

Annual Association Meeting

MAY 12, 2022, 7:00 PM



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Table of Contents

Contents

Superintendent's Report _____	1
6-12 Principal's Report _____	3
Department Reports _____	4
Annual Association Minutes 2021-22 _____	16
MCS Constitution Articles I, II & III _____	19
Current Board of Trustees and Nominees _____	21
Nominee Introductions _____	22
Absentee Ballot _____	29

Annual Association Meeting: May 12, 2022, 7:00 PM Agenda

1. Devotions: Ryan Ruffatto, President
2. Approval of 2021 Minutes
3. Board Elections
4. Floor Nominations for the 2022-23 Board Nominating Committee
5. Presentation of Reports from Board and Board Sub-Committees
 - Superintendent's Report
 - 6-12 Principal's Report
 - Board Report- Darin Hoekema
 - Facilities Report- Tim Visser
 - Friends- Chase Dyksterhouse
 - Education Committee Report- Beth Kamerman
 - Stewardship Committee- Gloria Veltkamp
 - Athletics Report- Jeff Bellach
 - Foundation Report- Ron Hoekema
 - Early Learning Center Report- Stacey Burley
 - Finance Committee- Alan Venema
 - Twice Treasured- Faith Dyksterhouse
 - Elementary Remodel and Progress Report- Travis Hamilton
6. Closing Prayer

Superintendent's Report

Tim Visser, Superintendent – P-5 Principal

At the end of this school year, I plan to hit the pause button on a forty-two year career of leadership in a classroom and in a school. Along the way, I have learned a few things that I would like you to consider:

- My best teachers are my best learners. I watched teachers learn to code right alongside their students and observed students respect their teachers for modeling what it means to be a learner. It is one of the things I enjoy most as we work together to implement Teaching for Transformation. Even more, I am proud of the elementary staff for their journey into proficiency grade reporting and implementing a new math resource. Our community is stronger because our teachers want to learn.
- The Good, the True, and the Beautiful. Watching our fourth grade read with *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* and then seeing it again as a play caused me to read the Chronicles of Narnia from beginning to end. They are a beautiful expression of Lewis' exploration of Plato's argument regarding transcendence. I am so thankful that our students are challenged to use their knowledge to be seekers of truth, beauty, and goodness.
- "You Don't Know What You've Lost Until It's Gone" In the song Big Yellow Taxi, Joni Mitchel is rumored to have returned to Hawaii to find a grove of trees that had been taken out for a hotel parking lot. The stark change when the owners "paved paradise" struck her that something so beautiful was so easily forgotten.
- Manhattan Christian is a living and breathing organism that has existed for over a century. It has weathered a variety of storms, has basked in the sunshine of the plenty, and has withstood the test of time. It has done so because of the dedication of the people who came before us. They cared for the school that we now get to enjoy, but once they are gone, who will keep the organism alive for the next generation?
- The Gallatin Valley is changing. As new people join our school, how do we work together to understand our past so that we have a future? To use a quote from Soren Kierkegaard:

Life can only be understood backwards; but it must be lived forwards.

- Thank you. As Sue and I considered serving Manhattan Christian, she asked one very profound question- “Will we regret not going to Churchill?” We had spent the last thirty years in Seattle working with Shoreline Christian School and decided that we were ready for a change. We prayed that the Lord would open doors for us that would bring us closer to our families in Michigan. God answered our prayers with an opportunity that was ten hours closer. We wrestled with the decision. We were leaving our Seattle family for a place where we knew only a handful of people and had no family anywhere close. While we could have developed a list of why moving to Bozeman made no sense, the question of regret that the Lord planted in our brains would not go away.

Since moving here, we’ve learned how to “Live the Story” through Teaching for Transformation, and we have practiced “Singing a New Song” as we sought harmony amidst the noise that is Covid. We have seen the Signature of the Divine as we scaled mountains, floated rivers, and traversed miles of nothingness. We have witnessed God’s providence in classrooms, meetings, playgrounds, and athletic arenas. All of this to answer the question- We have no regrets; instead, we give thanks for all we have learned and for the people that learned with us.

6-12 Principal's Report

Nathanael Hope – 6-12 Principal

Firsts are often exciting and difficult at the same time. There is excitement about a new adventure, a new setting, creating new traditions, and learning new cultures and ways of doing things. There is difficulty as there are steep learning curves, unexpected challenges, and occasional feelings of sorrow when remembering what once was.

I deeply appreciate the Kierkegaard quote that Tim Visser uses: “Life can only be understood backwards; but it must be lived forwards.” As I look back over a 23 year teaching career, I cannot help but be in awe of how God was preparing me for an administrative role. Looking back over my first year as secondary principal at Manhattan Christian, I cannot help but be humbled by God’s kindness.

This year has seen many ups and downs. The learning curve has been steep and yet God has sustained all along. He continues to put His fingerprints on many unexpected circumstances and provides clear reminders that this is His school and that He is the one doing a work. We are truly seeing the story as we live the story. God puts His people in specific places at specific times for His specific purposes.

As is the case with many new positions, I have spent much of this year observing how things are done at MCS. I’ve appreciated learning traditions and getting to know staff and faculty at a deeper level. It has been wonderful to watch faculty grow closer together and work more as a team. I’ve enjoyed the laughs and conversations with students. It has been an absolute joy to teach Junior Bible class. (We have a great student body here by the way.) I look back over the year and I cannot help but smile at all that God has done.

