

PTA MEETING NOTES
Tuesday, January 14, 2014

Meeting opened 6:15pm
Agenda and Meeting minutes from 12/10 approved

Parent Coordinator's Report (Terry via email)

- Thank you everyone for the card and gift
- Note to 5th grade parents, letters sent by Clinton Middle School last week will be resent due to error.

Principal's Report (Lisa)

- PAC High Stakes Testing event was amazing. Looking forward to follow-up. Much is still unknown with regards to the testing due to state directives. For the kids, it's best to keep a low-key attitude. Know that there is no real "opt-out." The opt out version of the test was completed online and administered by teachers 1:1. It's not the same test, but it's still standardized. We believe that evidence-based teaching is still a better approach.

Parent: Who sets high stake test requirements?

Lisa: Tests are mandated by New York State. The DOE sets the policy. In some cases, scores determine promotion for students and teachers (performance based). To the contrary, some middle schools do not look at results. We're unlikely to see a reversal where test scores fully dictate promotion to middle school.

- Good 2/3s breakfast. Questions were raised about testing and curriculum.

Teacher's Report (Susan Soler)

- Teacher's were asked: "Jan is filled with..."
 - Responses included: "getting re-acquainted, music, MKL, academic activity, lots of laughs, new beginnings, hope for the new year..."

Co-Treasurer's Report (Nicole)

- Statement of Activities - Income YTD (July-Dec) shows \$139K for 3Fund (goal was \$150K). Also raised, \$2,500 from Satya jewelry sale and \$909 from the Dream Hotel happy hour.
- Currently showing a loss of \$44K due to payment for teachers.
- Money raised during prior year pays for current year. Currently showing (\$183K). We need to add this income through fundraisers (or cut) to not pull from 2014-15 funding.
- We are projected to earn \$315K this year. With the budgeted expenses being approximately \$500K, we need to have a continued dialogue about what to do to cover the expenses and/or how to increase the funds raised.

Parent: Is this (\$183K) in addition to budgeted fundraisers like auction?

Nicole: YES.

Henry: To clarify, we need \$315K earned this year + \$183K shortfall to make the budget for next year. We need to add fundraisers or cut.

Parent asked if budget was bigger than last year?

Dana noted that we used PTA funds to pay for teacher assistants (in response to the Charette). Two years ago, we also had significant budget cut from the DOE. The PTA had to spend money from it's budget to make up for this loss. Our \$120K emergency fund was thus absorbed into this latest budget

- Discussion ensued.

Business of Meeting (Henry)

Amendment to PTA By-Laws (Section VI) to allow for morning meetings

- Special Meeting to vote on change: 1/28/14 after drop-off. This is a vote only.
- Survey is currently at 2:1 with preference for mornings. Will continue to survey.
- Lisa arranged for at least 5 teachers to be able to attend morning meetings.
- Morning meetings were spurred by Lisa who noted the high attendance (80-90 people) at the Special Safety meeting held during the morning in June of last year.

Parent asked where are morning meetings are generally held?

Henry: Meet in gymeteria and wrap up by 10 AM.

Committee Updates

Fundraising (Bob)

- Fundraising challenges with a \$183K shortfall = stretch for future years.
 - 3Fund hits 50% of its participation goal on average. If the budget continues to be 500k, a 50% participation rate in the 3Fund will not cover costs. We are at a fundraising impasse and the community needs to have an open dialogue about how to proceed.
 - Bring fundraising to the broader community via regular reports at PTA meetings.
 - Need ideas and participation and increased efforts outside the community as well.
 - Class parents or reps within the classrooms need to have a direct contact with parents. We need to be direct and transparent with messaging.
 - The average cost to educate a child at PS3 above what the DOE provides is \$650 per child.
 - Consider allowing donations for specific programs (silos) - cooking, aides etc...
- Discussion ensued.

Parent requested fundraising brainstorming session

Dana noted that the alumni association will be asking for donations, and we will be instituting a fifth-grade give back program in honor of teachers, because for some reason the fifth grade traditionally has given the lowest amount to the 3Fund

Parent noted that we've never mastered grants.

Parent noted that PS41 communicates directly and hard at the very beginning of the year when people are paying attention.

PAC Update (Nick G)

- 100 + in attendance at High Stakes Testing forum on 1/8/14.
- Just the beginning of the conversation. Stay tuned.

Upcoming events

GV Book Fair 2/21-2/23 at PS3

- 35 years old, external revenue, child-friendly (child care TBD)
- Losing vendors due to price increase and other changes; more vendors=more revenue.
 - Trying to get more vendors and more participants. Goal is 40-45 vendors verses last year 35-36.
 - Last year was a shorter event due to the holiday being truncate in the wake of Sandy.
- Volunteers Needed: Drop cards at book store; coordinate PS3 book table; coordinate food service Friday, Sat, Sun for vendors and media. Request for volunteers will be posted in lobby and online
- Some competition this year with another book fair group.

Auction 4/4 at Marquee (289 10th ave)

- Event will be similar to last year, but more streamline. Venue is plug-and-play. Goal is to minimize physical items at the auction. Include 2-3 raffles (teacher/student raffle etc). Smaller class projects and show these in advance. Open online auction to the outside community.
- Ask Class Parents to help with procurement. Spend energy on curating the event.
- Procurement forms will be posted online and sent out via class parents.
- Auction co-chairs are meeting regularly, and are always happen to have more volunteers.
- Weekly team meetings will be scheduled to begin 4-6 weeks prior to the event.

Other Business

- Lauren suggested adding a "message of the day" soundbite - pertinent info. or a positive quote relating to the school. This could be posted on the monitor, through Terry's e-blasts, posters or other channels.

- Parent noted that we are again using 1000 cups per week during lunches.
- Parent suggested putting note in lunchbox to remind parents to pack a water bottle.
Teacher noted that carrying water bottles from classrooms is an issue as they are easily lost.

Meeting adjourned 8:10pm

Notes Submitted by Sarah Sung ptasecretary@ps3nyc.org