

NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOL

The Parent Teacher Association of The Neighborhood School General Meeting

Date: Thursday, October 17, 2019

Time: 8:00am

Location: TNS PTA Room

Type: Monthly General Meeting

Notice Provided in Advance: Yes

1. **Meeting called to order 8:10am**
2. **Vote opened for [2019-2020 budget](#) and ballots distributed**

Meeting recessed at 8:22am for lack of quorum without objections.

Recess ended and meeting called back to order at 8:36 am.

3. **Introductions.** Those present introduced themselves.
4. **Approval of Minutes.** Motion to approve the [minutes](#) from the meeting on Sept. 19, 2019. Motion seconded. Motion passed.
5. **PTA Co-Presidents' Report.**
 - A. **Greater collaboration with STAR Academy:** One of the TNS PTA's goals for the year is to increase the connection between STAR and TNS. We are looking to increase interaction between the PTAs, hold shared events, and build community. Members of TNSPTA Executive Board, including Co-Presidents, attended the recent STAR Academy PTA meeting and report that there is interest from STAR Academy parents to working together more closely. One way we will increase collaboration is by working together on the Library Committee, which works to support the shared resource of the library and Cheryl, the librarian.
 - B. **ByLaws:** By the Chancellor's Regulations, we are required to review the PTA bylaws at least every three years and our bylaws are due for review and revision. PTA Executive Committee is working on that and will share more information at the next general meeting.
 - C. **The "T" in PTA:** We are an association of TNS parents and teachers and we want to make sure we are allowing the opportunity for teacher engagement in our meetings and decision-making. We have teacher representatives come to every general PTA meeting but starting our meeting at 8:30am prohibits almost all teachers from participating in our meetings. We started today's meeting at 8:00am to allow teachers the ability to participate, particularly in the vote for the budget. We also added a Teachers' Report to the agenda.

Chair opened the floor for discussion on this topic. Comments included statements of support, questions about whether members of the PTA can vote by proxy (they cannot)

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and how many teachers voted before 8:35am (one), as well as encouragement for making the timing of the start time more public. It was also noted that there were some parents who were able to vote on the budget and learn about the PTA because we started the meeting at 8:00am.

- D. Reminder about Meeting Participation: Presidents ask that members raise their hands to speak so we can encourage equitable participation and would love the opportunity to call on people who don't usually speak.

4. Treasurers' Report:

- A. Review Statement Activities: The statement of activities was distributed. The Statement of Activities shows cash on hand of about \$36K and some outstanding payments from last fiscal year (including an IRS payment due that will not be a regular charge). The revenue from the Readathon looks lower than last year but family donations looks higher than last year. The bake sales have been doing great. There are some deposits showing on the financial statement that have not been coded yet.
- B. Budget Outlook: The [proposed budget](#) was distributed. Assuming the budget is approved today, the budget outlook seem on track. If you ever have questions about the budget you can always ask an Executive Board member.
- C. Budget Process: The PTA has a lot of items we want to fund, including things people may not realize are programming funded by the PTA (e.g., Studio in the School, some teacher assistants) and the Executive Board learned over the summer than one teacher assistant would have to come from the PTA budget. We set ambitious fundraising goals for ourselves and we will have to take stock of what we raise mid-year to see if we are on track and may have to adjust the programming we fund if we don't hit the targets we need. We aren't having a detailed discussion about the proposed budget today because we discussed it at our last meeting and made sure to be available to answer questions between meetings. We are taking votes on the budget by ballot box today.

5. Principal's report.

- A. Teaching Assistant for Younger Grades: Assuming the proposed budget passes, we have lined up another teaching assistant for Caitlin's classroom. Right now, Caesar is shared between Dara's class and Caitlin's class, but we have someone ready to go if funds are approved.
- B. Partnerships with Community Based Organizations. We have worked to partner with new community based organizations -- looking for the same quality as we previously experienced but with lower cost. We have a grant that supports ballet and art throughout the year for 2nd-5th graders. This year, thanks to a parent suggestion, the school identified a new organization -- Notes in Motion -- to provide hip hop for 2nd through 5th graders (once a week). Class has started and reports suggest it was amazing. We are set for arts and dance for this year, and we hope the grant support makes it possible to continue in future years but if you know of community based organizations

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who might provide programming for students, let Dyanthe know. We are always looking for productive partnerships.

