

**PS/IS 187 PTO**  
**General Meeting Minutes**  
**September 22, 2022**

[7:02pm] - [8:26pm]

**Welcome**—PTO Co-Presidents Kierstin Hettler and Hila Milo Rasouly  
Quorum [7:02] (42 participants)

**2021-2022 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.

**Welcome to the PS/IS 187 PTO:**

- Kierstin shared the agenda for the evening and welcomed all to the PTO. She noted that the goal of the meetings is to bring everyone together, share updates, create a forum for sharing ideas, discuss initiatives, and vote on how to spend PTO funds. The PTO is a group of volunteers that works with many 187 stakeholders and community members to create the best school environment possible for our PS/IS 187 students. We do this by advocating for the school, organizing events, raising funds, running meetings, and being sure to follow Chancellor regulations as well as PTO bylaws.
- Hila welcomed everyone and named a few things that are made possible by the PTO. We fundraise for education enhancement grants (trips, supplies), after school enrichment activities, the school garden, film festival, schoolapalooza, Saturday clubs, teacher appreciation events, and more. The executive board coordinates activities but volunteers are needed! There are many ways to get involved: for example, you can be a CPR in your child's classroom (ES), you can volunteer or contribute resources to an event, and/or you can contribute via dues. Please go to the 187 PTO website and explore the "Get Involved" page. You are always welcome to join a committee or to start something new. Hila offered a special thank you to Sarah who will be heading the grants committee. If you have grants that you would like to submit, Sarah is your best point person.
- Upcoming events include a Welcome Back picnic on 10/8, Picture Day, and our Election Day Bake Sale.
- At every meeting, we vote to approve the minutes. If there are any challenges to the minutes, you really can share that.
- In the chat, the PTO leaders shared the PTO email: [psis187@gmail.com](mailto:psis187@gmail.com)

## **June 2022 General Meeting Minutes:**

Motion to approve: Ksenia Selemon 2nd: Gerry Goss Approved (100%); 76% participation.

### **Administration's Report (Emel, Ms. Marrero, & Ms. Daskaris):**

- Emel wished the PTO Executive board an amazing year together and shared her excitement about the upcoming year. She noted that the theme is "Connection and Community," and the mantra is "it takes a village to raise a child." She thanked parents for joining last week's curriculum night. The administration is hoping to have many more opportunities to connect within the school building and outside the building.
- Ms. Marrero shared her excitement to be back with the students, looking forward to a year full of activities and trips. She is also looking forward to working with the PTO to offer the best to the community. She thanked parents for sending in so many school supplies to the students; it is appreciated.
- Ms. Daskaris greeted everyone and shared her excitement to see everyone and hear from everyone tonight.
- A participant asked why curriculum night was virtual. Emel noted that curriculum night, parent-teacher conferences, and a family night in May will all take place virtually this year.
- Salvador asked whether there will be any school trips this year, and Ms. Marrero confirmed that there will be trips.
- A new parent asked about budget cuts. Emel notes that the school is in a good place; in comparison with other schools that were forced to excess staff, PS/IS 187 has enough funds to cover its staff. The budget that the school received did include a reduction in federal monies associated with COVID support, but this reduction was expected.
- A parent posed a question about recess: is there a group that comes in on Tuesdays and Thursdays that organizes recess time? Emel noted that this year, the school has partnered with Asphalt Green for their recess enhancement program. They have a coach named Angel who is working with the students across three recess periods. Ms. Marrero shared an example from that day: Angel began with simple games such as organized tag. The administration is in conversation with the coach about additional activities that they can incorporate into recess; it is also an opportunity for school personnel to get ideas for activities they can put in place with kids. A parent asked if participation is optional, and whether those who choose not to participate will have enough space to play. Ms. Marrero confirmed that there will be space for the other children to play. This week, there were fewer staff at recess so they were not able to staff the soccer pitch area. They plan to open it back up as staff return.
- Salvador asked if the school is following any guidelines for social distancing in the cafeteria and/or other spaces. Ms. Emel noted that social distancing was lifted city-wide last year. Lunch is now served in the cafeteria, and students are seated on both sides of the table. Middle school students who are allowed to eat out can eat outside in the school yard. Social distancing is not required in the lunchroom or the school yard.

- Marielle Ali introduced herself as the Manhattan Community Board representative for our area, and noted that each year they conduct a community needs assessment. It's an opportunity to gather community members' thoughts and voices for community programming. She shared the survey link in the chat, noting that the survey closes at the end of October: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2022CNANYC>
- Parents asked whether music classes would be available to all middle school students this year, and whether all students will have access to both music and Spanish all year. Ms. Daskaris noted that all 7th and 8th graders will be taking Spanish. In addition, all 7th and 8th graders have 3 power hours in their schedules. 7th graders can use their power hour periods to work with Mr. T. They are trying this out with the 7th graders this year, and next year they will determine whether they can continue it with the 8th graders.

