

**PTA MEETING NOTES**  
**Tuesday, February 11, 2014**

Dana and Henry Welcome

Change agenda order to accommodate teacher's schedules

**Principal's Report (Lisa Seigman)**

- NY state Regents working group met. Expecting an affirmative vote today on the implementation of common core standards.
- Working group is not encouraging school districts to use common core, instead evaluate performance using multiple criteria. Interesting to see what NY schools do with this. Stay tuned.
- Lisa holding informational meeting on 2/28 on testing. All welcome.

**Treasurer's Report (Nicole Tyler and Bob Osbourne, Fundraising Co-chair)**

- Review financials and discuss shortfall for 2014-2015 school year.
  - YTD 3Fund at \$185K. Met yearly goal.
  - Budget will be made in June for next year.
  - Current shortfall of \$183K for 2014/15. Teacher's aides were being paid through a PTA reserve. These costs now need to be absorbed into our actual budget. It's important to have a reserve for unexpected expenditures and to cover costs incurred at the beginning of the school year.

**Bob Osbourne** - Related to budget is revenue generation.

- Reaching the natural limits of current fundraising initiatives. Not confident that we will close the \$183k gap this year despite more planned 3Fund initiatives (targeting alums, grandparents etc)

**Parent** clarified that unexpected cost of funding teacher's aides for next year is what is causing the shortfall.

**Dana** - Yes

**Bob** noted that there are two things we can do to help ourselves:

1. More participation. Currently at 50%. We raise less than our peer schools
2. Raising auction prices

Please make 3Fund and PS3 a priority. It costs PS3 \$600+ per child beyond what the DOE provides.

**Discussion and Teacher's Feedback Followed:**

**4th grade teacher**- Noted that it's about finding balance between cutting and adding funds. For example, PTA helped fund science. This program was well intentioned but not perceived as useful. Teachers could use someone to manage materials instead of teaching a science curriculum. Perhaps we can find a volunteer? This would save \$30K.

**K/1 teacher** - Lisa brought the shortfall issue to the attention of teachers at their Friday meeting. Teachers were asked for their input on priorities. Teacher's believe that some personnel paid for by the PTA is unnecessary.

### **Discussion between parents and teachers with regards to special programs followed.**

**Bob Osbourne** with regards to fundraising, noted that expenses only go up. There will always be things that we want. Need to determine what we may need for the future. We underperform our peer schools in participation. It's not in our culture to talk about it, but it's our future.

**Nicole Tyler**- Noted that we are forming a budget committee for June. Please join. Teacher's included.

**Lisa** - With regards to fundraising and messaging, at PS3 we try not to push an expected donation as to not alienate families who cannot afford. The most effective fundraising is through the 3Fund. We need to put this conversation out to the larger audience.

**Teacher** - Noted some concerns with raising auction pricing. Teachers are invited free of charge, but we should be careful not to close out parents who cannot afford.

**Jocelyn Anker (Co-President)** - asked that teachers communicate to parents that we can help pay for auction tickets. There will be a free wine tasting event for everyone prior to the auction.

**Parent** asked about lowering auction ticket prices

**Henry** - Reiterated that we need to shift focus to the 3Fund. The Auction attracts a select group who spend a lot. We need to raise enough money at the auction to make the event worth the effort. These events are a lot of work and our auction doesn't get huge purchases like some school auctions.

**Parent** asked about selling tables at the auction or bulk ticket pricing. Parent ran the live action and noted that class projects sold at the live auction when it was held at PS3 did well. The live auction has been hard in recent (rented) spaces. Also asked if we could raise ticket prices for events like the theater benefit instead?

**Parent** noted that we need to be careful when discussing slashing new programs, especially those that were requested through the Charrette. Some ideas need to be worked through. Teacher's aides were paid for through an emergency fund. There's been a fundamental shift since and we now need to absorb these costs. We need to be more forthright in our financial messaging. Noted that PS41 sends out a dedicated letter over the summer stating that parents need to donate. Before we slash and burn think about shifting our mindset.

## **Discussion on fundraising through the auction followed.**

**Bob** - We need to improve communication on fundraising, but the conversation is now how to cut vs raise. We need to make a collective decision how money is spent. Personally, I feel that auction needs to be a fundraiser.

## **Other Business**

### **Safety Committee - Nick Day**

- We are in a unique security situation at PS3. We have 11 exits on 3 streets. Other peer schools have better security and have been able to institute safety measures faster.
- Trying to get second security agent. Told that after next police class graduates on 2/19 we will get that second agent.
- Camera and alarms and panic buttons with direct link to police voted on during June meeting. PTA voted down cameras.
  - Paragon Security doing work. Significant challenges working with a public school.
- Requesting \$3K to pay for additional wiring and to meet DOE requirements.

**Parent** - Interesting how this coincides with needing extra funds. Parents openly offered to give money to cover safety costs. Consider a direct appeal to cover these costs?

## **Discussion followed on the potential for funding programs through direct drives and whether this was allowed under DOE by-laws.**

**Dana** - Noted that direct campaigns could create deficit in some areas. Funds cannot be automatically redistributed to other areas. Need to find out what DOE will allow. Noted that vote on \$3K will happen at March meeting.

**Parent** asked about wiring and if wiring for door alarms can be expanded to accommodate cameras at a later date?

**Paragon rep ( and Parent)** - Noted that door alarm wiring will not support cameras, but Paragon will fund the cost of that wiring if installation of cameras is approved at a later date.

**Nick and Paragon** noted that they will start with \$10K already approved.

- Motion to vote on \$3k at next meeting - approved.

**Nick** - Noted that Safety Committee was criticized for not getting enough teacher input after the June safety meeting. Teacher's surveyed 6 weeks ago. 12 teachers responded. Most teachers are OK with current safety set up. They would like a second agent. Also, parents need to clear out faster after drop off. Slips and falls needed to be addressed. Visitor ID sticker would be helpful. Also, would like parent volunteer for 5th grade lunch when kids are outside.

**Budget and Internal Audit Committees - Conon Green**

Need to form budget and internal audit committee. Volunteers to look at books

- Please email Nicole or Conon at [Treasurer@PS3nyc.org](mailto:Treasurer@PS3nyc.org)
- Teacher's welcome.

**Food Grow Play - Becky**

- Farmigo CSA will be offered. Place order online, pay online and pick up at PS3 on Wednesday afternoon
- Need 10 volunteers to man table on Wednesday. Just handing out orders.
- Go to Farmigo.com to see menus, participating farms and order.
- This is a fundraiser. 10% after \$500 goes back to PS3.

**Dana** - Thanked Lucy for Coffee Catch; K outreach group - Jocelyn and Mary Anne

**Carrie Coakley GVABF announcement** - Book fair coming up over break. We need volunteers.

Approval to approve agenda and minutes

Meeting adjourned 10:07 am

Meeting Recorded by Sarah Sung PTA Co-Secretary