



GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES • February 17, 2022

A. In Attendance

It was noted that (a) parents and other “persons in a parental relation” as defined by NYC Chancellor regulations 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 (Members) present was 50. Quorum was reached.

B. Call to Order

Co-President Lynn Kennedy called the meeting to order at 6:38 pm EST on the Zoom virtual platform. Such virtual meeting is permitted under “Functioning in the Virtual Environment: Guidance for PA/PTAs and Presidents’ Councils”, issued June 4, 2020, by the NYC Department of Education (DOE).

C. Principal’s Report

Principal Sonita Ramkishun gave the Principal’s report. The following are highlights:

1. Students are participating in virtual trips. Prior to the pandemic, Q300 could schedule Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT) buses for in-person trips. Because OPT buses are currently unavailable, Q300 are looking at chartering private buses and other options for in-person class trips.
2. There are still openings for mid-winter break camps including Global Kids and NY Edge.
3. Q300 requests that students take COVID-19 tests prior to returning to school after mid-winter break, using the COVID-19 test kits distributed via students’ backpack.
4. Thank you to all the staff and parents that came together to help with the safety incident that occurred at the upper division campus on February 16. No additional information can be disclosed.
5. Several parents raised concern about the February 16 safety incident in which, according to a letter sent by the administration, at approximately 1:30 p.m., a pepper spray container was accidentally discharged in one of upper division stairwells. The stairwell was closed for the remainder of the day. All students who said they felt ill from the discharge were taken to see the school nurse and checked out, and Q300 immediately called the emergency medical service (EMS) out of an abundance of caution. EMS escorted some students to the hospital for further evaluation. A parent whose child felt ill had expressed concern that they had not been informed immediately about the incident. Others expressed gratitude for the staff’s work in helping ensure the safety of the students and noted that the communication could have been clearer.
6. A parent expressed concern about claims by their child that teachers are pressuring students to get 100% on a quiz. Principal Ramkishun emphasized that Q300 focuses on inquiry-based learning, students are encouraged to do their best, and that teachers have different teaching styles. She said she would follow-up.
7. Q300 has before and after school CHAMPS sports and fitness program for various grades. In addition, Q300 has been arranged for sports equipment, like softballs and soccer balls for students to use during recess.
8. In response to a parent’s question, Principal Ramkishun noted that she plans to hire PTA-funded teaching assistants (TAs) for the Fall 2022, so long as the DOE provides a hiring process and that Q300 teachers agrees to their hiring for their classes. (The PTA will include the funding for such TAs in its budget).
9. Q300 has not received any information about Q300 admissions for the 2022-2023 school year.

D. Co-Presidents' Report

Co-President Maria Hantzopoulos and Lynn Kennedy delivered the Co-Presidents' Report. The following are highlights:

