



GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES • January 23, 2020

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 (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 28. Quorum was reached.

B. Call to Order

Co-President Lynn Kennedy called the meeting to order at 6:15 pm in the lower division auditorium.

C. Reading and Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of the General Meeting held on November 21, 2019 were presented. A motion was made to approve such minutes. The motion was seconded. A majority of Members present approved the minutes. The minutes of the General Meeting held on December 19, 2019 were presented. A motion was made to approve such minutes. The motion was seconded. A majority of Members present approved the minutes.

D. Presentations

1. An Arts Connection representative gave a presentation about the Spring Arts Program at the lower division campus.
 - a. Kindergarten, first grade, and second grade will have a percussion residency, in which students will continue their exploration of rhythm and music dynamics, focus on rhythmic patterns, measure, dynamics, counting, and tempo to explore the fundamentals of music making. First and second grades will sing together chorally, be able to listen to the music and each other, sing with proper volume and energy and be able to express meaning and feeling through singing songs.
 - b. Kindergarten will learn about building stick puppets, hand puppets, and shadow puppets, story-telling and prop construction, as well as concepts of theater, staging, and character development. First grade will have a creative dramatics residency in which students will learn the foundations of theatrical elements and skills, as well as expressivity, scene structure, improvisation, theatrical analysis, problem solving, and teamwork.
 - c. Second grade will have music theater with sets and/or costume design. They will work in concert with the third and fourth grade music elective. Third and fourth grade will have a music theater elective in which the student will perform a musical review.
 - d. Third and fourth grades will have either visual art or cartooning elective.
2. Appel Farm Arts Camp representatives gave a presentation about its sleep-away summer camp in Elmer, NJ. The New Jersey. The camp is offering a \$1,750 voucher for its program in the winter auction, for a min bid of \$450. A parent gave a testimonial about the camp.

E. Co-Presidents' Report

Co-President Lynn Kennedy gave the President's report. The following are the highlights:

1. Congratulations to Sonita Ramkishun for her appointment as interim, acting principal. Thanks to Principal Ramkishun and Assistant Principal Milonakis for guiding the school leadership transition.
 2. Thanks to those who volunteered in the holiday breakfast for teachers and staffers in December. Thanks to parents Wennie Chen, Saswat Pattanyak, Lynn Kennedy, and Milko Milkov for the visit by Mike Massimino, a professor from Columbia University and former NASA astronaut. Thanks to the Principal Candidate Outreach Committee for its work in publicizing the Q300 principal vacancy. Thanks to the Wellness Committee led by Assistant Principal Milonakis for exploring ways to incorporate wellness topics to the curriculum. Thanks to parent Joanna Holzman for working on the winter auction, which includes summer camp options.
 3. The PTA digital newsletter will be issued shortly.
 4. Upcoming events include the Winterfest International Potluck on January 31, 2020; Skate Night organized by physical education teacher Toni-Anne Campuzano on January 24, 2020; Harry Potter Night to raise funds for eighth grade graduation on February 29, 2020; the upper division basketball tournament will be held on March 5, 2020; and a joint Zumbathon with P.S. 17's parent association in which 25% of the proceeds will be used to help with natural disaster relief in Puerto Rico, and the remainder will be given to both school's parent associations.
 5. 7 teaching assistants have been placed in the lower division. The school has not yet hired the final teaching assistant, who would be placed in the third grade. The school has informed us that it go forward with the proposed upper division film making elective organized by the Astoria Film Festival, due to space constraints.
 6. The PTA encourages the school to use any school budget savings from the retirement of former Principal Bill Biniaris for programs such as professional staff development or enrichment programs.
 7. The PTA encourages the school to organize community discussions about any proposed changes in the school's admission policy.
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F. Co-Treasurers' Reports

Co-Treasurer Yi-Wen Wang delivered the Co-Treasurers' Report. Attached is a copy of summary of the PTA's finances for December 2019. During this period, the PTA raised over \$81,000, which included over \$79,900 from the Direct Appeal and over \$1,000 from other fundraisers. Expenses were over \$22,100, which included \$9,000 upper division Chromebooks and over \$9,000 for holiday gift card payments.

G. Principal's Report

Principal Ramkishun and Assistant Principal Milonakis gave the Principal's Report. The following are highlights:

1. On January 17, 2020, Q300 hosted its Enrichment Showcase at the Lower Division. The students' work was impressive. Thank you to the enrichment program providers Arts Connection, Alvin Ailey and NYChessKids.
2. Second graders are writing on non-fiction books. Third graders are reading about Rosa Park and learning about fractions. Fourth graders are writing essays and learning about sound particles. Upper division students are learning about research and marshalling arguments using text. Fifth graders are focused on primary and secondary research sources. Eighth grader is studying American Imperialism.
3. On January 11, 2020, the Q300 upper division debate team competed in the Urban Debate League's Tournament. As a result of the students' effort, Q300 took 1st place overall as a school. In recent

competitions, upper division students have ranked as high as high as third place. Further, the team did very well in the varsity or open division of these competitions.

