

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 15, 2017

Chaired by: Genevieve Bernier
Call to order – 6:34 PM
October meeting minutes approved.

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL'S COMMENTS:

Ms Rombone:

Mr Pavone is sick tonight but wishes you all the best for Thanksgiving weekend. We have Parent Teacher conference tomorrow. I want to introduce our new Parent Coordinator, Theresa Cantante. She is smart, sweet, and speaks other languages and we want to welcome her.

Parent Coordinator:

I'm really excited to be here. I'm a fellow NYC school mom, 4 kids in public school, I feel for you and know where you're coming from, and look forward to looking with you. I speak Spanish and I do understand French, a bit of Italian and a bit of Greek.

Ms Rombone:

She's just being processed right now. She doesn't have an email yet, if you need to contact her, call the school. Until she's completely processed, call the school. Thank you and Happy Thanksgiving!

SASF:

Hello! I'm the director for the after-school program. I am head over heels for your kids, they are awesome. I wanted to talk about our initiatives and our vision. Our vision is to create an inclusive environment for your children to express themselves in a safe environment, where they can socialize. We do literacy, STEM programs (robotics etc) , leadership programs (debate and speech etc), visual arts, we are looking to do a lot of trips so they can experience NYC like they haven't before. We have current open enrollment for middle school kids. We'll be here tomorrow on the 5th floor, 521, with all the programs we have to offer. If you have any questions let me know, we want to make sure our vision coincides with the vision of the school, to add culture, etc. So we will be meeting with teachers. We have started a great relationship with the PTA board and want to extend that to the community.

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Parent 1:

I want to make a plug: anyone with middle school children please please spread the word. This is a great program.

SASF:

There is a need for kids to have a safe space for kids to express themselves. In one month, I've noticed a difference. They are curious and respect each other and I want to see more of that. I think this program is of value to the community, and we just need you to buy into that. We are inviting you to our holiday event to meet all our staff and interact with all the children already in the program.

Parent 2:

Do you have a minimum number of days?

SASF:

We have some kids who are going one or two days a week. We encourage kids to come for at least nine hours a week. That's how they will get the most of it. If there are three sessions of drawing and they only show up to one, they won't get the most impact out of it. If you really want to get the bang for your buck, even though we are a free program, you really want to do those nine hours. But we'll go through the schedule with you — if you guys want us to introduce chess or flag football, baseball, that's a dream of ours — to introduce team sports — we are willing to do that for you. Thank you for your time.

FALL FESTIVAL:

We raised almost \$9400, which is more money than we've ever raised before, and it was a crazy event. Thank you all to the parents, students, sponsors, they really pulled this off. Thank you to everyone. We hosted the event at the space donated by Plaxall to LIC ARTS and we are working with them, and we are trying to come up with a way to be able to collaborate with them more. We ask that you go and visit them and support them as well and look forward to any events we can do with them in the future

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Presentation of Slides

On the screen you'll see the funds raised to date

Fall festival \$9358 was 1500 more than last year. The General Fund is at \$3839.

If just wanted to mention, if you're indicating your payment is for something specific, like it's for the recess fund, there is a space to do that on Paypal now.

Expenses: this is same report we gave last month.

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We've been making monthly payments to Kids Orbit so that number is down to \$55,000 and we'll reflect that in the expenses going forward.

GARDEN COMMITTEE:

Karly Lin:

We have two gardens in our school, one is in Gantry State Park and one is across from the sports field. There are over 40 beds of fruits, vegetables, herbs and flowers. It's a huge garden but we need parent help to maintain it. We have a new garden committee with 5 people but we need more people. We have two goals. The biggest: every single class to do a workshop in the garden. Only 5 classes have done a workshop in the garden so far. Parents can talk to teachers and tell them we want to add this to our school culture and curriculum. The second thing is to raise support and awareness.. The next workshop is November 27 at 3:30 we are doing a fall planting. In January we will send out a mailing for meaningful ways they can volunteer ,so keep an eye out and email me with questions.

SASF Q: Can we help out with that as an after school program?

Karly: Yes! We need the man power. It's just me and a few other parents.

