

PTA General Membership Meeting  
October 16, 2008

Marta Agosti called the meeting to order at 7:15pm.

Bonnie Song asked members to peruse minutes from the last 3 general membership meetings for approval.

Independent motions to approve the minutes for May 2008 and June 2008 meetings were passed. Motions seconded and passed. Minutes for the September 2008 meeting were amended to "It would cost \$92,000 to fund a full-time counselor." Motion seconded and passed.

Bonnie introduced the new PTA e-mail address which will be a new way to communicate with the PTA board. An additional way to access the e-mail will be through the PTA website via the "Contact" link. Bonnie sent out a print out of the e-mail screen to explain the information a person will be required to provide before the e-mail can be delivered. Bonnie and Marta mentioned that most e-mails will be answered within 24 hours. The e-mail is meant purely for PTA business. If an e-mail requires further clarification it will be forwarded to the parent coordinator. The website includes the dates for PTA meetings, PTA Executive Board meetings and SLT meetings. Parents are welcome to attend any or all of these meetings.

Bonnie thanked Ralph Iskaros for his work on the website.

Marta asked members who volunteered at our September general meeting for various events to provide their e-mail addresses for easier contact.

Marta explained the various responsibilities for events such as Career Day, Fundraising Committee, Sunshine Committee, Book Fair, Hospitality and the Newsletter.

Bonnie spoke about the formation of an Ad Hoc committee to create a handbook for our parents. The handbook is meant to be a way for the PTA to help our members with many of the questions they might have such as school policies, or persons to contact for information. Bonnie asked for volunteers to formulate the handbook or to assist in typing it.

Bonnie mentioned that the PTA by-laws dictate that there will only be 2 parents per Exec. board position. Presently a parent is interested in being the third Co-VP of Fundraising. Bonnie asked for an amendment to the by-laws to open the Co-VP of Fundraising positions from 2 to 3 persons. She will send a revision proposal to the membership on the by-laws. This amendment will then be adopted at the next general meeting.

Bonnie asked for a change of roll of call to let Mrs. McGrath speak at this time since the elections can't take place until the time stated on the meeting notice.

**Principal's Report:**

Mrs. McGrath spoke about the After school Programs. There are two types of programs: Self-Sustaining and DOE-based. The former is a tuition-based program with classes costing anywhere from \$85-\$120/6-8 week sessions. Current programs include chocolate-making, volleyball, chemistry, pre-algebra, writing, integrated math, jazz dance, math remediation, NYS Math test prep, Hunter High School test prep.

The DOE program is free for the students. Programs include soccer, flag football, boys & girls basketball, volleyball, Math Counts, chess, art portfolio.

Sixth graders were sent invitations to sit for the Hunter High School test. To qualify a student had to earn a 701 on their 5<sup>th</sup> grade NYS ELA test and a 744 on their 5<sup>th</sup> grade NYS math test. 52 children in our school qualified for the exam. Taking the exam and applying to the school are optional.

8<sup>th</sup> graders have received their high school applications. The sooner they submit the applications the sooner the applications can be entered into the computer. Students and parents will receive confirmation of the choices they made.

The Specialized High School Test will take place on 10/25. Admission tickets to the exam will be distributed on 10/17.

The results for this exam will be available on 2/5/09. Results will be mailed to ensure receipt.

A parent asked Mrs. McGrath if notices get sent home for the CHAMPS sports program (the DOE-based after school program.) Mrs. McGrath informed the members that *notices are not sent home. Signs are posted around the school and announcements are made during homeroom. Students need to be proactive and aware of the various dates for each sport.*

The drama program is not a club – children have to audition.

A parent suggested that an information sheet get sent home with a list of dates for each of the sports. Another parent asked when test prep classes would be offered in advance of the Hunter College HS test. *Prep classes will be held sometime in December.*

Another parent questioned the bathroom use policy. *Mrs. McGrath explained that what was instituted this year is a policy where the hallways and bathrooms are patrolled by staff and teachers during periods 2-7 each day. Students may use the bathrooms on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor or basement at that time. Because there is no one to patrol the hallways/bathrooms during periods 1 and 8 students are not permitted to use the bathrooms at those times (unless it is an emergency that can be explained by the student.) Mrs. McGrath explained that this has been done for safety reasons. Bathrooms on the first and third floors are locked throughout the day because there aren't enough people to man them.*

Parents were concerned about the amount of time it takes during the 6<sup>th</sup> grade lunch period. Ms. Dolan explained that the lines move rather efficiently. For those students who don't want to wait on the lunch line just for a drink they can buy a can of Snapple from the machine in the lunchroom.

Another parent mentioned that there have been times that her son was unable to get a hot lunch. *Mrs. McGrath mentioned that her administration has little say on how the cafeteria is run. It is up to the Foods Division of the DOE.*

Another parent mentioned how her daughter was yelled at for only choosing a drink during breakfast. Mrs. Bogaty reiterated how the Food Division insists on food being served in a particular way, with no exceptions, therefore, because the cafeteria staff has to serve the full complement of food each day.