As I look ahead to next year I find myself continuing to smile. I am eager to work with Joel Westa and learn from him as I have been privileged to learn from Tim this year. I am eager to continue supporting faculty so they can continuously grow as professional educators and role models. I look forward to continuing to build a culture where all students see themselves as part of a bigger family and as a unique member of the body of Christ. I look forward to watching first hand as God does an amazing work at Manhattan Christian!

My Deep Hope remains the same: *that faculty, staff, and students will Discover, Delight in, and Grow in their unique and special role in God’s story.*

Department Reports

Board Report

By Darin Hoekema

We approach the end of another school year with an abundance of gratitude for our excellent group of teachers and staff that have gracefully navigated another exceptional year. Although the year has continued with some challenges, with everyone's effort working together, we are blessed to end this year feeling pretty close to "normal." Our generous community continues to provide the countless volunteer hours and resources to make this all possible. It is so rewarding to see how God provides through each of you and has blessed MCS for over a century!

This year we welcomed Mr. Hope and are thankful for his willingness to dig in and get to know our school, community, and kids. A common phrase we hear from Mr. Hope is that our students and hallways would have the "Aroma of Christ." We can see that permeate his efforts as he learned the ropes and seeks to earn the trust of students, staff, and community. We are thankful for him and his family. We will also be saying goodbye to Mr. Visser this year and want to express our thanks to him for his Godly guidance. His years of experience have been a great asset in leading MCS through some very unusual times! A frequent phrase we hear from Mr. Visser is, "if you aim for nothing, you'll get nothing." That wisdom has often been the nudge that helped focus our efforts and seek to aim for where God is directing us.

We are thankful for God's guidance as we look toward new administration with the hiring of Mr. Joel Westa. He will be leading MCS next year with the new title, Head of School. Joel has a wide range of experience, and we are excited for his leadership. Along with the day-to-day administrative responsibilities, Joel will be tasked with helping us set and aim for some specific goals to guide MCS, both present and future. We face some unique challenges and opportunities looking ahead at the continued growth and cost of living in the Gallatin Valley. As we seek to be "the aroma of Christ" in our community we desire to hold true to who we are, while facing the challenges and opportunities ahead with faith.

We strive to see the Home, School, and Church work together to equip and educate our kids to be the "aroma of Christ" in our community and world! We ask for your continued prayers and support as we step forward in faith and aim to steward the resources and opportunities God provides. He has been faithful, and we know that he will remain so.

Facilities Report

By Tim Visser – Superintendent

Operations Committee Members– Travis Hamilton, Jeff Dkysterhouse, Gary Dykstra, Terry Sinnema, Gene Bennett, Todd Flikkema, Scott Kim, Jim Potts, and Tim Visser

We are thankful for Scott Kim who stays on top of our maintenance needs, for Todd Flikkema for his work as Transportation Manager, and for Gene Bennett as he works to keep the school clean. When we consider the heavy use of our facilities, grounds, and buses, these guys make it all work for the benefit of our community and especially our students.

A few highlights from the year:

- We are thankful for the years of service that Doug Dyk has offered in driving our athletes to countless venues across the state. His retirement leaves a hole in our community that will be a challenge to fill.
- Bill Alberda, Paul Dykstra, and Todd Flikkema have shouldered most of our transportation needs. We are thankful for David Folsom and Gary Dykstra for their willingness to fill in where needed. We are seeking additional people to expand our routes as well as cover the transportation needs on a daily basis.
- We were able to sell off two of our spare buses this year.
- We are thankful that the sudden water leak in our Eagle gym resulted in limited damage to the floor.
- With the closing of Montana Indoor Sports, we were able to purchase a plastic floor and basketball standards at a very reasonable price. It is our plan to install these elements in the Eagle gym.
- We continue to search for janitorial help. A few years ago, we had four people working before or after school to clean. We are currently working with two people. With an increase of students and increase of facility usage, we are not making their work any easier.
- This summer will be busy as we prepare for the upcoming school year. There is quite a bit of cleaning that needs to be done as well as maintenance both inside and outside our facilities.

Friends Report

By Chase Dyksterhouse – Chair

“Friends” of MCS is the booster fundraising branch of MCS. Each year, Friends is asked to raise funds for the school in order to help bridge the gap between tuition receipts and actual operating costs.

Friends is asked to raise around \$240,000 per year. This amount is broken down into three broad categories:

General Fund: \$140,000 Tuition Assistance: \$40,000 Athletics: \$60,000

Fundraising is accomplished through the following list of activities:

- Booster Plaque Program - (Booster, Athletic Ad Boosters, Fine Arts Boosters)
- Cattle Fund Committee
- Fall Harvest Festival
- Tulip Mania Supper and Auction
- SCRIP Program
- Sporting Event Concessions
- 3 on 3 basketball tournament

The “Athletics” amount of the total comes primarily from athletic activities such as the 3 on 3 basketball tournament, concessions, and the athletic portion of the Booster plaque program. The remaining fundraisers make up the support for the General Fund and Tuition assistance.

Parents with students enrolled at MCS are asked to contribute time toward the fundraising efforts. Each family is asked to sign up for jobs at the various fundraising events. Each job has been assigned a “point” value called Family Service Opportunities (FSO) and families are asked to sign up for five FSO points.

This was our first year back to holding events as normal, and the response was more than we could have hoped for. The Harvest Festival was held a couple weeks earlier than we typically hold it, and the weather was beautiful. The favorable weather and the blessing that harvest was all in resulted in the harvest festival bringing in record giving. Dutch Supper and Tulip Mania was well attended, and the reverse auction contributions more than covered the first year’s *(Cont.)*

payment of the recently purchased land. As a committee we continue to evaluate each event and the number of FSO points delegated to our many fundraising efforts. With the help of our many heads of fundraisers we have been able to redistribute points to fundraising efforts that sorely need the help, as well as add two new events that we are very excited about. Currently our K-5 students are participating in a Fun Run campaign. At the writing of this report the students have already generated over half of their goal, and they have 17 days to go. The second event we are planning is a car show being held this summer. Our Athletic event concessions were able to operate at full strength and had another great year. Concessions not only provides funds for our athletic programs, but receive many compliments on the selection and quality of the food.

