

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 – October 18, 2017

Chaired by: Genevieve Bernier
Call to order – 6:31 PM
Sept meeting minutes approved.

PRINCIPAL'S COMMENTS:

Thank everyone for all you do for the school, we are growing every day. On Oct 24 from 5-10pm there will be a town hall at our school for two new schools in LIC. Wanted to talk about the safety and well being of our children for a moment. When we do safety and lock down drills for children. Section 807 of NY state education law requires lock down drills, we've already done one practice drill. It is announced that it is a practice and not a real drill so that there is no upsetting of the children. Another drill must be done after January. The other evacuation drills are done according to discretion (those are fire drills). We try to do both schools on the same day. There are 8 evacuations drills prior to Dec 31. A lot of times we have to do this without teachers knowing, so that it's a real test. I want to thank all the teachers here tonight. You'll hear a short presentation done by Kids Rise. I want to thank the executive board for all the time they put into this.

Oct 25: Open House

Oct 26: 8th grade trip

Oct 29: Fall Festival

Oct 31: Halloween it's ok for children to wear costumes. Will send out a letter for Do's and Don'ts about what is appropriate. The writing celebration is on the same day.

Nov 1: K is going on a trip, MS going on a trip as well

Nov 3: Student Council Election

Nov 6: First grade trip

Nov 7: Election Day, No school

Nov 8: Middle school admissions workshop

NY KIDS RISE-KINDERGARTEN SAVE FOR COLLEGE PRESENTATION:

School selected for this pilot program, all K students this year given a starter account for college. The non-profit granted money by Gray foundation, every child starts off K with \$100 for college. More deposits as time goes on. If this is successful it will be going throughout the entire city. Parents do have opportunity to opt-out. 30 days to turn money back in. If you want the money, do nothing. If you need more info, let us know. In addition to the money, starting in K, your children will receive financial literacy education.

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Parent 1: At any point will older kids be included in this program?

We do not know at this point. For now, it's K only, District 30, for the next three years.

SASF-MIDDLE SCHOOL AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM presentation:

Darius: We are a NYC based non-profit, offer 6-7-8. We offer basketball, rugby, floor hockey, design, photoshop, climbing, chess, etc. We are open to enrollment if you have any questions. Everything we offer is free. If we go on trips (aviator, gymnastics,) always free. We operate on Saturdays, Spring Break. Any questions?

Parent 1: Its really important we get parents to sign up for this. It's free and amazing. We need it to stay in the school. Please spread the word. Thank you.

Bree: We've been researching different programs, and they are open to different things and working with us.

Gen: We are also working on chess for the entire school, so we are going to be looking into that.

SLT REPORT:

We had SLT meeting on 10/15 and updated the bylaws to make sure the PTA president could participate. Our meetings are Friday mornings, once a month at 7:15am. We went through the education program, put them online, and it will be available for everyone once it's published (re: goals for the school next year). We had a Q and A session, discussion, how Book Fairs work and potentially do a Book Swap. If anyone has any ideas we would love to hear from you. Also thinking about a Chess Club, looking for someone to support this. Parents have reached out about the cleanliness of the bathrooms. If you have a problem on a specific day, reach out to the school and the principal can talk to janitorial staff. Contact PTA or SLT at any time with any question or issue, things don't have to be that complicated.

CLASS PARENTS:

We try to be involved in the school as much as we can. I'm a class parent. It's simple and easy and if anyone wants to become more involved in the school, this is a good first step. It's quick and easy, takes about 10 min a week. Any 5th grade parents going through the admissions process, we really love the school and I'm happy to talk to them.



TREASURER REPORT:

October financial update (presentation to slides)

Fundraising goal is \$200,000. Coffeed event, raised \$1500 more than last year, \$5008. At the last meeting we set a goal of \$500 per child, to date we have only received \$2800 to the general fund. We cannot meet the fundraising goal without donations to the general fund.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS:

Parent 1: What percentage of fundraising is the general fund?

Gen: We raised \$14,000 additional into the fund (separate from recess). We are going to be sending out a survey to just get out your feelings about it but we want to get tabs on how you're feeling about it, look out for that.

Parent 2: I asked for a revote after the survey goes out, where we can communicate. I'm not anti-recess. But one option is getting more TAs. That's just one alternative. I've requested that after this survey goes out.

