



GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES • March 31, 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 28.

B. Call to Order

Co-Presidents Julissa McHugh and Paula Marisi called the General Membership of the Q300 PTA Association to order at 6:47 pm in the auditorium at the upper division campus.

C. Co-Presidents’ Report

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

1. Tomorrow is the upper division’s first ever basketball tournament. Thanks to gym teacher ToniAnne Campuzano and Community Affairs VPs Lynn Kennedy and Gina Reis for organizing.
 2. The 8th grade will be holding a bake sale during the Parent Teacher conference at the Upper Division, on Tuesday, March 26, 2019.
 3. The joint Q300/PS 17 Zumba-thon fundraiser will be held on April 5, 2019. Please participate or pledge to a participant, as the proceeds will be used to fund enrichment programs.
 4. The Stepping into Summer Dance party and auction is occurring on May 5, 2019. The website-ticket link is active, so everyone should purchase their tickets. Early bird tickets are available until April 5, 2019, after that it is regular price. Last year the tickets sold out so don't wait until the last minute to buy tickets.
 5. Thanks to parent Hong Van Tieu for organizing the Bonjour Crepes and Wine fundraiser, which raised \$200, and the New York International Film Festival, to parent Rami Motiyr for organizing the Cim Cim Restaurant fundraiser, which raised \$500, and to parent Keri Goldman for the Square 1 fundraiser.
 6. Registration for the Long Island City Youth Soccer Academy will continue through March 31, 2019. . 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 meets twice a week for 1-hour classes over five weeks (10 Classes Total). The PTA has sent the registration form via students’ backpack. Please fill out and send the completed form and check to the PTA.
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F. School Leadership Team (“SLT”) Report

Principal Biniaris gave the SLT Report. The following are highlights:

1. The SLT is working on next year’s Comprehensive Education Plan (CEP), which details objectives and a program to meet the needs of Q300 students. The CEP includes issues areas such as training for a responsive classroom training, inquiry-based learning curriculum, development of strong families and community ties, and cultivation of effective leadership. The SLT discussed how to use student data to refine CEP goals.
2. The SLT discussed potential ways of increasing school diversity, including reserving a certain percent of seats for students who are from low-income households and live in school district 30 and students living in public housing

(NYCHA). All of these students would meet the gifted & talented (G&T) testing criteria. The SLT discussed the potential difficulties of paying for transportation to Q300 for those who do not have access to free bus or transit transportation. The Department of Education (DOE)'s Office of Enrollment will attend the May SLT meeting.

3. The SLT discussed lobbying the DOE for the appointment of a permanent assistant principal for each of the upper and lower division campuses.
4. Principal Biniaris noted that Q300 professional development plan includes observing teacher classroom performance and providing feedback to assist teachers in developing their inquiry-based teaching skills.

D. Co-Treasurers' Report

Membership Co-chair Sue Sekar delivered the Co-Treasurer's Report. Attached is a copy of summary of the PTA's finances for February 2019. In February 2019, the PTA raised over \$12,466, which includes \$7,114 from the Direct Appeal and \$4,110 from the Winterfest silent auction. Outflows were \$18,600, which includes enrichment program payments.

G. Committee Reports

1. **Fundraising.** Co-VP of Fundraising Claire Lui noted that the current fundraisers include the NYC Soccer Academy program (see above), the joint Q300/PS 17 Zumba-thon fundraiser, and the 5th annual Stepping into Summer Auction. Membership Co-VP Maria Hantzopoulos noted that Bareburger restaurant will serve as a featured sponsor of the Auction. Parents can donate auction items such as a museum tour, home-cooked meals, and other experiences. The Direct Appeal chair David Wang reported that the Direct Appeal has thus far raised USD \$216,000. Family participation rate is at 40%.
 2. **Communications.** Communications Co-VP Matt Schaefer requested assistance in archiving the PTA newsletters on the PTA website. The most recent PTA newsletters have been circulated as mailchimp emails.
 3. **Community Affairs.** Co-VP of Membership Maria Hantzopoulos noted that 97 upper division students participated in the March 22 Upper Division basketball tournament. For those residing in City Council District 22, please participatory budget committee meeting to vote for the funding of new fountain water stations that will enable students to refill their water bottle at Q300 and other School District 30 schools. Community Affairs is has formed a Wellness Council, which will help strengthen physical and health education programs within the school, as well as other health and wellness initiatives (e.g., Physical Activity, Food, School Environment, Community Wellness, etc.). The Council needs upper division parent members. If you are interested in becoming a neighborhood liaison, who will help answer questions for new families and organize events, please contact community affairs.
 4. **Membership.** Co-VP of Membership Maria Hantzopoulos asked for volunteers to help with the lower division open house, which will be scheduled after Q300 is informed about when the gifted and talented (G&T) exam results will be released, and to help with teacher appreciation week, which is held during the week of May 6. The PTA is seeking a new school supply vendor that will deliver the supplies to the 4th floor of the lower division and the 5th floor of the upper division as well as delivering such supplies in bulk.
 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. Fourth grade is organizing a graduation field trip to Alley Pond Park.
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F. Principal's Report

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

1. 55% of eighth graders received at least one spot in one of the eight New York City specialized high school. In addition, 44% of eighth graders received at least one spot of their preferred high school choices.
2. Recently 7th graders wrote and shared Spanish stories with 4th graders.

