



**PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION OF PS 199, INC.  
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES**

**September 26, 2018  
8:45 a.m.**

**ATTENDANCE:** SEE SIGN-IN SHEET ATTACHED TO THESE MINUTES

**LOCATION:** PS 199 Cafeteria

**CALL TO ORDER (Jenn MacFarlane and Barbara Trencher)**

- After determining that a quorum was present, the meeting was called to order by Co-Presidents Jenn MacFarlane and Barbara Trencher at 8:51 a.m. Eastern.

**PRELIMINARY MATTERS – Election for Co-Fundraising Chair (Angeline Higgins)**

- Angeline Higgins, Chair of the Nominating Committee, announced that an election would be held for a Co-Fundraising Chair to the Executive Board. The two nominees were Moe Bardach and Karen Kennedy. Karen Kennedy made a speech in support of her nomination. Moe Bardach was not present. In his absence, his wife, Bridget Bardach, made a speech in support of Moe's nomination. A vote was held amongst the parent body present at the meeting. After tallying all the votes, it was announced that Karen Kennedy received the most votes. Karen Kennedy was therefore appointed as the new Co-Fundraising Officer.

**Teacher Presentation (Bethany Trench, Julia Ramos, Jamie Zucker)**

- Bethany Trench, Julia Ramos and Jamie Zucker made a FUNdations Presentation. FUNdations is a systemic program taught to K through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade that incorporates early literacy tools such phonics, word study and trick words, among others, to teach children how to read and spell words. Ms. Trench described how the program is taught in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, Ms. Ramos explained how it is taught in 1<sup>st</sup> grade and Ms. Zucker did the same for kindergarten. The PTA will upload the FUNdations packet to the PTA website.

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT (Jenn MacFarlane and Barbara Trencher)**

- **Bylaws Update** (Barbara Trencher). The PTA Executive Board has been working to update PS 199's Bylaws so that they are consistent with the Chancellor's Regulations. Hard copies were made available for parents at the meeting to peruse. The PTA will vote on the updated Bylaws at the next PTA meeting. The following are the main items that have been updated in the Bylaws:
  - **The Role of PALS.** Bylaws were revised to allow for the election of up to four PALS in June and three in the fall. This will permit to include K parents and other parents new to school. Added a more specific description of PALS.
  - **Reimbursement.** The amount of money that parents can get automatically reimbursed from the PTA was defined in the Bylaws as \$3500. Any amount above \$3500 must receive approval by the PTA Treasurer.
  - Other items that were updated include the dates for the general elections and the budget process definition.
- **PALS.** Next month we will be electing 7 new PALS. Barbara Trencher described that the role of the PALS is to represent PTA and parents more generally. PALS are expected to be on at least one committee.

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Parents can nominate themselves. Nominations should be sent to Angeline Higgins or to the PTA Executive Board.

- *New Teacher and Staff Lounge.* Jenn MacFarlane told the parents about the new official teacher and staff lounge. The PTA Executive Board intends to organize a committee to make the lounge into a positive space for teachers and staff to relax and work. Kendra D'Emilia is leading this effort and more volunteers are needed to assist with this.

### **PRINCIPAL'S Report (Louise Xerri)**

- State test scores have finally been released for 4<sup>th</sup> graders and will shortly be released for 3<sup>rd</sup> graders.
- School Updates:
  - There are now two gym teachers (Mr. Regan and Mr. Engel) and two science teachers (Ms. Raff and Ms. Schuleman).
  - The school has purchased six new smart boards for the classrooms that needed them.
  - There will be AC in the cafeteria, auditorium and gymnasium in the spring.
  - School park/playground: to date, the school has earmarked about \$400,000 for park renovations and maintenance. Ms. Xerri requested the support of the larger parent body to appeal to local assembly officials for more resources. The park needs to be repaired and there are many specific spots that need to be fixed. The park is an important resource for our school and also for the community as a whole.

### **PRINCIPAL'S Q&A (Louise Xerri)**

- There was a question about a second adult in the classroom. Specifically, one parent asked why her second grader does not have a second adult in the classroom. Her second grader is in Mr. Gonzalez's ("Mr. G") class. Ms. Xerri explained that there will shortly be a second person in the classroom but that it will not be a Teaching Assistant ("TA"). The second person in the classroom is usually a TA, para professional or an "America Reads Tutor." The latter are individuals who are not teachers, but college students and can help the children with reading. Mr. G's class will soon have an America Reads Tutor as their second person in the classroom.
- There was a question about the pick-up and drop-off procedures on rainy/inclement weather days and whether drop off or pick up on these days can be indoors. Ms. Xerri explained that having everyone come inside for drop off and/or pick up on raining days poses a safety risk. She also said that it is early in the year for parents to come inside to pick up their children because they don't necessarily know where their children's classrooms are.
- There was a question about the presence of rodents in the classrooms and what the school was doing about it. Ms. Xerri explained that she was aware of the problem and has an exterminator coming in to handle it.

### **SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM REPORT (SLT) (Alexa Friedman)**

- Alexa Friedman and Sophia Hubscher are the co-chairs of the SLT. Alexa Friedman explained what the SLT does, i.e. it handles school leadership, which includes, *inter alia*, safety issues and school curriculum. The SLT meetings are on Friday mornings and anyone can attend, although only SLT members can vote. The SLT will address the Comprehensive Educational Plan, which determines goals for the teachers during the year, as well as goals for the school, the satisfaction of the parent body, among other items.

### **TREASURER'S REPORT (Maria Paskowitz)**

- *Review Budget.* Maria Paskowitz provided an update on the PTA's revenue to date; namely \$11,700 through August 31, 2018. Maria Paskowitz explained that most of funds so far have been coming through the school's Passport Program. Forty-three passports had been sold by September 25, 2018, amounting to \$74,000. Last year, the PTA sold a total of 185 passports for a total of \$230,000. Progress has been good so far. Parents should check to see if their employers do corporate matching, as many

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companies do. There have been a lot of up-front expenses and these have totaled to date \$235,000. These expenses include, *inter alia*, teaching assistants' salaries, the school's arts programs, office equipment, books, liability insurance and technology expenses. Fortunately, there was sufficient budget from last year to cover these upfront expenses.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- *Fundraising Committee* (Gayle Slonim). Gayle Slonim spoke about the Passport Program. This program was started at PS 199 two years ago and it has been one of the most successful fundraising initiatives ever. It provides families with the most sought after tickets to PTA events while also enabling the PTA to plan for the year. Families can make a one lump payment or monthly payments.
- *No Cost Fundraising Programs*. Jenn MacFarlane highlighted a few no cost fundraising programs that the parent body can take advantage of, namely, the Amazon Affiliates Program.
- *Parent involvement* (Jenn MacFarlane). There are a number of committees parents can join, as well as sign-ups to help cover specific events, the upcoming bake sale, Garden Days, and the like.

**OLD BUSINESS**

- None

**NEW BUSINESS**

- Jenn MacFarlane announced that the next PTA meeting will be held on Thursday, October 26<sup>th</sup> in the evening. There will be childcare for PS 199 kids.

**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Jenn MacFarlane and was seconded by Barbara Trencher. There being no objections or abstentions, the meeting was adjourned at 10:15 a.m. Eastern.

Minutes prepared by:

Ana Frischtak  
Recording Secretary