

Executive Board Meeting, February 2, 2009

Present: Francesca Di Mauro, Kathy Brito, Ivelisse Suarez-Levine, Carlos Brito, Susan Saar, Kirsten Cowal, Susan Saar, Tory Frye, Ruth Lilienstein-Gatton, Wilma Lopez

Francesca Di Mauro announced that she and Ivelisse Suarez-Levine met with Ms. Chory to discuss the Wish List. The initial discussions were based on the formula developed by Leonisa Ardizzone for distributing the wish list funds across grades and clusters. Ms. Di Mauro distributed a copies of a document listing the amounts for each grade and cluster. This formulation has been modified because some clusters were not accounted for in the original iteration (for example the intermediate school has a self-contained special education classroom). A new chart with all of the relevant categories (grades, departments, etc.) but with the amounts allocated left in blank was distributed to the members. Given the existing time constraints, teachers will be asked to submit their wishes without any information or guidelines on price ranges for their requests. It was explained that this is the way it has been done in the past and that it has not presented insurmountable problems. All Executive Board members agreed that the PA should receive the entire list from the administration of teachers' wish list requests.

There was some discussion about the rationale for dividing up the wish list into roughly equal halves for trips and supplies. It was noted that the amount allocated for trips was roughly the amount that had been spent on trips the previous year. There was some question as to whether the kindergarten classes would or could receive some supplied from the wish list in light of the fact that the wish list has traditionally paid for the kindergarten Green Meadows farm trip. Ms. Hovde approached Francesca Di Mauro recently to express some concern that the kindergarten classes don't get any classroom supplies through the wish list. Last year, the kindergarten receives three buses (at \$400 each) for the farm trip from the wish list. Tory Frye pointed out that the funds she raised last year through her "friendraiser" were supposed to go to the kindergarten trip so she was wondering why the wish list amount had not been smaller. Francesca DiMauro expressed her view that if Ms. Hovde had not approached her directly, the Executive Board would not be aware of these concerns since this would not have been conveyed by the administration to the PA.

A request by Tal Reis, the on-site part-time psychologist from Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center, for a DVD on learning disabilities was discussed. She was advised to submit the request to the PA by the Parent Coordinator. It was agreed that this request should be submitted through Support Services which has intermittently made wish list requests.

The question of where the revenue from Schoolapalooza and Movie Night should go. One thought for Movie Night was that the funds be dedicated to the kindergarten trip. Kathy Brito will talk to Mr. Miller about needs and the issue of coming up with recommendations for allocating the funds will be an agenda item for the Executive Board meeting before the general meeting.

Jeanine McAdam sent an email to the Executive Board regarding Chris Kapetanos and the appreciation that ought to be expressed by the PA for his many years of service to the school. At the April general meeting a plaque will be presented to him and the PA is buying a package from Irving Simon consisting of a photograph of himself and his daughter. Judith Michael will make a speech as well.

Follow up to the petition presented earlier to the SLT was discussed. Ms. Di Mauro indicated that at the next SLT meeting Ms. Hozumi and Ms. Ardizzone will make a presentation on the discipline code. The momentum on the issue seems to be slowing down since parents aren't pursuing it individually or through the Parents Association. It was agreed that the only thing to do is to wait for parents to come

back.

Tory Frye mentioned that she met with Ms. Chory about her plans for a series of Education 101 sessions and that discipline will be included. The sessions are an opportunity to educate parents. Ms. Frye is working on an outline and anyone with ideas should contact her. Discussion on the communication chart was deferred since Leonisa Ardizzone was not in attendance at the meeting.

Ms. Chory asked for approval to use Title I funds for refreshments at the Science Fair. Following clarification that the Title I funds are not tapped out, the request was unanimously approved.

Committee reports followed. Ruth Lilienstein-Gatton reported that a grant for the second grade video project has still not been obtained. Some ideas were discussed including that of going through the 2nd grade class parent representatives to seek contacts. Wilma Lopez has contacts in the North Manhattan Arts Association which she will pursue.

Jeanine McAdam raised an issue with the kindergarten gardening project. For the last 6 years the project has been funded by a private donor and the funds have been managed by the Hudson Heights Neighborhood Association (HHNA). Parent volunteers run the program and generally lay out their own money initially to purchase materials and supplies and then submit receipts for reimbursement. The parent who coordinated the gardening project in 2007-2008 has not submitted her receipts for reimbursement and claims that she is owed upward of \$500. Over the past few years, unexpended funds have been carried over and maintained in the project account. Ms. McAdam indicated that she would like to encourage HHNA to close their books and that she was seeking support from the Executive Board to take this measure. The Executive Board members agreed with her reasoning and on the suggestion of several members for Ms. McAdam and Ms. Lilienstein-Gatton to write the parent in question a formal letter by certified mail with a date certain (with a realistic time frame) for submitting the receipts. Francesca Di Mauro should be copied on the letter and a reminder should be sent if necessary.

The future of the kindergarten gardening project was discussed. The project is run by a different set of parent volunteers each year and is not formalized within the Executive Board or any of its sub-committees. This, in turn, leads to a certain amount of reinventing the wheel each year. It was agreed that the status of the gardening project would be a discussion item at the upcoming Board retreat, scheduled for March 1.

Jeanine McAdam clarified that the funding for the Daniel Gewirtzman dance program is ending this year and that the same may be true for the gardening project since both have been funded by the same private donor. Some of the funding from the private donor may be shifting to the Intermediate School. It was noted that Bennett Park is undergoing extensive renovations and that the space for the gardening project may change. A lot of printed material related to the gardening project, flyers and the like, is currently kept in a binder and on a CD. The question of how to manage the storage and transfer of this information was discussed. It was agreed that Ivelisse Suarez-Levine will ask the current holder of the binder to give it to her and she, in turn, will give it to the new coordinator.

Carlos Brito presented the mid-year budget that he submitted to Ms. Chory and the Department of Education. The question of whether a decision had been made to fund the 2nd grade video project was discussed since the project is on the budget. It was also stressed that decisions need to be made on earmarking for the funds raised by Movie Night and School-a-palooza.