Our Boosters Program continues to be successful and reaches a variety of businesses with varying advertising and sponsorship opportunities. We are continuing to look at new Booster recruitment and how to tap into a growing business economy in the Gallatin Valley. The cattle program is growing, beginning to build some momentum, building on past successes.

I personally would like to thank a few members of our committee. First after many years of service, Randy Visser has elected to step down as chair of the Friends committee. We would like to extend our deepest gratitude for the years of service Randy dedicated to the fundraising efforts for Manhattan Christian. Next, Jen Scott has let us know that she is nearing the end of her tenure as the head of our major events (Harvest Festival, Tulip Mania, and Dutch Supper). As with Randy, Jen has dedicated many years to ensuring our biggest events are planned, coordinated, and run with great success. Jen's absence will be sorely missed, but we are confident the Lord will provide the next volunteer to fill her shoes. The last change that will be coming is Jeff Dyksterhouse and Jodi Smith are going to be stepping down from heading up our athletic concessions at the end of the 2022-23 school year. Jeff and Jodi have dedicated their time to making sure bellies are full and taste buds are satisfied at most of our high school athletic events. Please be sure to thank all the above-mentioned volunteers for their years of service in raising money for the students of Manhattan Christian. We also ask that if your heart feels led to step into any of these roles, please reach out to any of the members of the Friends committee.

The Friends committee also wants to thank the hundreds of volunteers that participated in fundraising efforts this past school year. Oftentimes volunteers were asked to fill a different role than they signed up for and were expecting. Thank you for your willingness to adjust and move to where you were needed. The committee also wants to thank the many generous individuals and business donors that gave freely of their financial resources. The dedicated effort of so many volunteers and abundant generosity of donors continue to make Christian education an affordable opportunity for those parents desiring to train their children in the way of the Lord.

Education Report

By Beth Kamerman – Board Liaison for Education Committee

The Education Committee consists of Leah Brouwer, Julie Hager, Nathanael Hope, Beth Kamerman, Sharon Kamp, Kurt Kimm, Heidi Kuperus, Marylou Sytsma, Jeanette Walhof, and Tim Visser. Thank you to each of these individuals for their time and service to MCS on this committee. We have been tasked with overseeing the educational aspects of Manhattan Christian and here are some highlights from this past year:

- We have had several discussions regarding class sizes due to continued growth in our school. We praise God for increased enrollment, however it poses a number of challenges. Some of these challenges include not having an adequate number of classrooms, ensuring that our student to teacher ratio is reasonable, and the implications of class sizes for future school years.
 - The fifth grade class will be split for the 2022-23 school year. Jon VanDer Laan will continue to teach one half of the fifth grade class.
 - A first grade split class was approved for the 2022-23 school year, with one full time teacher and one part time teacher. The part time first grade teacher would teach five mornings per week with the majority of the core classes being held in the mornings while classes are split. Specials and full-group instruction would be held in the afternoons with the full-time teacher.
- A new position, Director of Student Learning, was approved. This will be a half time position to provide leadership and support for PS-5th grades.
- A special thank you to both Jean Selles and Sarah Van Gelder for their years of service teaching our preschool classes. They will not be returning to MCS to teach next year, so our committee is in the process of hiring a full-time preschool teacher for 2022-23.
- We are grateful to all of those who substituted for our teachers who were out on maternity leave this school year.
- Unfortunately, we will not be offering a Driver's Education Program this summer due to not being able to find an instructor. Thanks goes out to Mr. Jeffery Bennett for a fantastic job teaching last year's class.
- A new Math curriculum called "Bridges" was implemented in grades K-2 this school year. A huge thanks goes out to Mrs. Leah Brouwer for helping head up this effort. She put in an immense amount of time and effort this year to get it up and running.
- Approved the calendar for the 2022-23 school year (*Cont.*)

- Currently, we are interviewing to fill the following positions:
 - Preschool
 - First grade to address a grade split in the morning.
 - Fifth grade to split the grade

Stewardship Report

By Gloria Veltkamp – Admissions Director, Committee Member

The 2021-22 Stewardship Committee included Tim Visser, Mark Bradford, Ryan Ruffato, Darin Hoekema, Lexi Glaus, Jill Ayers, and Gloria Veltkamp. The committee's responsibilities are to oversee the admissions of the new students to our school and to manage the marketing/advertising for our school.

Marketing continues in our use of social media by making our school visible on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter. We have done some work to make the website more user-friendly and visually appealing by highlighting various events through photos on the main banner and linking important announcements and events on the circulating banners near the bottom.

We were pleased to welcome 27 new families with 47 new students to Manhattan Christian this school year. We are very excited to be able to provide Christian education to students in available spots! It is a joy to have families come for tours and share MCS with them. We appreciate every parent's help in spreading the word about our school. Sharing your positive experiences with others is one of the greatest marketing tools that we have. Thank you for your help in sharing these experiences with others.

