

OCTOBER 29, 2015

MANCHESTER TOWN-WIDE PTA COUNCIL

COUNCIL CONNECTIONS

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT:

**MANCHESTER
COUNCIL
PTA®**
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Happy Fall, PTA Friends!

It's hard to believe but the first couple of months of school have come and gone! I hope that your PTA's school year is off to a fantastic start. Please know that the Manchester Town-wide PTA Council is here to support you however we can. Whether you need help with a specific issue or just want to get help brainstorming, we can help you. Also, please tell us about the successes you are having too! We'd love to hear about those as well.

Hopefully at some point before your school year started your PTA Board had a chance to have a conversation about PTA goals for the year. Setting goals for your PTA is truly important. The Manchester Town-wide

PTA council has set the following goals for the year: Communication: Resume publishing a Council Connection newsletter; Send out updates bimonthly to PTA Leaders; Establish monthly report update.

So what is YOUR PTAs membership goal this year? Do you want to increase membership by a certain percentage? Get more dads, uncles, grandpas, and other men to join?



Students at Washington School during a STEM class.

MEMBERSHIP STRATEGIES

ABC's of Male Involvement

What does your PTA look like? Do men make up half your PTA members? Leaders? Volunteers? If they don't, do you know why? Do you know why men are important to PTA? Studies show students perform better when BOTH parents are involved in education. Men and women think differently and bring different perspectives to PTA. PTAs are more vibrant and more appealing to all when both men and women help run them. PTA does regular membership surveys and the results are informative.

A = Ask

Ask men to participate. Nearly half the men polled in surveys said they were not asked to join PTA. As with every "sales pitch," asking them is the strongest tool you have to get men involved in PTA.

Continued on the back

Membership Strategies (Cont.)

Understand that sending a form through the "backpack express" or a flier on the PTA table at a school open house is not a very effective "ask." A real "ask" is personal and powerful. Show enthusiasm and draw on your experiences. Don't apologize for asking, and be prepared to say what your PTA is doing to help their children and the school. Most important, make the message meaningful to men.

B = Bend

One size does not fit all in meeting the needs of PTA members, particularly men. Unless your unit is brimming with male PTA members, what you are doing is not working. Therefore, it is essential that you bend, that is, be flexible in your actions and thinking. The top reason men in our survey gave for not joining PTA was time. In fact, time was the top reason for not joining PTA among all survey participants. But what does time have to do with signing up as a member, paying dues, and carrying a membership card? The fact is that most people think that belonging to the PTA means they have to volunteer. Joining the PTA is a great way to support children and the school in and of itself. Men not only want to know if membership equals volunteering, but almost half of the men surveyed said they would volunteer if their roles and expectations were clearly defined. For these survey participants PTA membership and volunteering are not social activities—these men want results.

C = Communicate

"C" stands for communication—the centerpiece of any effort to attract new members. What needs to be communicated? At every opportunity, communicate the value of PTA, the value of membership, the need for members, and the need for men. Our survey asked men how to communicate effectively with them. Their #1 answer was male-oriented advertising. It is important to understand that men do not necessarily respond to "parent" as meaning "male" or "dad." They see it as any parent who is handling the family/school stuff, and often this is the mom. Therefore, communicate to dads (not parents) that they are welcome by addressing letters, announcements, and other communications to "moms and dads." Highlight opportunities and activities specifically for men.

What Men Want

They want clear agendas, results-oriented meetings, and quick and effective meeting communication. Men prefer bulleted lists and reports, summary points, email communication before and after meetings, and quick updates and reports.

Finally, let moms, dads, and all family members know that the biggest payoff of PTA membership and involvement is the success of their children in school and in life. There is no greater gift children can get than to know that their parents and family care enough about them to get involved.

Additional information is available on the National PTA Website.

OF NOTE

Our new Council Board Members

- President - Christine Cardoso
- Treasurer - Kay Fyler
- Secretary - Tracy Maio
- SEPTA - Rebecca Thereault

Council Meetings Dates, Time and Location

The Manchester Town PTA Council Meetings will be on Thursdays at 6:30 pm in the Media Center at the school listed. (Babysitting is available during the meeting.)

- October 29, 2015 at Waddell
- November 19, 2015 at Buckley
- December - no meeting
- January 28, 2015 at Martin
- February 25, 2015 at Bowers
- March 31, 2015 at MHS
- April 28, 2015 at Robertson
- May 26, 2015 at Washington

Board of Education Meetings

11/9 at Keeney Street School and/or
11/23 at Lincoln Center at 7:00pm

Science Nights Are Back

School Science nights are from February - March 2016
District wide Science fair is on March 19, 2016 at Illing Middle School.
WE NEED VOLUNTEERS!!!!

President and Treasurer Training Webinars

Monday November 2, 2015 at 10am
Monday November 9, 2015 at 7 pm
Sunday November 15, 2015 at 7 pm
Go to the CT PTA Website to register

We Have a New SEPTA Committee

Next meeting on November 30, 2015
at 6:30 at Keeney Street School