

P.S./I.S. 78Q PTA

THE ROBERT F. WAGNER, JR. SCHOOL

48-09 Center Boulevard, Long Island City, NY 11109 (ECC)
46-08 Fifth Street, Long Island City, NY 11101

Telephone: (718) 392-5402 - FAX: (718) 392-5434
Louis Pavone, Principal
Deana Rombone, Assistant Principal



PTA Meeting Minutes – November 16, 2016

Call to order – 7:03pm

Genevieve introducing PTA once again

October meeting minutes approved.

Anastasia could not attend the meeting tonight.

Thanks to all the teachers attending today.

STUDENT COUNCIL ANNOUNCED:

Miss Morgan and Miss Collins introduced the students. Gave children sashes and pictures were taken up on stage.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Genevieve reminding all that the PTA's main purpose is to fundraise. All programs going forward are mostly paid by us, we are not a Title 1 school.

We've raised \$13,000 so far.

SLT REPORT:

Lakshmi Reddy will reintroduce members of SLT (Esther Verhalle, Anne Marie and Tomoko Kawamoto)

SLT's last meeting primarily focused on recess.

She added how our school has changed the last few years. We have more than doubled in size as well.

Thanked the amazing staff. School is an absolute open door. Speak to teachers or principal whenever needed. Please reach out to any of us if needed. Reminded parents that SLT members are all volunteers just like PTA members are. Everybody has other jobs and we do this for our children and because we care about the school.

Bree also let parents know that any ideas parents might have should be shared with us. We can look into it, we might not have time to research all but we can definitely look into it. Recess has taken hours and hours of time and we are hoping we have come up with good solutions in order for our children to have daily recess.

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Lakshmi also pointed out how we've done lots but everything takes time and doesn't happen overnight. This includes playground in front of ECC building.

Miss Mulligan representing teachers for SLT.

"Over the past couple of months, many things have been said that have been disappointing. Teachers aren't afraid to voice their opinions as has been believed. The teachers stand united with the administration. Time can't be added to the school day besides the after school hours."

Parent: wants to address this for Minutes purposes

"No request has been added for recess to the day. Go Noodle is not considered recess."

PRINCIPAL'S COMMENTS:

This is an important issue to our community. We need parents to feel comfortable to send students here. We need teachers feeling comfortable.

We need more staff. More time. We don't have the space. Lots of issues.

How do we get there? We have a unique school and a unique situation. Different schools and different sizes are ones that have been brought to him for comparison.

3.5 hours of last SLT meeting was dedicated just for recess.

We still have parents that still don't have any idea about this issue. Miss Mulligan represents the teachers. We have to think about all 650+ students, not just a small group or your own.

Middle School parents want: Regents courses, Foreign language, Robotics, Arts, etc.

This is not just about certain grades, but the school as a whole.

There has to be listening on both sides. We need to come to some kind of compromise. We can't do certain things because of the structure of the schools. Fifth floor in Citylights first had a "playground" put in. However, if recess space isn't safe, we aren't doing it.

Mr. Pavone has had many meetings over the years, in the summer with lawyers and representatives of officials. It wasn't easy to get that small playground.

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RECESS UPDATES & QUESTION OR COMMENTS:

Pre-k isn't involved in schedule – they have a whole different schedule

Kindergarten also has an additional 45 minute recess a week that's been added

Learning Leaders isn't as easy as it sounds - we need commitment from parents if it's going to work.

Kids Orbit is the company that can help move children back and forth and make it possible for all children to have daily recess.

B.B.:

With the additional children, she doesn't understand why additional staff can't be hired.

Mr. Pavone:

We don't have access to money and have a cut off date for registry. We have small classes that have under 25 kids, K classes are much smaller. You get funded due to the number of students registered. We still have a position for a Spanish teacher and a librarian. We have programs, books, copy machine, etc. that also need money. This all changed around Bloomberg years – no more funding which means we have to buy it all ourselves.

B.B.:

Every school in NYC has staff that flip flops, why doesn't 78?

Mr. Pavone:

The flip flop can be done, but we don't have enough staffing. We have to walk the children to the playground or the field. By cutting costs, we were able to hire teachers but we still don't have enough school aides and we need people in the main office answering phones even during lunch periods.

K.C.:

If we did the flip flops, and we only had 3 classes in the cafeteria at a time, then we don't need extra staff right? If they're being taken to the multi purpose room, then the teachers are in lunchrooms and there.

