

**Manhattan Middle School  
PTO Annual Meeting  
May 19, 2016**

**Chair:** Michele Marshall

**Vice Chair:** Mary Dineen

**Treasurer:** Erica Johnson

**Secretary:** Nicole Wobus

**Teacher Representatives:** Sarah Blackford, Dan Tomlin, and Mary Ellen Steele

**Principal:** John Riggs

**Meeting Attendees:**

Michele Marshall, Nicole Wobus, Persia Houston, Julie Chang, Jamie Baker, Mary Dineen, Wendy Baumert, Susan Wu, Julie Volckens, Shirley Chacon, Karen Gall, Erica Johnson, Jennifer Dingman, Amanda Wember, Kristin Kusmierek, Jenn Hardee, Kristy Lane, Shannon Collier, Darcy Fan, John Riggs, Anita Krol, Zennia Jennie, Diana Lane

**Meeting Notes:**

**Treasurer's Report:** Erica Johnson

- Erica has worked closely with Michele in past- with writing checks, etc.
- The PTO currently has 3 8<sup>th</sup> grade parents on bank account. Julie and Karen have said willing to put names on the account.
- Erica converted PTOs records from Excel to QuickBooks- use desktop version.
- About 10 transactions/month.
- Erica creating many accounts in QuickBooks
- Julie and Karen will put names on.
- Treasurer doesn't always have to go to all meetings, just produce a 1-page report each month. Available on website.
- Michele will meet with the new treasurer after summer for organizing- transfer of names on bank account will need to happen in person.
- Report distributed at meeting shows summary only; can see more detail in P&L statement.
- Last year carried \$20k over from previous year. There had been a bag credit fundraiser at Whole Foods for 3 months which brought in \$10,000. Since it wasn't a parent donation it's ok to maintain the funds in the account (with Magic Phoenix funds raised from parent donations the goal is to spend the funds within the same year they are raised).
  - Michele noted that someone has submitted another Whole Foods bag credit grant application. It could take a couple of years for Manhattan's next bag credit time to come again.
- Those funds will now go to school beautification fund, leaving cash balance of \$10k.
- The \$10k remaining isn't flagged for anything.
- There has been a last minute request for a chrome cart. Chrome carts fit into "all school improvements." The Chrome Cart was purchased with PTO funds. Funds for earlier Chrome cart purchases came out of Magic Phoenix, but this is another Chrome cart purchased for Armbruster.
- Erica's approach is to distribute funds equitably, and distribute funds across on a percentage basis.

- The PTO was previously taking 12% out of all fundraisers for operating costs, but realized they didn't need to do that. The PTO really doesn't have many operating costs. PTO needs to pay sales tax on things sold at school store.
- PTO is a 501c3. The cutoff is \$50k for needing to fill out an IRS form.
- Operating expenses are only about \$500 annually. Magic Phoenix expenses came out of Magic Phoenix funds.
- PayPal is well worth the expense. The percentage seems to change from one donation to another.
- Community fundraisers and retail fundraising- (e.g. from King Soopers cards, Safeway, Ozo cards, etc.) is distinct from reselling things. King Soopers brings in the most funds. It brought in \$3,700. Retail fundraising is about 5% of the budget.
- PTO doesn't make much off of the school store- but did make ~\$900 (including clothes) of actual profit this year. The store is open for ½ hour at end of each school day. The store sells sketch books, etc. – supplies needed for classes. It's not a big money maker, but does break even and contributes to the school community. Currently the store is stationary only. PTO could get a cart to use at school events to sell things- fundraiser for clubs, at school events, etc.
- A ½ hour after school is over can sell anything at events. But restricted at school store on what can sell based on BVSD guidelines.
- PTO could support that extra cart by buying the inventory that is requested, get reimbursed, and the profit would go the clubs.

