

General Meeting, April 23, 2009

Francesca Di Mauro welcomed members and announced that a brief ceremony would be held to honor Chris Kapetanos for his contributions to the Parents Association. Before that happened, Ms. Chory, after indicating that Ms. Hozumi and Ms. Marrero were absent for different reasons, announced recent and upcoming events and described the status and schedule of enrichment programming, outlining which grades and classes were receiving which services and programs and on what days. It was agreed that this information would be posted on the e-group.

Ms. Chory then gave a speech highlighting Mr. Kapetanos' various forms of service to the school, Kathy Brito made some brief comments and Judith Michael presented him with a certificate of appreciation.

During the question and answer session with the administration a parent spoke of her concerns about over scheduling events and programming such that children occasionally had multiple events or trips within a short period of time. Ms. Chory said she would look at the schedule with an eye toward that. Another parents pointed out a specific scheduling conflict in the calendar and Ms. Chory indicated that she would address that as well.

Ms. Chory left the meeting and the minutes from the previous general meeting were approved.

Carlos Brito distributed copies of the PA budget and pointed out that there is enough money left to cover all outstanding expense budget items if the PA chooses to do so. Some of the budget items, such as the second grade video project, will not be expended, while others – such as the 8th grade trip buses - may only be partially expended if at all. It was explained that the second grade video project had been grant funded for several years until the 2007-2008 school year in which a grant was not secured for this project. The PA decided to finance the project and because of that it ended up on the 2008-2009 budget. The video project is not happening because the instructor is not available. Regarding the buses for the 8th grade trip, the budget line was inserted because last year the PA paid for two buses which came to \$3,000. It was agreed that this year the PA would pay for one bus (which was done through the Wish List) and the 8th grade class would raise the funds for the other. The PA budget line will cover any shortfall. The cost of the buses is expected to be lower since energy costs have dropped. If there is a request by the administration for PA funds to cover the cost of the 8th grade trip buses it will have to be put to a vote by the PA membership.

Mr. Brito pointed out that the budget contained a new expense line item for the class parent representative breakfast. It was explained that now that the CPR program includes the pre-kindergarten and upper school that there is an even greater need for occasional events, like a breakfast, to facilitate communication and show appreciation to the volunteers. A motion was made and passed to add a budget line under expenses for the class parent representative program.

A discussion followed about the structure of the budget and whether it would be better to have categories for functions rather than events. Mr. Brito explained that since a budget must be drafted and approved at the beginning of the year, he felt constrained by transparency considerations to keep the budget categories from previous years. He indicated that there are no specific rules for changing the accounting format for a budget and that the only requirement is that the budget be approved. Nicky Rosen suggested looking at the budget template in the A660 before drawing up the next budget.

The new budget line under income for the sale of CDs at the 3rd and 4th grade music festival was noted and Tory Frye made a motion to accept the revenues from the CD sales which was seconded and passed with no negative votes or abstentions.

Joey Brenneman reported on behalf of the Nominating Committee that the PA election will be held on Tuesday, June 2 and the SLT election will be held on Wednesday, June 10th. All of the information has been approved and the nominating forms will go out in backpacks next week. At the next PA meeting nominations will be accepted until 7:30pm and then the Meet the Candidates forum will take place. There will be morning and evening voting sessions.

Wilma Lopez asked if there could be a voting session during dismissal time. Various people explained that the idea had been considered and discarded in the past because the environment is not conducive due

to staggered dismissals. Some PA members expressed their strong belief that dismissal time was the only time that some parents would be able to vote. The current members of the nominating committee indicated that the only conditions under which they would and could offer another voting session would be if, given approval by the administration to do this, two more people (at one which was Spanish speaking) joined the nominating committee. Wilma Lopez and Jenny Alexander volunteered to join the nominating committee, therefore Joey Brenneman will find out if the administration is amenable to a dismissal time voting session.

Amy Ogata gave an update for the environmental committee. The seedlings that were planted at Schoolapalooza will be planted in May. The committee is looking to work with the intermediate school and there are plans to plant larger shrubs and put in new beds.

As part of the report from the Fundraising Committee, Tory Frye thanked the organizers of Schoolapalooza and invited Ariel Knachmann to single out the individuals who were instrumental in making the event happen. Leonisa Ardizzone indicated that the committee is looking for parents to take coordinating roles for the committee and for point persons for the fall fundraiser. Interested parents were invited to attend an upcoming meeting on May 4th at 8:00pm or to contact either Ms. Frye or Ms. Ardizzone. Ms. Frye pointed out that for each fundraising event a CD will be available containing flyers, timelines, etc. Francesca Di Mauro alerted parents that at the next meeting they will have to vote on next year's fundraisers.

Ruth Lilienstein-Gatton and Jeanine MacAdam reported for the Grantwriting Subcommittee. Ms. Lilienstein-Gatton reviewed the history of the second grade video project, indicated that it's real cost is closer to \$2,500 rather than the budgeted \$2,000 and raised the question as to whether it should go back to being a grant funded program as it was in the past. Francesca Di Mauro pointed out that there has been discussion of trying to get second grade parents to raise the funds for the project. She indicated that this might be a topic of discussion at the upcoming retreat on May 8th between the PA, SLT and administration. She also mentioned that there will have to be a vote on whether to continue Studio in a School next year (at the same price) but that before a vote can be taken an evaluation must be done and the results presented to parents.

Jeanine MacAdam listed the grant monies that were raised during the school year that were outside of the PA budget, namely: Out2Play (\$200,000), the Daniel Gewirtzman dance program (\$15,000), the intermediate school after school sports program (\$6,600), the kindergarten gardening project (\$1,000-1,500), and Bent on Learning (\$1,200). The total raised in grant funds was \$223,800. Ms. MacAdam informed parents that intermediate school students started a petition to continue the after school basketball program and that it was signed by 75 students.

For the Fitness and Nutrition Subcommittee, Susan Saar reported that Family Yoga Night has been moved back to Mondays at 7:00pm now that the weather is nice (it was held for the last few months on Fridays). She reported that \$500 has been raised in cookbook sales.

Francesca Di Mauro thanked Wilma Lopez for chairing the hospitality committee for two consecutive years.

Susan Rosenberg, as chair of the Community Liaison committee, announced that the Spaghetti Dinner for incoming parents will be held on Thursday, June 4th from 6:30 to 8:00 and that volunteers will be needed beginning at 5:00pm for set up. A parent suggested that having t-shirts or caps with a 187 logo could be a good way of raising spirit and enthusiasm. After some discussion, a motion was raised to allocate \$360 for the Spaghetti Dinner to create 60 t-shirts to sell at the Spaghetti Dinner. There are several existing t-shirt options. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Navi Stoller gave a report on the Studio in a School program. He has observed the program in several classes and indicated that it has been hard to get teachers involved though some are enthusiastic. The children are responding well to the program.

Ms. Di Mauro reported that an investigation of a PS/IS 187 teacher involving a potential conflict of interest is underway. She described the circumstances that preceded this development particularly as it related to an unintentional error on the part of the PA Executive Board in which a regulation governing

fundraising activities was violated. Some parents expressed outrage and dismay over the investigation while others defended the administration's actions. A motion was made to hold an extra special meeting of the PA within the next two weeks to discuss the investigation as well as any steps that can be taken to show support for the teacher in question. It was also requested that Ms. Chory be invited to this meeting to answer questions. The motion was seconded and passed.