

# NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOL

## The Parent Teacher Association Executive Meeting

**Date:** Monday, April 8, 2019

**Type:** Monthly Executive Meeting

**Time:** 8:30 a.m.

**Notice Provided in Advance:** Yes

**Location:** TNS PTA Room

Present: Dyanthe, Theresa, Rocio, Matthew, Havilah, Jesse, Jenny, Rene  
Meeting called to order at 8:35 am.

1. Approval of [previous minutes](#)
  - a. Approved.
2. Treasurer's report
  - a. Reviewed current budget.
    - i. Outstanding expenses of around 45k, including Studio in a School and some classroom support line items. Dyanthe will ask teachers to submit receipts for current expenses. Some line items, such as fixtures and furniture, are done and so won't need all of budgeted money; other line items, such as for the Wellness committee, won't need budgeted money either due to separate grants.
    - ii. Will have clearer picture of deficit after a few more fundraising events (online auction and movie night). Final numbers still being tallied for auction, but the online portion is open until Spring break. Total profits on pace to meet or exceed the 25k goal. Spring Dance still to be planned; unlikely to happen unless someone other than PTA presidents step in and drive.
  - b. Discussed PTA savings account
    - i. Created some years ago from budget surplus. Unclear what the intended purpose was, but since it was not money donated for specific purpose, it is not a restricted fund, and PTA can use discretion.
    - ii. Discussed using some of savings to pay off prior years' debt that rolls over from year to year, but the general consensus was that it's important to retain savings for real emergencies.
3. PTA mission statement and priorities for next year
  - a. Presidents shared draft of a PTA mission statement (see below). Discussed how the mission statement can help clarify the purpose of the PTA and the priorities for fundraising. Essential for next year.
  - b. Discussed the effects of the current year's budget: Enormous pressure on fundraising, which falls heavily on a few shoulders and strains the broader TNS community. Past PTA exec and principal confirmed that this is not a new

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issue/dynamic. General consensus that the budget should be scaled back to some extent.

- c. Discussed importance of being thoughtful about priorities. Mission statement and further discussions will help clarify, as well as discussions at the PTA General meeting. Discussed looking at available data to understand which activities bring in the most revenue with the lowest burden. Also discussed providing more transparency to TNS families about the full budget PTA needs to raise and letting families decide about their contribution.
  - d. Additional teaching assistant for K class
    - i. Having added a pre-K class this year, we'll have an additional K class next year. School needs an additional teaching assistant as a result. Not covered by the DOE. Needs to come from PTA budget. This means an added 20k or so.
    - ii. PTA needs to understand the priorities in terms of classroom support, enrichment programs, etc. Presidents to meet separately with principal to discuss further.
    - iii. Next steps:
      - 1. Presidents to meet with principal to talk priorities.
      - 2. PTA to continue working out budget options.
      - 3. High-level conversation about priorities and budget in April general meeting.
      - 4. Actual budget to vote on in May general meeting.
4. SLT
- a. Differentiation survey results
    - i. SLT sent survey to teachers, asked about differentiated learning in classrooms. Reviewed summary of challenges, including professional development and books, and discussed where PTA might allocate funds to support teachers. Principal mentioned that school budget is responsible for some of the issues (e.g., books).
5. Events
- a. Movie night
    - i. Permit filed. Set for Friday, May 3. Theme: Cinco de Mayo. Looking for related film. Coco was screened last year. Discussed making this a dress up to some extent, perhaps with mask making.
  - b. Read aloud/tasting in the library
    - i. This coming Monday, 5-6pm. Exec board invited with family plus 12 family raffle ticket winners. Less than 12 entered raffle, so Jenny will

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publicize to the listserve. This event comes with a 2k grant from Action for Healthy Kids.

- c. Garden/eco/wellness
  - i. Community event in May 9. Tasting during lunch, garden party, fitness class.
6. SLT and PTA elections for next year
  - a. PTA presidents to find 2-3 parents to be nominating committee responsible for organizing elections for next year's PTA and open SLT spots.
7. School lunch
  - a. Dyanthe shared an update about STAR wanting to switch back to the standard lunch menu. Large portion of STAR students qualify for free lunch, and school lunch participation at STAR seems to have gone down after switch to alternative menu. Home lunch is a burden for some STAR families.
  - b. In contrast, since last month, there has been an increase in participation from TNS. The PTA presidents would like more time to communicate to the community about this potential change and share communication to STAR families as well. The Garden/Eco/Wellness event planned by both schools includes a tasting and promotion of healthy foods.
8. Set agenda for upcoming PTA General Meeting (April 18)
  - a. Approval of previous minutes (8:30 - 8:35)
  - b. Presidents updates (8:35 - 8:45)
    - i. Library
    - ii. Auction
    - iii. Mission statement
  - c. School Food advocate and speaker: Andrea Strong (8:45 - 9:00)
  - d. Events/committee updates (9:00 - 9:10)
    - i. Movie night 5/3
    - ii. Garden/eco/wellness event 5/9
    - iii. Restaurant night 5/14
    - iv. Diversity: Cookbook and Rice 'n Rhythm, 5/22
  - e. Treasurer's report/budget outlook (9:10 - 9:30)

Meeting adjourned at 9:40am.

## **Mission Statement of the PTA of The Neighborhood School**

The Neighborhood School PTA is committed to:

- Supporting educational enrichment programs that educate the whole child;

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- Augmenting classroom resources and professional development trainings for our teachers; and
- Prioritizing a positive, welcoming, inclusive community atmosphere for all TNS families.

We believe that our diverse, socially-minded student body is at the heart of our school. We are committed to supporting programs that foster social and environmental awareness, experiential learning, inclusivity, and physical and emotional wellness for our children and their families. We recognize the importance of environmental education and true nature experiences for New York City children. Our fundraising efforts are targeted to support those programs, supplies, resources, and trainings most in line with this mission.