

**PS/IS 187 PTO  
General Meeting Minutes  
October 27, 2022**

[7:08] - [8:23]

**Welcome**—PTO Co-Presidents Kierstin Hettler

Quorum [7:04] (32 participants)

Kierstin welcomed everyone and provided instructions for creating an anonymous zoom name for the expedited election. She named which members of the executive board were present, and provided an overview of the agenda, including a detailed overview of the expedited election process to come and a note that there were two important funding requests to consider for tonight as well.

**2022-2023 PTO Executive Board Attendees:**

Kierstin Hettler, Co-President

Hila Milo Rasouly, Co-President

Terri Rosenblatt, Treasurer

Katie Ledwell, Recording Secretary

Sayuri Stabrowski, Co Vice President (Elementary)

Jackie Cruz, Co Vice President (Elementary)

Ksenia Selemon, Vice President (Intermediate)

Absent: No PTO Executive Board Members were absent.

**September 2022 General Meeting Minutes:**

Approved (100%); 77% participation.

**Expedited Election**

- Kierstin explained that no one ran for the Communications Secretary position in spring/summer of 2022, and because it is not a mandatory position, we were able to move forward without anyone in that role. However, in September the executive board communicated the opening to members multiple times and in a variety of ways, and we now have two nominees who could act as co-recording secretaries. Kierstin opened up the floor for any additional nominations and noted that if there are no additional nominations, someone would need to motion for the recording secretary to cast a vote, which will then need to be approved by the membership. Kierstin then provided reminders regarding who can vote (members who are not running for the position), and who cannot vote (the principal).
- Kierstin then provided an overview of the Communications Secretary role, including responsibilities such as preparing notices, posting meeting minutes on the webpage, and engaging in correspondence. Nominees must be parents of a PS/IS 187 student.
- Kierstin noted that two people have already been nominated, and opened the floor for additional nominations. There were none.

Motion to close nominations: Ksenia Selemon. 2nd: Gerry Goss.

- Kierstin shared the pre-recorded candidate statements from Margaret Ryan and Steve Evangelista. In the statement, Margaret and Steve introduced themselves, noting that they are parents and long-time neighborhood residents. They are both former educators, with a combined 25 years of experience in education. They ran a school together in Harlem, and they note that their responsibilities in those roles prepared them for the work of Communications Secretaries. They also noted that they are actively engaged citizens, and they work to ask the right questions. For example, with an influx of students from around the district for middle school, they wonder what the PTO could do to better engage new middle school families? They emphasized that they are committed to engaging all families.
- Kierstin shared the process for casting a vote in an uncontested election.

Motion to open the election: Gerry Goss. 2nd: Rachel Hilliard.

- Katie Ledwell, as Recording Secretary, cast a vote for Margaret Ryan and Steve Evangelista to be co-communication secretaries.

**Administration's Report (Emel, Ms. Daskaris, Ms. Capellan):**

- Emel greeted everyone and noted which members of the administration were present. She thanked everyone for their participation in the Think Pink fundraiser; many families donated funds and cheered on students in the walkathon. This year, the school also invited a PS/IS 187 parent to teach students in several grades about cancer.
- Emel introduced new staff members. Mr. Trottman is a new dean who will be supporting students with their social and emotional needs. Ms. Davis is a new ENL teacher, and Ms. Martinez is a new school counselor, working with middle school students. 187 now has a team of 4 school counselors. Finally, Ms. Hogan will be teaching middle school Social Studies while Mr. Holthusen is out.
- Mr. Trottman introduced himself and said he is already enjoying his time at 187. Emel noted that some students may already know Mr. Trottman as a coach from the Washington Heights/Inwood community.
- Looking ahead to November, parent teacher conferences will take place on 11/3. It is a half-day, with dismissal at 10:45.
- Ms. Daskaris thanked parents for a successful picture day, noting that it was completed in record time. She shared that for parent teacher conferences, upper grade parents will receive an email from herself with a link to a signup genius where parents can choose a time to connect with each of their child's teachers. She asked parents to look out for that email, likely arriving on Monday. Fifth grade teachers will be sending their own emails out, but parents can use the signup genius to sign up for meetings with their child's other teachers.
- Ms. Daskaris discussed costume day on Monday and emphasized that students should wear family friendly costumes. She invited questions from parents.