Athletics Report

By Jeff Bellach – Athletic Director

The traditions continued with Manhattan Christian athletes and coaches during this 2021-22 school year. Athletes and coaches in all sports displayed courageous spiritual belief as they competed and built relationships with each other, as well as with those they competed against. On the court, there has once again been a large amount of success in the form of State Championships including Boys Cross Country, Girls Cross Country, Volleyball, and Boys basketball. The Girls basketball team qualified for State for the 3rd straight season despite only 10 girls total in the program, and the expectations are high this spring for the Golf and Track teams (*Cont.*).

The fall sports season saw 46 middle school athletes and 47 high school athletes participate in volleyball, cross country, and football (co-op w/MHS). Our winter season saw 55 middle school and 39 high school athletes participating in basketball. Our turnout this spring is once again excellent as we have 46 middle school students and 47 high school students participating in golf and Track & Field.

There continues to be post-covid challenges associated with high school athletics in Montana but all in all, there has been a good return to normal. There are serious concerns over participation, officials shortages, and lack of willing and qualified coaches around the state and region. We are blessed at Manhattan Christian with rich tradition, great facilities, and willing student-athletes but these concerns are here as well and should not be overlooked. The officials shortage is definitely going to be impacting our MS sports programs beginning this year as 5th and 6th grade games will not be staffed by the local officials pool for basketball.

Thank you to the Manhattan Christian community for the continued support of our athletes, coaches, and traditions.

Foundation Report

By Ron Hoekema – President

Our Mission is to Lower Tuition!

Our membership drive in 2021 added significantly to our base but was still short of our goal and almost 50 members short of what we once were. We have the potential of exceeding that with the number of families that have benefited and currently are benefitting from MCS.

Your foundation will be contributing \$161,672 for the 22-23 school year! That is 6% of our total budget.

MCS has always depended on a community of families and your membership will supplement a good portion of our investment fees (We would love to cover it all - \$21,449 in 2022). Encourage your grandparents and greater family to make an investment in our children's education for years to come.

Thank you to the 22 new members who joined us in our mission and to those who created new annuities totaling more than \$85,000 in gifts (*Cont.*).

Also, remember us when it comes to our memorials and estate gifts. Thank you for remembering and supporting our mission and lowering tuition!

Early Learning Center Report

By Stacey Burley & Lorna Wyatt – ELC Co-Directors

The Early Learning Center has once again felt God's amazing presence through the 2021-2022 school year. The ELC is currently providing care to 28 families resulting in 43 children who enter our doors on a weekly basis. We also continue to maintain a waiting list of families who wish to have their children attend our program. We currently employ eight wonderful Christian women who bless the ELC with their talents and love for the children. We are in desperate need of additional fulltime caregivers and teachers in our center and have run ads frequently since August. Unfortunately, those ads have not brought us any applicants or even a single inquiry from any possible candidate. We have been able to maintain our current hours of operation with the exception of closing one hour early on Fridays. We ask that you please keep this urgent need in your prayers as changes will have to occur if we are not able to fill these vacant positions.

The ELC continues to remain in the Stars to Quality program at a Star2 rating. Our participation in this program provides the ELC with \$4876.00 per year that must be used towards items or services that benefit the children in our care. In January, we were also awarded a stabilization grant which provides childcare facilities with funds to cover operating expenses for 2022. Childcare centers have faced less revenue and higher expenses due to the effects of the pandemic. The ultimate goal of this funding is to provide centers with the ability to set aside funds so we are able to sustain for years to come.

This last year has been extremely challenging, but we look to our amazing God for strength and guidance as we continue to do His work in the lives of these young children.

Finance Report

By Alan Venema – MCS Board Treasurer

2021-2022 Finance Committee Members include Tim Visser, John Schutter, Mike DeVries, Angela Hinds, Tim Dykstrahouse, Janelle Gustafson, and Alan Venema (*Cont.*)

We have made it through another year at MCS in good financial condition. The fundraising events had a great year. Both the Harvest Festival and Tulip Mania had some of the highest income totals that we have seen. The Campaign Dinner also reached its goal. We are also thankful for the contributions from Twice Treasured Thrift and the MCS foundation (*Cont.*). These contributions are very beneficial to our general fund meeting its needs. The association voted on and passed the purchase of some property that borders the north side of the school. Some of the funds for this purchase were raised during the reverse auction at the Tulip Mania. We are excited for the possibilities that this property will provide. We have a balanced budget approved for the coming year which allows for an increase in wages for salaried and hourly employees. There is a lot to be thankful for with regards to the finances at MCS and look forward to the coming year.

Twice Treasured Thrift Report

By Faith Dyksterhouse – Twice Treasured Thrift CEO

We are thankful for another year of God's providence and blessings. At Twice Treasured each day brings great opportunities and great tasks to tackle. I am so thankful to have volunteers, staff, and a board that are unified in the vision of what Twice Treasured is to MCS and the community. Over the years these supporters of the thrift store have worked tirelessly to improve everything we do. The Lord has given us the skills and the vision to carry out our mission not only today but in the future. This mission often includes customers that are impatient, anxious, or hurting. Daily we ask the Lord to help us to think deeply and give us the strength to care deeply for our customers that are hurting. The Lord always provides! If our tanks are running low a customer comes in the front door gushing about how they love the store! A customer donates a carload of baby items that are no longer needed. She reminds us that two years ago she came to us with a three-day-old grandbaby left in her care, very much a surprise. She had nothing, *nothing* for this baby. The volunteers that day listened, prayed with her, and got her some items she would need. Volunteers bought formula, wipes, and diapers and later brought it to her home. It was not that this grandma could not afford these items; she was in shock over the surprising situation that she was in. She cared for her grandchild for two years, waiting for all the papers to be filed until a distant family member could adopt the little one. She again expresses her thankfulness to us for the kindness shown to her. Are we a fundraiser for MCS? Yes! Are we called to be His hands and feet? Yes! We ask for your continued prayers for each of us that encounter our customers as we aim to fulfill the mission of the thrift store. Could the Lord be nudging you to be open to joining us in this mission?

