

MINUTES
PS 166 PTA GENERAL MEETING
MARCH 16TH, 2016 AT 8:40 AM IN THE CAFETERIA

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:40AM by Co-President Erin Volkmar. Quorum was established.

II. Approval of Minutes

MOTION to approve the minutes of the General Board Meeting held on February 11th, 2016 was made by Karyn Gooden and seconded by Erin Volkmar. The minutes were unanimously approved.

III. Principal Debra Mastriano

- a. Teachers College (TC) budget line: Very important. PTA money goes towards a staff developer for K-2 and 3-5 who talks about the curriculum with teachers. The teachers also attend specialty groups at other schools. Anderson, PS 199, 452, 84, and 87 all have the Teachers College curriculum. Saturday there is a TC open forum - parents are welcome.
 - o James Fama spoke about his experiences with TC. It raises the level of discourse, and increases collaboration with other teachers to discuss strategies, etc. Professional development is differentiated.
 - o The PTA votes on the TC budget line before TC knows their budget. This year we went over the budgeted allocation by \$10K. The school will make up for \$5K of this difference. Will the PTA pay for the other \$7K from the PTA fund?
- b. Substitute teachers: There is a shortage of subs which means that sometimes children are pushed into other classes. This is **not** due to budget issues. Note that parents of children in older grades prefer pushing in, since children can follow the regular curriculum with the other class, while parents of younger children prefer substitutes, as too many children becomes disruptive. The principal tries to hire student teachers as substitutes so that they can follow the curriculum, but she isn't always able to choose who she wants.

MOTION by Erin Volkmar to use \$7000 from the PTA reserve funds to pay for a shortfall in funds for Teachers College.

The motion was seconded by Tiana and unanimously approved.

IV. Presidents' Report: Kerri Keiger

- a. Changes to state testing: see handout
- b. Science fair: district-wide, Saturday 11am-1pm at Brandeis on 84th between Columbus and Amsterdam
 - o There was not enough notice this year, only 3 weeks, so only one group from each grade submitted a project. Next year, hopefully we'll have more projects submitted.

V. CEC Report: Kim Watkins, Treasurer for the CEC Zoning Committee (and 166 parent)

- a. Controlled choice is being proposed as a way to increase diversity amongst schools. This is not a proposal from the DoE, it is a grassroots effort from District 3. Anyone currently at PS 166 is grandfathered in, including sibling priority.
- b. We the PTA / SLT should compose a letter to the CEC before May stating the school's opinion on controlled choice. The PTA board will ask for parent input.
- c. Rezoning usually occurs when there is overcrowding or a new school is created. This time, rezoning would be to increase diversity and to get kids from underperforming schools into better schools.
- d. Controlled choice wouldn't happen in 2017 or even 2018 because it takes a lot of research.
- e. Parent comments:

- o NYC is unusual because most kids walk to school, and we we would need to spend a lot to bus children to school. Why not spend this money to improve failing schools instead?
- o People may be willing to bus children to a better school, but will not be willing to bus their children to a failing school and will instead pull their children from the system.

VI. Treasurers' Report:

- a. Annual Fund is around \$45K, much lower than where it was last year at this time of the year. The Annual Fund pays for everything besides assistants in the classroom (CAPs).
- b. Madelyn Storms, Annual Fund chair, wants to increase participation. 50% per class is the goal, prize for the highest participation. We will have a phone-a-thon if we can't get the numbers up.

VII. Auction: Erin Peck, Max Alvarez and Janet Moyle / ps166auction.com

- a. Bidding closes tomorrow. Ticket prices increase March 25th. You can buy a ticket to win a bag on the ticket page. Saturday or Sunday the auction page becomes a preview site for artwork and baskets.
- b. Looking for a sponsor to cover the cost of AV equipment: we need 2 flat screen TVs or \$2000-2500, in exchange for sponsorship.
- c. Next week, items will be distributed. Any volunteers?
- d. Basket drop off on Friday, March 18th in room 107, after drop off.
- e. Art: Send a picture to Janet to post, along with what info you need to present - lights, easel, etc.

VIII. Participatory Grant: Kirsten Brashares

- a. We applied to Helen Rosenthal's office for \$210K to renovate the auditorium. We are a finalist for this grant.
- b. To vote for our project to receive funding, go to Helen Rosenthal's office on Columbus and 87th street, Monday - Thursday 10am - 6pm, Friday 10am - 4pm. Voting takes place March 26th - April 3rd. For an absentee ballot email districtpbvoting@gmail.com.
- c. Anyone over 14 who lives in the district 6 voting district (different than the D3 school district) can vote. Top 3 winners get money. Bring a photo ID and proof of address.
- d. Note that we have also applied for another grant application for the auditorium from Gale Brewer.

IX. Upcoming:

Cultural performances next week, around 1-1.5 hours. K-2 perform on Wednesday, 3-5 Thursday, no school Friday.

X. Miscellaneous:

It was noted by a parent that some Spanish-dominant families aren't aware of PTA meetings, and that the fact that meetings and notes are in English makes it difficult for these families to participate. While the DoE provides translation services for some activities such as parent conferences, it is uncertain whether we can provide these services for PTA meetings. Please contact Parent Coordinator Deborah Markewich (DMarkewich@schools.nyc.gov) if you feel that your family could benefit from translation services for school-related communications.

XI. Adjournment There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:00 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Rachel A. Polimeni, Recording Secretary