



## GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES • June 20, 2019

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### A. In Attendance

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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 (**Parents**) and (b) eligible Q300 teachers and instructional staff members who are currently employed on a full-time basis (**Staff**) at Q300 were present. The total number of Parents and Staff (together, **Members**) present was 39. Quorum was reached.

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### B. Call to Order

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Incoming President Milko Mikov called the meeting to order at 6:40 pm in the auditorium at the lower division.

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### C. Co-Presidents’ Report

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Milko gave the President’s report. The following are the highlights:

1. The PTA is organizing a trip to a baseball game between Brooklyn Cyclones and the Staten island Yankees on Sunday, June 23, 2019 at 2:00 pm at MCU Park in Coney Island.
2. Ample Hills Creamery will donate 25% of your bill to the PTA on the last day of school, June 26, 2019, between 12 to 4 pm. It is located at on at 34-02 30th Avenue, Astoria.
3. The PTA will received a portion of any book orders through <https://www.childrensbookstore.com/welcome/q300-book-fair/>.
4. The PTA is launching its 4th annual Summer Read-a-Thon. The class with the highest participation rate in each campus will get a pizza party.
5. Many thanks to Lynn Kennedy and Gina Reis for organizing the Lower Division Park Day at Athens Park on May 31, 2019. Many thanks to those who volunteered at the Welcome breakfast on June 15, 2019 for incoming Q300 families and at the lower division student registration on June 17 and June 20, 2019
6. The “Back to School” picnic will be held at Rainey Park on August 25, 2019 from 3 pm to 6 pm, pending park permit approval.
7. Q300 will organize its in-school volunteering training on August 27, 2019.
8. The PTA is partnering with 1st Day to deliver student supplies to the school. This option offers one-stop shopping for school supplies. The PTA will get a small amount of the proceeds from each box sold. Please help move the school supplies from the ground floor to the fourth floor in the lower division and the fifth floor in the upper division in late August 2019.
9. The newly elected board was introduced. Thanks to the outgoing board members for their hard work.

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## D. School Leadership Team (“SLT”) Report

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SLT Parent Member Laura Marks gave the SLT report. The SLT met twice in June 2019. The first meeting focused on revising the school’s Comprehensive Education Plan (CEP), which describes the goals and strategies of Q300 for the 2019-2020 school year. The SLT discussed what academic components need to be changed as well as ensuring that social-emotional education is implemented. The second meeting focused on the school budget.

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## E. Treasurers’ Reports

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Treasurer Karen Van Wart delivered the Co-Treasurer’s Report. Attached is a copy of summary of the PTA’s finances for May 2019 and portion of June 2019. During this period, the PTA raised over \$33,000, which included \$20,900 from the Stepping into Summer auction and dance party and \$9,847 from the Direct Appeal. Outflows were \$47,480, which included expenses related to enrichment programs, teaching assistants, school supplies, and professional development.

An overview of the 2018-2019 budget was presented. The following are highlights:

1. Total income for the year to May 31, 2019 is nearly \$330,000, which is slightly higher than the prior full year.
  2. At the end of this school year, the PTA expects to have a carry-forward balance in excess of \$230,000 to meet future obligations.
  3. The Direct Appeal accounted for 72% of gross raised funds, compared with 67% in the prior year. The Direct Appeal has the lowest expenses – just 1% of total amounts raised.
  4. PTA-funded student enrichment programs, teaching assistants, and school supplies accounted for almost 85% of the PTA’s total expenditure. Fundraising expenditures are approximately 15%.
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## F. Committee Reports

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**Fundraising.** Fundraising Vice President Claire Lui noted that the PTA will hold its annual summer read-a-thon. Direct Appeal chair David Wang gave an overview of the Direct Appeal. The Direct Appeal encourages Q300 families to give or raise funds to pay for crucial enrichment programs and services that deepen your child’s learning experience at Q300. The PTA raises money to help **cover the funding gap** between the **cost of the enriched education** your kids receive and Department of Education (DOE) funding. The DOE does not pay for teaching assistants, certain enrichment programs and electives, and other priorities and does not provide extra funding for Q300’s gifted and talented status. The PTA is a 501(c)3 organization and charitable contribution is tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. The PTA may be eligible for employer’s corporate matching program.

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## G. Principal’s Report

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

1. The following 2019-2020 staff announcements were made:
  - a. Jessica Gonzalez and Julia Park will continue to teach kindergarten.
  - b. Cristina Baron and current 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher Carol Choi will be teaching 1<sup>st</sup> grade.
  - c. Stephanie Praitmuth and current 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher Kiera Sullivan will be teaching 2<sup>nd</sup> grade.
  - d. Maria Kakakios and newly hired teacher Alejandra Roma will be teaching 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.
  - e. 4<sup>th</sup> grade has two teacher positions open.

