

Panther Pride Foundation

You might be wondering:

What is the purpose of the Panther Pride Foundation?

- The Panther Pride Foundation is being established to support the academics, arts, athletics and other activities that will provide enrichment and education for the betterment of Maumee students.
- Over the years, we've spent our dwindling funds where it matters most - strong academic programs – and have “made do” with our facilities and what some might consider “extras.” While our academics have remained stellar, the total student experience – including academic enrichment programs, arts opportunities and athletics – need to be addressed. Many of our facilities are aging and some of our enrichment opportunities need a 21st century update. They don't accurately represent our commitment to developing the entire student and actually detract from the vibrancy of our community. We need a way to fund these important school needs.
- The Panther Pride Foundation is also a way for members of the community to become more invested and involved in our schools. It provides a way for alumni and community members to reconnect with the school and each other. It increases the culture of giving back in our community.

Wait...we're a school, not fundraisers. Why are we getting involved in development?

- The **educational needs of students have changed drastically** in the past few decades, but the current models of funding schools haven't kept up. We need to become more proactive in raising funds, and we must elevate the programs that distinguish Maumee from other districts in the region.
- Some local voters have displayed **levy fatigue**, while others would be thrilled to support our schools with their private donations. We need a new option for increasing community involvement and bringing in additional revenue for the district from our most loyal and generous supporters.
- We need to **keep the district competitive** with private and charter schools that have cultivated donors, many with strong Maumee ties. The district loses locally levied funds every time a student leaves for a charter school. If school vouchers are successful at the state level, private schools will be structured similarly.
- **Private fundraising has been a common practice** for private schools, charter schools and public universities for many years, and public primary, middle and secondary schools are now catching up. In 2010, nonprofits linked to schools and school districts

raised about \$880 million (up from \$197 million in 1995). Many public schools across the country are turning to private donors to supplement their public funding. We're forging a connection with the National School Foundation Association to stay on top of this trend in public school fundraising.

- **Other public school districts in our region are building development programs** and establishing foundations to connect with alumni and potential donors, including:
 - [Perrysburg Schools Foundation](#)
 - [Sylvania Academic Excellence Foundation](#)
 - [Anthony Wayne Education Foundation](#)
 - [Ottawa Hills School Foundation](#)
- This professional, focused approach to fundraising will **allow us to raise significant sums** of money far surpassing what we've been able to raise without a professional approach.

How did we get to this point?

- This was not a decision that has been made lightly or quickly. For several years, we've done significant community research, benchmarking against other school districts' approaches and debated with fundraising practitioners and experts to determine the best approach for our needs. Here's a snapshot of our progress to this point:
 - **Early 2000's** – The district undertook a capital campaign for the state-of-the-art Performing Arts Center, which cost \$4.85 million and was paid for through land sales and private donations. While donors were eager and extraordinarily generous, the project itself was funded primarily through the sale of Rolf Park to the City of Maumee.
 - **Summer of 2014** - The Maumee High School principal and superintendent of Maumee City Schools were approached by a group of concerned alumni and long-time Maumee supporters who wanted a way to give back to the school. They recognized that Maumee has suffered some delayed maintenance on facilities, namely Kazmaier Stadium. As the conversations continued, it became clear that there are alumni and supporters in the community that want to enhance the arts and enrich the academic offerings for students. Maumee High School doesn't currently have an internal structured vehicle for giving in this way, so we began to pursue a structured, formalized way for supporters to give.
 - **Spring of 2015** - Maumee City Schools hired a local third party consulting firm to conduct a feasibility study for a capital campaign for improvements in the areas of arts, academics and athletics.
 - The firm, Aly Sterling Philanthropy, interviewed stakeholders (donors, volunteers, alumni, parents, past school board members and community members, to test whether there was enough support to fund a multi-million dollar campaign. Through their feasibility process, they found that in order to have a successful campaign, it would first be necessary to build a fundraising infrastructure to solely manage this work, including

creating a foundation with a board and a staff person to manage the work.

- **Winter 2015** – The Maumee School Board approved hiring a staff person to manage the work: a Director of Development and Alumni Relations.

This sounds like a lot of work. Who is going to do all of this?

- The district is in the process of hiring a full time, salaried staff member skilled in fundraising to design and execute a comprehensive fund development strategy for the Foundation. She or he will accept, manage and distribute gifts according to donor wishes and established district goals and priorities that include academics, arts, and athletics. Specifically, the **Director of Development and Alumni Relations** will be responsible for:
 - rekindling vibrant relationships with alumni and supporters
 - managing an annual fund and a donor database
 - building a major gifts program and potentially running a capital campaign
 - showing heartfelt gratitude toward donors on a consistent basis
 - setting up a planned giving program
 - serving as a resource to support organizations, such as booster groups
- The Panther Pride Foundation will also recruit a **self-governing board of directors** to launch the foundation, contributing and soliciting significant gifts for the betterment of Maumee High School.
- At the same time, starting a formal, professional fundraising foundation is a challenging undertaking that will take the help of many individuals. We are looking to **all members of the Maumee City Schools family** to join us in embracing and enhancing our already-strong culture of giving back.

**Why is the district hiring a Director of Development and Alumni Relations?
Why can't the current administrators do this work?
Is this a permanent position?**

- We recognize that this is a new concept in traditional public schools: a revenue-generating position. There is a significant amount of specialized work required that requires the full attention of a salaried, skilled staff person in order to be successful.
- Alumni, potential donors and supporters have indicated that they want to know that their donations are being managed professionally. People are more likely to give more and more often to organizations they trust are able to accept donations, are tracking donations properly and are using the funds in the way that they were intended.
- The Director of Development and Alumni Relations will be the only person solely responsible for generating revenue for the district. The School Board has hired him/her for only the next 3 years with the intent that after this time, the Panther Pride

Foundation will have raised enough money to transfer the Director of Development and Alumni Relations position to work directly for the Foundation.

Is this Panther Pride Foundation just for athletics?

- No. While this initiative was initiated by a desire to improve Kazmaier Stadium, it quickly became clear that the need is bigger than that. The Panther Pride Foundation is dedicated to enhancing the whole student experience for Maumee students. Students, parents, teachers, staff members, coaches and the entire Maumee community will benefit from updated academics, arts, and athletic facilities and programs provided by generous gifts to the Panther Pride Foundation.
- These efforts will help parents and students since we will be able to offer more enrichment activities, gap-closing measures and technology integration, which will promote academic excellence.
- The Panther Pride Foundation will strengthen relationships with alumni and buy-in from those with an affinity for Maumee Schools. It will increase the involvement and investment in the schools by the community.
- When the Panther Pride Foundation is successful, it will enable Maumee to continue to be a destination district that provides a well-rounded educational experience.

Who decides how the money is spent?

- The Panther Pride Foundation will be a 501c3 tax-deductible organization separate from the school district. The money donated to it will be kept in the Panther Pride Foundation Fund at the Toledo Community Foundation. The Panther Pride Foundation will be governed by a volunteer board of directors, who will be responsible for making sure it is operating legally and in a fiscally responsible way. The board of directors will determine how the donations are spent, in consultation with the school district's long-term strategic goals and within the parameters of how donors indicate they want their donation to be spent. The Toledo Community Foundation will also approve expenditures.