



**PTA Meeting Minutes
April 11, 2019**

About 25 parents and the executive board were in attendance.

President's report -- Ashley Salazar

Archery night: Ying Lai has planned this parents' night out for May 4. We have at least 10 slots still open. We'd love as many parents to come as possible: Please bring your friends. We need participation so we can continue to do fun events like this in the future. Even though the event is May 4, the payments must be in advance, so please sign up ASAP, especially before spring break.

PTA elections in May: We need every role filled to keep our organization going. It's rewarding to be on the PTA board: We've enjoyed hanging out and getting to see how things work behind the scenes at AEA. Please keep the possibility of running for board roles open.

2019-20 school year PTA budget: Paul Goldfarb will be meeting with Mrs. Leto and Mrs. Gallo to start the process of preparing the budget for next year. The PTA needs estimates on the cost of items the PTA has paid for in the past, such as Singapore Math and whether Mrs. Stewart will be temporarily retained. More students in the school will mean more per-pupil money to the school as well. The effect on the PTA budget is to be determined.

Fundraising updates: Thanks for participating in the Miss Chocolate fundraiser. We did over \$7,886.25 in sales, and the PTA received \$3,154.50. Delivery was easy enough, thanks to the volunteers who brought the chocolate to the classes -- and a special thanks since the elevator was out. Mr. DeJesus's class won the ice cream party for the most class participation. It will be April 18. The parent-teacher bake sale was a big success too, with \$751 raised.

The March highlights newsletter sent home by the school showed third graders using the Dash coding robots the PTA raised money for last year.

The PTA would like to hold the Read-a-thon this year on May 13-24 (to be confirmed). This is a great fundraiser that gets children to read and allows them to involve extended family and friends to raise money online for the school. We're looking into incentives like lunch with a teacher or a dance party to encourage students to read. This will be after state math testing and teacher appreciation week. We're asking the administration whether they have a specific goal we can raise money for with this fundraiser.

Treasurer's report for March -- Paul Goldfarb

The breakout provided at the meeting needed an update to show the full details of deposits. It is attached at the end of these minutes.

The expense for the Miss Chocolate sale will be reflected in the April report.

Paul asked for any suggestion for next year's PTA spending.

Ilyse Sisolak asked whether all the big PTA bills for this year have already been paid. Answer: Yes. The new PTA board will be on solid ground for the fall, esp. after the Read-a-thon.

Motion to approve March's minutes -- Stacey Shick Samuels

Approved without objection

Nominations for 2019-20 PTA Executive Board and SLT positions

Marina Zakry and Melissa Lugo, on behalf of the committee, announced these nominees:

For president: Simone Dornbach and Elaine Lee-Wong, running as co-presidents

For vice president: Rebekah Pokart-Cabonargi

For treasurer: Ooma Deonarine, Edward Suh

For secretary: Sheryl Hirshon

For the four SLT positions: Walter Birkhold, Henny Maddox, Michele Molfetta, Vincent Roulot, Stacey Shick Samuels, Maria Scoloveno.

Parent coordinator's report -- Jainnie Hackman

In her short time at the school, Jainnie says it's been apparent that the staff's hearts all beat for the children. When it comes to some important questions about teacher staffing, the administration needs to check with legal advisers before it can communicate certain news with parents.

Suggestions are wanted about how the school can better communicate with parents. Some parents say there have been too many notices, others say not enough. The school uses face-to-face communications with Jainnie, written notices or Remind. Rumors have been a problem; please bring any concerns directly to staff instead of playing telephone among parents. The staff is trusting that the parents trust them. Remind is a limited platform with only 150 characters allowed in a message. If you have suggestions for a different platform, please approach Jainnie. We can have a conversation about whether the PTA wants to fund a better service. What about the school website? Bring your ideas for improvements to the parent coordinator. Jainnie started exploring another option that schools use to improve the website and send messages to parents, but it would be \$3,200, which is not in the school budget. But maybe it could be PTA-funded, and updated with parent assistance, so the school could have an updated website for the fall. Ideas for a better website presented at the meeting included: consolidate with Shutterfly sites, adding a calendar more than a month out, posting homework assignments, links to Think Central and similar academic sites, lunch menu, overall curriculum guide, video streaming of performances and events. Pupil Path is another option for emails and texts, which is used widely throughout NYC Schools. Should the school go paperless? Teachers and principals send newsletters electronically, weekly, at other schools. There is some frustration by parents who are not receiving email responses from teachers within the 24 hour window that is the school's policy; parents and teachers could have clearer expectations -- what about "office hours" for teachers? Suggestion to run a survey of parents about how to better communicate.