### ***Magic Phoenix***

- It is the major fundraiser each year. Grew from \$18k (when the current 8<sup>th</sup> grade parents started with the PTO) to \$33k this past year. Now up to \$37k. PTO gave approximately \$36k to the school, and the remainder was used to cover costs. The school is seeing more innovation in the classroom as a result. Things like Chrome carts and wobbly stools were purchased to accommodate different needs of students. PTO receives feedback / requests from teachers (teachers' wish list) on what they want for classroom. Parents can select what classroom they want to donate to.
- Funds are spent within the same school year so the parents who donate can see the benefit of the fundraising in the same year, which their kids are still at the school.
- Teachers are given a date by which they need to spend funds or it gets taken back.
- When John arrived there was \$25k of unspent funds from magic phoenix, which prompted the focus on spending funds within the year they are raised.
- Magic Phoenix involves intense fundraising during October, including a number of challenges and activities / school spirit-related rewards for making progress with the fundraising (e.g., if raise \$X this week get to throw pies at teachers, etc.).
- Darcy Fan will have an 8<sup>th</sup> grade and a 6<sup>th</sup> grade student and she has offered to co-chair it.
- At registration in August – have information available about the Magic Phoenix
- At registration time the school now asks for \$60 (used to ask for \$120). Is there is line to add to this donation to support kids who are unable to.
- One parent noted that it seemed like a lot of requests for funds happened at the start of the school year and it was challenging for many families. For example, the science trip will happen again next year, and that is an unexpected expense for 6<sup>th</sup> grade families.

- It's possible for families to make a small monthly donation to Magic Phoenix to spread out the donation over time.
- There was a suggestion to mention the fall science trip at the end of summer picnic for incoming 6<sup>th</sup> grade families so they can start planning for the expense.

### ***Other Fundraisers***

- Community dinners (local restaurants donate % of proceeds to the school on a designated date)- Jen Hardee will organize that
- Box tops and milk caps programs have raised about \$350 and have about another \$170 worth to collect. The PTO likes to spend that money on fun things- popcorn machine, snow cone machine. Have about \$500 now to spend.
- One parent asked where the money to assist families in need comes from. Michele noted that the PTO did a Chipotle fund raiser- they give 50% back to the school. Those funds were used to support 2 families in great need at the start of this school year, in addition the PE department raised money thru the payback books and this was given to the four families who were in need.
- Michele has gone above and beyond on PTO support for teachers, and teachers now expect it. The teachers have a great appreciation for the PTO, especially the meals provided.
- Persia, who was the hospitality coordinator this year, will remain on the PTO and will recall much of what was done this year.
- John noted that new and fresh ideas that will come in are also welcome. He noted that the teachers most like the food provided, and the projects committee too. There's a feeling of collaboration. Often PTOs form and the intent is to run the school, but that's not the case with this PTO and teachers appreciate it.
- Someone noted that this PTO has encouraged more teacher participation at PTO meetings. Several have come to present ideas at meetings and talk about what they're doing in the classroom. Kristin was able to pass on the milk caps fundraising project to a teacher who thought it was a good project for her students.
- One parent noted the importance of prioritizing funding for activities and items that will benefit a lot of kids, like the slam poet that all LA classrooms had a visit from.
- Michele noted that the PTO website has a list of all volunteer activities available, and that the PTO has a volunteer form in the registration packet at the beginning of year.

### **Principal's Report:** John Riggs

- This year there's been a focus on refining the school's vision statement and goals.
- The school is losing the last large class this year, though the incoming 6<sup>th</sup> grade class is larger than current 6<sup>th</sup> grade class.
- The school lost a lot of neighborhood families when Manhattan converted to an arts focus. Need to work on communicating the school's academic identity. Want to work to encourage neighborhood families to choose Manhattan.
- Diversity is a priority.
- Currently the school is involved in the DAT process for bond program- phase 2. The committee is deciding how to spend the limited funds allocated to school. BVSD's innovation

director attended the most recent meeting. New buildings are being built very differently than existing ones. Manhattan will have \$800k to work on how spaces should be developed. The school may do something innovative with the courtyard- enclosing it to make it unique. Teachers would like to prioritize upgrading classrooms. It's a 30 year plan for the building.

