

**PTA General Meeting Notes
October 11, 2012
Mantua Elementary School**

The president called the meeting to order at 7:06 PM.

Present at the meeting were:

Executive Board: Lesley Kowalski, Carolyn Stephan, Jennifer Epley, Shannon Murphy, Teresa LeMair, Julie Middleton

School Representatives: Jan-Marie Fernandez and Amy Alley

General Membership: Lisa Klein, Becky Fisher, Lori Recher, Lori Prendergast, Donna Pentek, Bobbi Nelson, Robert Silkowitz, Serena Chan, Allison Warren, Susan Kim, Kristin Loiacono, John Thomas, A. Doyle, Janet Sottolano, Colleen Parker, Jessica R. Chapman, Kathy Phillips, Monica Cameron, Margaret Scheele, Julie Lifland, Paul Malc

Vote: The Minutes from the September meeting were reviewed and voted on by the membership with some spelling corrections.

President's Report: Lesley's report began with the announcement that she and the Mantua PTA received a 2012 Bammy from Excellence in Education in the Parent Group Leader category. To learn more about the awards, visit: <http://www.bammyawards.com/index.php/all-2012-nominee-finalists>.

School Board member, Sandy Evans, held a meeting with PTA leaders in her district to discuss various issues. Ms. Evans discussed the county's process for finding a replacement for Dr. Jack Dale, the county's superintendent since July 2004. The school board is interested in what qualities the community would like to see in the future superintendent.

The PTA is always looking for volunteers to help with Grant Writing. There are many opportunities that the PTA would like to apply for, but need more help in doing that.

The Academic Competition meeting that Lesley hosted was very well attended.

Lesley gave Monica Cameron some time during her President's report to discuss one of the VA PTA Legislative Proposals that local PTA's are being asked to vote on. Monica discussed the proposal pertaining to allowing home schooled children to participate in public school extracurricular activities such as sports. The VA PTA Legislative Proposal supports the position that home schooled students should NOT be allowed to participate in public school sports teams. Monica does not support this proposal and did some research to find out how many students would get access to these extracurricular activities. According to her research there are 479 home-school students in the county, but 55,000 students in the public school. She does

not think a state law is necessary and would not provide flexibility for counties across the state with different circumstances than Fairfax. Kathy Phillips mentioned that Mantua's Basketball Program is open to all kids in the community, not just those kids who attend Mantua. This is a program that could be impacted by the proposed legislation. Monica encouraged parents to express their opinion by voting on this issue. Meeting attendees were given the opportunity to complete a VA PTA Legislative Proposal ballot. The ballot was also made available on line. The ballots are due to VA PTA October 23, 2012.

Lesley expressed her condolences to the Glenn Family for the death of their son, Bryan, a senior at Woodson High School.

Treasurer's Report (Carolyn Stephan): Carolyn reported that at this point in the year very little has impacted the P&L. We made \$600 more than budgeted with the Ice Cream Social due largely to higher sales than anticipated. Membership dollars are on par with last year at this point in the year. In addition, Basketball is on target to meet, if not exceed, its budgeted income. Drama Club dues are coming in now. We budgeted \$1500 for sound system which has been purchased. We still have \$400 budgeted for speakers if we need them. In addition, a stage light is out and needs to be fixed.

Principals' Report: Jan-Marie Fernandez gave the principal's report. She announced that Spirit Day is October 26th. The Spirit Parade is Mantua's version of a Halloween celebration. It takes place on the field by the Kiss and Ride at the end of the day. Classroom Parties usually happen that day, too.

Teachers have been administering practice tests for the Fairfax Abilities Test known as the CogAt. The actual test will be given to the 2nd grade over the following 2 weeks. Unfortunately a spam email was sent by a company called Mercer. The email offered practice tests for sale for the Fairfax Abilities Test. That email was not sent by the FCPS or the publisher of the test, Riverside. It's not known how Mercer got a copy of the practice test and FCPS is looking into the issue.

Mrs. Fernandez said that progress reports/interims going out next week. Not all teachers are issuing progress reports, however, the parents of students who are struggling will be contacted about that. This is the first year that all elementary schools are using the new standards based report card. Teacher conferences will be the end of October/beginning of November. Do not worry if your child receives a 1 or a 2. That means that he or she is starting to understand concepts the concepts and is likely to improve.

The 4-6th Grades are using the Reflection Sheets for discipline situations. These sheets do impact report cards. By using this system, the hope is that students will be reflective on their behavior and actively make changes. Mrs. Sottolano says the discipline system is working. She feels that all teachers are working together and speaking with one voice.

The recent death of Bryan Glenn has made for some interesting discussions at school. Teachers are having to deal with kids talking about these recent events with their friends who may not know what happened. Mrs. Fernandez knows that parents need to decide how to discuss these issues with their children, but asked that parents also discuss with their kids what is appropriate to talk about at school.

