

**Minutes of the Mantua PTA
November 5, 2003
Mantua Elementary School**

The president called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. Present at the meeting were:

Executive Board: *Carole Thomas, Pam Promisel, Beth McKeown, Laura Mead, and Rob Luftglass.*

School Representatives: *Jan-Marie Fernandez, Tina Tingler, Cheryl Thompson, and Ann Baum.*

Board Members: *Allen Clark, Jennifer Cooper, Loren Brandman, Beth Whitehead, Randi Kirkland, Deirdre Mayes, Chris Love, and Barb Suidikas.*

General Membership: *Sabrina Pagkalinawan, Barbara Mingo, Donna Yudkin, and Margarita Foster.*

Tina Tingler made a **motion** that the minutes of the October 1, 2003 meeting be approved. Chris Love seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Beth McKeown distributed an income statement for the 4 months ending 10/31/03. The amounts for Sally Foster and the Auction are not yet final.

Carole Thomas presented the **Announcements:**

- Tonight's topic, presented by Ms. Fernandez, is the integration of technology at Mantua.
- Two of the three major fundraisers - the Auction and Sally Foster - have completed and were very successful. Thanks to all who were involved. These two fundraisers should net between \$45,000 and \$50,000. We plan to start applying these funds towards a prioritized wish list from the staff at the January PTA meeting.
- Loren Brandman asked if it would be possible to allocate some of these funds now, specifically for Math Happenings for upper grades. Ms. Fernandez said she would support this as a part of wish list. Loren made a **motion** to allocate up to \$1,700 for upper grades for the Math Happenings program. Pam Promisel seconded the motion. A discussion ensued. We have \$1,200 in budget plus \$835 encumbered already for Math Happenings. This request is in addition to that amount. This is a take-home program that provides both enrichment and remediation. The motion carried.
- Directories will be provided next month.
- The PTA recently treated the Custodians to Honey Baked Hams and gift checks for Custodian appreciation week
- The PTA is nominating Ronnie Hanpeter for Teacher of the Year.

- The PTA is donating money from the benevolent fund to Education Trust Funds for two students (siblings) who recently lost their father.
- We are still looking for volunteers for County Council and School Board liaisons and the Woodson Coalition. Plus, we need volunteers for some community spirit programs. It would be a benefit to have representative on the Woodson ReNEWal group to keep PTA informed.

Mrs. Fernandez made the **Principals' Report**:

The Spirit Parade was held last Friday. The younger students enjoyed the parade, though the older students did not appear to enjoy it. We are discussing this with SCA to see if there are any alternatives.

The Thanksgiving Luncheon is scheduled for November 19 and 20.

CogAt testing is underway.

The Minister of Education for the Republic of Ireland will be visiting shortly.

Cheryl Thompson announced that Margarita Foster is putting together a committee to address transportation/traffic near the school. While traffic is continually being fine-tuned (and hopefully improving), input is encouraged. Anyone who is interested in joining this committee should contact Margarita.

Traffic is going somewhat smoothly, aided by an earlier arrival of buses in the afternoon, streamlining of bus routes, and coordination with other schools. The school encourages parents to use buses instead of driving children to school to reduce traffic. This new committee will review various options and make the appropriate recommendations to the school and the community.

Ms. Thompson is fine-tuning the recess schedule, most recently adding ten minutes to recess for grades five and six by leaving lunch early for those who have completed lunch. We need volunteers for the ten-minute gap before teachers come back from their thirty minute lunch.

Tina Tingler commented on the TC after-school program. She is researching grant funding sources.

Teacher Representative Report: Ann Baum reported on the garden. We are teaming up with Frost to build a garden structure. Planting is ongoing. Ms. Baum will submit a wish list for the garden to Ms. Fernandez..

The following **Committee Reports** were filed:

Auction/Basketball: Laura Mead reported that evaluations will be held this weekend. We plan to maintain the schedule online. Regarding the Auction, many thanks to all the volunteers. It was a huge success. While final numbers are not yet available, we expect a net profit of approximately \$32,000.

Kids Care Club: Jennifer Cooper announced that we are collecting eyeglasses through a program sponsored by Lens Crafter and Lions Club. The support of troops was a huge success and very much appreciated by troops. Leaf raking will be on November 15 and a Raccoon Run meeting will be held on November 19.