1. After buying air purifiers and high-quality KF94/KN95 masks for teachers, staff and students, the PTA has purchased additional masks, so that each student can receive two high-quality masks. Families have an option to opt-out of the mask distribution.
2. The PTA encourages parents to permit their students to participate in the in-school COVID-19 PCR testing program. The DOE has provided a video to all schools on how the free in-school COVID-19 PCR testing actually happens for children. See the video [here](#) or visit the PTA website for [more information on how to participate](#).
3. Huge thanks to Executive Vice President (VP) Yvette Choy for researching, purchasing, and organizing delivery of air purifiers. Thanks to volunteers Mohamed Ghobashi, Nicholas Kwong, Maria Mazing, Paul Sikar, Sae Makino-Siller, Eli Stahl and Kurt Swenstein for helping to unload, transport and haul them all up the stairs. Appreciations to David Wang for purchasing the additional purifiers needed to complete the January order in the interim. Also, thanks to Maria Hantzopoulos, Yvette Choy, and Lynn Kennedy for purchasing and delivering KF94/KN95 masks for teachers, staff, and students.
4. Please visit this list of [Black History Month Events and Resources](#).
5. Please visit this list of [Lunar New Year Events and Resources](#).
6. In honor of Random Acts of Kindness Day on February 17th, the PTA would like to invite the Q300 community to participate in a Kindness Challenge. The Kindness Challenge will run from February 13th – 27th. More info is below.
7. The PTA is introducing Chat and Chill Mondays! On the Second Monday of each month at 10am, the PTA will host casual and virtual meet-ups for folks and share a (virtual) coffee while talking about life and parenting.
8. Q300 has completed its first cycle of PTA-funded enrichment programs, including visual arts and music with Arts Connection in the lower division, Architecture (2nd grade), Chess (K-2nd grade) and elective cycles for the Upper Division. Thank you to Arts Connection for their virtual artists showcase and highlighting Q300 students' wonderful and creative work.
9. PTA has approved \$200 per grade for spending toward a grade activity or event that supports relationship building, in lieu of in-person events. If you are interested, please reach out to your Class Parents for details and guidelines.
10. The Green Team has been sharing “Green Team Green Tip of the Week,” in the school-wide Google Group and on FB page! It is also starting to plan activities for Earth Day in April. To join the Green Team, please contact rachanas@Q300pta.org
11. The Enrichment Committee is drafting a survey on potential enrichment programs for the 2022-2023 school year, in consultation with Principal Ramkishun. The PTA will share the survey with parents/guardians and teachers.
12. Please participate in the Pizza Kit Fundraiser from Feb 14- March 18. Purchase a Little Caesar's pizza or cookie making kit and have a party! The kit will be shipped to you and the PTA will make \$6 per kit sold.
13. Please join or support the annual virtual joint Q300 and PS17 PTA Zumba-thon. It will be a night of movement, fun, and community to help raise money for the PTA and Lifeline Groceries.
14. Thanks to Vice President (VP) of Fundraising Lisa Christopher and Susie Steward for organizing the popcorn fundraiser.
15. Thank you for all of the artwork submitted in January for the Square 1 Art Fundraiser. Big shout out to Lisa Christopher, Susan Stewart, and Q300 Parent Coordinator Jenny Lando for coordinating, and teachers for collecting all of the students' creations. Over 250 pieces of art have now been sent in.

E. Co-Treasurers' Report

Co-Treasurer Takila Oku delivered the Co-Treasurers' Report. Attached is a summary of the PTA's finances through Jan. 31, 2022. In January, the PTA raised about \$34,700, including \$16,100 from the Direct Appeal and

\$18,600 from the COVID-19 vaccine referral program. The PTA expenditures were about \$1,033, which included the expense for KF94/KN95 masks for students, teacher's wish lists, and PayPal fees for Direct Appeal.

F. SLT Report

Alisha Arthur gave the School Leadership Team (SLT) report. The following are highlights from the Jan. 6, 2022 SLT meeting:

1. The SLT discussed the Comprehensive Education Plan (CEP), focusing on prioritize mid-year goals and analyzing gathered data. The SLT came up with plans to offer content specialty focused workshops to provide parents with resources that they would need in order to support their students learning at home and provide support during the summer. These workshops are planned for late April and May.
 2. The SLT discussed the biannual review of the SLT to evaluate how well schools within Community School District 30 (District 30) are aligned to the district plans for school-based planning and shared decision making.
 3. The SLT briefly discussed new policies that have been recently updated, which includes the attendance policy and the cell phone policy. The policies are located on the Q300 website.
 4. The UFT report included a discussion about teacher burnout, teacher absences, and UFC sponsored helpline for students and their families. There are many reasons why a teacher may be out. Teachers have days that accumulate over the course of their career and may take time when they are sick, for personal business, caring for a sick family member, bereavement days, COVID days, and now vacation days. The reason is private and not public information. The UFT's Positive Learning Collaborative has forged a partnership with Vibrant Emotional Health to create a phone and chat helpline that offers free, confidential mental health support to students and their families. Please help us spread the word about this important service to students and families who could benefit from this service. The helpline is open Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to midnight, and on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Call 212.709.3222 Text "PLC" to 43961.
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G. One School Building Committee

Co-Chair Marlon Aranda gave an update on the One School Project. The following are highlights:

Why Q300 needs one building to house both lower and upper divisions:

- (a) Eliminate duplicate office and admin functions (inefficient);
- (b) Allow teachers more time in the classroom;
- (c) Provide more enrichment programs;
- (d) In-flexibility of lunch and recess due to shared space;
- (e) No universal wheelchair access.

