



MACS Events Fundraising Review

MACS FUNDRAISING REVIEW OVERVIEW

McDonnell Area Catholic Schools is developing a robust fundraising approach focusing on multiple opportunities to create partnerships within the donor community, stakeholders, alumni, and current families. The recent shift to donor centric focused partnerships which develop relationships over transactional interactions is the purposeful change in the Advancement Department (formerly known as Development). Fundraising Events are only one piece of the overall program and while they have a specific purpose that is both donor development and cultivation, they are not the sole source of funding for the system.

Basic Breakdown of How Programs are Currently Funded

Co-curricular programs are funded in a number of ways. Some funding comes directly from a designated fund donation or grant and thus can only be used for purchases towards that designation (club, program, or team). Some of the programs are funded partially by their booster club (Faith, Fine Arts, Alumni, or Athletics), some programs are funded partially by HandS (Home and School Association). Most programs run fundraisers for their programs in addition to making funding requests through their respective Booster Clubs. Athletics receives funding to cover the cost of game officials, facility maintenance, and some facility fees through the Operational Budget, and athletic fees covers the cost of the Athletic and Activities Director's salary and coaches salaries/stipend. MABC covers the cost of game transportation and upkeep of buses, co-op fees, uniforms (through a refresh schedule) and some equipment needs, but most athletic programs choose to additionally support themselves through individual fundraising.

Review of Previous Practices

MACS is blessed to have multiple clubs and extracurricular activities for students, with that we face the challenges of budgets, program growth, and adding activities. Currently MACS has twelve co-op sports teams, ten in-house sports teams, eleven student clubs, four music/arts focused clubs, HandS, Fine Arts Boosters, Faith Boosters, MABC (McDonnell Athletic Booster Club), and the MAA (McDonnell Alumni Association).

It has been prior practice that each Booster Club has permission to run two fundraisers per year. However, MABC has at times run three fundraising events, plus one additional fundraiser (Football Mania). Each Club Team/Program has been allowed to run one additional team fundraiser. These are in addition to the two major fundraiser events MACS puts on that are essential to the operation of the schools. Each Booster Club and program is required to submit their fundraising request to the MACS Central Office (Advancement Director and President) for review and approval, utilizing a required form, before conducting the fundraiser.

Our current system has the potential to have up to 45 fundraisers per year and up to an additional five to ten with wreath, roses, poinsettia, t-shirts, and mission driven events (like the diaper drive, jeans for Jesus or Casual for a Cause). Additionally, MACS stakeholders are often solicited by more than one student for each fundraiser, such that an individual parent or supporter may be asked for a donation or to purchase an item dozens of times.

The A.B. McDonell Vision Fund (our annual fund) is also a separate campaign which is unrestricted funding for the most needed items to support our students' intellectual, spiritual, physical, and moral development throughout our curricular and extracurricular programs. Without the A.B. McDonell Vision Fund and the two MACS events meeting or exceeding their goals every year, MACS would need to greatly increase tuition.

Conclusion

Based on the current enrollment and growth models along with the feedback, it is unsustainable to continue the current policy of allowing each team and club to run a separate fundraiser. Risk to donor and parent relations is high. Risking Donor Fatigue and Community Support is high. We understand and agree that the current policy is not sustainable system wide; it is leading to donor fatigue, volunteer burnout is high, and fundraiser overlap. We need to create an equitable policy to support co-curricular and extra-curricular programs.

GOAL of The New Fundraising Policy

A multi-phase plan that financially and responsibly meets the needs of ongoing programs, establishes protocols for expanding and increasing programs, attends to donor fatigue, preserves the image of MACS, and decreases the burdens of current families, staff, and students all while maintaining the quality of the amazing programs MACS has.