- f. Upper division guidance counselor Christine Katartzis is taking a study sabbatical.
  - g. Payroll secretary Bonita Onunka is leaving her position.
  - h. Physical education teacher Toni Ann Campuzanno will continue to teach at both campuses. She is also training teachers to integrate movement into the classroom.
  - i. Current 4<sup>th</sup> teacher Katie Xie will be teaching 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Current substitute teacher Zoraida Dooley will temporarily replace current 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher Jessica Huang who will be taking maternity leave for part of the fall semester.
  - j. Current upper division math teacher Ann Hauser is expected to take maternity leave in the fall.
2. The New York State Department of Education has selected Q300 as 1 of 562 New York state recognition schools for the school's high academic achievement, student growth and graduation rate, and its progress during the 2017-18 school year.
  3. In connection with a school-based option (SBO) vote, the teachers have voted against having the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teachers departmentalize -one teacher teaching English Language Arts and Social Studies, and the other teacher teaching math and science. Instead, for next year, each 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher will teach all subjects to their students.
  4. In response to family concerns, the upper division board game elective has removed the board game "Secret Hitler" from its stable of games. Principal Biniaris noted that the having the game available was not intended to harm the students. He has reached out to the Department of Education field support center to have someone come in and discuss with the students why the game raised concerns with families, including concerns about anti-Semitism. It may be difficult to have the discussion this semester, as the school year is about to end. He will look into having a session occur in the fall.
  5. For the fall, online chess will be taught by NY Chess Kids one day a week for a 12-week cycle during technology class for kindergarten and first and second grades. A parent expressed concern that technology class, where students code, will be reduced from 2 days a week to 1 day a week during the chess cycle. Another noted that parents polled in the PTA enrichment survey ranked chess lower than other enrichment programs. 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> graders will have the option to take a chess elective during their enrichment block.
  6. Much of the school budget pays for staff salaries as well as substitute teacher coverage for teacher absences. The budget has relatively little for supplies. To save funds, the administration requested help in identifying someone in the Q300 community to help maintain and update the school website.
  7. Q300 is expecting the following with respect to the student population for the 2019-2020 school year:
    - a. a maximum of 5 current 6th graders will not return to Q300;
    - b. at least 1 current 5th grader will be leaving for private school; a former Q300 student will be returning to Q300 for 6th grade.
    - c. Each 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade class will have at least 30 students and a maximum of 32 students. (Each kindergarten class will have a maximum of 25 students.)
    - d. There will be three 6th grade classes. 1 of those classes will be designated as an "Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) class. (An integrated-co-teaching (ICT) class consists of one general education teacher and one special education teacher, providing a reduced student/ teacher ratio. The ICT class can consist of up to 40% of students with and an individual education plan (IEP), which is a plan that helps ensure that a child who has a disability receives specialized instruction and related services.)

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## H. Resolution

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1. A resolution was presented to approve the proposed 2019-2020 PTA budget. Sue Sekar gave the proposed budget overview. The following are highlights:
  - a. The proposed budget increases fundraising targets by about \$60,000 in higher fundraising. The increased targets would help pay for the following:

- (i) Q300 has proposed replacing the current lower division arts and music provider with Arts Connection. Arts Connection would provide Visual Art, Music and Theater residency programs for K-4. The programming costs about \$24,000 more than the current provider. Just before tonight's PTA meeting, Arts Connection had made a presentation to parents. Art Connection serves 46,000 students, works in 120 schools, and is highly regarded in providing quality programming.
  - (ii) The enrichment cycles for K-2<sup>nd</sup> grade will increase from 12 to 16 weeks.
  - (iii) a fifth-grade guitar program, which will enable the fifth graders to have a second year of guitar classes; and
  - (iv) band, chess, and film electives in the upper division, and other expenses.
- b. In the event that the PTA does not raise sufficient funds, it may cut teaching assistant positions and/or enrichment programs.
  - c. The proposed budget was amended to reflect a \$30,000 carry-over of funds that had been allocated in the 2018-2019 budget to teaching assistant salaries.
  - d. The administration is working on enrichment offerings, so there may be a budget amendment to the fall.
  - e. A parent suggested reducing the school supplies funding and replacing it with in-kind donations. Others suggested that the teacher professional development funding be reduced and that the administration seek other sources of funding. Neither suggestions were incorporated into the resolution.
  - f. A motion was made to approve the resolution. The motion was seconded. A majority of Members present approved the resolution.
2. A resolution was presented to appoint Stephanie Peled to the elections committee. Kevin Gallagher and Luke Lukose were the other elections committee present. A motion was made to approve the resolution. The motion was seconded. A majority of Members present approved the resolution.

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## I. Expedited Elections

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The PTA held an expedited election for the position of Co-President, Executive Vice President, and Co-Vice President of Fundraising. At least 10 calendar days prior to the Meeting, written election notice had been sent to the Membership.

1. **Co-President.** No nominations were made from the floor.
  2. **Executive Vice President.** The following nomination was taken from the floor: Lynn Kennedy. No other nominations were made. A Member made a motion to cast one vote to elect Lynn Kennedy as Executive Vice President. The motion was seconded. A majority of Members present approved the motion.
  3. **Co-Vice President of Fundraising.** No nominations were made from the floor.
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## J. Adjournment

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The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:30 pm EDT. The next general membership meeting will be held on September 19, 2019 at 6:00 pm in the lower division campus.

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