- A parent noted that the updated vision and mission statement may be helpful because too many think the school only does arts. The racial and socioeconomic diversity is a great asset for the school and Manhattan should celebrate it.

**Teacher's Report:** Sarah Blackford, Mary Ellen Steele, and Dan Tomlin

- No teachers were present at the meeting.
- The PTO members noted that it is good to have a mix from different departments.

### **PTO Remaining Business:**

#### ***Trip Tracker Decision for Next Year (cost \$730)***

- To participate in trip tracker again the school would need to come up with \$735.
- The program's mission is to reduce traffic flow but there's debate on whether the program succeeds at that. Karen came in monthly to the lunchroom this year and logged trips with kids. It wasn't clear based on information gathered through that process whether the program is changing behavior. It may have made a difference in whether kids choose to ride their bike on bad weather day. It may not have the same impact on middle schoolers as elementary school kids.
- There was some concern about whether the cost to participate in the program is worthwhile.
- Karen noted that the program is expecting some middle school attrition, though other middle schools are not really dropping out of the program. There are 11 schools 100% committed for next year.
- Nicole noted that there are other off the shelf sustainability programs offered through BVSD which can also offer an opportunity teach students about behavior change in support of sustainability (e.g., Energy Challenge, etc.).
- John noted that it takes energy to support those other programs. In the case of the Energy Challenge, there's a lot of energy saving activity going on already that doesn't get recognized in the Energy Challenge (which focuses just on savings compared to current), so it can end up not being a positive / motivating activity for the school.
- One parent noted that although the school is a Green Star school it's not actually doing as many "green" things as it could be, and could do a better job of getting the sustainability message out to students.
- The group decided to keep participating in Trip Tracker for 1 more year with caveat that Peter make the sustainability message stronger and the program needs more messaging to students about its purpose.
- John noted that as part of the 5-year anniversary as a Green Star school the superintendent and a county commissioner will work with 6<sup>th</sup> grade science classes for 3 days. John agreed on the importance of getting the sustainability message out every year.
- Karen suggested asking Peter to attend the Green Star school events and present at them. He is very knowledgeable and it would be an opportunity to spread the Trip Tracker message.

- Michele noted that for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade party they're having Ecocycle come in to help with trash. John noted that they come in for locker clean out too.
- Missing some key elements to be a green school
- Lori is the Trip Tracker coordinator.

***Shadow boxes still need to get paid for – they're \$500 each.***

***Whole Foods Donation (\$8500 left for front of school beautification project)***

***Ideas for Item to Purchase with Box Tops And Milk Caps Money***

***Payment of Art Shadow Boxes (\$500)***

***Election of Officers and Board Members for the 2015-2016 school year***

Chair: Interim Co-Chair team: Darcy Fan, Karen Urbanowski, Julie Chang, Shannon Collier, and Nicole Wobus

Vice Chair: N/A

Treasurer: Karen Urbanowski

Secretary: Nicole Wobus

Magic Phoenix Chair: Darcy Fan (co-chair)

Projects Committee Chair: Shannon Collier

Grocery Cards: Kristie Lane (though may be moving next year)

Community Dinners: Jenn Hardee

School Store: Persia and Karen will help purchase the stock, but not offering to be the school store leads (360 students could potentially staff the store on Wednesday afternoons)

Hospitality/Conference Dinners: Persia Houston

Winter Social Chair:

Trip Tracker: Lori Winslow

Science Garden: Jenn Dingman

PEN (parent Engagement network):

- Michele noted that in past there has been a chair and a vice chair. When she first started they had one co-chair from each of the main feeder elementary schools.
- Nobody offered to run for chair or vice chair. However a few parents indicated that they would be willing to help support in a co-chair capacity.
- Julie Volckens offered to serve as treasurer but is unfamiliar with Quick Books.
- Magic Phoenix chair: Darcy has mentioned interest in serving as co-chair. She will recruit another co-chair. Amanda has a binder from her history running it.
- John and Shannon noted that a mobile store cart could be used to raise funds for clubs. They could take profits, or maybe PTO could do a matching program. The cart would be an easier way than the store to raise funds since income would be straight profit (PTO would stock the cart, get reimbursed), but the profits would go to the club.
- Julie noted that it would be good to try the cart first as a club fundraising opportunity before turning over the school store for those purposes. There are more BVSD issues around what can be sold at the school store, and when.