Gen: Our goal for the survey is to see who wants recess and who doesn't. If we don't have Kids Orbit, then we will have recess twice a week.

Parent 3:
Why can't TA's do it?

Gen: TA's can't do recess. It's in their contract. We priced it out and we need 7 additional aids, not Teacher Assistants. The price for school aids was \$140,000. So we want to hear what the majority of the parents want.

Parent 4: Is there any way to create a door through the small playground meaning they won't go through the street?

Bree: You mean in the middle school building? District 75 always has access to that playground full time, so that's the bigger issue there.

Parent 4: What about parent volunteers?

Gen: The past few years we did Learning leaders, but they went out of business, so we are looking for another way to get new parents into the system.

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Parent 8: I thought last year we had raised a specific pool of money

Gen: We raised \$27,000 last year, but that was for last year. We know this isn't sustainable year after year. So we are looking into other options for funding.

Parent 9:

This is another reason we need the class parents to come to the PTA meetings, so things don't slip through the cracks, come to the meetings.

Parent 10:

I was wondering if you could do a youtube FAQ for why recess is the way it is?

Gen:

I post all my slides from previous meetings. You can click on PTA meeting / info. If there's something you don't see, just please let us know.

Parent 11:

The price is for the whole year current? If we are talking about per year, it's 100 per year. If some other family wants to write a check for 200/300 for families who can't afford it.

Bree:

And if we hit our goal, it's not a big deal. We just need to continue with the fundraising. Most schools out fundraise us by \$50,000. So this is part of what we're striving for the future and we are also looking for corporate sponsors. We just don't have anything set yet.

Parent 12;

Can we give money and allocate it to something? Half the budget is recess. If people want to give to a certain line item?

Gen:

It's difficult to do that. What we did last year, we allocated 3 weeks where it was allocated for recess. It just gets a little complicated. We want people to be in the mindset that this is our school. When we are donating, we are doing it to the good of the whole school.

Parent 12:

I get it and I want that to happen to. It's hard to give, when certain pushes go to half what the fundraising is. At the moment, it feels like it's an investment in recess.

Gen:

Even though it looks like we are just paying recess... because it's the biggest number on the budget ... we take that off the administration's plate so they can pay for other things. We are

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still funding all the other initiatives up there. Nothing else is being passed over because of recess.

Bree:

We got an extra gym period this year, and an extra gym teacher. The administration picked that up, to help with the kids running around. We have an extra Spanish teacher for \$75,000. We fought for them to get that Spanish teacher. It's just really semantics how you want to look at it. It just happens to be that they can fully fund a Spanish teacher vs a program for recess. We are pretty much funding everything that's been brought to our plate right now.

Parent 13:

When I look at the budget, \$70,000 on recess, and everybody's priorities are different, I understand that, and look we go through 8th grade, and those older students don't care for recess. We need to be aware for that. That's a huge number. When I look at that number that says to me that's our school's biggest priority. I cannot get my head around that we've had the extra gym class, and I've read the research. but i just can't understand like why is that extra 70 minutes a week, why is that the highest priority on what we spend money on. Is that how we're enriching our kids the most?

Gen:

We understand your point

Parent 13

Is that your highest priority?

Gen

We are a K-8. And there are great things about that and there's give and take. It doesn't mean it's a priority it means it's the most expensive thing on our list

Parent 14

I'm on the PTO at another school. I think they got 5 minutes to run around outside. We've got young kids coming home with migraines, a whole host of problems. \$70,000 is nothing compared to what we have to deal with.

VOTING ON TA:

Everybody in favor of TA say yeah

Resolution passes

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FALL FESTIVAL:

We used to do it by the lower school but we have run out of space. So we are doing something with the parade and LIC Flea and Food. We are going to collaborate and do a haunted house together on 46th and Vernon. We will have space for games, crafts, bouncy houses, a DJ. Something for kids to do after the parade. This is something new for us. We need volunteers. There's a link to sign up, we need water, snack donations. Anybody that can help, we need you guys.

Turkey Trot will be on a Sunday and kids run around gantry park

Picture day is Nov 9

Teachers always have office hours on Tuesdays, reach out to them anytime.

STUDENT OF THE MONTH:

For the month of September - Honoring the value of Effort
Meeting adjourned 7:28

Recording Secretary - Joy Gabriel

Approved By:

PS/IS78Q PTA Co-President

Date