sound system. The school could label items noting what is purchased with Magic Phoenix funds. No great need this year like that.
 - ix. PE (health) and electives have asked for Chrome books. They would be shared among a large group. Chrome books currently in the school are used every day and are in high demand.
 - x. Loli has already set money aside for Chrome book repairs.

- xi. Amanda suggested one option would be to have teachers apply for funds.
 - xii. Michele noted the importance of equity. Previously Magic Phoenix could only spend up to \$1,000 per teacher.
 - xiii. The school also has Whole Foods money that could be used for furniture. Mr. Riggs was thinking about spending that money for school beautification, potentially converting one of the atrium outdoor areas to a music garden with outdoor instruments.
 - xiv. Michele asked how much Mr. Riggs could come up with to contribute to the Chrome cart. The Chrome books cost \$179 each. They receive tech support from the district so they cost more than they would for an individual. The carts cost \$2,000 (not including the Chrome Books themselves). The carts are important to provide mobility and charging capabilities. Chrome Books are all web based so there are some bandwidth issues. As more teachers use Schoology there will be a greater need. Mr. Riggs knows he could get \$2,000 but he doesn't know if he could get more.
 - xv. In general if there are funds left over (general funds, not Magic Phoenix Funds) they go into an account at end of year, and they are given to teachers based on their requests.
 - xvi. Wobbly chairs are very popular in classrooms. Springy chairs are popular too.
 - xvii. Michele proposed giving \$7,000 now toward Chrome Books so it can be spent right away and \$500 for wobbly chairs (e.g., from beautification funds). The school has \$500 already allocated for the second phase of the sciencegarden. The school could buy 10 wobbly chairs in addition to chrome books. The Chrome Books could be kept in a room for checking out. The wobble chairs would be distributed to classrooms as needed, as some classrooms already have chairs that are used every day. Mr. Riggs noted that they are needed most in content classes and they could be allocated across each department.
 - xviii. Mr. Riggs has \$1,300 to spend on wobbly chairs. In addition to \$2,000 for Chrome books.
 - xix. 11 attendees voted for spending \$7,000 on Chrome books. PTO will give \$500 for wobbly chairs and \$1,300 from Mr. Riggs can buy approximately 30 wobbly chairs.
 - xx. \$8,500 is still available for school beautification
- b. Garden Committee: The committee will ramp up in February. Kristin noted that Manhattan is not currently recognized by Ann Cooper/School Food Project for having a garden. Jen has been the primary leader on garden effort. They have been self supported and didn't ask for any district funds, which is why the district wasn't aware of the garden. Right now the goal is to improve on what's already there. Manual from Ann Cooper has very helpful information on how to get free seeds (Lake Valley Seeds), etc. However, someone noted that the quality of materials from the district was poorer than direct donations from parents in the past.
- c. Grocery Cards
- d. Winter Social

- e. Projects Committee: Julie reported that the science department requests help with clean up. In general the projects committee wants to avoid being used as a janitorial service. They will label new math textbooks. One teacher requested help making an indoor classroom brighter. The committee may also help with tax letters.

VI. District and Community Representatives: TAG DAC & BVGT- Kristin Kusmierek (kusberry@me.com); SAC & DAC- Troy Thornberry (kusberry@me.com)

- a. SAC is a state legally mandated body to advise the State Board of Education. The committee is working on setting budget priorities for the district. Issues being discussed: technology, social / emotional support, all day kindergarten, testing, student data privacy. Last year the focus was on making changes to the district's mission and goal statement. This year the focus is on developing a District-wide Unified Improvement Plan, and there is much discussion of the "Success Effect." The committee is coming up with implementation plans for 6 themes. Mr. Riggs noted the priority for Manhattan is funding for special needs students. The school is 30% TAG students and 30% IEP students- Manhattan represents the gap between high needs and low needs. BVSD typically does better than the state average, but disadvantaged students have performed at or below state average. This indicates the district is not advancing the needs of students with greater needs.
- b. Boulder Valley Gifted and Talented : On Feb 2 at Fairview Jim DeLisle will talk about the teenage brain and differentiation in classroom. The talk will target 11 year olds and up. On January 26, Douglas Elementary will host a talk on giftedness and stress. On April 7 at Broomfield Heights Middle School there will be a talk about Grit and Resiliency.

VII. Volunteering Opportunities-

Winter Social volunteers, PEN representative, parent /teacher conference dinners

VIII. Other Comments or Questions

- a. A microwave is needed for the school. A parent asked whether there should be a wish list of items the school needs. Sarah Blackford suggested posting a list on the Manhattan Facebook page. Loli said the school needs translator vests to be sewn.
- b. Destination Imagination gave a presentation. The group is doing a community service project, collecting winter clothing (gently used) and toiletry items for the Boulder Shelter for Homeless. DI meets after school on Fridays. The group would like to have a restaurant fundraising event scheduled to raise funds for their efforts. They will use the funds to fill gaps in donated items. The group could also use the funds for food for bagged lunches. The whole school could work together to make sandwiches. They could have a Freshi event. Freshi focuses on delivery. They could do a delivery event. Freshi will give 30% to Manhattan for all purchases on the event day. Parents are not allowed to assist the DI students. They contacted several non-profits in area to gather ideas about what's needed. They heard there is a large need for bottled water. DI is currently collecting items by the front door. Socks are the least donated item. The DI kids will contact a restaurant, pick a night, and be in charge of advertising. Mr. Riggs will include it in his blog and make loudspeaker announcements.

ACTION ITEMS

- Prep for winter social on February 9.
- Develop a teacher wish list and consider posting it on the Manhattan Facebook page.
- PTO to spend \$7,000 on Chrome books and give \$500 for wobbly chairs. Mr. Riggs will contribute a match for the PTO \$7,000 Chrome Book contribution and will contribute \$1,300 to purchase approximately 30 wobbly chairs.
- DI Group to schedule a community dinner fundraiser