- Kierstin shared a question from the chat about how long the middle school Social Studies teacher will be out. Emel noted that she was not sure, but they have lined up Ms. Hogan so that students have continuity of instruction.
- Emel shared upcoming school closures on 11/8 (Election Day) and 11/11 (Veterans Day). The next family cafe is on 11/21. This will be the last outdoor session. After that, virtual family cafes will resume.
- Emel noted that Ms. Capellan is still pushing for 100% completion of lunch forms. Approximately 200 families have not yet responded; it's important to return these, even if your child does not eat lunch at school. Ms. Capellan will be sending out reminders.
- Emel thanked everyone for being members of the 187 village, and noted that the children bring her and other members of the team great joy.
- Someone wondered if completing the lunch form online was acceptable, and Emel confirmed that it is. Another person wondered when the deadline is, and Emel noted she is hoping for 100% completion by the end of November. Another person asked if voting will take place at 187 on Election Day, and Emel confirmed that the school is a voting site.

#### **Faculty Report: (Chris Jennings)**

- Mr. Jennings noted that the pre-k students are working on their 5 senses. For example, they have made fizzy paintings. The 7th grade went on a trip to the New York Historical Society to see an exhibit on women in the US, as part of their unit on narratives. The I.S. student government will be up and running next week, with the new officers and representatives. They will be sending out a Thankful November fundraiser flyer. The sixth grade math teachers would like to remind students to join the new Google classrooms. Open Mike starts on 11/2. It is an I.S. event.

#### **SLT Report: (Joy Waitkus)**

- The SLT is currently focused on finalizing their Comprehensive Educational Plan, to be submitted in November. Their main focus is bringing students up to pre-pandemic levels. They have been looking closely at the data. They are also looking to improve the culture of the school, with a focus on DEI and anti-bullying. They would like to partner with the Anti-Defamation League, Facing History, and Screenagers. This final organization offers opportunities to learn about the dangers of screen usage.
- The SLT meeting times have changed. They will now be meeting on select Tuesdays from 5:30-7:00. The next meeting will take place next Tuesday.

#### **PTO Co-Presidents' Report (Kierstin Hettler):**

- In November, the PTO will kick off its annual Meadow Farms fundraiser. It's a great opportunity to purchase holiday gifts, wrapping paper, and other treats. You would also be supporting the PTO through these purchases. Information will be sent out via flyers over the next few weeks. You can also follow the instructions shared on the screen (go to [meadowfarms.com/register](https://meadowfarms.com/register) and enter the school ID 1802207). The start date will be 11/2, and it ends on 11/30. The money raised goes right back into events and programming for the 187 community.

- Picture Day was a huge success. The fundraising component comes into play when parents receive the photos and have an opportunity to make a purchase. The retake day is TBD. Students can participate in retake day if they were absent, or if you are unhappy with the photos taken. We will share the retake day details via the newsletter as well as via flyers.
- Kierstin encouraged members to sign up for the newsletter to stay abreast of important reminders and events. If you go to [187pto.org](http://187pto.org), you can sign up for the newsletter there.

#### **PTO ES Co-Vice Presidents' Report (Jackie and Sayuri):**

- Sayuri shared that they are planning a bake sale for 11/8, outside the school. Hours are 7am-10am and 11:30am-1:30pm. The goal is to feed hungry voters and raise money for the PTO. Volunteers are needed to bake and drop off baked goods, as well as volunteers needed to sit and sell baked goods.
- Jackie shared that emails have gone out to the Class Parent Representatives who have been chosen for each grade. Once Jackie receives the CPR agreements, CPRs will begin assisting in their assigned classrooms.

#### **PTO IS Vice President's Report (Ksenia Selemon):**

- Ksenia noted that they are still looking for ideas for assembly programming. She is seeking speakers or organizations that are inspirational, motivational, educational, and/or enriching.
- Ksenia invites parents with ideas or questions about IS programming to reach out to her.
- A parent asked about the IS track team, and Emel shared that they are finalizing the coach's availability. They are shifting coaches this year, which has caused a delay.
- Ksenia shared that the clubs are going well, and all but one had enough interest to launch.