**Open time for Comments:**

- A kid and parent directory would be helpful for building community. There are privacy challenges, but there's a web program some schools have used successfully to get around the issues. Someone should research that opportunity further.
- John noted that in the past the directory has always been done through PTO.
- Douglas uses "My School Anywhere.com" for their directory- you can go in and enter own information.
- Michele and Anna Karplus had worked on getting something set up but it did not get completed.
- Note: There is a PTO closet, off the teachers lounge where many PTO items are stored (compostable kept there, etc.).

### **Next Steps:**

- Research potential purchase of a cart that could serve as an extension of the school store (e.g., costs of cart, materials, potential club use for fundraising). See Centaurus High School band events example.
- Make 6<sup>th</sup> grade families aware of the cost of the Keystone science trip so they can start planning for the expense.
- Enhance sustainability efforts and sustainability-related messaging at the school to promote behavior change.
- Research online / electronic resources (including "My School Anywhere.com") for developing a school directory that will address potential privacy concerns.
- Plan for beginning of school year events

### **Additional Information for PTO 2015-2016**

#### **Upcoming Events for Beginning of School Year 2016-2017 @MMS**

August 15—Registration, School Pictures and Finger Printing (Volunteers Needed)

August 17—Welcome Back Teachers/Staff Lunch (Volunteers Needed)

August 18—First Day of School for 6<sup>th</sup> Graders

6<sup>th</sup> Grade Parent Coffee Sponsored by 360 parents & PTO (Volunteers Needed)

August 19—First Day of School for 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Graders

August 25—Back to School Night, 6 to 8pm

#### **Fundraising:**

Magic Phoenix Chair: Amanda Wember

Grocery Cards: Kristin Kusmirek transferred to Kristy Lane

Milk Caps: Kristin Kusmirek transferred to Sarah Blackford's Class

School Store & Box Tops: Deana Zimenoff

Community Dinners: Chris Goodman

#### **School Events:**

Winter Social Chair: Sara Knight

Trip Tracker: Lori Winslow & Karen Gall

Conference Dinners: Persia Houston

Science Garden: Jenn Dingman

360 Parent Leader: Shannon Gallagher

Project Committee: Julie Chang

DAC & SAC Representative: Troy Thornberry  
TAG DAC Representative: Kristin Kusmierek

**Who Are We:** Our PTO is group of dedicated parents who care about Manhattan Middle School.

**What is Our Purpose: (From our Bylaws)**

The PTO is organized and shall be operated exclusively for those charitable, educational and scientific purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (or corresponding provisions of any future federal tax code). The following specific purposes are included, without limitation, in the foregoing general purposes:

- a) To support the well-rounded education of children in Manhattan Middle School of the Arts and Academics (“MMS”).
- b) To improve the quality of education and the total school environment at MMS by supporting and funding academic and environment goals set forth by the School Accountability Team.
- c) To serve in an advisory capacity to the principal of MMS, and to work in a collaborative forum with the principal and staff to facilitate effective site-based management.
- d) To raise funds through fund-raising activities that shall be used for educational projects and other educational activities for MMS’s students, faculty and staff.
- e) To act as a coordinating body, for all members of the PTO who would like to volunteer their time at MMS, and to provide a structure for communication among students, parents, faculty, staff, administration, and members of the community.

**How Do We Raise Money: All amounts will be in the treasurer’s report.**

**Magic Phoenix—Amanda Wember Chair**

This is Manhattan’s Major Fundraiser. It is a direct appeal to the parents and guardians of our students. The campaign starts when school starts. We get a wish list from teachers, for items that aren’t included in their budgets but would enhance the classroom experience. Then we send out the wish list along with a letter asking for donations. This year we had a goal of \$30,000; we raised over \$37,000 and distributed over \$36,600 into the school.