We are hoping the following information from this past year will be as exciting to you as it is to us! **We are also listing opportunities for you to get involved!**

- With the help of Travis Hamilton, Brandon Vander Molen , Jeff Dyksterhouse, and their crews they moved our baling trailer to more convenient location. This has been a HUGE improvement! **We have plans to remove a wooden shed—can you lend a hand?**
- We had our parking lot sealed and lines painted. **We need to paint our cement curbs red; we will supply the paint and brushes, let us know if you can help!**
- We have NO PARKING and DONATION INFO signs ordered but need to be put up. **Can you fill this need?**
- We had a group of kids from Heritage Christian School come in December and in May to volunteer at our fundraiser. Their advisor, alumni Landa Wierda Hayes, was able to help with a customer who only spoke Spanish. **What a blessing!**
- We picked up and moved many pieces of furniture. One elderly lady came back to the store to show volunteer Ron Hoekema (who helped move it) a picture of the couch in her new room. Sweet! **Can we call you if we need help moving a couch or dresser?**
- Jay Kimm, Dave and Dawn Hoekema, Jeff Dyksterhouse and sons, and Jason Kimm family hand shoveled snow this winter. So thankful! **This job sometimes includes breakfast! Can you join the fun?**
- Struggled to get enough help to keep the store open on Saturday, which is our busiest day. Our thrift store board covered November and December. Linda Klompjen, Roz Danhof, Jean Selles, Shirley Dyk, Heidi Braaksma, Lynda Dyksterhouse, and Sharidee Addink graciously picked up the others. **Reach out to one of these gals if you have questions. Sign up with a friend!**
- Hired Barb Van Egmond to help keep up with the cleaning of the store.
- Melissa Visser and Linda Klompjen answered our call for help when our Linen Ladies went south for a few months. We sold \$6,000 in linens in the few weeks that they helped. **As we grow we will need to have a few more hands. Can that be you? Chat with Vonnie Kimm or Ruth VanDyken.**

- Eileen Scheffer measures ALL the fabric that comes into the store. She does a beautiful job!
We would LOVE to give her some support. Can you help?
- We are excited to announce that we are going to have parents working off their Community Grant hours on consistent bases. We are hoping this will help with our difficulty in finding help on Saturdays and get more people involved in this fabulous fundraiser. **When one new person is excited about our work, we are hoping it will inspire others to join!**
- \$130,000 raised for the school
- Fun facts:
 - **Our biggest month in sales** 2017-2018 \$34K / 2021-2022 \$58K
 - **Accessories pieces sold** 2017-2018 \$3,400 / 2021-2022 \$7,500
 - **Books sold** 2017-2018 \$10,000 / 2021-2022 \$15,000

God's faithfulness never changes. We do have challenges, but we have had them since the beginning, yet here we are. He has remained faithful, and the blessings far outweigh those challenges. The biggest blessings are the volunteers that come in each and every week. They have given their all to perfect the departments that they work in. There are too many names to mention but these volunteers are invaluable to keeping the store running. Prayerfully consider joining us? It does take a time or two to get trained, but this is nothing to be feared! Our board members Mark Kredit, Martin Kimm, Sherwin Leep, Tami Flikkema, Kelley Halle, and Kevin Smith all gave it a try. Our newest member, Tom Hubers is ready to give it a try too.

We look forward to this coming year as together, with the Lord's help we work at the store to promote Christian education. We covet your prayers in this tremendous endeavor.

Elementary Building & Remodel: Update on Progress Report

By Travis Hamilton

Committee Members- Anna Lynn Alberda, Leah Brouwer, Mike DeVries, Travis Hamilton, Scott Kimm, Kevin Smith, Marylou Sytsma, Tim Visser

After shelving this project for 20 months, we started back on the elementary building/remodel process as of November. We want to especially note that Randy Visser and Visser Architects as well as Darin Hoekema have worked very hard to prioritize building room in their (*cont.*)

very busy schedules to work on plans for our MCS elementary remodel. We are very appreciative of all they are doing for this project.

As of date, Dowl Engineering completed a topographic and site survey in order to incorporate all the underground lines into the plans. CDS Engineering started engineering the electrical and mechanical systems. Visser Architects is working on floor plans and exterior elevations. Visser also had conversations with building inspectors and is now working with the fire suppression folks. We are in the beginning stages of really getting the ball rolling. Our goal is to have documents that a contractor could put accurate numbers on by the end of this summer.

Our next steps:

- First, we are getting drawings finalized that we can present to contractors for bid. Our goal on this first step is to have these documents by the end of this summer.
- Second, we will get cost estimates from contractors.
- Then step three is to get association approval.
- The fourth step is fundraising and finalizing building construction documents which will be done simultaneously.

After step one is complete, we will for the most part wait for Joel Westa to arrive on staff before moving to the second step. We would like him to be as much in the know as possible.

Annual Association Minutes 2021-22

**Annual Association Meeting
Minutes of the May 4, 2021 Meeting
Manhattan Christian School**

Article I

Board President Ryan Ruffatto opened the meeting with devotions and prayer.

Article II

A motion to approve the minutes from the 2020 MCS Association Meeting. Carried.

Article III

A motion to approve the slate of nominees—Ryan Ruffatto, Libby Triemstra, Tim Dyksterhouse, Stephanie Venhuizen, Beth Kamerman, and Bill Kimm and submitted absentee ballots was seconded and carried. There were 53 members present at the meeting. Newly elected board members are: Tim Dyksterhouse, Beth Kamerman, Ryan Ruffatto.