#### **Faculty Report:**

Mr. Chris Jennings shared that the faculty is really excited for the year to come. They are sleep deprived but fired up!

#### **SLT Report:**

There was no SLT report this evening. Hila Milo Rasouly shared that the SLT team has not met yet this year. The SLT meeting notes will be posted on the school website.

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

- Kierstin noted that parents will be hearing from the PTO throughout the year. All events and activities that the PTO organizes are made possible by PTO funds. During these meetings, you will be asked to vote on different uses for funds. There are a few active fundraising initiatives taking place right now. For example, in the chat you will see a link for our exclusive "Welcome Back" fundraiser. The apparel and designs that you see there will only be available for a few more weeks. In the chat, Hila shared the following link: <https://www.customink.com/fundraising/187-2022-welcome>
- Our dues drive is also active. You can contribute on the website (paypal and Zelle are both accepted). The Welcome Back picnic will also include an opportunity to pay dues. Kiersten noted another way to easily donate money: you can designate the PS/IS 187 Hudson Cliffs PTO as your Amazon Smile charity. In addition, Meadow Farms and Picture Day are both upcoming fundraising events. All funds raised help benefit and support the various activities that we organize and support.
- Hila took a moment to introduce the members of the executive committee and noted that the PTO has an opening for a Communications Secretary. This person helps to create flyers and handle communications. The only qualification is that you are a parent of a child at the school and that you are not an employee of the school. Think about nominating yourself, or nominating another person. We are able to vote on this position at the next meeting. Hila also plugged the upcoming Welcome Back picnic, noting that it is an opportunity to meet other parents.

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

- Jackie and Sayuri both introduced themselves. Sayuri noted that their first big push is to find as many class parent representatives (CPR)s as possible. She urged all elementary parents to return the forms. She noted that serving as a CPR is a wonderful way to be a liaison between the teacher and the other parents in the class. You also learn more about the school's operations and initiatives.
- Jackie shared the dates for picture day and noted that a sign up sheet will go home for volunteers- it's a busy event. If you have time, please sign up to help out. As a reminder, picture day is a fundraising event; know that if you do buy pictures, you are supporting the school. Jackie also shared that the administration is urging families to complete the school lunch form. Jackie introduced Ms. B, the director of NYJTL.
- Ms. B (Charlie Buckner) noted that she had enjoyed meeting PS/IS 187 students this week and that NYJTL is committed to deepening their partnership with PS/IS 187. She shared her contact information in the chat: cbuckner@nyjtl.org, 631-913-5689.
- In the chat

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

- Ksenia introduced herself and shared her excitement about the role. This year will include middle school events such as dances in the spring and events related to graduation for the 8th graders. Since our pre-teens and teens don't always want *their* parent at events, the PTO will be sending out a sign-up to widen the pool of parents who are interested in helping out at IS events.
- As the IS prepares for assembly programming, the PTO asks if you have contacts that might have expertise to share at an upcoming assembly (e.g. support with test anxiety, motivational speakers/stories, etc). Ksenia also shared the list of proposed IS Enrichment Clubs for fall of 2022. The PTO already has some funds allocated for this purpose, from last year. If fewer than 8-10 kids express interest in a club, the club will not move forward. Children list the clubs they are interested in in order of preference, and the goal is to provide each student with a club that is high on their list. Jackie noted that there will also be enrichment programs for the ES students as well. Information will go home with children soon.
- A parent asked about the track team, and Emel noted that there will be a track team for the upper grades as well and that information will go home soon.
- <https://msnadiene.youcanbook.me>

#### **Treasurer's Report (Terri Rosenblatt):**

- Terri introduced herself and noted that it is her first year as treasurer. Every meeting will include a budget report. Break-down of expenses currently add up to \$25,424. These include summer expenses such as music and garden. On revenue: there is currently only \$78 in PTO dues, but revenue will grow over the year as we run more and more events. Folks who are interested in discussing budget questions can reach out to Terri directly. Meetings will often take up funding requests. Terri noted that currently, we have a funding request related to Schoolapalooza, and invited the event organizers to speak.

#### **Funding Request: Schoolapalooza**

- Michael Bridinstine introduced himself and gave an overview of Schoolapalooza. Schoolapalooza is a parent-teacher-faculty talent show. This year will be the 16th show. Prior to COVID, they were raising over \$20,000 a year. During COVID, revenue from the event dropped, partly because the event was shifted to the summer. This year, they are working to shift it back to the fall, hopefully the Saturday before Thanksgiving. In the chat, Michael noted that if you want to help with Schoolapalooza or the Film Festival, you can email him at [mb@towheadproductions.com](mailto:mb@towheadproductions.com)
- Annette Fletcher introduced herself as a co-producer this year. She noted that they will begin seeking parents and teachers very soon, to bring the best talent to the show. In addition, Chris Jennings will perform again this year; he has performed at every Schoolapalooza. The event raises money mostly through sponsors in the program. If anyone has any interest in helping out, reach out to Michael Bridinstine and Annette Fletcher. More information will go home soon in backpacks.
- The Schoolapalooza organizers noted that they are asking for \$4,800 to cover expenses associated with the event.

