



GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES • February 28, 2019

A. In Attendance

It was noted that (a) parents and other “persons in a parental relation” as defined by the regulations of the New York City Chancellor and designated persons having a relationship to a child or children currently attending Q300 (the “**Parents**”) and (b) eligible Q300 teachers and instructional staff members who are currently employed on a full-time basis (the “**Staff**”) at Q300 were present. The total number of Parents and Staff (together, the “**Members**”) present was 17.

B. Call to Order

Co-Presidents Julissa McHugh and Paula Marisi called the General Membership of the Q300 PTA Association to order at 6:45 pm in the auditorium at the lower division campus.

C. Long Island City Youth Soccer Academy

Ivana Dokic, of the Long Island City Youth Soccer Academy gave an overview of the program. The Academy is offering a five week program with 50% of the program fee going to the PTA for the spring semester starting in April. The program will meet twice a week for 1-hour classes over five weeks and will be held at Murray Playground (45th Ave and 21st St., Long Island City 11101). It is geared for youth ages 5-14 years old. The PTA will send a registration form via students’ backpack. Please fill out and send the completed form and check to the PTA.

D. Co-Presidents’ Report

Co-Presidents Julissa McHugh and Paula Marisi gave the President’s report. The following are the highlights:

1. Thanks to all those who donated to a special Valentine’s Day treat for the teachers. Special thanks to Margarita Soto and Maria Hantzopoulos for organizing
 2. In response to some comments about specific teachers on the Q300 google group, the PTA asks parents to raise concerns directly with the teacher. If this is not successful, please consider elevating the issue to a Q300 administrator. If you want to discuss the issues with others, please be courteous, considerate, and mindful – and it may not be appropriate to have such conversations in front of your kids.
 3. The New York International Children’s Film Festival has begun. It is great opportunity to the family to see some wonderful films and a portion of the ticket price will be donated to the PTA.
 4. We have a number of upcoming promotions: (a) from March 2, 2019 to March 10, 2019, Cim Cim Restaurant at 33-08 Ditmars Blvd., which is owned by parent Rami Motiyr, will donate 20% of your purchase to the PTA; (b) on March 14, 2019, Bonjour Crepes and Wine, located at 34-10 30th Avenue, will donate 25% of your purchase to the PTA; and (c) The PTA will hold its Spring Tea Collection fundraiser from March 4, 2019 to March 11, 2019. Use the code SDS19Q300PTA to get 15% off your order + free shipping and 15% of your order will be donated to Q300 PTA. You can check out what's available at teaschooldays.com.
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F. School Leadership Team (“SLT”) Report

The SLT Report was presented. The following are highlights:

1. Q300 is interested in partnering with the WE organization to develop service learning projects that Q300 students would participate. The program is free and is aligned with the school’s core values. It provides an inquiry-based curriculum that demands that students ask, investigate, create, discuss, and reflect. It seeks to be inclusive by bringing all students

together to take responsibility to implement a service-learning campaign involving advocacy, awareness raising, and behavior change. A We representative will make a presentation to Q300 teachers in April.

2. The SLT discuss ways in which Q300's community can be more reflective of the diversity of New York City. Suggestions included universal pre-kindergarten testing for admission to gifted-and-talented ("G&T") programs, holding G&T registration events in low-income neighborhoods, and setting aside seats for students who meet the G&T testing admission threshold and who meet a certain criteria, such as being eligible for federal free lunch program. The SLT also noted that the Department of Education ("DOE") should provide more bus transportation so that students who live far from Q300 can attend the school. The DOE may make changes to G&T admissions for the 2020-2021 school year.

E. Co-Treasurers' Report

Treasurer Karen Van Wart delivered the Co-Treasurer's Report. Attached is a copy of summary of the PTA's finances for January 2019. In January 2019, the PTA raised over \$18,158.15, which includes \$17,170.33 from the Direct Appeal. Outflows were \$1,394, which includes school supplies/ professional development and enrichment program payments.

G. Committee Reports

1. **Fundraising.** Co-Vice President of Fundraising Claire Lui asked for volunteers to help solicit auction items from local businesses for the 5th annual Stepping into Summer Auction and to sell ads in the auction journal. Families may purchase tickets online. The joint Q300/PS 17 Zumba-thon fundraiser will be held on April 5, 2019. For those who buy tickets to The New York International Children's Film Festival 2019 (Feb. 22 to Mar. 17, 2019), the PTA gets \$3 for each ticket purchased. For those who would like to purchase products like mugs, lunch bags, and other items with their child's artwork, they must submit the order and artwork to Square 1 by March 6, 2019. The Direct Appeal chair David Wang reported that the Direct Appeal has thus far raised USD \$206,000. Thanks to all those who have donated. The PTA is organizing its "31 Days for Q300" in March to help raise the family participation rate for the Direct Appeal, which is the primary fundraiser for the PTA. So far, the participation rate is 35%. In previous years, the participation rate has been an average of 65% by the end of the school year.
 2. **Community Affairs.** The committee is seeking volunteer coaches or referees or donations of basketballs and healthy snacks and drinks for the Upper Division basketball tournament on March 22. The committee is organizing neighborhood liaisons to answer any questions of incoming families. If you are interested in organizing the PTA boxtop collection, please contact community affairs. While there had been a discussion about having a joint library with PS 17, the lower division campus does not have space for a dedicated library.
 3. **Communications.** Co-Communications chair Matt Schaefer reported that the PTA newsletter was published today.
 4. **Membership.** The PTA is soliciting proposals for a school supplies vendor that families can purchase grade-specific school supplies. The vendor should provide bulk school supplies and move the supplies to the fourth floor in the lower division campus and the fifth floor in the upper division campus. The PTA has sent a survey soliciting interest in a Q300 fun run. So far, 48 responses have been recorded.
 5. **Lower and Upper Division Representatives.** Each grade is putting together gift baskets with themes, such as Legos, Harry Potter, etc. to auction during the Summer auction.
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H. Resolution