#### **Treasurer's Report (Kierstin):**

- The carryover from September was \$52,866.64. Since the last report, the PTO has incurred \$7,238.84 in expenses. We've also done some fundraising since our last report: \$2,912.
- The breakdown of expenses incurred since last report includes funds for the holiday tree sale, Schoolapalooza pre-production costs, carryover expense from paying Ms. Donetta last year, garden program expenses, PTO administrative fees, mailchimp, the welcome back picnic, and funds for the sensory wall.
- Our revenue so far includes funds from dues and donations, PTO merchandise sales, and Schoolapalooza business ads, totalling \$2,912.96 in revenue to date.

#### **Funding Request: Foodarama (Kierstin)**

- On behalf of Dustin, Kierstin shared an overview of foodarama and noted that they need a new popcorn machine. The total request is 384.98, including the machine and a protection plan for the machine. Foodarama is a delicious event that takes place prior to Schoolapalooza.

Motion for Funding Request: Karen Blundell. 2nd: Courtney Eckman.

Funding Request: 100% approved; 83% participation.

**Funding Request: Holiday Tree Sale** (Gerry Goss)

- Gerry welcomed new members and shared his conviction that the tree sale is the best event of the year. It's a great community builder, fundraiser, and opportunity to volunteer. Middle school parents, elementary school parents, and prospective parents all engage with the event. This is a request to cover expenses for the trees. Inflation has impacted the cost of the trees, which is higher than last year's cost. Gerry noted that they are hopeful that the event will bring in profits this year, just as it has in the past. The tree sale committee's request for \$13,000 would cover trees, wreaths, gas, tolls, and miscellaneous expenses.
- Gerry also notes that they will be seeking volunteers and he is happy to answer questions.

Motion for Funding Request: Karen Blundell. 2nd: Ksenia Selemon.

Funding Request: 100% approved; 87% participation.

**Committee Reports:**

- **Gardening Committee** (Camila and Nori)
  - Nori noted that there will be a family garden day this Sunday, 10/30, 10am-1pm. She invited folks to bring compost and encouraged folks to notice what can be brought in and what cannot be brought in (displayed on screen: Yes = vegetable scraps, fruit scraps, coffee grounds; No = meat, fish, oils, dairy, cheese).

**Friends of 187 Report:** (Rae Hilliard)

- Rae shared that there is a new event coming up this weekend, the Spooktacular Soiree. Tonight is the last night to get pre-tickets. The event takes place on October 29th and will include dancing, food, wine, beer, and soft drinks. It's for parents only and is less formal than the gala- it's meant to be a lot of fun. Masks will be available for folks who want one. Costumes are encouraged but not required at all. It will take place at the Fort Washington Collegiate Church.
- Rae reminded the group that Friends is a not-for-profit organization focused on bringing arts programming to 187. Examples from the past include puppetry in the pre-k classroom and uptown stories workshops. Recently, they sent home flyers about upcoming dance workshops for all grades.
- Kierstin noted that Friends and the PTO are two separate organizations with two separate fundraising goals, but they work together and cheer each other on.

**Open Forum:**

- Annette Fletcher shared that Schoolapalooza is in 3 weeks, on November 19th. It's coming up pretty fast, and Dustin will set up a table tomorrow morning, during drop off, to recruit people who can volunteer for Foodarama. Foodarama is a great pre-show fundraiser. This year they really need parents to come out and help out with that event. T-shirts are also for sale, and the t-shirt flyer went home this past week. The new design was created by alumni. Wearing t-shirts adds to the spirit of the show. This event has the potential to be a \$20,000 fundraiser.
- Rebecca Saez noted that the ice-cream social for incoming kindergartners would also be a great opportunity to sell t-shirts to families excited about their acceptance to 187. Ksenia shared enthusiasm for this idea and noted that in the meantime, one can always buy non-specific 187 t-shirts on the school website. Ksenia also welcomed any illustrators or artists to reach out to help with design for t-shirts and other merchandise.

Motion to Adjourn: Ksenia Selemon 2nd: Gerry Goss

Meeting adjourned at 8:23 pm.