Report of First Vice-President for Community Outreach(Teresa LeMair):

1. New Program called Math COUNTS- Mr. Malc is sponsoring the program at Mantua with Eli a former Mantua student who is now a 9th grader at Thomas Jefferson HS. Math COUNTS will help students prepare for middle and high school math. It is open to 6th Graders only. There will be weekly meetings about competition Math with an actual competition at the end of the year. Up to 10 students can compete with a group of 4 students on each team. The program will be held on Monday nights at 7:30 p.m. starting October 22nd.
2. Lori Prendergast gave the report on Girls on the Run (GOTR), Art Reflections and Chess Club.
 - GOTR- 25 girls are meeting before school at 8 a.m. on Mondays and Wednesdays. This Fall we have a good group of girls. Many of the older girls have taken up mentoring roles with the younger girls.
 - Art Reflections Program- Deadline for submission is November 9th. We have received only 1 submission to date. Submissions can potentially go up to the National level. The theme is "Magic of the Moment." Some one suggested presenting the competition to the SACC teachers to see if they could work with their kids on submissions.
 - Chess Club- Mr. Malc and Mr. Svoboda will run Chess Club starting on October 23rd; Chess club is open to 4-6th graders.
3. Kathy Philips gave the report on Chat & Chew- registration ends tomorrow for Chat & Chew which is the lunchtime book club that will start in December.
4. Margaret Sheele gave the report on the Parent Education program. [RESCHEDULED TO DECEMBER 5th] On October 29th at 7 p.m. there will be a seminar called, "Yes, You can Raise Financially Aware Kids". Childcare is available. Mrs. Fernandez commented that younger kids don't grasp money since we use credit cards so frequently. This is a very important issue for kids.
5. Teresa made the following announcements.
 - We have a coordinator for the *Kids Care Club*- Amy Smith with some helpers will hold KCC meetings on the 3rd Thursday of the month.
 - In addition, she thinks that she has a volunteer for the *Community Building Network* position. The *Take Home Reading Program* will start 2nd quarter for the K-2 grades. Training is on October 25th.

- *Digital Kidz* we received 160 applications. Due to that overwhelming interest in the program we opened up Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday classes. They will start next week after school.
- The *FLEX*- Foreign Language program- is close to finalizing Level 1 and Level 3 Chinese classes.
- The *Drama Club* will be performing "Treasure Island" in November.
- The Mentor Works is off to a great start. Staff members and parents are working with kids who have been identified as needing a mentor. They are meeting on a weekly basis.
- Other After-School opportunities could be available over the winter. The PTA will be sending out a Survey Monkey to judge interest in Yoga, Pottery, Guitar Lesson, and a LEGO building class among other classes.
- The first Family Fun Night will be on November 2nd – Pokeman

Report of Second Vice-President for Fundraising (Jennifer Epley): Jennifer made the following report:

- Bobbi Nelson and Yelena Jones are the yearbook coordinators for Mantua. This year, there will be no mailings for order forms which will save over \$1200. Instead, forms will be sent home in the Tuesday Folders or accessed through the Alert News; Link on Web site. The cost of yearbooks is \$25. The Theme is U.S. Presidents. They are always in need of high resolution photos. Please list what the picture is (what class, what event, date) and email them to: mantuayearbooks@gmail.com
- Tomorrow- deadline for Spirit Wear- the form is on PTA website.
- Book Fair is starting Friday, November 9th. The Diary of a Wimpy Kid pre-sale is under way. Please access the volunteer sign-up sheet for the book fair on the PTA website.
- Still accepting donations for November Auction- There will be an Ice Cream party for the class who brings in the most items for the Auction. Deadline is Oct 19th.
- The Carnival will be March 16th, 2013. We have budgeted \$24,000 in income. Our Carnival Chairs, Julie Lifland and Kerry Hogg, however, feel more comfortable with \$19,700. We know it will all work out in the end.
- Box Tops- deadline October 19th
- Link for Amazon- If you shop on Amazon, please start on the Mantua PTA web page and use the Amazon button on the upper left-hand side of the page. The PTA will get a percentage of your sale.
- Facebook Page- We are still looking for someone to administer the FB page.

Report of Second Vice-Presidents for Membership (Shannon Murphy)- Shannon gave the report on Membership. She provided statistics comparing previous years' membership totals with the current year.

Total memberships as of 10/11/12: 361 families

Total memberships as of 10/11/11: 296 families

Total memberships as of 10/11/10: 266 families

Old Business:

New Business:

Rob Silkowitz presented a potential new program for the Spring- Hershey's Track and Field Games which is a free program for kids aged 9-14. Basic track sports will be taught. It's open to girls and boys. See this website for more background information on the program:

<http://www.hersheystrackandfield.com/#/Inspire-Excellence>

Red Ribbon Week will be the end of October. Red Ribbon Week reminds all of us to stay "Safe and Drug Free." Each day students should wear a different outfit to support this important effort. Mrs. Sottolano expressed how important this issue is to her. Her husband deals with law enforcement and curbing drugs. She says we would all be surprised by what types of drugs are available many of them legal drugs. These drugs are having bad effects on kids. As a community we need to make a big deal about teaching our kids to stay away from drugs.

Fungi Award- This month's Fungi Award winner is Paul Malc, 6th Grade Teacher at Mantua and his work with after school programs for the kids such as the Chess Club.

Meeting adjourned at 8:31 PM.