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3. Eighth grader Roman will be participating in the New York State geographic bee competition.
4. The eighth grade has raised \$10,000 for their graduation and overnight trip.
5. The Biobus, a mobile science lab, will be visiting the lower division on May 13-14 and the upper division on May 22-23, 2019.
6. The English language state tests will be held on April 2-3, 2019.
7. 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.
8. Q300 is scheduling a talent show for the upper division on June 17, 2019 and for the lower division on a date to be determined.
9. Q300 will be holding a Story Slam on April 12, 2019 from 1:30 pm to 3 pm, where 5-8th graders will be performing stories.
10. Upper division teacher Laura Pariss and Jean Kim are working with a creative arts team at CUNY to involve seventh students in the New York Shakespeare Festival
11. Assistant Principal Sonita Ramkishun gave a presentation of current lower division happenings:
 - a. Kindergarteners are learning about the solar system.
 - b. First graders are having a publishing party and are learning about surveys and how rainbows are formed and will have a trip to the New York Hall of Science in April.
 - c. Second graders are learning about evaporation and condensation, have started a new architecture class, and are visiting the National Geographic Encounter experience and the Noguchi museum.
 - d. Grades K-2 students will participate in a tree stewardship, including removing litter from tree beds, pulling invasive weeds, cultivating the soil, mulching, watering and planting flowers. Students are encouraged to adopt the trees they work on to continue on-going tree stewardship. For more info: treesny.org.
 - e. Third graders are comparing culture, conducting research on African American and Women's history, learning about fossils, learning about fractions, and interactive number lines.
 - f. Fourth graders are learning about the American Revolution and performing scenes using props and having debates (loyalists v. patriots). They are building a habitat for the moon.
 - g. Third and fourth graders will have a park day on May 31, 2019.
12. The enrichment committee will meet to discuss next year's programs. The committee will discuss multi-year enrichment programs that will build certain skills, such as music or art, and to evaluate current enrichment providers.
13. 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.
14. Principal Biniaris noted that he is not aware of any teachers leaving the school at the end of the school year; however, he is prepared to deal with any vacancies. In response to a question about whether or not teachers are expected to change the grade that they teach next year, Principal Biniaris noted that the teachers provide their grade preferences, and the school takes such preferences into consideration(as well as other factors such as school needs) when they place teachers.
15. A parent noted that there seems to be different levels of proficiency in teaching using an inquiry-based approach in the lower division. Principal Biniaris noted that the teachers want to improve their proficiency and professional development will help them with improving such skills.
16. Principal Biniaris reiterated the school policy that homework is optional for kindergarten through second grade. He noted that there was one class that this was not the case; he will make sure that all teachers understand the policy.

17. A parent asserted that third graders are not doing science experiments. Principal Biniaris stated that he sees students using equipment and conducting experiments. He asked for more info and asked that the parent reach out to him directly.
18. In response to a question, Principal Biniaris stated that the upper division curriculum teaches critical thinking and problem-solving skills that will help those who take the Specialized High School Admission Test.
19. A parent expressed concern that a family abruptly pulled their fourth grader and kindergartener from Q300 last week and is sending them to their local zoned school. He expressed shock, as the family has been at Q300 since the first year of the school's existence. The family has been very involved with the Q300 community. Five years ago, the family had hosted the PTA's first board retreat at their home, and over the years, one of the parents served on the PTA board. This year, the family expressed confidence in the school by enrolling their kindergartner. Principal Biniaris agreed to look into the issues why the family left.
20. A parent stated that it seems that restorative circles are no longer a priority and are not integrated in the curriculum. Restorative circles are classroom strategies to develop relationships, build communities, and respond to conflicts and problems that arise among students. Principal Biniaris responded that teachers are attending trainings that include restorative circles and that the approach still occurs in school.
21. A parent requested that the administration provide an understanding of the types of teacher professional development and how that aligns with the long-term vision of the school.
22. Principal Biniaris noted that the lower division has a response to intervention process to identify students who are at risk of failing and provided targeted teaching to help them catch up. The process has three tiers. A special education teacher support services (SETSS) team help gather data about a student and makes recommendation as the student moves from one tier to the next. In tier 1, teachers identify student who is at risk and track data concerning the student. Teachers may use differentiated instruction that focuses on the student's learning styles. If the student is not improving, the SETSS team may recommend that the student may get more targeted instruction in tier 2. In tier 2, the student receives lessons in a small group session a number of times a week. The school gather more data and offers recommendations. In tier 3, the school reaches out to the student's parents and the student may be assessed about whether he or she may have a disability that would warrant specialized instruction and related services. Principal Biniaris emphasized that it takes time for the data to be gathered about a student and for assessments to be made.

H. New Business

No new business was discussed.

G. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:20 pm. The next general membership meeting will be held on April 11, 2019 at 6:30 pm in the lower division campus.

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