Ms Rombone: We just want to thank you so much because you've been an awesome part of developing this. We had 40 teachers out there last week, going through what we can do to have part of it in the curriculum. We do believe in having the children part of the garden, and thank you for being a lead on this.

Gen: Just going to take a quick minute to talk about recess survey. The point was to figure out if we could pay for it. We know it is a lot of money. We don't think it's the best option forever, but it's the only one we have right now. We are always thinking of better ways to fund this so we invite everyone to help us petition our elected officials and Superintendent. Regardless, we have hired KidsOrbit for now. We have already raised \$10,000 now and about \$21,000 was pledged. Last year we had a special fund for about three weeks and we will do something similar this year. We also know that the younger grades seem to be more interested, and we know that ... if you can't give any money please come and volunteer at our events and help us raise money that way. We did hire a TA for third grade classes. So thank you for supporting that as well. Any questions?

TURKEY TROT:

Second annual turkey trot. We did 1/2 mile for younger kids and a full mile for older kids, so this year we are going to do one distance, a full mile. We do need volunteers so please visit the website. We want a ton of people there, on the route, and runners to run with the kids. And 5 parents dressed as turkeys. And it will start at the circle field by Coffeed, and end there as well. So it's just showing up, running a mile, and then afterwards we'll have hot

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chocolate and pastries. It's a fun quick event and a great way to be healthy. Rain or shine. We look forward to seeing you there!

Briefly announce that Tomoko, a middle school parent, is holding a mixer at Sweetleaf on Nov 21 from 7-9pm. It's not just for MS parents, but anyone who is interested in learning about MS.

Lakshimi:

Please tell anyone 4/5 graders to join us that day, and we will have parents from people who have graduated to join us this day, so please come and join us if you can. Also: Nov 28, we have the CEC will be at LIC High School. We had a big meeting like this a few years ago, and it's how we can start asking for the DOE to pay for our recess, so it's an opportunity right there in our neighborhood.

Gen: Any event we posted, we need people to head these committees for us. We need someone to head Spring Auction, last year we raised over \$40,000, and we are looking for people on that now.

Floating Hospital:

We are going to put up some information on our FB page about supporting this toy drive in the community for Candy Cane Lane at the Floating Hospital. TFH provides medical care and other services to homeless women and children throughout the city. Over the holidays, they provide toys, new coats, mittens and pjs for homeless children — there are over 250,000 homeless children — and 10% of public school kids will experience homelessness this year. We have an amazon wish list and a number of locations where you can drop things off throughout the community.

Alternative Menu:

School lunch is free this year. schooled.org provides several different lunch menu. There is another menu we can get if the parents want it. You can go on the menu and look at the two menus. We will send home a survey. Show of hands right now, would anyone be opposed to having a slightly healthier lunch menu?

Child 1:

Why would they take mozzarella sticks away?

Gen: I don't think they actually do.

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QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS:

Parent 1:

My daughter is in second grade and I don't think she has art classes this year. Is that standard?

Gen: We hire studio in a school and it's for grades 2-5 and its a 6 week program.

Ms Rombone: For 2-5 we just do studio in a school, and the teachers supplement with their own art otherwise.

Gen: SEM is an art based program that we try to do. But studio in a school is the latter half of the year.

Parent 1: I'm raising that as an idea, because it's really important for our children.

Parent 2:

Lunch related question. On the side that says entree alternatives. Is there a way to get a schedule of what that is?

Gen: I think they are there everyday?

Ms Rombone: I think those are some choices they offer daily

Gen: If we change this menu, we'll look at everything.

Ms Rombone: There's an * on the menu that says could change.

Gen: The school food can change it, so we are kind of at their mercy

Ms Rombone: They have cheese and PBJ sandwiches every day.

Gen: thank you so much for coming, email us if you have any questions.

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STUDENT COUNCIL INDUCTIONS

STUDENT OF THE MONTH:

For the month of October - Honoring the value of Responsibility

Meeting adjourned – 7:35

Recording Secretary - Joy Gabriel

Approved By:

PS/IS78Q PTA Co-President

Date