## **PTA Elections**

The membership voted for a Co-Recording Secretary as well as parent members to the SLT. Marta asked if there were any nominations from the floor and explained what each of the positions' responsibilities were.

Sue Berkowitz, a parent of a 6<sup>th</sup> grader as well as a former PTA president from PS 94 and former middle school teacher, was nominated and approved to be the Co-Recording Secretary since there was no one else running for that position.

Darlene Ritchie nominated herself from the floor. The other nominees included Greg Mitchell, Rosanna Maslinski, and Bonnie Song. The candidates introduced themselves to the members.

Darlene's name was added to the pre-printed ballots. Bonnie asked Mrs. Bogaty to collect and tabulate the results. Mr. Surrett agreed to certify the ballots.

### **Yearbook**

Ms. Dolan talked to the members about the 8<sup>th</sup> grade yearbook. She showed the parents copies of last year's book to give them an idea of what the final product could look like. She explained that the theme of this year's book is "American Idol." The yearbook will hope to incorporate all of the talents of graduates. Students in the Art and Journalism programs will be contributing to the book. Ms. Dolan explained that students who agree to volunteer to work on the book must be committed to the work involved. Any students with 3 or more absences up to this point will not be permitted to participate on the yearbook committee. The publisher of the book is Irving Simon. Parents are welcome to submit photos to the committee.

### **Assistant Principals' Reports**

Mrs. Choit mentioned that the 6<sup>th</sup> grade has booked two trips:  
11/14 – Cirque de Soleil @ Madison Sq. Garden  
4/29 – Medieval Times.

She mentioned that students have adjusted well.

The NYS ELA will take place on January 20, 21 & 22.  
Beginning on 10/17 students will be taking the Predictive Exam. Scores will be available to parents online sometime in early November through the Acuity program.

A parent raised a question regarding the appropriate amount of time should be spent doing homework. Mrs. Choit responded by saying that 20 minutes per class is appropriate.

Mr. Chambers mentioned that the 7<sup>th</sup> grade trip to Philadelphia will take place sometime in mid-March. The second trip has not been booked as yet. He said that October 31<sup>st</sup> is the last day in the marking period.

A parent asked if the self-sustaining programming will be offered in the Spring. Mr. Chambers responded "yes."

Mr. Surrett reported that the 8<sup>th</sup> grade HS applications were sent out and the SHST tickets will go home on 10/17. The deadline to return the HS applications is 12/2. He asks that students return the applications sooner in order for parent to review the receipt that is issued. This is to ensure that no mistake is made for the choices placed on the application.

On 3/25 results for the Main Round for non-specialized HS-accepted students will be known.

### **SLT** -

Arlene Jankowitsch reported on the first SLT meeting held on 9/23. The discussions focused on meeting dates for the coming year. The decision is that SLT meetings will be held on Thursdays at 3:30pm. Dates will be published on the website.

During the meeting Mrs. McGrath spoke about the Quality Review and school report card. The SLT by-laws need to be reviewed also.

An Inquiry Team was established to discuss remediation at our school. Mrs. Choit is overseeing this.

The CHAMPS program was also discussed – Mr. Viruet is running this program.

The SLT also talked about the size of our student body and class size.

Following Arlene's recap, Karen announced the results of the election for SLT parent members – Bonnie Song and Gregory Mitchel were elected to the positions.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Maria stated that we made our first deposit for this school year in the amount of \$6,235.00. This amount represents membership dues and nearly meets the amount budgeted for.

Three checks were issued:

- one for \$4,000.00 towards the school gift,
- one for \$2,296.00 for the school planners,
- another for the cost of the website domain.

The current balance is \$8,888.94.

The Safety Committee meets 1x/month. A plan is written each year on how to evacuate the building in case of a fire or other emergency. The plan is devised and then approved by the DOE. The Safety Committee also decided to train 7 or 8 people on the staff in CPR. Based on the Safety Committee recommendations the school will conduct a workshop on bullying for students and parents. There was also a discussion about monitoring the bathrooms.

### **Membership:**

Jenny Cho reiterated that so far \$6,235.00 has been raised from membership dues. Thus far 29% of 6<sup>th</sup> grade families responded; 19% of 7<sup>th</sup> grade families and 19% of 8<sup>th</sup> grade families.

### **Fundraising:**

A fundraising letter will be sent out in November to our parents.

The Sunshine volunteer will be contacted by our presidents to begin the job.

On a final note Bonnie reminded the members that the CDEC will be holding a Forum on 10/29, 7pm at MS 67 on school governance and mayoral control. She encouraged the members to attend this very important forum

The meeting was adjourned just after 9pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Doris Iskaros  
Recording Secretary