Article IV

The 2021-2022 Board Nominating committee members are Anna Lynn Alberda, Nick Venhuizen, Jen Scott, Jodi Venema, Kendall Walhof, Jeff Dyksterhouse.

Article V

Reports

- A. Tim Visser, Superintendent – gave an overview of the past year during the pandemic and the challenges it presented and the growth seen as each challenge was met. Great is Thy Faithfulness.
- B. Matt Kamps, Principal – Gave a “Thank You” for the years spent here, the relevance and transitioning of TtT for the school and staff and how it connects to our school’s mission statement.
- C. Travis Hamilton, Board liaison on the Operations Committee – Highlighted work done by Gene Bennett and Scott Kimm. He also spoke of the Elementary Remodel Project and that we would begin fundraising for it again soon.

- D. Sharon Kamp, Board liaison on the Friends Committee – Thanked the many people involved on this committee and the work they do in specific areas. A special thanks to Jen Scott and her crew who headed up our fundraising endeavors, Harvest Festival and Dutch Supper, for their efforts to make them successfully happen within the parameters of the Covid19 protocol. Also, a special thanks to Yvonne Kimm who tracks the FSO points for the families of our school.
- E. Jonathan Schutter, Board liaison on the Education Committee. Thanked retiring staff – Allison Bussing - Grade 3, Kim Vander Ark - High School English, and Matt Kamps – Principal 6-12 – for their years of service to MCS. He also noted the new hires for next year: Sydni Ayers – High School English, Heather Hope – 3rd Grade, and Nathaneal Hope – Principal 6 – 12.
- F. Darin Hoekema – Board liaison to the Foundation Board. Darin emphasized a push to increase membership.
- G. Kevin Smith – Board liaison to the Twice Treasured Board. Continued thanks to Faith Dyksterhouse and the work she does. This is a huge fund raising are for the school and it continues to operate profitably.

Article VI

The budget for the school continues to be in good shape. We thank Janelle Gustafson and her work in the office to track all of this in a prudent way.

Article VII

Alan Venema thanked everyone for coming and closed the meeting in prayer.

**Association Minutes – Special Meeting
Wednesday, February 16, 2022**

Article I

Following introductions by Board President, Ryan Ruffatto, opening devotions and opening prayer were presented by Beth Kamerman, Board member.

Article II

Joel Westa, our newly hired Head of School, was present along with his family. He introduced himself and it gave our staff and community members time, after the meeting, to meet and welcome him into the MCS family.

Article III

Remodel of the Elementary School started with plans about 4-5 years ago. Committee members Leah Brouwer, Mary Lou Sytsma, Kevin Smith, Randy Visser, and Travis Hamilton all spoke informing the members by way of the presentation as to the why, where, and how this came to be. The vision is to create a better learning and updated space for our students and teachers. Following the presentation, the association members were informed that they would like to have it come to the association at the May, 2022, Annual Association Meeting for a vote so they could begin to move forward with definite plans.

Article IV

Additional Property Purchase – At the monthly January Board meeting, the Board requested, by approved motion, to request approval by the Association to purchase 3.75 acres directly north of MCS and Flying Eagle Road offered to the school by Mike DeVries for potential development that the school might need. Initial funding would come from the budget of Twice Treasured Thrift store with the understanding that they would need to be reimbursed over a 10-year period at 4% interest.

Following a Q and A with the association members and a call for the vote, a motion was made and approved to accept all absentee ballots. Members in person voted by ballot. The motion to purchase the property passed.

Article V

Ryan Ruffatto closed the meeting with prayer.

MCS Constitution Articles I, II & III

CONSTITUTION of MANHATTAN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

ARTICLE I

NAME

The name of the school shall be Manhattan Christian School.

GOVERNING AUTHORITY

The Association.

ARTICLE II

BASIS

The basis on which the school is founded is the infallible Word of God interpreted in accordance with the Reformed tenets and in agreement with the three Standards of Unity: the Belgic Confession, the Canons of Dordt, and the Heidelberg Catechism. The following statements will help to clarify this article as to what it means for education:

1. The ultimate basis in the Scriptures of the Old and New testaments which we believe are the written Word of God, the revelation of the Triune God; the truth by which He enlightens our understanding of God, man, and the universe; and the infallible authority by which He directs and governs all of our activities, including the education of our children.
2. The foundation of Christian education is in the Creator-creature relationship as taught in the Bible. Imbedded in creation is the pattern of our educational task: understanding the universe, communication with God, and creative performance.
3. We acknowledge the disruptive effect of sin, man's estrangement from God, and his blindness to the true meaning of life. We heartily acknowledge the restorative work of Jesus Christ (e.g. Col 1:16-20), His reconciliation of the world to God, and the redemption of our life in its entirety. This implies the necessity of a distinctive and peculiar dimension in our educational task, namely, to direct and guide the child to commit his heart to Christ, the Truth.
4. The primary responsibility for education rests upon the parents (e.g. Deut. 6:6-9, Eph. 6:1-4). They may delegate a part of this responsibility to an institution that is able to carry forward this God-given task. While standing in place of the parent, the teacher, as a servant of God, exercises authority in the performance of his office in educating the child in the school.

5. The child, created in the image of God, is regarded as a spiritual-physical creature who through grace is capable of learning the laws of God's creation and knowing and obeying the truth of God's Word. He is, as image-bearer, regarded as a social creature standing in relation to his fellow man, having moral, intellectual, and emotional needs.
6. The total educational program of the Christian school is designed to orient the child to a life in Christ, through his culture, for fellowship with and service to God and his fellow man.

