



GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES • November 21, 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 (**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 22. 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. Asphalt Green Presentation.

A presenter from Asphalt Green a nonprofit organization, discussed the recess enhancement program in the lower division campus. Started in 2001, the program trains play coaches to get children physically active through over 150 organized games that decrease conflict and increase self-esteem, safety, and fun. The program is now in 61 schools. The program occurs during recess on Tuesdays and Thursdays. A coach has the equipment ready at game stations in the recess area. The coach explains the rules of the games and the students have the option to play at the game stations. The games are based on seasonal needs (e.g. indoor vs. outdoors).

A parent expressed concern that students may be forced to play a certain game and are not having the opportunity to free play. The presenter noted that the students have the option to have free play at designated areas in the recess area. The size of the free play area varies, based on how much space a particular station needs. Someone noted that free play often is a game of tag. When that is the case, the coach encourages the students to join the coach-led tag games.

The presenter led the Members in an indoor recess game. The game involved the Members stomping feet and clapping hands depending on the presenter’s instructions.

D. Approval of the Minutes.

The minutes of the General Meeting held on June 20, 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 September 19, 2019 were presented. A motion was made to approve such minutes. The motion was seconded. A majority of Members present approved the minutes.

E. Co-Presidents’ Report

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

1. 450 Q300 community members attended the Costume Party on October 27, 2019. The attendees consumed 60 pizza pies and the PTA raised over \$5,000 gross. were consumed. Many thanks to the planning committee, which was chaired by Maria Hantzopoulos and Ellie Rabinovich and the volunteers who helped run the event.

2. Over 70 people attended Gallery Night at ClampArt Gallery on November 15, 2019. The PTA raised over \$3,700 gross. Many thanks to Raechel McCarthy for hosting the space at ClampArt, Nicole Gallagher, Ingrid Bromberg-Kennedy, and Raechel McCarthy for spearheading the planning committee, Joanna Holzman for organizing the silent auction and raffle, Eve Wolff for securing the beer from Lagunitas Brewery, Nora Lawrence for securing the wine from Communal Brands, Ori Consentino for preparing the amazing food. We are also grateful to Nora Lawrence, Raechel McCarthy, Sindy Aprigliano, and Joanna Holzman for obtaining and donating auction prizes.
 3. Many thanks to those who organized the teacher Thanksgiving Luncheon on November 27, 2019 including Rami Motiyar for his generous donation and this gorgeous and tasty spread, and those who helped with the set up and delivery at both campuses.
 4. The PTA is partnering with P.S. 17's PTA for a free screening of the movie, "Moana" on Dec 6, 2019 at 5:30 pm at the Lower Division campus. Net proceeds from the sale of pizza and snacks will be split between the schools.
 5. The Board has the following openings: Executive Vice President and Co-Vice President of the Lower Division.
 6. Thanks to Claire Lui and Sae Makino-Siller for coordinating the Thanksgiving Pie Sale. 154 pies were sold.
 7. Thanks to Hong Van Tieu and others for organizing the book fair during the parent-teacher conferences. The PTA raised \$305 and parents bought more than \$325 worth of books for the Q300 classrooms.
 8. Thanks to Agnes Luo and Li Lin, who are organizing a voluntary holiday group collection to Q300 administrators, teachers, and staffers. The deadline to give is December 9, 2019. This is not an official PTA collection.
 9. Thanks to those who volunteered at the November 19, 2019 middle school open house. Over 350 people had RSVP'd for the event.
 10. Among the PTA-funded items, the PTA is paying for 13 chromebooks, one cart, the salaries of 7 teaching assistants (the 8th teaching assistant has not yet been hired) and helping to fund "Responsive Classroom" training in February 2020 for 4 teachers. In addition, the upper division teachers have used PTA funds to pay for supplies and other expenses for electives, including math competition, math Olympiad, math league, national geographic bee. The PTA has also paid for the Junior Honor Society renewal fee.
 11. Please contribute to the next PTA newsletter, which will be issued in late January or early February.
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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 October 2019. During this period, the PTA raised over \$49,000, which included over \$42,300 from the Direct Appeal and \$6,700 from other fundraisers.

G. School Leadership Team ("SLT") Report

SLT Parent Member Sara Clough gave the SLT report. At the October 29, 2019 SLT meeting, DOE school enrollment representative presented suggestions about how Q300 can increase the diversity of its student population through changes in its admission policy. The representative is working with TAG and other schools and suggested that Q300 target District 30 as well as 4 and 5 in northern Manhattan. The discussion also focused on potential applicants living in NYCHA housing. The representative suggested that Q300 needs to have a basic diversity plan finalized by March 2020 in order to have the plan take effect for the 2020-2021 school year. The November 27, 2019 SLT meeting will focus on the Comprehensive Educational Plan ("CEP"), which articulates objectives to meet the needs of students and the school's educational program.