Classes for 2019-20 school year: The administration was as shocked as the parents were to discover that the school will only have two pre-K classes. The decision was made by the Office of District Planning. Once construction is done in 2020-21, with the renovation in the old building complete, the two extra classes will be added. There should be enough seats for pre-K siblings, even with two classes, but offers haven't gone out yet. In the summer, families will receive a map that shows where the dropoff and dismissals will take place next year. Hope is to have an additional school aide. Right now, there are no plans for a parent tour of the school before back-to-school night in September. 1st Day School Supplies will be delivered after Labor Day because of the construction. There will also be no end-of-year picnic because of the construction. If you have another idea for an event, please bring it to Jainnie.

A grant-writing team is being formed. The school hopes to have a garden, with maybe a grant from Home Depot, once the yard is free. The school is also forming a media team to record events.

SLT meeting update

The SLT reviewed emergency protocols. There are three kinds of emergency actions: fire evacuation, lockdown and shelter-in-place. There are 12 drills required a year. Two fire alarms went off this year because of work in the new building, which required students to leave classrooms unexpectedly. Students do not have time to go to the closet for their jackets, but they can grab what they have on their chairs. In the case of the teachers who had jackets outside, it was because they were on their chairs. A lockdown drill, which includes active-shooter situation, is practice for when someone unauthorized is in the school. If the danger is outside the school, then a shelter in place can be called. In the case of a recent shooting in Forest Hills, the school contacted the NYPD who said the danger wasn't near P.S. 303, so there was no need to shelter in place. If there really was a shelter-in or lockdown, notices would go out to families after the fact. Pre-K classes and school-parent communications were also discussed, especially the possibility of a text-based notification system.

Fourth grade: Concerns were raised about whether the need to hire new teachers meant that inexperienced teachers will be teaching this grade. Mrs. Leto asked that parents trust her hiring decisions, and that teachers who are already in the school could potentially move into that grade. Plans call for there to be two fourth-grade classes.

Q&A

Stacey Shick Samuels: A few AEA parents attended a town hall for parents in our district with the NYC schools chancellor. He took about 10 questions. Most focused on whether more classroom seats will be added in Queens or various physical improvements will be made to schools. Particularly of interest to AEA: The question was raised whether schools should be doing more to keep students with severe food allergies safe. The answer was mostly that parents need to make sure schools are aware of the problem.

Sheryl Hirshon: There were two students currently in pre-K who did not get kindergarten offers, even though the priority order approved by the DOE said they should have. Sheryl helped the affected parents contact the appropriate DOE official, and they quickly got their seats. Victory!

PS303Q PTA

Monthly Treasurers Report
For Month Ending March 31, 2019

BEGINNING BALANCE (March 1, 2019) **\$11,824.46**

INCOME (Deposits)

Description	Amount
Deposit - Chocolate sales	\$252.00
Deposit - Chocolate sales	\$178.00
Deposit - (Chocolate sales - \$4,925.75; Chipotle Fundraiser - \$152.38;	
Spirit Items - \$35.00; Annual contribution - \$165.00	
Bake sale - \$751.00	\$5,864.13
Deposit - Chocolate sales	\$312.00
TOTAL INCOME (Deposits)	\$6,606.13

EXPENSES (Checks Written)

Description	
PTA Meeting Expense - Babysitting Justin Vazquez	3/8/2019 \$45.00
Archery event deposit (Check #1231)	3/15/2019 \$75.00

TOTAL EXPENSES (Checks) **\$120.00**

ENDING BALANCE (March 31, 2019) **\$18,310.59**