Fundraising 101

Where to start when you don’t know where to start . . .

Mary Caroline Parker
Montessori Institute of North Texas (MINT)
Before raising money . . .

• Do you need tax-exempt status (Section 501(c)(3) status)?

• Can you get assistance and training from a group like the Center for Nonprofit Management? http://cnmconnect.org/

• Is there a “Communities Foundation” that will allow you do set up an account for charitable donations while you are waiting for your nonprofit status? https://www.cftexas.org/

• Write your story – “The Case for MINT”
“The Story of MINT”

• Who we are and what we do
• This is our unique mission
• What is the critical need we are meeting for our children
• Why Montessori? Does it work? (Personal stories and research studies show that it does!)
• What have we accomplished so far? What more can we do (our goal)?
• What resources do we need to reach our goal?
• How does our community support us?
• This is our opportunity and our challenge!
Andy Goodman, "Storytelling as Best Practice"

"Telling stories is the most powerful way to capture attention, engage an audience, and motivate them to act."

http://www.ustream.tv/recorded/15665748

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Five sources of funds

• Individuals
• Foundations
• Corporations
• Community organizations
• Government
Four methods for raising money

• Personal asks (in-person requests)

• Grant proposals to foundations/corporations

• Mailings (such as an Annual Fund Campaign)

• Events (auctions, bake sales, sporting events, workshops and presentations)
Planning

• Do you need a Funds Development Committee?

• Who should be on it?

• A road map can help you stay on track —
  – Logic Model (handout)
  – Moves Management Chart (handout)
Personal Asks
Donor Cultivation

• Who do you know?

• Who can open the door?

• The ask – after a tour if possible!

• Handout – notes from our consultant
Grants from Foundations
Sample Grant Proposal

• Mission and history

• Amount requested, current fundraising goal, and specific purpose for funds

• Description of community need, and how your program will meet the need

• Program evaluation method and description of outcome

• Relation of organization to others within the community

• Financial documentation (tax return, balance sheet agency budget to actuals, proposed project budget)
Mailings

• Creating your mailing list

• Past donors

• Potential donors

• Proofread with an eagle eye

• Handwritten personal notes on the letters from the school director and/or board members
Recordkeeping

• Grant and Gift Management handout

• Keeping mailing lists updated

• Unrestricted vs. restricted donations
Donor Recognition

• Prompt thank yous to all donors, IRS acknowledgment, plus handwritten notes and phone calls from board president, board members

• Invite major donors to special events, to serve on advisory board or board committee

• Progress reports and final reports to foundations and donors of restricted funds – what did we do with your money?

• Regular newsletters and informational updates to all donors.

• Acknowledge previous gifts when you encounter the donor and in subsequent mailings

• Meaningful token gifts with personal notes for donors who have given for 5 years, 10 years, etc.
Use stories and pictures!
A picture is worth a thousand words!
It’s all about the relationship!
Extra thoughts

• Social media – Website, Facebook, Twitter

• Community “Giving Day”

• Challenge grant (matching grant)

• Close the gap (between tuition and the true cost of educating the child)

• Importance of 100% support from Board members and staff
What if I don’t feel comfortable asking for money?

• Let others ask – you can play a different role.

• Get over it! You can learn to be comfortable. Practice makes perfect.

• Look at it in a new way – you are giving the donor a gift.
Don’t be afraid to think big!

Be bold!
When a small group of key persons commits itself to the purpose and outcomes of a project, the power of their intention creates an energy field that attracts people, opportunities, and resources that make things happen.

Otto Scharmer
Go Forth and Prosper!