ARTICLE III

OBJECT

The object of this Association is the establishment and the maintenance of a school in which instruction is given in harmony with the basis of this Association.

By-laws Concerning Membership and Absentee Voting

Association Membership

1. Any person who has reached the age of 18 and subscribes to Articles II and III of the Constitution may become a member of this association.
2. Members of the Association are eligible to vote at any duly called meeting of the Association.

Absentee Voting

Ballots signed by Association members will count on the initial vote only.

Current Board of Trustees and Nominees

Name	Year of Retirement	Church
Tim Dyksterhouse	2024	Bethel Christian Reformed
*Travis Hamilton	2022	Journey Church
Darin Hoekema	2023	Bethel Christian Reformed
Beth Kamerman	2024	Manhattan CRC
Kevin Smith	2023	Bethel Christian Reformed
**Sharon Kamp	2022	Manhattan Christian Reformed Church
Jim Potts	2023	Manhattan Christian Reformed Church
Ryan Ruffatto	2024	Bozeman Christian Center
**Alan Venema	2022	Bethel Christian Reformed

Thank you for your years of service to Manhattan Christian School!

*Reupping

**Retiring

Nominee Introductions

2022 Manhattan Christian School Board Nominees

Name: Travis Hamilton

Spouse: Laura Hamilton

Children: Rance (9th) and Tate (7th)

Educational Background (high school, college, degree):

Seely Swan High School

Job Position: Business owner of TD Hamilton Excavation and Co Business owner of D&D Trucking

Church Membership (location, years): Journey Church, 16 years

Church Involvement (service, etc.): Usher

MCS Involvement: Parents, Board Member, Facilities Committee, Remodel Committee

Perspective on Christian Education and MCS:

We came to MCS when Rance was in preschool, not expecting to stay longer than preschool because we are in the Manhattan School District and that was our hope for our kids, or so we thought. I grew up in a small-town class C public school and Laura grew up in a small town class B public school. That seemed ideal based on what we were comfortable with. We were nervous to come to MCS because it was on “the hill” and we weren’t sure we would feel welcome here since we weren’t Dutch and didn’t attend one of these churches. However, we were so surprised and impressed with how Rance’s teacher seemed to have a love for ALL the kids- not just the easy to love kids. It seemed that something was different. I can only say it seemed like it had to be from God. We didn’t have the money to just spend on private school at the time, but as we went through preschool and saw how different it was from our public schools- which were really pretty good by the way, by the grace of God He kept providing for us to stay here. The people were very welcoming and we made friends. We liked how every class was taught from a biblical perspective and not a worldly perspective. Every subject can point to God and be taught leaned up against what the Bible says is true. We had nephews and many friends at Manhattan, my boys still have many friends at Manhattan, we even think it is a good public school, (Cont.)

but we continue to be thankful that at MCS everything points to the ultimate Truth. We're grateful that even though our school is not perfect and without sin, it believes that sin is real and you can't pick your own truth. There are many great Christian families at public schools and I even believe God calls many to do that. If a family is well rooted in their Christian faith they may be perfect for public schools where they can make a Kingdom difference. Our family is not a family of long standing deep rooted Christians. Honestly we've learned much about our faith right along side our boys. This school was built for Christian parents to allow their kids to receive an education that is leaned up against what the Bible says is true and we really like that. At MCS we see plenty of issues, but this school has people in it. Where there are people, there is opportunity for sin. We don't claim to be above that for that matter. But we do believe and trust that the families, teachers and staff at MCS have for the most part the same spiritual hopes for our kids.

Name: Yvonne Kimm

Spouse: Jason Kimm

Children: Willem (senior), Benjamin (sophomore), Eliza (8th), Joshua (6th), Sarina (4th)

Educational Background (high school, college, degree): High school: Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. College: Graduated from Dordt University in 1998 with a Bachelor of Arts in High School Education with a major in English and a minor in Communications: Theatre Arts.

Job Position: I am co-owner with my husband of Kimm's Organic Potatoes where I am in charge of marketing and delivering/shipping.

Church Membership (location, years): I have been a member of Bethel Christian Reformed Church since I moved to Montana in 1999.

Church Involvement (service, etc.): Choir member and youth group leader for 5+ years

MCS Involvement: I taught high school English at MCS from 1999-2004 and have been a substitute teacher since then. While teaching, I also directed the senior class plays. I was on the Stewardship Co. for 5 years. I was the FSO Co-Ordinator with the MCS Friends Co. from 2011-2021. I have started directing the school plays again, as of this year. Most importantly, I am the mom of 5 MCS students.

Perspective on Christian Education and MCS: Deuteronomy 6: 5 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. 6 These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. 7 Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. 8 Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. 9 Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

I have been able to see Christian education from the perspective of a student, a teacher, and now as a parent. I have always seen the Christian school as part of the 3-legged stool metaphor where home, church and school are the three legs raising up our children. As a parent, I see the beauty in that image knowing that many others are there to help me raise my children to follow and love the Lord. I want to have God's love, law, grace, and justice imprinted in everything they do—when they sit at home, walk the roads, lie down and get up. (Deut.6) For that, I and my (*Cont.*)

husband are grateful to have a school where the teachers' understanding of God's Word and World flow from the same understanding as ours does. What a blessing!