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Mr. Pavone:

Some parents have concerns about children not having enough time to eat. Children want different things – some don't want to go out, some want to play chess, some want to go to the library or the music room. Not all want recess even if that's hard to believe. We need staff in all those places.

We have to coordinate times for all children K-8

How do you get 90 minutes for Phys Ed?

You don't see 5-6 minutes that teachers use sometimes to let kids stretch or do Move to Improve program besides the 2 periods of Phys Ed weekly.

E.V.: Physical Ed is required by NYC, not the same as recess.

Mr. Pavone:

When we spoke at SLT meeting, we said that the goal was to have 6 people in each school in order for the flip flopping to work out. We haven't even been able to try it yet.

Hiring student teachers? They're not able to supervise students alone, they're not FT or stay a full year, most just stay 2-3 months.

Pre-K is separate and they get a Para. We can't hire a Para just for recess.

B.B.:

"I worked in many schools where Paras came in just for recess. PS48 does that. Pay them same as other teachers but PT."

M.:

Bringing in LL isn't successful? We don't have enough volunteers. We need to be more flexible if we want to become LL.

Mr. Pavone:

We need to know who's coming what days and if to expect you. We need some type of commitment but will try being more flexible this time around.

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M.V.:

LL was too strict and it was very hard to try to help the school. Parents that wanted to help couldn't because of LL rules.

Lakshmi:

Wants to remind parents that SLT has worked in a way that parents go to them first, then they go to Pavone and then programs are looked at.

Mr. Pavone:

We brought LL in again after many years because we need the help. Grants are always helpful. If you know of any, please try to bring them to us.

Bree:

Reminder to support the school in events coming up this week and also shopping for your holiday cards at Shutterfly.

SHI event **Thursday, 11/17** – please come

Turkey Trot this **Sunday 11/20** @ 10-11:30 - also please come

Shutterfly – Please use the link to order and our school will get 13% back from your total amount spent. Prices for items are the same whether you use the link or not.

psis78q.shutterflystorefront.com

Genevieve:

We need a total of \$140K for Kids Orbit program for the rest of this year and the whole next year. This Kids Orbit program is one that many other schools all over the city use and people don't even realize it. Parents just know that their children get recess. That's how many schools have figured out the routine and make it work to have recess daily.

Lakshmi:

“We have other programs, art programs, gym equipment, music instruments that make us a rounded school. Will we lose these?”

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Mr. Pavone:

We won't lose the other programs. We also have incredible corporate companies that we will be speaking about at our next PTA meeting, which can help us.

R.H.:

Lots of research on recess. Recess doesn't take away from school performance. It's been proven. If we don't get recess daily, then we should feel bad. We need to speak up to the system or DOE to let them know that we can't give kids what they need with the schedule we have. Teachers shouldn't have to migrate back and forth to the schools.

C.:

As a parent that has been in this school for 8 years, and as a parent of an older child - this issue isn't getting my daughter into a great HS. If our children get into a great HS, then it reflects well into this school.

Jennifer Malinowski:

Wants to let parents know that the donations we get between 11/17 and 12/9 will be put just for recess. We need a \$300 check (or two \$150 checks that can be given at separate times). You can be sure all other programs are still going to be funded with all the other money being donated. Family Giving Fund (general fund) money goes for all the other programs in the school.

B.B.: What happens if the SLT doesn't go for this?

Genevieve: "Then we go back to square one."

S.O.:

I'm a class parent, willing to host a little party in my home. I can get a good 20 people together and it's easier to get people together to donate this way.

Parent:

What are the priorities and the money being raised is used for what else?

Mr. Pavone:

SLT discusses what is needed and brings it up to the school and administration.

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We also need to focus on Math. Those scores have been low so we need to raise these numbers (only one 8th grader got a 3 or 4 last year in standardized test).

K.C.:

“Can we think of a recess sub-committee so we don’t have to sit here and do this again?”

Bree:

If we get this program passed and implemented then all of our students will get daily recess. Keep communication going with all the parents so we stop this going back and forth.

Lakshmi:

“maybe the first action would be getting this group that you talk to on Facebook to pay the \$300 per child so we can get this program.”

Genevieve:

Sarah and Tiloma are two parents that are working on our fundraising committee which will speak at the next PTA meeting.

Also - a big thanks to Mona that helps us with the whole PTA website.

Meeting Adjourned - 8:52pm