4. The results of the American Math Competition 8, which is a 25-question, 40-minute, multiple choice examination in middle school mathematics designed to promote the development of problem-solving skills, have been issued. As a school, Q300 earned a spot in the competition's school honor role. Four 8th graders scored in the top 5% in the country.
5. Upcoming events include the following: reports cards will be distributed on January 28, 2020, the school will conduct the interim assessment for students in connection with the Measures of Student Learning ("MOSL") process, which helps teachers better understand their students' strengths and how best to support their growth from January 27, 2020 to February 14, 2020; "Respect for ALL" Week, which will focus on activities and events concerning respecting diversity, religious acceptance and racial diversity, will occur during the week of February 10, 2020; 100th Day of School will occur on February 14, 2020; and mid-winter recess will occur during the week of February 17, 2020.
6. Through the social emotional learning program, lower-division students are discussing ways in which they can work on solving problems with one another, are focusing on kind words and actions, are discussing the differences between reporting and tattling as they work on problem-solving skills, and are learning about the pitfalls of communications including the challenges of gossip and rumor.
7. Upper-division students are providing input on what characteristics that they hope the new principal will have during advisory. Teacher Esteban Villafuerte is working with the upper division Student Council to create a student survey about the selection criteria for the new principal.
8. The SLT is developing a proposal to change the Q300 admissions priority policy in order to encourage more diversity at the school. The proposal may provide priority to 40% of kindergarten seats to applicants who get an overall score of 97 or above and who live in NYCHA housing, housing funded in part or whole by Section 8 housing choice vouchers, or temporary housing, or who live in School District 4 and 5 (East and Central Harlem). Such priority is applied after all eligible siblings are placed. A parent expressed concern that students living in School District 4 and 5 are ineligible for public (OPT) bus transportation to Q300. Another parent asked whether there would be income limits for those living in School District 4 and 5, because by giving these districts priority, wealthier families may decide to move to these districts to increase their chances of getting into Q300. Another parent noted that if Q300 moves to one building at a location that is further from western Queens, students who live in School District 4 and 5 may not want to make the commute to Q300. The SLT will circulate a draft to the Q300 community and then submit to the Department of Education for its consideration. The policy would not apply for the incoming kindergarten class for 2020-2021 school year.
9. For 2020-2021 school year, the incoming 6th grade will consist of two classes. The Department of Education denied Q300's request for 3 classes, due to space constraints at the upper division. In the 2019-2020, Q300 had 3 sixth grade classes. One of the classes was an integrated co-teaching ("ICT") class where a general education and a special education teacher jointly provide instruction to a class that has students with and without disabilities.
10. The Q300 Wellness Committee applied for and received \$2,500 Department of Education grant to promote the well-being of students and their families. The Committee has helped organize a number of activities including Turkey Trot, Family Skate Night, March Madness Basketball, and a healthy cooking workshop. The Committee meets monthly. The next meeting is on February 11, 2020.
11. Ten upper division students participated in "A World of Difference" Peer training program on January 6 and 7, 2020. The program, which is led by the Anti-Defamation League is designed to use positive influence to combat against stereotypes and prejudice in schools and communities. This program is to help promote social

responsibility, critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Student council members will continue the work during student council sessions as well as launching a 5-8 event about the program during the “Respect for ALL” week. The school may create a “peer to peer” elective next year.

H. Committee Reports

1. **Fundraising.** Thus far, the Direct Appeal has raised \$213,388. Many thanks to those who donated to fund enrichment programs and services for our students’ education.
 2. **Membership.** Volunteers are needed for the Winterfest International Potluck on January 31, 2020.
 3. **Principal Candidate Outreach.** Tom Cirrito gave an update on the committee’s work. The following are highlights:
 - a. The Committee’s aim is to raise awareness of the principal vacancy in order to increase the number of applicants. When the Q300 principal position was last open in 2016, only ten candidates applied – four of whom were unqualified and one of whom failed to show up to the Level I interview.
 - b. The Committee and other volunteers sent emails (“**Outreach Emails**”) to a list (the “**List**”) of over 3,700 principals, assistant principals, and other potential candidates in the New York City metropolitan area. The email list was assembled from public sources, linkedin searches, personal contacts, and an educational marketing vendor. In addition, the Committee has reached out to various networks and institutions.
 - c. The Committee tracked the results of a subset (1,850 emails) (the “**Subset**”) of the List. Out of the Subset, 94-95% emails reached the targeted email account (5-6% bounce-back). Of the emails that reached the targeted email account, 55% were opened. Many were open multiple times, which is an indication that the email was forwarded to others.
 - d. Thanks to the Committee members and those who have been reaching out to their contacts.
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I. Expedited Election

1. A resolution was presented to appoint Luke Lukose, Ingrid Kennedy, and Dragos Bozdog to serve on the nomination committee. A motion was made to approve the resolution. The motion was seconded. A majority of Members present approved the resolution.
 2. The following nomination was taken from the floor for the position of Co-Vice President of Fundraising: Claire Lui and Stephanie Peled. No other nominations were made. A Member made a motion to cast one vote to elect Claire Lui and Stephanie Peled as Co-VP of Fundraising. The motion was seconded. A majority of Members present approved the motion.
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J. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:30 pm EST. The next general membership meeting will be held on February 27, 2020 at 6:15 pm in the upper division campus.

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