



**PS9 Teunis G. Bergen Elementary School
PTO Meeting Notes – Tuesday, Sept. 20, 2016**

TOPLINE

- Special election held, and the addition of four new members completes the roster of PTO officers.
- PTO meeting agenda to include a pillar of the Whole Child Network each month.
- Upcoming events and fundraisers: Bounce Back to School Carnival, Silent Auction, Bake Sale on Election Day

Welcome and Opening Remarks, by Jesse Hendrich, PTO Co-president (community):

- Meeting opens at 6:52 pm.
- About the PTO: The PTO is the Parent Teacher Organization. We are a nonprofit so that we have an opportunity to leverage corporate matching for fundraising purposes, and account for tax write-offs.

Reviewing the Agenda:

- Question: Did we get the approval to hold the election tonight? Yes, we did, by the board. There was a question raised by a PTO member about the validity of the election because the election notice was posted 7 days ahead of the election instead of the required 10 days.
- But Oct. 15 is the end date of our legal obligation to fulfill these officer seats, so in the spirit of participation, we are holding a special election tonight.

Review of Minutes from June 2016 Meeting:

- Noted: there are no corrections to the agenda.
- Motion raised from the floor by an officer; all voiced their approval of the previous agenda. *Approved.*

Remarks by Principal Sandra D'Avilar:

- Did you know that today is one of Principal D'Avilar's favorite days of the school year? Because she had all of the dads this morning in class, making the day a special one. A special thank you to Ms. Jacob for arranging a very successful "Dads Take Your Kids to School Day."
- This year, the PTO meetings will include a core discussion topic around the Whole Child Network (WCN). The goal is to explain it in greater detail, and more directly to parents, so that more people can understand the school's approach to early childhood education. With that said, each month at the PTO meetings, the agenda will include one pillar of the WCN and one of the Wellness SLT members will discuss it in greater depth.
- What is the WCN? It is looking at every component of the child – and the parents – and the school community. It involves everyone, and it involves five basic principles:
 - *Being healthy* – In all ways. Socially, emotionally, well-being.
 - *Feeling safe* – Making sure children feel like they are in a safe environment, that children feel they can speak to all teachers, educators, Ms. D'Avilar without being



intimidated. Physical and emotional safety. i.e., pick up and drop-offs, and lunchroom volunteers – need special training to ensure that safety of children are protected.

- Don't assume that children are protected from what is happening in our world, in the news. Children share stories and express themselves freely in school and in the playground.
 - *Being engaged* – A core focus of 2016-17 school year. How can we ensure that every child is engaged at every single moment of the day? And, how do we keep parents engaged in the school community?
 - PS9 is one of the most diverse schools in Brooklyn; it very much represents the diversity of New York City.
 - *Feeling supported* – Social and emotional support, PlayWorks, conflict resolution, and border crossers. These are terms that describe programs that will help teachers and students feel supported at school.
 - *Being challenged* – This year, we did some backwards planning. Working with PS321, we have partnered and over the summer, we shared best practices. One thing that we planned for this year is very rigorous instruction.
 - *Being sustainable* – Sustaining the level of excellence across all programs, and across the entire school. There are things we must do with limited funds – like team-building, thinking outside of the box and simple initiatives – to show that we care about our teachers and the adults who care for our kids.
- Our school is a model of success for the WCN, and it is being noticed around the country. Principal D'Avilar was invited to present PS9's work in the WCN at a national education conference and teachers from around the world are looking at what PS9 is doing. And it is because of the parents and the PTO that many of these things are happening making many of these happen. Teachers, administrators, parents – and most especially the children – make our school a great success.
 - Please note: The school calendar is a living document and events may change. We hope parents will get involved.
 - We hope all of you will be ambassadors of WCN by spreading the word.

Special Election

- At the end of last year, there was an election that took place in June, but several positions were left unfilled.
- JH read the titles and job descriptions of the open positions:
 - Corresponding Secretary
 - Second Parent-Teacher Liaison (Lower grade)
 - Second Recording Secretary
 - Parliamentarian
- Call for nominations:
 - Sakura Amend nominates herself for Correspondence Secretary. *Approved.*
 - Jim Kerwin, parent of a K child, nominates himself for Second Recording Secretary. *Approved.*



- Caroline Cryer, parent of a K child, nominates herself for Second Parent-Teacher Liaison (Lower grade). *Approved.*
- Eleni Delimpaltadaki Janis, mother of Alexander, who is in K, nominates herself for Parliamentarian. *Approved.*
- We must have a quorum, a minimum of eight parents per the bylaws.
- Have the proceedings satisfied the PTO Board? Yes.

