

Mercer Island Schools Choir Boosters

Meeting Minutes

November 20, 2023

Chair: Tom Henderson

Attendees: Annalise Rockow, Brooke Conway, Shari Matheson, Angela Hoefer (zoom)

Location: MIHS Room 503

We kicked off the meeting with a motion to approve the minutes from October – approved.

It's been a busy couple of months for choir, so we spent some time reviewing activities and noting future ideas when appropriate.

- Eastshore Honors Choir – 21 students between IMS and MIHS participated in the regional honors choir. There is no boosters involvement. It went very well and will continue. Additional honors choirs: Several students auditioned for and were accepted into additional honors choirs: 8 IMS and MIHS students were accepted into WMEA (all state choir) and 6 into ACDA (regional choir covering 6 states).
- MIHS Retreat: The retreat was a huge success and Annalise plans to continue to next year. To hold our spot Annalise will need a deposit in the spring – boosters agreed to cover this (Shari will add to the budget). We will need to determine if this lowers the cost of the retreat for families or is a temporary placeholder.
- Dine out fundraiser: The Sahara fundraiser was a big success. Besides choir families, we believe the IMS students holding signs outside the lot drove additional families into order. We'll plan to do this next time as well. We discussed frequency of dine outs and decided 2x a year to not overwhelm families. We'll plan to do again the spring and announce at all district (where we also plan to do another bake sale). Sahara is interested in putting a picture of the choir on their wall, so Shari/Annalise will take pictures at the IMS/MIHS portion of the upcoming IMS winter field trip (when all kids will be in choir tshirts). We can look into doing something more professional in the future.

We then discussed upcoming activities that need booster support.

- IMS Winter field trip is on Dec 6: Every year the IMS choir works with the high school choir and then takes a field trip to go ice skating with orchestra. Boosters agreed to pay for lunch (more below) and ice skating (approximately \$564). For lunch – we agreed to do pizza again. It needs to be ready for pick up by 11am, so Angela will check in with Sahara to see if they can do this, if not we'll go with plan b (Dominos or another that opens earlier). We need pizza for 50 including one gluten free. Shari will make salad and get Rice Krispies Treats and other snacks from Costco. Shari and Angela can both chaperone.
- Tree lighting at Mercerdale Park on Dec 1: The city puts on this event and MIHS choir will sing twice (opening and closing) during the ceremony. After singing they will go to the firehouse for

an activity there (Firehouse munch), but will not sing at the retirement center this year due to timing. Annalise will send an email to 5th grade and IMS families encouraging them to go. There will be a non-school sponsored party for the singers post activities (Odievich household). There is a sign up genie for families to contribute to snacks.

- MIHS field trips: Unfortunately, this year the UW and other choir festivals for high school students are during spring break. There is a competitive festival in Tri Cities. Annalise is going to look into and send a survey to families as it would involve longer travel/commitment.

Finances and communication

Next newsletter: We discussed getting the next newsletter out the week of 11/27, in advance of the tree lighting ceremony. Shari will create the newsletter for input. Here are the items we discussed touching on: retreat, honor choirs, upcoming performances, fall concert, how much money was raised and thank you, winter field trip. We need to determine if we add info to newsletter around chaperones for the middle school field trip.

Financial report – Benevity is working! This is great news as many companies participate in for donation matching. We've already received two donations through them for 1K each. In addition to roll over from last year, the funds from the dine-out and a much more successful fundraiser this year, the booster balance is now up to over 9k (last year we were at about 2k at this time). We spent some time discussing how we could use these funds.

- We agreed that we wanted donations to have impact year of donation, vs carrying a large savings.
- We have mainly been helping for the “food and fun” part of choir at this point due to funds – we discussed being able to contribute more to enrichment. While the budget needs to be worked through, we discussed making up to 2k available. This could include about \$150/200 for one off coaches to paying for the solo ensemble that happens in the spring (\$8 per participant). (Fine arts grants take care of most enrichment/clinicians).
- We agreed we want to put some booster funds into 5th grade related things. We discussed the boosters purchasing the 5th grade choir tshirts (Annalise will get a quote) and/or gift bags for the district event in the spring.
- Some other misc discussed: We have 50 bags that we could use for swag for one of the choirs or use to sell. Brooke will drop them for storage in the choir room while we decide how to use them. We discussed other things we could invest in for choir that would also be “marketing” – yard signs (orchestra has families purchase if they want – Tom will look into pricing), pay for high school sweatshirt next year. Angela to look into A frame signs that we could use to promote performances.

We closed with some miscellaneous items.

- Long range facilities discussion: School consolidation appears to be off the table. The district will likely send out another survey. If survey, again encourage arts families to participate with examples (like how great the Eastshore honors choir location was for performers). Band

boosters are now ready to engage after their return from NYC. The school district presents rough ideas to board in January.

- Boosters engagement: We'll continue to offer a zoom options and send mail to those interested 1-1 and ideally add to booster website.
- We will work on thank you notes for donors. Shari will work on getting a magnet made and Brooke will write letters.

Our next meeting will be an email check in on December 13. Our first in-person meeting for 2024 will be on January 8 at 5pm at MIHS room 503.

Minutes Submitted by: Brooke Conway