

PS/IS 187 PTO
General Meeting Minutes
December 16, 2021
7:04 p.m.- 8:29 p.m.

Welcome—PTO President Jennifer Bennion and Gwen Kingsberry
Quorum 7:04pm (19 participants)

2021-2022 PTO Executive Board Attendees:

Co-Presidents: Gwendolyn Kingsberry & Jennifer Bennion
Treasurer: Traci Schwinn
Recording Secretary: Stephanie Reed
Elementary School co-VP(s): Dena Wolk and Yessika Murga
Intermediate School VP: Jacqueline Cruz

Absent: Communications Secretary Ksenia Selemon

November 2021 General Meeting Minutes:

Motion to approve: Gerry Goss. 2nd: Robyn Schwartz. Approved (100%).

Principal's Report

Ms. Emel thanked the PTO for support of afterschool programs.

Ms. Daskaris noted a letter sent out to parents regarding PupilPath, and parents need to register for it to have access to student grades and communications (though email is still option for communications). I.S. students are registered already. If families registered previously, they do not need to re-register.

For 6th and 7th grade, there has been an addition of IEP students, so a second ICT class in 6th grade was added. Classes were reshuffled to accommodate the percentage of student to teacher ratio needed. 7th grade will do the same thing. New Schedules will be implemented in the new year. A mixer will happen next week to try out new schedules.

She noted that next Thursday is the holiday celebration.

A parent asked if students will physically change classes with the reshuffling of classes and Ms. Daskaris stated that the teachers will stay the same.

A parent asked about additional ICT teacher for each grade and Ms. Daskaris stated that there will be additional ICT teachers (i.e., Jamison, Chowensky, O'Conner and Mendes).

A parent asked about a 3rd grade class ICT teacher and Ms. Emel noted that they are onboarding another teacher now and waiting for clearance.

A parent noted that her son did not get into an afterschool program and asked about another opportunity after the current session ends in February. Ms. Daskaris said there would be another session but said she would work with the student to get them into a program now. She also noted that there would be a 5th and 6th grade science club in new year and Mr. T would be starting soccer.

A parent asked about having a meeting with administrators since she had not yet received a response to her request for this and Ms. Daskaris said she would work with the parent to set up a meeting.

A parent asked about kindergarten and 1st grade afterschool and Jen noted that it was up to teachers that are interested and willing to teach the classes. If teachers are interested, they will communicate to

Ms. Emel and Ms. Marrero. However, usually the classes are 2nd – 8th grade, but younger classes could be considered.

Gwen asked parents to get involved in school activities and the PTO.

Faculty Report:

There was no faculty report this evening.

SLT Report:

There was no SLT report this evening.

President's Report (Jen B.):

Jen reported that the Meadowfarms fundraiser raised \$2,245, of which our share is 34%. Prizes for top sellers will be sent home.

The Tree Sale raised \$18,584. A big thanks to Jay and Gerry for all their hard work. Thanks to volunteers, Buunni, administration, and staff. Jay and Gerry also thanked the volunteers and helpers. Gwen noted the kids' excitement was a beautiful sight. Jen thanked Traci as treasurer, which is a big job during fundraisers.

The dues drive brought in \$13,332 so far.

Virtual art with Donetta started for 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade. Emails have the information.

School photo re-take day will be on January 13, 2022. We will send out a form to get a sense of how many will be re-taking photos. Proof forms for first picture day went out weeks ago. There is no obligation to purchase photos, but it is a fundraiser, and we get a share of money spent on photos.

Film Festival will be at United Palace in-person on March 20, 2022, and submissions are due on February 27th. A parent asked if there is a time limit for films duration still. Collin noted that there are standard guidelines and Michael will send out tips soon for making a good film, and it was suggested that parents take a look on the Film Festival website for specific information. A theme may be "new beginnings" but we are waiting for the official announcement.

The bookcase is now located across from Nurse Joy's office on the 1st floor. Thanks to everyone who donated books. A parent asked if it will be a lending library and it was noted that the PTO and school are trying to figure out how best to handle this issue. It could be "bring a book, take a book" but we want to make sure it is not depleted. Dena enforced that we need to keep reading alive so if it is accessible to students, it will help. A parent asked how this will be different from a library and it was noted that students can bring it back if it is in good shape, but originally, we were hoping to give the books away. The books are used but they are in great shape. We were hoping to give books as a treat a couple times a year. So, students would not have to bring the books back, but they could. If this works, there is a possibility for a bookshelf for the 4th floor for the I.S. as well. The current bookcase will be geared toward the E.S., and once we get a system, we can expand.

A parent asked about the library and Ms. Emel stated that they are not currently lending books but are planning on lending books in the new year with a potential for being open after school.

A parent suggested read-alouds or mystery ready, possibly via Zoom.

Jackie noted that the DEI calendars will be on the PTO website in advance of each month. Parents and families can contribute to the blog via the website. The current submissions will be about what "home" is to you.

Traci noted the Month of Movies will occur on Friday nights in February to celebrate Black History Month.

Treasurer's Report (Traci):

Traci summarized the budget and noted that there is ~ \$83,305 of funds available. Expenses were ~ \$15,694. The Garden Committee received a \$3,000 grant from Whole Foods so they have now only spent \$193 of their budget. Revenue is ~ \$32,000. Total budget approved (spent) 2021-2022 is ~ \$72,210.

There was no budgetary voting this evening.

The PTO Board is hoping to vote on a request next month for funds to offer some screen writing classes from Uptown Stories in advance of Film Festival.

A parent asked if the Tree Sale could be held earlier, and Gerry noted that the weekend it is held is the most successful weekend. He also noted that we try to have our trees affordable with respect to the other offerings in the area.

IS Report (Jackie):

Jackie noted that the I.S. counselors sent an email about High School applications opening in late January, and the deadline is late February. Transcripts can be requested from Ms. Quesada. Some High Schools are having open houses. There is some confusion over whether District, or other, priorities are still in place.

Karen Suarez who runs Play Study Win noted that there was a Beat the Bomb email confirming how many would be interested in playing, but there was confusion with the email. She is looking to book the game for next Wednesday the 22nd. Lego afterschool classes have started, and they are getting ready for competition. MSA basketball competitive league has also started having games. There is hope to start an intramural league too, but they are waiting for staff to be cleared by the DOH. One teacher will be starting a YuGiOh card curriculum that incorporates STEM. They also have a graphic designer working with PSW that may be able to teach introduction to film for film editing. PSW has books that they ordered for the summer, but they are sitting in the storage space; Karen noted that students can borrow them.

ES Report (Dena and Yessika):

Dena and Yessika noted that on Friday, January 21st there will be 2 sessions of Trivia Night for the E.S.; one for Pre K – 1st grade and one for 2nd – 4th grade.

Friends of 187 Report:

Friends of 187 thanked the PTO for collaborating at the Tree Sale. December fundraising will focus on arts programming and budgetary items for school needs (i.e., Mr. Jennings needs for equipment for his E.S. project and Mr. T needs new instruments). Spring programming will focus on in-person classes for Movement and Dance in January – March and creative writing and spoken word in April – June. Friends of 187 is looking for spring volunteers for various projects.

Open Forum:

There were no other issues brought up for discussion.

Motion to Adjourn: Gerry Goss. 2nd: Dena Wolk

Meeting adjourned at 8:29 pm.