1. Streamline fundraising for McDonell Area Catholic Schools
2. Maintain and increase positive donor relations with stakeholders
3. Create proper fiscal & stewardship oversight without dictating program outcomes or stifling creativity
4. Support new and ongoing program growth

Phased Solutions

Phase 1:

All Booster Clubs will provide a detailed financial report quarterly, based largely on the needs of the quarterly audits, to the Business Office and Advancement. The Business Office will provide Clubs with a quarterly financial report. This transparency allows collaboration between Booster Clubs, programs, the Athletic and Activities Director, Advancement and the Business Offices. This information gives everyone a complete financial understanding and the ability to collaborate for success, along with being aware of areas that may need supplemental help.

1. Faith Boosters: Approved to run two fundraisers
2. Fine Arts Boosters, f/k/a Music Boosters: Approved to run two fundraisers
3. McDonell Athletic Boosters: Approved to run three fundraisers plus an additional three season fundraisers.
4. McDonell Alumni Association: Approved to run two fundraisers.
5. All Booster and Association fundraiser requests will still need to be submitted for review and approval by the Advancement Team and System President.
 - a. A system shared calendar will be created with all events and fundraising pushes.
6. Programs can participate in unlimited service projects throughout the year to raise program specific funds.
7. Programs will not be authorized to run program specific fundraisers, nor will coop fundraisers be authorized unless run as one of the approved Booster Club Fundraisers.

Key Components of Success:

Planned Communication and Understanding of Program Needs on the Booster Club Level.

1. Advancement or Business Office members will attend one Booster Club Meeting annually or upon request.
2. An annual or bi-annual meeting that would include all current Booster Club Officers, the Athletic and Activities Director, Advancement Team, Business Office, President, Controller, and Principal to go over six month or yearly plans, goals, and missions.
3. Booster Club representatives are encouraged to attend two meetings of the Finance Council Meetings and the Education Commission.

Implementation of a plan to scale down the amount of individual fundraisers by consolidating teams and clubs under their respective Booster Club umbrellas. The Booster Club would partner with their programs to develop a budget that would be reviewed and approved by the Boosters no later than March 1st and then presented to a Budget Review Committee consisting of the Business Office, Controller, Advancement, Athletic and Activities Director, Administrator, and President for final review, approval, and dispersal by March 15th. Any changes to the proposed and approved budget would need individual approval per overage need with explanation or a new budget proposed and approved if it is a large amount of changes based on unexpected program growth or needs. This process will start with Club Leaders and the Booster Clubs or Athletic and Activities Director and the new budget will be submitted following the same process.

The Booster Clubs would be allowed to keep their current fundraisers to support their programs. Additionally we propose that up to three times per year a fundraiser for MABC could be utilized. This could be organized with the Central Office Advancement Department and run with current software. These fundraisers should be presented to the Advancement Department for approval. This also allows MACS to keep our donor information confidential and assist our programs and Booster clubs with effective stewardship of gifts.

Key Components of Success:

1. Financial and planning transparency within all levels, MACS families, stakeholders, Administration, Booster Clubs, Advancement, and Business Office.
2. Proper communication and collaboration of process detail plans between Booster Clubs, Advancement, Athletic and Activities Director, and School Administrators.
3. Proper communication and collaboration with process details of the proposed plan with the Business Office and Controller.
4. Proper understanding and buy-in from Administration, Athletic and Activities Director, Booster Club Officers and Coaches/Program Leads.
5. Proper and timely communication with staff, students, and parents regarding the proposed changes, the importance of participation, trust that the programs will be funded to their needs as usual, and keeping our promise to reduce the heavy asks.
6. Each Booster Club has an increase in volunteer engagement. System wide, we embrace an atmosphere of volunteerism.

Implementation

By building a system of collaboration with teams and clubs, we can work together to encourage foresight, growth, and development within programs. The transparency will be monumental with stakeholder trust and most importantly financial needs can be properly planned for and each group can see continued success. Programs may find ways to work together creatively to meet needs and share expenses more effectively, thus increasing program vitality and available funds.