1. A resolution was proposed to approve a fundraiser with LIC Soccer Academy in which the PTA will receive half of the program fee for a participant who registers through the PTA for the Academy's spring 2019 season. A motion was made to approve the resolution. The motion was seconded. A majority of Members present approved the motion.
2. A resolution was proposed to approve a fundraiser in which the PTA would organize a group outing to a Brooklyn Cyclones baseball game in June 2019. The PTA would receive a donation for each ticket sold depending on the total number of sold tickets. A motion was made to approve the resolution. The motion was seconded. A majority of Members present approved the motion.

F. Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of the General Meeting held on November 29, 2018 were presented. A motion was made to approve such minutes the Secretaries were authorized to fill in the number of attendees to be filled in later. The motion was seconded. A majority of Members approved the minutes.

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F. Principal's Report

Principal Biniaris gave the Principal's Report. The following are highlights:

1. Newly appointed social worker Rachel Weiss introduced herself and discussed her role. She has served as a social worker for about fifteen years, ranging from working with young people in outpatient mental health program to, most recently with middle school students at a charter school. She will be working with lower division students. She has been enjoying getting to know students, attending morning meetings, and informing students about what a social worker does. In K-2nd grade, she has focused on teaching students about how they can express differences of opinions to one another. In the 3rd and 4th grades, she has focused on how students can work in groups and about group dynamics.
2. Principal Biniaris expressed appreciation to Margarita Soto and Maria Hantzopoulos for organizing a special Valentine's day appreciation treat for teachers and for all the families who contributed to the treat.
3. Parent Megan Cirrito organized a meeting with the administration and a representative of the Department of Education Office of Library Services. Q300 is unfortunately not eligible for many of the Office's services, as Q300 does not have a dedicated library and librarian. However, the meeting focused on strategies to improve classroom book collections, including purchasing a mobile library cart to help bring supplemental books into the classroom.
4. Q300 conducted interim assessments for students in reading and math in the lower division and in English in the upper division. Principal Biniaris noted that students have exhibited learning growth between 15 and 40% from benchmarks established at the beginning of the year.
5. Upper division students raised over \$3,000 in a "Pennies for Patients drive, where students collected change for cancer research.
6. Q300 is organizing a STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and math) fair for students on May 24, 2019. The lower division fair will be held from 8:30 am to 10:30 am. The upper division fair will be held from 11:00 am to 12:30 pm. Students will have the opportunity to share their projects with one another.
7. The SLT is creating a vision statement based on Q300's core values of inquiry, inclusion, and responsibility. The SLT will seek input from teachers and parents. It is also developing a long-term plan to create a coordinated program in which social-emotional learning, subject matters, and other areas are taught over a number of years in which concepts are built upon each other in a seamless way.
8. Q300 is developing a multi-tiered response to intervention ("RTI") approach to identify and support students who are struggling academically.
9. Assistant Principal Sonita Ramkishun gave a presentation about Q300's potential partnership with the We organization to develop to learning service projects at the school. She noted that the partnership would allow students to learn about a particular issue, become passionate about the issue, and develop and implement a plan of action. The service learning project would connect to Q300's core values. The program culminates in a one-day event at the Barclay center where certain students are invited to attend.
10. Teacher Zoraida Dooley, who served as 3rd grade substitute teacher, has been moved to a first-grade class. Fourth-grade teaching assistant ("TA") Julio Monzongo Zola has been moved to class 101. A new teaching assistant has been appointed to the class 101 and the 4th grade. Teaching assistant Mandy has been working in the fifth grade since January.

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11. For the 2019-2020 school year, Q300 will have 3 sixth-grade classes. One of those classes will be designated an integrated-co-teaching (ICT) class, which provide students with a disability the opportunity to be educated alongside their non-disabled peers with full-time support. It is likely that each class will have 30 students.
12. A parent volunteer, who volunteered during lunch period in the lower division, remarked how she was impressed about how kind the lunch staff were to the students. She also gave a shout out to the fourth-grade community helpers, who appeared to take a lot of pride, in helping kindergarteners during lunch. Parent Coordinator Jenny Lando is working on another training for parent volunteers.
13. Several parents met with upper division teachers recently after there had been some discussion on the informal parent google group (which is separate from the PTA) about certain upper division teachers. Principal Biniaris noted that the teachers were concerned that negative things were being said and that they were relieved that parents came and spoke with them. They were appreciative of the positive messages from the parents. Principal Biniaris noted that if parents have a concern, they should first go to the teacher to resolve the matter. If they are not satisfied with the result, parents should elevate the matter.
14. In response to a question about class size, Principal Biniaris stated that he would like to reduce class size, however it depends on the school budget.
15. A parent stated that it seems that the second-grade students are not getting hands-on inquiry based science lessons. The parent noted that students seem to be learning concepts through memorization rather than through experimentation. Principal Biniaris noted that Q300 is implementing a new Houghton Mifflin Science curriculum that has a lot of hands-on-work. He will follow-up with the second-grade teachers.
16. A parent noted that the second, third, and fourth grade students were given the same Spanish exam. Principal Biniaris agreed to follow-up.
17. The upper division will hold a national honors society induction ceremony.

H. New Business

No new business was discussed.

G. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:15 pm. The next general membership meeting will be held on March 21, 2019 at 6:30 pm in the upper division campus.

M. Daniel Bach and David William Wang, Co-Secretaries