

## The Manning School: Parent Council Summary 10/8/13

*These meetings are OPEN to ALL Manning School Parents. Please consider attending on Tuesday November 12 at 6.30pm*

### Words from the Co-chairs

Thanks to Jodie and Claire for all their hard work last year. Thank you to Heather for all she has done in getting volunteers and helping to contribute to the school community.

Focus for this year will be on improving our communications as members of Parent Council.

How can WE (all parents at Manning) do more? We need to be thinking what else can we do to help further the goals of this community?

### Brief Notes from Ethan

- SSC
  - Discussed k-8 expansion. We will have a growth and expansion committee and also much discussion about what the other implications of growth might be. It appears that this year's application would be due in May of 2014.
  - Academic Rigor—for all students—we did well on MCAS last year compared to other BPS schools but we want to do even better. The state is our competition (Re: open response questions—we are below the state 4 pt scale-by .27--Goal this year is to decrease this to .13)
  - Building and clarifying our inclusive environment. We at Manning firmly believe Inclusion is why we do so well.

Across all 3 of these areas we NEED to work on building communication in all sorts of ways.

### Report Backs

- SSC : (Amanda Lapham) Today discussed the vision work: Growth and Expansion , Academic Rigor and Inclusion.
- Growth and Expansion: We are looking at changing status: charter, innovation, pilot, Horace Mann school etc. Each have a different degree of autonomy but remain in district public schools. There are 5 areas of autonomy that come with becoming something other than a traditional public school: staffing, curriculum, budgeting, scheduling, and assessment.

Our first step is to tell our story. Telling the story of children's success at the Manning. We need to hear from our diverse community about how the Manning has helped everybody across the spectrum. WE NEED parent engagement about how the school has benefited their families. We are looking for ALL stories to sell this to the district. The school committee needs to hear from Emotional Impairment families AND everyone else. We should ask ourselves: How has this school been a positive force in my child/children's life.

- Family Engagement: Cyn Young is spearheading and initiative to find ways to increase and diversify family participation. Engagement begins with knowledge about what is going on. How to be engaged? There is a large spectrum of how to be engaged from reading to your child, to attending a parent night to attending a parent council meeting. What are the committees, how can parents be involved and how can we let parents know about the multiple ways to be involved. She met with Chip, Anna, Zack and Ethan last week to begin this initiative. They came up with these ideas:
  - Communication Improvements: all school list serve, class list serve,
  - Inclusive Decision Making process: Engagement means that parents feel they are part of the decision making process. They become informed advocates for their own kids. They

- know where to go for support, who to reach out to and how to access them. Improved decision making and advocacy for all parents.
- Focus groups: Host groups to get parents together (EI, IEP, of color, same sex, single parents etc) to get them talking about their particular situations. This would allow us to look at what's working, incentives to participation, obstacles to participation, how to get them to feel like more of the decision making structures.

## **Class Parents**

K1-Jennie Lapollo and Jodie Casagrande  
K2- Jane Miller and Stacey Kaplan  
1st-Stacey Kaplan and Kiersten Konefal  
2nd-Rachel Newton and Nancy Sharkey  
3rd-Amanda Lapham and Nikki  
4th-Nini Diana, Nancy Sharkey and Lindsay MacNeil  
5th- TBD

### **Ideas for this year:**

Are presentations to the community still part of what we do?

This has been successful in the past. Anna asked if you could learn one thing that would help you be a better support person to your child...

Ideas:

school wide math night \* in school folks to talk about curricular tie ins for outdoor space \* teaching emotional intelligence (Daniel Goldman) \* Dan Habib, documentary film maker who made a film about inclusion latest film: Who cares about Kelsey \* urban gardner group \* speakers focused on boys and schools \* teaching cursive/penmanship \* lice \* homework (pros and cons) how to make it most effective \* technology in parent council/the classroom \* how to talk to your children about drug prevention \* strategic planning re: community building \* chop chop (family cooking) \* children's nutrition

## **Events and Fundraising**

We have financial obligations to pay 1/2 Ms. Leesa's salary and other obligations so our fundraisers are incredibly important.

- Upcoming events
  - Holiday Fundraisers-in past did Yankee candle and Equal Exchange. We need someone to take the lead on selecting a holiday. Nini Diana and Nancy Sharkey
  - Dance-a-thon-Rachel Newton, Lyndsay MacNeil and Scott Lapollo are in charge. It will be Saturday, Nov 23rd. 1-3.
  - Bake Sale-Nancy Sharkey and Lindsay MacNeil did a great job at last bake sale. They volunteered to take the lead for the Nov 5<sup>th</sup> bake sale. They are asking for added support at end of the day –after 4pm.

*Questions or comments can be emailed to our Co-Chairs*

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