H. Committee Reports

1. **Fundraising.** Fundraising VP Claire Lui reported that the Read a thon raised \$8,500, which exceeded its target. 3rd and 8th grades raised the most funds, and they received a pizza party. Fundraisers, including events sponsored by T-Swirl Crepe (36-16 30th Ave, Astoria, NY 11103), Ample Hills Creamery (34-02 30th Ave, Astoria, NY 11103), the Astoria Book Fair, and the Disney on Ice, raised a \$1,000 in total. The Thanksgiving Pie sales raised a total of \$984. Please note that the PTA website has a link to online websites that will make donations to the PTA (Shutterfly, Amazon, and others) based on purchases using such links. Claire will look into a Fairway program that will give donations to the PTA based on Fairway purchases. Direct Appeal co-chair David Wang reported that Q300 families have made about \$106,000 in donations and pledges, which is about 37% of the fundraising target. He explained that thus far, the percent of the funding target is lower this year because the budget target is much higher (\$212,000 vs. \$277,000). He encouraged families to send emails to friend asking them to donate to the PTA on "Giving Tuesday" (Dec. 3, 2019), a global day of giving. Facebook will match donations on Giving Tuesday for up to a total of \$7 million. They will start matching at 8:00 am EST. (Please note that last year, the match was exhausted within a matter of seconds).
 2. **Membership.** Membership Co-VP Maria Hantzopoulos requested volunteers for the Thanksgiving Day luncheons on November 27, 2019 and the Holiday party on December 20, 2019 at the lower and upper divisions. The PTA will hold its annual community-building International Potluck on January 31, 2020. At the Potluck, each grade will set up game and activity tables. The library committee met with the administration about ensuring that in the future, the school will have a sufficient number of books in the classroom library collections.
 3. **Community Affairs.** Community Affairs Co-VP Marisa Nagano noted that the PTA will partner with NY Cares to collect gently used, clean coats and new socks for less fortunate New Yorkers through December 13, 2019.
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I. Resolution

1. A resolution was presented to appoint Claire Lui to fill the remaining unexpired Fundraising-VP 2019-2020 term. Claire's Fundraising Co-VP had resigned. A motion was made to approve the resolution. The motion was seconded. A majority of Members present approved the resolution.
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J. Principal's Report

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

1. The renovation of the science lab, which will include a hydroponic lab, at the upper division campus has begun. Much of the work will be done over winter break and be completed by the end of April 2020. Queens Borough President Melinda and Katz and Council Member Costa Constantinides funded the renovation.
2. Assembly Member Aravalella Simotas allocated \$1,000,000 for capital improvements for the upper division campus.
3. The lower division campus received a \$2,500 grant to promote wellness and health. Physical education teacher Toni Anne Campuzanno will organize a "Turkey Trot" at the lower division.
4. Upcoming events include the following: The Back to Bach project will perform on December 4, 2019 at the school; the second grade architecture celebration will occur on December 6, 2019; and make-up picture, sibling (assuming the siblings are at the same campus) and eighth-grade caps-and gown pictures will be taken on December 9, 2019; the mobile planetarium Skydome program will be held on December 17, 2019.
5. In response to the concerns of several families, the upper division board game elective removed the board game "Secret Hitler" from its stable of games in June 2019. Principal Biniaris has continued to have

discussions with families. He noted that since then, teachers have been trained in the “Echoes and Reflections” program about the Holocaust, and that trainers from A World of Difference Institute will be conducting trainings to a small group of students on discrimination and social responsibility in the upper division. These trained students will provide peer-to-peer training to other students. A parent noted that the DOE Office of Arts and Special Projects has culturally relevant and culturally sustaining curricular materials.

6. Principal Biniaris has requested that the student enrollment office consider adding a third sixth-grade class for 2020-2021. The third class would be an integrated-co-teaching (ICT) class, which 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 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. He noted that the upper division may have space limitations for the additional class; but he is willing to find space for the third class. In response to a parent question, he also noted that having a third class would not affect space allocation for electives.
7. Middle and high school applications are due on December 2, 2019.
8. Principal Biniaris confirmed that students who are admitted through a diversity admission policy would have to meet the 97% cutoff on the gifted and talented exam for the lower division. He noted that the school will hold focus groups with the Q300 community on any proposed admission policy changes. A parent suggested that Q300 students should have a diversity discussion as well.
9. The next “Coffee with Bill” is on December 20, 2019.

K. New Business

Co-Presidents Milko Milkov and Lynn Kennedy signed on to a letter (the “**Letter**”) that calls for the inclusion of more parent voices and urges the Mayor to reject the recommendation made in the School Diversity Advisory Group (“**SDAG**”), Making the Grade II: New Programs For Better Schools, August 2019 for the elimination of Gifted & Talented programs. In the report, the SDAG notes that economically and racially integrated schools can provide students with high-quality education they deserve and laid out goals that all schools represent the socioeconomic and racial diversity of the city as a whole. The SDAG defined integration goals to include racial and socio-economic integration, multilingual learners, students with disabilities and students in temporary housing as students who should be represented in schools throughout the city. In pursuit of those goals, the Report, among other things, calls for the phasing out of existing Gifted & Talented (G&T) programs as students age. These programs would not receive new incoming classes. The Letter was signed by PTA presidents of New Explorations into Science, Technology and Math High School, Lower Lab School, The Anderson School, and TAG Young Scholars. Here’s the link to the letter: https://www.andersonpta.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Letter-to-Mayor_SDAG-recommendations_20191104.pdf

L. Adjournment

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

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