

February 12, 2020 PTA General Meeting

Tracey opened the meeting at 8:40 AM. Spoke of a few highlights from the previous meeting and told everyone that the full minutes were available for reading at the front.

Minutes were approved by voice vote.

Treasurer's Report:

Olga is requesting \$5000 for Chromebooks for teachers. The DOE is restrictive in funding so they would like the PTA to purchase the appropriate Chromebooks for teachers that would be used for professional development. These differ from the ones that can be purchased for students through the DOE and cannot be purchased through the school budget.

Expenses are for Music Together, Field Day, Teacher Appreciation, with oral amendments for OT tools, auction, and fixing the flood damages (the PTA room was flooded last month).

Expenses were approved by voice vote.

Tracey: There was a flood in the PTA room. We didn't lose too much. Kenny and Jeff (custodians) did a great job of cleaning up.

Principal's Report via Olga:

After the midwinter break, will be ramp up of academics because of the state tests. Then, residencies for older grades will start.

School response to coronavirus: increased focus on hygiene. More bathroom inspections during the day by teachers and staff. Teachers need to email immediately when out of soap. There was a question about mandatory hand washing, but it would take too much time to implement. Will strongly encourage hand washing. Will send letters home from DOE.

New arrival protocols are making the mornings better. Thank you to all parents for helping with that.

School surveys have opened online. It's important for all parents to give feedback. They will also be available at parent teacher conferences.

President Report:

International Dinner was a great success. Thank you to everyone. Lots of cooks, national pride. Paid babysitters were great. Clean up was really easy. Thank you to Janet for organizing.

RIOC grant has been submitted. Irena is presenting to RIRA on Feb. 19. RIRA will make recommendation for our grant to be funded. Everyone can come and support in the audience.

Significant part of our funding comes from the public purpose fund. Asking for funding for wrestling, Salvadori, Sound Wave, Hip Hop.

Teacher Appreciation Week coming up in May. Will be changing format so that we can spread out the food love. May be spread out throughout the whole month.

Speakers have been fixed, thank you to Chris Griffin. Hard wiring can work in the future, but the bluetooth is working.

School survey is for parents and teachers to show feedback. We really want increased participation.

SLT report:

Open Safety meeting in April at PTA meeting. School safety team open to speakers and topics. Potential topics - body safety/awareness, safe touches.

Parent question: How does one get on SLT? Hold elections for parent representatives (2 year terms, staggered so that not everyone's terms expire at the same time) during PTA board elections. Teachers elect own representatives. This year, there will be one open spot. The PTA president is an automatic member. The SLT is advisory in nature. Work on CEP (comprehensive education plan) goals. Meetings are open to all parents, whether or not voting members of SLT.

At SLT, parent brought up not understanding the new math so we talked about the resources for academics. Need to better connect parents with the resources. Teachers are best resource. There is also the homework website with videos, teacher newsletter have explanations of methods. Tuesday mornings are available for appointments with teachers. But teachers need to know if there were confusion or need for more support.

Committee Report:

Auction - been soliciting items since January. Backpacked forms home. Will start increasing messages about getting donations. After the midwinter break, there will be a short online auction for the summer camps, Feb 24-28. The main auction is March 30 - April 3. This year's auction will be only online. Decided to not have an in person event. It was lots of work to do event on top of the auction. Want to focus instead on auction itself. Will hold separate event in spring. Teacher playdate raffle will still happen. Possibly at the spring concert.

Book Fair - will be in May with Scholastic. Had reached out to Follett to reschedule and they never responded. Book fair with Astoria Bookshop would be a popup event maybe in spring or end of school year. Need volunteers for book fair in May.

Mets game - flyers sent home already, and the link is live online. Can sit together with specific families, just need to indicate it. Lots of teachers and staff attended last year. This year, will get jersey with tickets.

2/25 is Pancake Day (IHOP gives away free pancakes) and pre-K classes are eating pancakes and raising money for St. Jude's. Ms. Kaplan is organizing those donations.

PTA Bylaws: every 3 years the general membership needs to review the PTA bylaws. They're online in the About PTA section of the website. Please take a look. Will approve at next month's meeting. They are written to be aligned with the chancellor's regulations. There was a major revision of them 3 years ago.

Tracey adjourned the meeting.