

# 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 – September 28, 2016**

Call to order – 7:10pm

Welcome and introductions - PTA members introduced themselves

### **PRINCIPAL'S COMMENTS:**

Mr. Pavone welcomed parents, new teachers and old teachers. Thanked all for involvement.

Wants to alleviate some of the concerns and explain what's been going on in the background. Thanked new PTA Executive board. PTA Presidents have constantly been in contact with him. Thanked the teachers and staff for all they do for school and children and also for being there tonight. We are the school we are because of all their work and efforts.

Addresses the parents asking about recess. How do we get all children out?

He too wants to achieve that goal. Recess is an essential part of children's development. His concern for 10 years. Wants to let Kindergarten and new parents know that we have done a lot but maybe it's not seen. New playground in front of ECC building didn't happen overnight.

Got permits for the sports field. We are the only school in the neighborhood that has it every day for recess and gym. Mr. Pavone in contact with superintendent regarding what he can or can't do regarding scheduling and rotating basis for children to get recess. ECC building doesn't have attached large playground. We work with an 8 period day, 45 minute periods. We can't add a period daily or extend school day. Extra 45 minutes a week for recess for Kindergarten has already been added (besides lunch recess.)

First, we can use more Learning Leaders to get our children out to recess. We can use the multi purpose room in ECC building. More volunteers will get more kids out. Sports field also not attached just like in ECC building. Children have to be supervised to get out and it takes time to get them in and out.

Secondly, we need a larger play area for the ECC building. We need permits to close down the street. Many schools in Manhattan do it. He doesn't have authority to do himself. Needs parents' help to do this. Need protective space for children so that they are safe.

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Thirdly, a meeting is planned on Friday 9/30 with an outside organization that can help us with this. They come in and help with recess. This program has to be paid for separately.

He hears and understands parents and is trying to have this happen.

Another issue that came up was the concerns about 2 new K classes that were added in the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of ECC building. Those classes were added a couple of days before school began. Until school has numbers they don't know if they could add classes.

Some Kindergarten kids were finding it difficult to go to the bathroom outside of their classroom with heavy door. Huge concern about that and therefore First grade classes are moving downstairs and switching classrooms with them within the next week. Kindergarten relocated to second floor. A letter is going home explaining all this on Friday. All desks will be moved with everything inside.

We have our 2 Pre-K classes and 4 other UPK classes also in ECC building. We have 6 Kindergarten classes and 5 first grade classes. Lots of growth in the last 10 years. New middle school building is starting to lose space too. Smaller classes are best. Another teacher assistant has been added which makes it two now in school.

Mr. Pavone wants you to know that none of your concerns are taken lightly. He takes the responsibility very seriously. He's proud to see so many families that want to bring their kids to the school.

Reminders:

October 3 & 4 – Rosh Hashanah

October 10 – Columbus Day

October 12 – Yom Kippur

October 31<sup>st</sup> - Writing Celebration

For Halloween – Kids can wear their costumes (no masks allowed)

Q & A – Parent of 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders commented – “Everything is being done for the younger children but she feels that the older kids are being put aside. What happened to the Middle School Spanish teacher?? We believed in school but I feel that these kids are being put aside.”

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Pavone's response – We are the only successful K-8th grade school in the district that's ever been grown. Spanish teacher resigned just days before school began and it had nothing to do with our school – it was personal issues. Now the position is open. School is looking for a new Spanish teacher. Middle school children do concern him. He knows that they need certain credits and certain classes to qualify for HS. Children that are in 8<sup>th</sup> grade now have had the benefit of having gotten Spanish already. Needs teacher that knows the curriculum and is certified and licensed, not just a substitute. Not as easy to find.

Reminded parents that he will try to resolve issues but it's not his meeting but PTA's.

Informed parents that school did bring in Art teacher and a Librarian for Middle School. Great teachers here are because of referrals from other teachers here. However, he has no control over every little detail of human resources.

The more people he gets to stay, the better it is for him and for the school. School also has Robotics and coding for middle school. Everything is thoughtful and planned out. Reminds parents that something that might benefit older grades, might not benefit parents of younger children at the moment but will soon.

Ms. Rombone spoke – As a parent of an 8<sup>th</sup> grader she can reassure parents that what they're doing in the school is right for all the kids. She can say she's very happy and comfortable and feels like her daughter is safe, well educated and very well taken care of here.

### **SLT REPORT:**

Esther Verhalle spoke – Introduced herself as one of ten members of the SLT which is made up of parents, teachers and staff. There are 2 parent members representing the middle school. They are Anne Marie Nasello and Tomoko Kawamoto - if any middle school parents have any concerns, please speak to them.

Other 2 parent members are Lakshmi Reddy and herself

We are separate from PTA and we “determine the school's educational direction”.

Meets 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of every month

If you have any issues speak to PTA and they will then share with us (SLT)

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Repeated what Pavone commented – 2 Teacher Assistants went to largest classes. Each one is \$21K being paid by PTA.

### **SASF MIDDLE SCHOOL PRESENTATION:**

Director to program introducing SASF program – free middle school program. Told parents that they are able to do more here than other schools because of how advanced children are academically.

They bring specialist that are highly qualified to teach - Chess specialists, Soccer specialists, etc.

Please sign up to program. Only for 6-8<sup>th</sup> graders.

For more information please email: [is78q@sasfny.org](mailto:is78q@sasfny.org)

### **TREASURER'S REPORT:**

Our goal this year is to raise \$200K so we ask for any donation for school to pay things like 2 TA's. We've purchased school supplies and paid for 2 teacher assistants already.

Sabina Omerhodzic shared her experience and her having 3 children here. "We all have many options and basically one big one – accept that they come to this school and have a solid education. Next option is move to suburbs. Last option is private schools. In her opinion, PS/IS 78 is as good as gifted and talented or better. Parents please donate."

MY ON wasn't renewed so if needed log on to public library – tumble pads.

Question regarding Parent Coordinator – issue hasn't been resolved.

### **VOTE ON FUNDRAISERS**

Please sign up in sheets left in back of the auditorium today. Volunteer forms for many committees also there. Sign up for Fall Festival. We do want ideas. Please share with us. Besides raising money, we also want community building.

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### **EXPEDITED ELECTIONS**

Anastasia Athanasiou and Jaclyn Bowdren – uncontested

Leo Richman – Head of Fundraising Committee

### **QUESTION OR COMMENTS**

Sabina has all forms for those that signed up for class parents. Please don't forget to hand back to teachers if you haven't done so.

Parent of kindergarten and 3<sup>rd</sup> grader shared how children are sharing books and have copies sent home instead of actual books. Genevieve asked for her to please let us know what class and teacher to see if we can get more books.

Parents asked about recess. Petition for street to be closed that might take a year. Why so long? PTA mentioned how we can push for it but it's not under our control as to how fast it happens. We also want the same – more recess for our children.

Kid Orbitz – recess program that is coming to meet with Mr. Pavone and PTA Presidents on Friday. Paid program and they'll be here every day M-F.

The issue is that there is no time for recess. We need space and adult supervision.

Question regarding the start time of school – PTA has no control over this.

Thanks for coming to the meeting.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:40pm