1. Each current team and club program is housed underneath a central Booster. Faith Boosters, Fine Arts Boosters, and Athletics Boosters will provide a timeframe for each club or program to submit a budget. Each club or program should have a program account within the Central Office for Booster Clubs and/or programs to fund. The first couple of years a budget creation day might be useful by season. This should be based on historic needs, future needs, and account for program growth. Athletics Boosters may want to develop a review cycle that requires a team to submit their proposed budget for the next year's school season no later than six weeks after the close of the current year's season. All budget revisions should be done at this level before approval by the Booster Club. Since the Booster Club will be responsible for collaborating with teams to provide necessary funding they have a stake in a fiscally responsible use of funds. This model allows for students, through surveys, and parents to continue to have a voice in the programs and prioritize needs within the scope of program development and growth through participation in the Booster Clubs. This model may require a committee or subcommittee within each Booster Club be created to handle budget review and may require additional volunteer members to be sourced. Approved budgets will still have to be submitted to a MACS Budget Review Committee potentially composed of the Athletic and Activities Director, Principal, President, Advancement, Business Office and Controller to review and approve.

Disbursement of funds:

1. Club/Program accounts will remain active and available for use at the discretion of the program lead/coach and Athletic and Activities Director. A purchase order will be submitted for approval to the Athletic and Activities Director and the Business Office prior to ordering. Budgeted funds will be housed in the Boosters Club accounts and are disbursed directly to the school through reimbursement at a minimum of three times per fiscal year. The Central Office will bill the Booster Clubs for all approved budget expenses.

Implementation Timeline: Start processes within the 2024-25 school year

Phase 2:

Implementation of a plan to evaluate the fundraising projects and budget needs of student groups and create a comprehensive policy and guidelines which may include participation fees. Annual plans and budget review will still be required. An internal committee composed of student representatives and teacher leads may be created to attend to this review and approval process. This includes Freshman-Senior events, Student Ambassadors, Student Council (Notre Dame & McDonell), National Honor Society, Yearbook Club, Spanish Club, Physics Club, Video Club, Sew & Sow Club, and Science Olympiad. Once approved these will be presented to the Business Office, Controller, Advancement, Administration, and President for review and approval. (Estimated Implementation Timeline by 2026-27) This allows us to work through new processes and develop a streamlined procedure to pass along. This also allows the overall budgeting process to improve.

Implementation Timeline: Start processes within the 2026-27 school year

Phase 3:

Initiate the final plans to scale back major system fundraisers to five large community events per year. This phase will take into consideration all implementation processes that were refined in the previous two phases to streamline the process. Total annual budget needs including program growth and expansion will be considered. Events will be strenuously evaluated by the purpose of the fundraiser (fundraising, public relations/marketing, engagement, stewardship, cultivation, donor impact, and recruitment/enrollment), by the margin of the profit raised, by the lift of the organization as a whole, and by stakeholder feedback to minimize donor fatigue and maximize effect.

Key Components of Success:

1. The successful navigation of both Phase 1 and 2 including transparent and documented policies.
2. Stakeholder and MACS Community buy-in.
3. A robust A.B. McDonell Vision Fund.
4. Annual Advancement Team Strategic Planning with goals and objectives spelled out.
5. Strong and diverse volunteer base and with an organized volunteer coordinator.

The Long Term Sustainable Vision

MACS robust fundraising efforts on the events side is scaled down to no more than five large community engaging events per year that cover the cost of all co-curricular activities, program growth, and annual needs of the schools. All MACS (PreK through 12) students, families, volunteers, alumni, faculty, and staff will partner together in these joint ventures to engage MACS Stakeholders and the supporting community at large for the success of the schools' programs. The pursuit of "sales" on behalf of other companies ceases. Service projects that embrace and build community, in alignment with our mission and vision, are still encouraged (ie: YMCA Little Dribblers, event car parking, diaper drive, working booths, etc.).

This document was drafted by the Fundraising Policy Steering Committee meeting from January-April 2024.

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