

PS/IS 187 PTO  
General Meeting Minutes  
September 23, 2021  
7:04 pm - 8:44 pm

**Welcome**—PTO Co-Presidents Jennifer Bennion & Gwendolyn Kingsberry  
Quorum: 7:04 pm

**2021-2022 PTO Executive Board Attendees:**

Co-Presidents: Gwendolyn Kingsberry & Jennifer Bennion

Treasurer: Traci Schwinn

Recording Secretary: Stephanie Reed

Elementary School co-VPs: Dena Wolk & Yessika Murga

Intermediate School VP: Jacqueline Cruz

Communications Secretary: Ksenia Selemon

**June 24, 2021 General Meeting Minutes:**

Motion to approve: Leanne Gonzalez

2<sup>nd</sup>: Ksenia Selemon

Poll to Accept: 100% (74 participants) in favor

Approved.

**Special Guest Speaker:**

Deputy Director of Facilities for the Island of Manhattan, Mr. Giancarlo Vinciguerra, discussed ventilation and facilities issues and guidance regarding COVID-19.

- Mr. Vinciguerra noted that different buildings have different guidance, but occupiable buildings have optimized ventilation (i.e. air conditioning, fans, filters, purifiers, etc). Procedures for daily disinfection occur per CDC recommendations. The exhaust system in each room of PS/IS 187 was fixed in the last 1.5 years. PPE, wipes and gloves are readily available.
- Parents questioned what type of filters are used and Mr. Vinciguerra said he would look into it.
- Parents questioned whether windows should be open while air conditioning (AC) units are running. Mr. Vinciguerra said that if the AC is on for comfort, do not open windows, if they are open for air flow, one could open upper windows. He noted the more air movement the more air exchange and window open brings in fresh air.
- Parents asked or clarification about the ventilation in the cafeteria. Mr. Vinciguerra said the school is following guidance appropriate for the number of people and the space in the cafeteria. He also noted that there are exhaust fans in larger public areas, such as the gym.
- Mr. Vinciguerra noted that further questions could be submitted to the principal, who could then pass them on to him and he would respond.

- A recording of Mr. Vinciguerra's presentation at the PTO meeting can be found [here](#).  
Password: fvl84Z!i

### **Principal's Report:**

- Ms. Emel noted that the soccer pitch is almost completed; there will be a ribbon cutting ceremony in mid-October and a planning team will be created. She asked volunteers to reach out to her.
- Mr. Vinciguerra will also look at the pond health.
- Ms. Emel noted Curriculum Night was last night.
- Parents questioned whether separate Spanish classes could be held in the I.S. for those who have never had Spanish before and those who are proficient. Ms. Daskaris noted the issue but said the 5-day class schedule would make it challenging and currently only 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades will receive Spanish. Parents questioned whether an extra Spanish class could be held as an afterschool program and Ms. Daskaris said this could be explored.
- Parents questioned whether there is an opportunity for lower grades to eat lunch outside more. It was noted that the auditorium, classrooms, outdoor schoolyard and cafeteria are being used currently. The garden path is not used yet because of staffing issues for all the spaces, but support staff are in the process of being hired.
- Parents questioned whether those who bring home lunch eat outside while those who eat school lunch eat inside. Ms. Daskaris noted that all I.S. students have the option to eat outside; for those who eat school lunch, they can go outside after they eat.
- Parents questioned if the school is still using Otus. Faculty noted they are no longer using Otus and they are in the process of choosing a new system.
- Faculty noted that the I.S. grading policy will be disseminated next week.
- Coordinators in each I.S. grade will be the point person for parents. Grade teachers will be the point person for parents in the E.S. Class-specific email lists are forthcoming.
- With respect to COVID-19 vaccine mandating and staffing, it was noted that DOE will require proof of vaccination by Monday and the majority of PS/IS 187 teachers are vaccinated.
- With respect to the library being used as an art room, it was noted that there is a new art teacher for all grades, but that library access will still occur; the library will be a multi-purpose space. There are also classroom libraries.
- \*\*\*Later, during the Treasurer's report a parent questioned whether funding could be obtained for someone to help with the library and it the PTO Board noted that would have to be discussed with the faculty.