Traffic – Margarita Foster announced that informal work had been going on to address traffic and transportation concerns around the school, and that we would be making this more formal as a committee. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Margarita at brookhs@aol.com. Note that most activity will be handled via emails vs. meetings.

Fall Fundraiser (Sally Foster): Carole Thomas reported for Jeanine Davies and Lynn Richmond. The fundraiser was very successful, earning the PTA approximately \$17,000. Online sales are still available until January 15.

Community Spirit – Carole Thomas reported for Julia Margulies. Clothing sales will be happening soon, with pictures available on the website. We still need coordinators for events.

Parent Education: Pam Promisel announced that a seminar was held on Monday. Dr. Leslie Smith discussed different learning styles and 35 parents attended.

Original Works: Barbara Mingo discussed this new program in which children's artwork will be available for sale on magnets and other items. This is a fundraiser for the PTA general fund. Since this is the first time, we are not sure of the response.

Principal Coffee: Barb Suidikas announced that there will be a coffee to discuss Professional Learning Communities on November 12.

Drama Club: Beth Whitehead announced that the performances are all coming together and will be held on November 21 and 22. Beth asked about paper in the restrooms. A suggestion regarding non-heated hand dryers was made. Ms. Thompson and Beth will discuss this and other ideas.

Woodson Coalition: Leanne Stynchula made a **motion** for the PTA to purchase a Red Ribbon Week banner for approximately \$155. Donna Yudkin seconded the motion and it carried. We are learning a lot regarding what is happening with teenagers with parents not knowing. We are hoping to educate parents about this shortly.

At the request of the PTA, Ms. Fernandez presented information on the **integration of technology** at Mantua.

First, a video from the auction was shown, illustrating what the auction was raising money for. Two-thirds of profits are intended to fund a mini-lab of 16 laptop computers for all classes. Additional funds are going towards musical instruments, field trips and infrastructure.

Ms Fernandez's presentation touched on many topics, including:

- the school is replacing many obsolete computers – through the Knects program as well as school system purchases and assistance from the PTA.
- Through the Laptop initiative, all teachers either already have or will soon have laptops.
- Teachers are being trained on the laptops to ensure that they are used effectively.
- Several specialists are also receiving laptops.
- Laptops have also been received through the Visual Literacy Project. Further, these laptops are being connected to mimeo or smartboards to can display from the laptops to board. This capability is being rolled out for both LD students and into general ed.
- Teachers are getting more and more skilled with the technologies.
- We are moving away from overheads to projectors directly from laptops, which enhances the presentation capabilities making things more fluid.
- Training is ongoing on the use of PCs (vs. Macs) and Blackboard.
- Ms. Thompson discussed MIT (Mantua Institute of Technology). With MIT, we are meeting the need to educate our teachers to seamlessly integrate technology into the classroom. Weekly classes are being held for teachers, with focus on specific topics like telecommunications, databases, graphics, video editing, etc...
- Technology is a great tool for the students – they are not afraid of the technology.

Ms. Fernandez fielded questions, as follows:

Where does Frost stand regarding technology? Ms. Fernandez answered that Frost is moving ahead and moving from Mantua to Frost no longer requires a step back from a technology perspective. They are integrating technology at all levels.

What are Mantua's technology priorities over the next couple of years? Ms. Fernandez indicated that our priorities include teacher education, replacing obsolete and Apple computers (we will have 3 mobile Dell labs), and wireless (creating access points in various places throughout school) . We are also evaluating what to do when the Emates are gone, the use of digital textbooks and projectors (vs. overheads).

Do all teachers have laptops? Ms. Fernandez indicated that within two 2 weeks, all teachers will have laptops and that training underway. *What about specialists?* Some specialists have laptops (primarily ESOL, Reading and Special Ed.).

Carole thanked Ms. Fernandez and asked to be provided with feedback on today's topic and any suggested topics for the next time.

Motions Carried

A motion carried to approve the minutes of the October 1, 2003.

A motion carried to allocate up to \$1,700 for upper grades for the Math Happenings program.

A motion carried for the PTA to purchase a Red Ribbon Week banner for approximately \$155.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 pm. The next meeting will be December 3, 2003.

Robert Luftglass
Secretary