Name: Jeanette Walhof

Spouse: Kendal Walhof

Children: Devan, Natalie, Bryce

Educational Background (high school, college, degree): Ripon Christian, Dordt University, BA Elementary Education/Physical Education

Job Position: Homemaker/Puppy Breeder

Church Membership (locations, years): Bethel CRC – 26 years

Church Involvement (service, etc.): Coffee Break Leader, Video Presentation, Nursery, Former VBS Coordinator

MCS Involvement: Previous teacher at MCS; coaching basketball, golf, and volleyball; former board member; current Education Member

Perspective on Christian Education and MCS: I believe that Christian Education is a vital part of leading children to know and love the Lord their God! It is so very important that we can teach kids who God is and how He has given us a plan involving His Grace to save us from our sins. This is to be done in a partnership with parents and the church. It also includes teaching kids about the world God has given us, as well as what their role is as a student. It is my deep hope that we can teach kids to love God and enjoy Him forever not only as students at MCS, but also in their future lives. Hopefully one day teaching others to know and love the Lord too.

Name: Jonathan Schutter

Spouse: Robin Schutter

Children: Tristan (6th), Quincy (4th), Dawson (2nd)

Educational background (high school, college, degree): MCS Alumni, Bachelor's in business finance from Dordt

Job Position: Farmer

Church Membership (location, years): Bethel CRC

Church Involvement (service, etc.): Served as deacon (treasurer), Cadet counselor, search committee

MCS Involvement/Perspective on Christian Education and MCS: "Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it." (Proverbs 22:6) I believe that as Christians, we are called to teach our children how every part of our lives should be intertwined with and reflect God's work in us. One of the best foundations we can give our kids is to give them a solid Christian education. MCS helped give me that foundation during my years there, and I pray that the school can continue to be that foundation for the youth today.

Name: Sue Kimm

Spouse: Martin Kimm

Children: Abby Kimm, Taylor & Casie Kiimm (Sage, Laci, and Lane)

Educational Background (high school, college, degree): Holland Christian High School, Calvin College; Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education

Job Position: I came to Manhattan Christian, fresh out of college in 1983, to teach 3rd grade. I taught for three years, married, and then we started our own family, raising our children on the family farm and sending them to MCS.

Church Membership (location, years): Bethel Christian Reformed Church, since 1983

Church Involvement (service, etc.): I've been involved in Sunday School, Youth Group, GEMS, Fellowship Committee, weekly worship, and choir.

MCS Involvement: After "retiring" from my own classroom, I spent many years as a Substitute teacher, filling in for any classroom, subject, and age. During those same years, and while our children were in school, I volunteered on the Board of the Ladies' Auxiliary (pre-Friends of MCS days), which included involvement in most every fundraiser that the school put on.

Now that I'm a grandma, I love volunteering weekly at the Thrift Store. It keeps me involved with the school in a different way, and I'm very excited to support Manhattan Christian through this relatively new venue.

Perspective on Christian Education and MCS: Many people feel "safe" in sending their children to a Christian School. I know that was part of my thinking, as a parent. However, through all the years of my experience with Christian Ed, as a student, teacher, and parent, I realize it's much deeper than that. Much more than sheltering our children from the big, bad world, Manhattan Christian is meant to prepare them to face that world with a strong sense of who they are (a child of God) and a heartfelt Christian worldview. Unfortunately, every student isn't going to "get it" while still at Manhattan Christian, since everyone develops in their faith at a different rate, but MCS is here to train them in that direction. I'm thankful for having been raised in a Christian home, backed by the church and school. I'm thankful that we could do the same for our children, and now our grandchildren. My prayer is that Manhattan Christian never becomes unavailable to anyone who truly desires it for their children.

Name: Tami Leep

Spouse: Ben Leep

Children: Abbi (junior), Brook (8th grade), Danica (5th grade)

Educational Background (high school, college, degree): I attended MCS K-12, then went to Montana State for a short time.

Job Position: I work part time as an administrative assistant at Churchill Equipment Co. Inc.

Church Membership: Manhattan CRC

Church Involvement (service, etc.): I've been a GEMS leader for 10 years, a Sunday school teacher, and a member of the Christian Education review team.

MCS Involvement: I was a member of the Friends committee for a number of years. I've also volunteered in my daughters' classrooms and gone along on numerous field trips.

Perspective on Christian Education and MCS: I believe that Christian education (not just private school) is a vital tool in the training of our children's faith and helps give them a firm foundation to launch from. It is so important that they are taught every day that God is in all things and all aspects of our lives. In a world that continues to distance itself from absolute truths and morals it is more important than ever to do all we can in the brief time we have to prepare them. Now more than ever, we need to build a biblical foundation in our kids so they will be equipped to "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation" (Mark 16:15). Ben and I feel very blessed to be a part of MCS and know the commitment it takes from churches, parents, staff, students, and supporters to make it work. We are grateful for the role that MCS has played in our own lives and the lives of our girls.

Absentee Ballot

Manhattan Christian School

Please vote for three. This will be good toward the first round of voting only.

_____	Travis Hamilton	_____	Jonathan Schutter
_____	Yvonne Kimm	_____	Sue Kimm
_____	Jeanette Walhof	_____	Tami Leep

Absentee Ballots must arrive in sealed envelopes with the voter's signature both printed and signed on the outside. Ballots must be delivered to the school no later than Thursday, May 12 at 7:00 pm. Ballots may also be hand delivered to the school prior to the meeting, brought to the meeting, or placed in the box outside the main doors.

Voter must be an Association Member of record; your signature must be in the Association membership book. Call the school if you are not sure of your status.

IMPORTANT ABSENTEE BALLOT INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Please put your **Absentee Ballot** inside a sealed blank envelope
2. Place inside a second envelope
3. **Sign** and seal the outside envelope