- C. Gender & Family Project of the Ackerman Institute. Last spring and again this fall, the staff will participate in professional development with GFP. This Thursday, from 6 - 8 PM the Gender & Family Project of the Ackerman Institute will lead a Gender 101 Workshop for TNS families. Childcare and pizza will be provided for TNS children.

6. Teacher's Report. Teachers report that the first hip hop classes were a big success -- it was a welcoming environment for the students, the class was structured, and instruction will be sequenced -- all things the teachers were looking for. It will run 10 weeks. (Hip hop runs until winter break, ballet is in the spring).

7. Committee reports and other updates.

A. Fundraising:

- Bake sale tomorrow during sing. Bakers bake!
- Picture day, Oct. 29.
- Halloween Party, Oct. 31, 5:15 (Children don't wear costumes to school but can wear costumes to the party.)
- Original works coming up!
- Movie night, Nov. 8 (and more throughout the year). Amanda is leading
- Holiday fair, Dec. 15; many volunteer opportunities, reach out if interested.
- Spring Auction -- major event, adults-only party. Zoe will help support.
- Working on other fundraising streams (sponsorships like Two Boots to host movie night pizza), corporate donations, in-kind donations -- offers of help and ideas, send to PTAevents@tnsny.org. (Some ideas mentioned in the meeting: more yearbook ads and see link in newsletter for Amazon Smile.)

B. Parent Engagement:

- Joy and Amy are organizing class parents and sending the weekly newsletter (much gratitude expressed!). The newsletter is part of an effort to streamline communications and have less emails on the listserve.
- We recently realized that many parents were not on the listserve and we added names to the listserve. Now, we are considering how best to check that people are receiving messages (e.g., ask people to respond or send out a survey).
- We are also using Facebook and Instagram. If you have other ideas about ways to connect to parents, talk to Joy. (And, remember, that PTA meetings are live streamed on Facebook!)

C. Garden: Meets every Wednesday after drop off and works in small groups to maintain the garden. Come by!

D. Library:

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- NYC Participatory budgeting is coming up. People can vote to get equipment in classrooms. Click on the link in the newsletter.
- Upcoming author visit for parents: Maria Russo comes to speak about her book, How to Raise a Reader. Maria is an editor at the New York Times and a former TNS parent. She visits Monday, Oct. 28, 6pm.
- E. School Tours: 5th graders lead school tours. Sign up to participate as parents, see our fabulous fifth graders in action and talk to prospective families. There's a link in the newsletter.
- F. Website: Freddy and others are working how to revamp the website. Let Freddy know if you are interested.
- G. Dyslexia discussion: Recent research shows many kids have dyslexia. Parents are getting together to discuss reading interventions. Thursday, Oct. 24 at 8:30 am.
- H. an mé, children's clothing store on East 9th Street, is giving 5% of proceeds this week go to TNSPTA.

8. School Leadership Team (SLT) Report

The SLT's primary responsibility is to create a comprehensive education plan. The focus changes based on DOE leadership and this year's focus is on literacy, math, and attendance. This group creates goals and activities based on the needs of the school and monitors activities throughout the year.

Also, the SLT sponsors Community Day, which is Saturday, Nov. 23. Families come to help beautify the community and participate in a community event. Teachers help identify the kind of help they need. So in the morning, parents might put in hooks in the classroom and help clean out the PTA room in the morning and then participate in a community event in the afternoon, which this year will be an art workshop

Anyone can attend SLT meetings.

9. New business

- Parents who are interested in going together to take advantage of the places to enjoy nature in NYC may get together as in informal "TNS Outsiders" group. Look for emails or announcements in the newsletter.
- There is a request that we make a one-pager for families about all the ways to give to TNS or some way to share the different fundraising opportunities so we can see the different moments and ways to give in one place.

10. Concluding voted on the proposed 2019-2020 budget.

Votes tallied for budget. The [proposed budget](#) is adopted with unanimous support.

11. Meeting adjourned at 9:35