Consolidation is in the best interest of current and future students.

By moving Q300 to a new campus, Q300 can return over 500 seats to Q300's co-located schools, P.S.17 and I.S. 126.

New school buildings are already funded in NYCSCA 2020-2024 Capital Plan to create 376 new seats in Community School District 30.

The Q300 community needs to stay on the radar of public officials and continue to advocate for one school building. District 30 Superintendent Dr. Composto is very supportive of the consolidated Q300 facility. The local community board has passed a resolution in support of one school building.

Ideal sites include under-developed city-owned properties, vacant retail sites, underutilized warehouses, and closed private school buildings.

The Q300 community can help by attending public meetings and speak on behalf of the one school committee; meet with local and state officials; help identify potential development sites; and look for possible development partnerships.

H. Committee Report

1. Maria Hantzopoulos gave an update on behalf of the Wellness Committee. They are working on planning some outdoor activities. Please reach out to Q300 social worker Rachel Weiss for more info.
 2. Co-VP of Community Affairs Rachana Shah shared that Green Team are organizing initiatives which includes advocacy action and organizing a composting program. She encouraged families to reach out to the NY Governor to advocate for more investment in climate resiliency. P.S. 17 is working with Queens Botanical Garden to become a public-food scraps drop off site. Co-VP of Community Affairs Meghan Cirrito noted that District 30 is starting a rezoning process of several public schools in western Queens. There is a new STEM focus high school Gotham Tech opening up this fall near Queensboro Plaza.
 3. Co-VP of Communication Dana Holmes shared that they will be sending out the quarterly newsletter in the spring. If you would like to contribute to the newsletter, please reach out to Dana.
 4. Co-VP of Membership Erica Soto Eng shared that the Kindness Challenge is in full gear. Each grade has come up with ideas to show kindness such as food drive, handmade cards for the elderly etc. The PTA will be sharing these projects on its Facebook page.
 5. Co-VP of Fundraising Susie Stewart talked about the New York International Children's Film Festival fundraiser where PTA will receive \$3 per ticket sold to Q300 community.
 6. Joanna Holzman from the Auction Committee gave an update on the upcoming spring auction and encouraged parents to donate or help request for donations from local businesses, summer camp, etc.
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I. New Business

1. A resolution was presented to allocate \$1,000 for each of the Class of 2025 (current fifth graders) and Class of 2024 (current sixth graders) for an in-person trip to the Alley Pond Park Adventure Course, which features both low- and high-ropes course activities that promote team building and problem-solving skills and allocate \$800 for an in-person educational trip for the Class of 2022 (current 8th graders). The Classes of 2025 and 2026 had been scheduled to experience the Adventure Course in fourth grade, but the trips were cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions. Similarly, the Class of 2022 had been scheduled to experience an overnight trip to the Taconic Outdoor Education Center in seventh grade; but the trip had been cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions. Such amounts shall be reallocated from the enrichment line, as several budgeted enrichment residencies did not occur this school year, due to scheduling challenges arising from the physical distancing restrictions arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. A majority of Members present then approved the resolution.
 2. A resolution was presented to permit the use of the enrichment line to include the funding of virtual or in-person trips for up to \$500 per class for the 2021-2022 school year only, as several budgeted enrichment residencies did not occur this school year, due to scheduling challenges arising from the physical distancing restrictions arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. A majority of Members present then approved the resolution.
 3. A resolution was presented to approve the meeting minutes for the Jan 20, 2022 general membership meeting. A motion was made to approve the resolution. The motion was seconded. A majority of Members present then approved the resolution.
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J. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:41 pm ET. The next general membership meeting will be held on March 17, 2022 at 6:30 pm ET on a virtual platform.

David William Wang, Amy Wong
Co-Secretaries