



# Talented & Gifted School For Young Scholars Parent Teacher Association

Trina Edmundson &  
Anand Raghunath

**Co-Presidents**

Sara Coates &  
Norma Corvera

**Co-Vice Presidents**

John Johnson &  
Rebecca Yoftahie

**Co-Treasurers**

Rasheedah Harris &  
Laura Lampert

**Co-Secretaries**

September 20, 2016

## MINUTES FOR TAG PTA MEETING

Meeting Date: Tuesday, September 20, 2016

Meeting Time: 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

Meeting Location: TAG Cafeteria

### I. Call to Order

- A. PTA Co-President, Anand Raghunath, called to order the TAG PTA meeting on Tuesday, September 20, 2016 at 6:10 pm in the cafeteria of the Talented AND Gifted School for Young Scholars.
- B. Co-Secretary, Rasheedah Harris, made sure both parents and TAG teachers signed the attendance sheets. The following people were present: (see attendee list in secretary's binder)

### II. Reading and approval of the minutes

- A. Hard copies of the June 7, 2016 PTA meeting minutes were made available for all attendees.
- B. Anand made the motion to approve the minutes. Pamela Simon seconded the motion.

### III. Principal's Report

- A. Principal Cesar welcomed everyone back and asks new families to stand; they are greeted with applause.
- B. ELA scores this year were at Levels 3 and 4. This year 91.4% of students achieved 3's and 4's, last year it was 84%. Math dipped a bit but was 93.3%. Much was attributed to our math teachers such as Mr. Haitrum and our science teacher who taught toward the Regents, Mr. Roberts. Mr. Haitrum spoke and said he is very happy to be here. Principal Cesar said he is a good support system for us. She said questions have come up about our after school programs.
- C. We have basketball, volleyball, etc., and the Y after care program. We have a new social studies teacher, Mr. Harris. By the time students leave TAG they have 4 Regents exams completed.
- D. Regarding teacher transition, if a teacher wants to transfer to a school closer to home or in another state, we can't stop them. We've lost teachers, such as Mr. Sheridan, to California, etc. 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher Mr. Dimatteo is getting married and they are living in Westchester.
- E. Achieve 3000 replaced iReady and you will hear more about it. Parent Training will be on November 14<sup>th</sup>. We are called a reward school. According to the data we exceeded 97.7% of the schools across the state.

### IV. Question and Answer for Principal Cesar

- A. Fourth grade parent asked why Spanish is being cancelled. Principal Cesar said we have a mandate, during school teachers have lunch, etc. We have art, gym, science, Latin. Having Spanish once a week is ineffective. The 8<sup>th</sup> grade proficiency test is to speak Spanish at a certain level. We had to look ahead and make sure the students have enough from 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade. 5<sup>th</sup> grade has Spanish two times per week.
- B. Second grade parent asked if withholding physical activity during gym is a method of punishment. Principal Cesar said Mr. Wong has things in place to make sure kids don't get hurt.
- C. Parent asked when Latin starts and the response was that it starts in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade.

- D. Kindergarten parent asked if there is another break period aside from snack and lunch time. Principal Cesar said that the teachers gauge the kids. Between every subject area there is a transition period.
  - E. Parent said that their child is tired; they come from the Lower East Side, and asked if there is a quiet time at the Y aftercare. Principal Cesar said they have time in the beginning to eat a hot meal. It's a long day for little ones.
  - F. Parent said their kindergartener has been at TAG for 8 days and is showing an improvement in many things and it's awesome.
  - G. Principal Cesar asked parents to please come to celebrations when we have them. Students leave TAG playing an instrument.
- V. Parent asked a question regarding diversity; do you feel the children have enough time to talk with each other? Principal Cesar answered that we have various celebrations. Thanksgiving, pot luck meals, etc. Another parent added that they've been in the TAG community for eight years and there are many opportunities for the children to talk to each other related to diversity. Community building takes place and over time it has only gotten better.

#### **VI. Y Directors' Introduction**

- A. Ms. Andrea Scott welcomed new parents to the TAG community and Y community, and said that we have an exciting year ahead, and in conjunction with the Enrichment committee.
  1. The elementary school program goes from K – 5<sup>th</sup> grade; Nicole's program goes from 6 – 8<sup>th</sup> grade for middle school. Last week was a little chaotic; we've been working with School Safety.
  2. Parent Conference is this Thursday and we can't have the after school program that day because the high school students stay in the gym for a bit after school, but we will be back Friday.
  3. The aftercare program has robotics for the kids, and coding for K – 5<sup>th</sup> grades. We ask parents not to pick them up too early or they'll miss out on some things. We are in the cafeteria with Esperanza High School for a bit; they currently use the auditorium and gym until 2:45 pm. For questions email Ms. Scott: [ascott@ymcanyc.org](mailto:ascott@ymcanyc.org)

#### **VII. SLT report**

- A. Anand explained that the SLT is the School Leadership Team, consisting of 5 school administrators and 5 parents. There is definitely one and possibly two parent seats open. The SLT meets once a month to discuss the CEP – Comprehensive Education Program – how we'll implement it, etc., Vice Principal Dascal will work out when we will have elections, etc.