SLT Meetings

- First SLT meeting is taking place next Tuesday, at 4-6pm.
- All parents are invited; not all may speak, however they can voice their concerns at the meeting.
- Nomination of Alicia Nosenzo as PS9 representative of PTO of President's Council. *Approved.*

Budget Discussion by Krystal Linton, Co-president (fundraising) and Warren Coleman, Treasurer

- Direct appeal:
 - Last year, we had a goal of \$150,000, and it's an aspirational budget. We didn't reach the goal, but we set this goal every year with the hope of achieving it.
- Fundraising events:
 - PTO raised approximately \$32,000 last year
 - Several additional fundraisers will be added this year; specific initiatives will be announced in near future
- Expenses are listed on budget summary, including:
 - Administrative expenses for PTO
 - School and activity support
- Unallocated funds: \$51,000 (appears on second page of budget sheet)
- \$17,000 was allocated to renovation of the dance room
 - But, we did receive a grant in the amount of \$18,000 (expected in mid-October) so the \$17,000 has been moved back into the budget
- Question: do we have a "pot" of money available this year that carried over from last year?
 - Answer: Budget is generally ok. There is a carry-over year-to-year but we do not currently possess enough money to cover the whole year's projected expenses. So is there a pot of money? No. The PTO projects a budget based on aspirational fundraising goals.
- Items at the bottom of the budget doc were approved for expenditures in this year.
 - The excess from last year has been spoken for already.
 - i.e., sound panels for gym
- Why did the excess in budget happen?
 - We believe things were less expensive than expected.
 - And budget set aside for substitute teachers was not used
 - Because of PS9 received additional funding, there were fewer contributions made to the school, and therefore support was required from the PTO.
- Notes:
 - Silent Auction is not a PTO event, it is a school event.



- The SLT can host two events per year and the silent auction is one event, and the Scholastic book fair is the other.
 - Funding for soccer net was cut from the budget. We could vote at next meeting to decide how \$1000 is used towards school supplies.
 - Principal D'Avilar does have a discretionary budget, but it was allocated by DOE and so soccer net purchase was not possible.
 - There is a budget request form is available and Budget Committee can consider it, against the full financial picture, and take a vote. The budget committee cannot unilaterally increase any budget item. It must be done vote at an open PTO meeting.
- Motion to approve the budget. *Approved.*

Events

- Carnival
 - Great need for volunteers! SignUp.com is live and shows exactly what is needed.
 - All the proceeds will go directly to the PTO.
- Silent Auction
 - Saturday, Nov. 19. The silent auction is a party, it is really fun, and every year nearly 300 items are available for bidding.
 - Takes place at Union Temple, from 6:30 to 10:30 pm
 - We need people to solicit local businesses, volunteers and donations.
- Bake Sale
 - Solicitations will take place shortly
 - Bake sale is a very good community outreach event because parents who are not a part of the PS9 committee see the school and see parent engagement, so it is a good opportunity to generate donations.
- Harvest Festival on Oct. 22
 - Pumpkin patch event proceeds go to the Garden Committee

Committees

- Committees are another way for parents to get involved at PS9, for example:
 - Diversity Committee
 - Communication
 - Wellness, which is merged with the WCN
 - Gardening
 - Budget
 - Fundraising
 - Traffic “team” to held advise on traffic issues around our neighborhood and speak on behalf of PS9 at council meetings
 - Library committee does not exist officially
 - Grants Committee – Ivana Espinet heads this group and has raised a lot of money; you can learn how to write grants
 - Sustainability Committee
 - Parents have discussed projects such as securing solar panels for the roof
 - Lunchroom volunteers – another way in which parents can improve the quality of life here at the school (Miles Champion is the coordinator)
 - Orientations are being held in the next few weeks



- Class parent orientation is taking place on Thursday, Sept. 22. Charmaine leads the orientation. It doesn't take a great deal of time, all parents are encouraged to consider becoming a class parent.
 - Membership Committee doesn't quite exist in official capacity, but this committee would be very helpful, if anyone is interested in joining.
 - If you are interested in a committee, what do you do?
 - Speak to Jesse, or contact him via email (rev.smada@gmail.com)
 - Also all committees are listed on the website
 - Parents can also speak to the committee leaders directly; information is listed on the website
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- Donations requested for Ms. Santiago for babysitting support.
 - Meeting concludes at 8:05 pm.
 - Next PTO meeting will be held on Tuesday, Oct. 11 at 6:30 pm. All are invited.
 - *NOTE ON NEXT MEETING: Next PTO meeting moved to Oct. 18, due to Yom Kippur holiday.*