Motion for Funding Request: Michael Bridinstine. 2nd: Hila Milo Rasouli.

Funding Request: 98% approved; 89% participation.

#### **Funding Request: Tree Sale**

- Gerry Goss introduced the tree sale funding request. He noted that this is the 12th year of the Tree Sale. This year it will be co-organized by Gerry Goss, Jenn Bennion, Traci Schwinn, and others. The organizers are seeking volunteers for the event. It's also a great opportunity for parents to meet one another and for everyone to get to know their community. Finally, it's an opportunity to get a good deal on a tree; last year they raised almost \$17,000. Gerry already has put an order in for trees. Last year's pre-sale deposit was \$2,700; they are asking for \$3,000 to cover a similar deposit this year.
- In the chat, Gerry noted that if you would like to help with the tree sale, you can email him at [gerrygoss@mac.com](mailto:gerrygoss@mac.com).

Motion for Funding Request: Sayuri Stabrowski. 2nd: Susie Pourfar.

Funding Request: 100% approved; 85% participation.

#### **Committee Reports:**

- **Film Festival Committee.** Michael Bridinstine shared the date for this year's film festival: 5/21/23. This year will be the 10th show, taking place on the 4th largest screen in the city. Students and families are encouraged to make films together. They have had over 400 films made in the last 9 years. They are seeking volunteers (helping with the event, creating promotional materials, and helping to make movies). Hila notes that you can see movies from previous years on the website.
- **STEM Committee.** Hila shared that the STEM committee has brought a Biobus to the school, participated in schoolapalooza, career day, demonstrated science experiments

on stage, and presented at an assembly day. They are looking for additional members. If you are interested in science, join; you do not need to be a scientist yourself.

- **Garden Committee.** Nori Kuriyama introduced herself and other members of the committee, including a new member, Courtney. Nori expressed appreciation for the school community, which has helped out the garden in any way it is needed, even over the summer. Camilla noted that this year will include a lot of activities, in collaboration with 187 teachers. They are working to bring kids to the garden. For example, the Pre-K kids feed the coy, the 2nd graders plant daffodils, and the art teachers will bring art into the garden (signs and other projects). Yesterday they kicked off their first IS gardening club; they harvested tomatoes, planted seeds, and identified a new mascot (a caterpillar). Next week they plan to bring tomatoes to both ES and IS. K and 1 are exploring the garden, using their senses. Laszlo shared that family garden days are coming back- no RSVP needed. Just show up and be ready to help! Garden days take place at 10am on selected dates- check the calendar. Parents are also encouraged to follow the garden's instagram account; this can be an opportunity to spread the word and even get grants. Camila emphasized that they need volunteers to join in any way that they can.
- In the chat, Nori noted that you can reach out to the garden committee at [ps187garden@gmail.com](mailto:ps187garden@gmail.com), and you can follow them on instagram at <https://www.instagram.com/187garden/>
- In the chat, Hila shared the following link so that folks could learn more about committees they can join: <https://www.187pto.org/join>.

### **Friends of 187 Report:**

- Emily Barnes (co-president of Friends of 187) shared who they are and what to expect. Friends is a separate non-profit organization founded in 2008 in response to budget cuts, specifically to fund arts programming. Today, they fund the arts along with programming around the arts. The organization is run by volunteers, and the board is made up of volunteers.
- Karima Khawja shared excitement about returning to in person programming. Friends has funded over 400 art classes for pre-k through 8. Based on feedback from school leadership, they are bringing back dance and movement for this year. For example, for 5th -8th graders, they will bring Alvin Ailey residencies. Programming takes place during the school day.
- Representatives from Friends also encouraged parents to look out for the Spooktacular Soiree on October 29th. They note that it is a fun fundraiser; costumes are optional but encouraged. Save the date, more to come.
- A participant asked if Ms. Donetta will return. Representatives from Friends noted that they will look into bringing back Ms. Donetta. The priority this year is dance and movement. Any ideas, bring them to the attention of Friends representatives; they are always looking to expand their offerings.

- In the chat, a Friends representative noted that they can be reached at [friendsof187@gmail.com](mailto:friendsof187@gmail.com). Nori also shared the following points of contact for Friends of 187:
  - Friends of 187 website <https://www.friendsof187.org/>
  - Join our Mailing list: [www.friendsof187.org/mailling-list](http://www.friendsof187.org/mailling-list)
  - Sign up to volunteer: <https://forms.gle/eitELvo9YYBeLDZV7>
  - Follow us on IG: <https://www.instagram.com/friendsof187nyc/>
  - Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/friendsof187nyc>
  - FB Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/friendsof187>

**Open Forum:**

There were no other issues brought up for discussion.

Motion to Adjourn: Hila Milo Rasouli 2nd: Ksenia Selemon

Meeting adjourned at 8:26 pm.