### **Faculty Report:**

- Mr. Jennings noted that tentative dates are booked for E.S. shows this year (12/9/2021 for 3rd & 4th grades, 6/3/2022 for kindergarten, and 3/24/2022 for 1st & 2nd grades).
- He described a new project for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade show which will center around community, which he will write. PS/IS 187 alumni will interview the elderly at the

S.T.A.R. and Moriah senior centers and the interviews will be used for lyrics and songs. The show would be held for the elders and parents.

- Mr. Jennings asked for parents to volunteer with transcriptions and translations of recording interviews.
- He also would like to request funds to hire a collaborator, Justin Hines, to co-write and co-produce the songs, which will be voted on later in the meeting.

**President's Report (Jen):**

- Reminded parents that they are all already PTO members but encouraged parents to get involved by volunteering for committees and as CPRs and to share ideas and attend meetings.
- Fundraisers coming up: Meadowfarms in early October, Tree Sale in December, Picture Day in November, Dues Drive in mid-October, more to come.
- Discussed the 187 Community Picnic on October 16th.

**Treasurer's Report (Traci):**

- \$76999.56 carryover, our expenses since 7/2021 were \$1552.85 (garden), fundraising since 7/2021 brought in \$1568.47 (PTO Dues and Amazon Smile), the balance is \$76,985.18, so funds available are \$66,985.18.
- The 2021-2022 budget approved in June 2021 is \$72,210.45.
- Proposed spending is \$1000 for the E.S. 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade musical project and \$2386 for a deposit on trees for the tree sale.

**Time to vote:**

1. Elementary School 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> grade musical project collaborator fee (\$1000 for 60 hours):  
Motion to approve: Karen Blundell  
2<sup>nd</sup>: Gerry Goss  
Poll to Accept: 100% (76 participants) in favor  
Approved.
2. Deposit for trees for the Tree Sale (\$2386):  
Motion to approve: Gerry Goss  
2<sup>nd</sup>: Jay Douglas  
Poll to Accept: 100% (74 participants) in favor  
Approved.

**Communication Secretary Report (Ksenia):**

- Described the new PTO website, highlighting features such as signing up for our emails, the calendar, donations, and the PTO shop.

**IS Report (Jackie):**

- Described the launch of Destination Diversity last year which will continue this year.

- This month is Global Diversity Awareness Month, and we will focus on a map of experiences; e.g. eateries, dance, music, films, etc. Parents/students can submit photos, soundbites, etc. Explained the Diversity calendars.
- Discussed improving communication with I.S. (e.g., parent reps, parent email directory).
- Noted upcoming school dances, field trips, game nights, speakers, more to come.

**ES Report (Dena & Yessika):**

- Gave information on being a parent representative for E.S. classes, as well as reminding parents about the upcoming movie night, trivia night, and other functions.

**PTO Garden Committee:**

- Camilla discussed that, with Grow NYC partnership and help from community, they've been focusing on the benches, garden beds and vegetables, and they are getting ready to harvest. The committee was awarded \$3000 from Whole Kids Foundation for growing lights.
- They will be working with science teachers to bring gardening time during school hours.
- Compost bins are soon-to-come.
- Request for volunteers.

**FO187:**

- Marisa explained the mission of Friends of 187 and discussed possible upcoming collaborations with the PTO.
- Emily asked for FO187 volunteers.

**Open Forum:**

- It was noted that the school is still trying to figure out how to have art and music for all grades. One parent suggested having a quiet zone for I.S. in the school yard during recess.
- Parents asked when the basketball hoops are going back up and Jen said she would follow up. It was noted the PTO needs to also follow up on track and soccer.
- Ms. Emel then clarified that the school is waiting for approval of their request to put the hoops back up from the facilities department.

Motion to Adjourn: Meera Orochena

2<sup>nd</sup>: Jacqueline Cruz

Meeting adjourned: 8:44 pm.