Highlights this year:

- \*Teachers Involved! And kids! Drawings for prizes & teacher activities (pie in the face, song by teachers, painting the teachers)
- \*Money distributed in early November, spend date of mid January, or be forfeited
- \*PTO generated money for compostable products, projects committee, and school garden
- \*Distributed additional funds for school wide items, chrome cart & Hoki chairs
- \*Handed out school wide snack, ice cream bars, for reaching our goal

**Community Dinners**

These are fundraisers that are set up on a monthly basis, and families can choose to participate or not. If clubs or groups at MMS have financial needs, we try to assign one of these nights to the group. Who we funded this year, kids going on the art field trip, Minecraft club, Robotics Club, Latina Leadership Club, Music Students, and our families in need. We had events at California Pizza Kitchen, The Kitchen Next Door, Chipotle, Glacier, and Yellow Belly.

**Box Tops & Milk Caps**

There are collection boxes at the front entrance, near the office. These items are collected throughout the year with the purpose of purchasing something for the entire school to use. In the past, we purchased a popcorn machine, a sno-cone machine, and part of a portable sound system.

We have not purchased anything this year; we currently have generated over \$300, and will be submitting another box top for roughly \$150.

### **Grocery Cards**

This is our third year to have the reloadable grocery card program at King Soopers and Safeway. A goal is to grow this program, as it is an easy way to generate money without a cost to the donor. This year we also added OZO coffee cards. We have also added a way to pay for these cards on our website.

### **School Store**

This year we continued to have school supplies, such as reeds, locks, pencils, paper, protractors, planners, etc. We also added sketchbooks and erasers that were requested by the art department. The mark up is very low, as this was for the convenience of the students. We continue to offer healthy food selections. We also offered switch drinks, but Costco no longer stocks these.

### **How Do WE Support MMS:**

#### **Teacher Support:**

- \*Provided a Welcome Back lunch for our staff before school started to introduce the PTO members and to start the year off on a good note.
- \*We provide information about volunteers for the teachers, from Volunteer forms.
- \*We provide meals for teachers and staff during conference nights, this year we provide three dinners in the fall and spring. For two of the meals we purchased tamale dinners from one of our parents.
- \*We provide snacks for the teachers and staff throughout the year.
- \*We support the Projects committee, which assists the teachers in tasks
- \*We treat our teachers and staff to a wonderful week during Teacher Appreciation Week in May—this year we had drawings and then thru generous donations we able to give \$10 to each staff member at MMS,

#### **School Support:**

- \*Coordinate the Bike to School and Earth Day—making the events fun for the kids.
- \*Sponsor the Winter Social; by supplying the compostable, and organizing the event, this year we had a family donate the ice cream for the night.
- \*Bought compostable products for school use.
- \*Co-sponsored the 6<sup>th</sup> grade welcome coffee for parents.
- \* Contributed financial resources to the science garden.
- \*Assist with Vision and Hearing Screening and provide snacks for the volunteers.
- \*Provide snacks for open enrollment Principal's coffee.
- \*Help to distribute the Trip Tracker Awards on a monthly basis.
- \*Assisted with Open Enrollment tours.
- \* Contributed financially to the Project Committee; this committee has cleaned several areas of the school, organized chrome carts, along with updating all the bulletin boards in the school, along.
- \*Contributed financially to support the Cherry Creek Arts Display at MMS
- \* Sponsor the visit by poet Jovan Mayes for the entire school.
- \*Purchased a complete chrome cart for school use, purchased another cart to store chrome books, and purchased several Hoki stools for the entire school to use.
- \*Made \$150 donation to Impact On Education for their fundraiser
- \*Paid for the trip tracker program this year, \$675
- \*Organized the PARCC snacks for testing.

**Upcoming events for End of School Year:**

May 20—8<sup>th</sup> grade Bowling Field Trip, End of Year Dance

May 23—6th Grade Transition Picnic @MMS

May 25—Locker Clean Out

May 26—8<sup>th</sup> Grade Continuation Ceremony & Picnic