#### **VIII. Committee reports**

- A. Enrichment Committee –
  1. Kathy Powell-Manning, 6<sup>th</sup> grade parent and Co-Chair Jen Fiore, 7<sup>th</sup> grade parent, introduced themselves saying there are many programs for the students. Regarding middle school programs, the person who preceded us brought in funds, there were none prior. Now we have Debate, with 25 slots and 28 students showed up and we're full. Partial funding from a grant from Black Rock, and the PTA. The students go to tournaments. Theatre starts in October, through Shakespeare in the Schools, and we're working with them again this year. Basketball – it's a matter of space. We have zero access to the gym. The high school uses it, after care uses it; TAG volleyball uses it on Fridays. Last year we pulled together a girls' math team and they ended up doing very well.
  2. We are parents with full time jobs and we only can do this with partnership with the Y. Nicole who handles the middle school after care has been great.
  3. Chess Team – Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade children get chess in curriculum. If they like chess, the

enrichment program is an option. Our chess team did amazing last year and now there is a buzz around. We have a dad who has volunteered to be at all PS 116 tournaments. Regarding Piano, Kathy said that it was the only enrichment program when her daughter started. It is currently being run by Beehive Music Academy and we again partnered with Ms. Scott.

4. Field Day – May 16<sup>th</sup> – May 19<sup>th</sup>. We need parents to make this work. Mark your calendars for those days. A tremendous amount of work is involved; please contact us to be involved.
5. Poets in the Classroom is for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders. The poets come here from City College. New Victory Theatre – different classes go to there and see great performances. Crazy 8's is a math program for little kids. Jen said the students have music with Ms. Revi and there are a variety of performances planned. Kathy said regarding Mandarin a potential vendor is coming on Friday and we hope to get it up and running in the fall.

B. Fundraising Committee –

1. Co-Chairs Catherine Levine and Pamela Simon spoke. Pam said the committee is vital, and that all the items Kathy spoke about and items on the budget are due to Fundraising. Our goal is high and aggressive. If you have ideas, connections, can find grants, please let us know. The first meeting is Monday at 8:15 am and 5:45 pm. It's a great place to collaborate and meet other parents.
2. iPledge – The first major kickoff is iPledge in October. Catherine said that Anand is the Project Manager and iPledge is our direct appeal, and is tax deductible. Our goal is \$90,000. There are convenient monthly payment schedules. If you are unable to donate monetarily but you have family, friends, or if your company matches, that would be good as well. iPledge pays for many or most of our enrichment. iPledge pays for many items such as Singapore Math, chess in curriculum, physical education, Field Day, Debate Team, etc. Many families pay thousands a year in tuition; we the parents get these things for free. Please donate your money, and your time.
3. TAGwear – Pam said we've sold out a lot of sizes so don't delay in ordering. A reorder is coming in a few weeks.

C. Communications Committee –

1. Nina Reiniger said to go to the website. We have a newsletter. An email will be going out to sign up to be on the school directory. Go to "photos" on the website. The password is scholarparent (no space).

D. Membership Committee –

1. Ilaria Mogno said in September we delivered the school supplies. An email will be going out about class parents. There is a meeting next week, discussing events for next year.

E. Budget Committee – Eric Crump said the budget has to be approved by the entire PTA. Over the summer we had some changes. Principal Cesar asked for more money to be allocated toward moving up ceremonies. Eric made a motion to request making funds available for the increase. Catherine Levine seconds. Motion approved.

1. Ilaria (from Membership) returns and speaks regarding trips: they are fee-based. Cooking Night is in November. Ice Skating will be in December. Ski trip in January. Jumping Glow in March. The water park trip will be in June. Trina said we are a 501c3 so we don't pay tax, and we get deals and discounts.

F. Grants Committee –

1. Michelle mentioned her co-chair David Kwok who couldn't be at tonight's meeting. She said we write proposals and apply for grants both public and private. We look for grants for music,

debate, chess, park renovations, technology. We work closely with the PTA to come up with ideas. Today was the first meeting and we can always use more people to write, edit, research. We were awarded another \$50,000 grant from Melissa Mark-Viverito.

**G. Audit Committee –**

1. Anand said we don't have an Audit Committee. We need to have the auditing done twice a year. It conflicts to have the treasurers take care of it and is not allowed.

**IX. Treasurer's Report**

- A. Rebecca Yoftahie and John Johnson spoke. We approved the budget for \$141,000. We need to keep \$7,000 in reserve. \$3,400 came in debate grant funds. We received a small grant from the Louis Armstrong Foundation. We cut Administration a check for \$20,000 toward Teacher Assistants and music. We had a small expense for bank fees and PayPal expenses. TAGwear collected around \$3,400.
- B. We need to make sure items are paid according to the by-laws. We maintain a binder in Ms. Bruno's office. You can review where the money is going, bank statements. John said we're not allowed to withdraw cash, and attributed Rebecca to being the brains behind the treasury, adding that iPledge amounts to about ½ the fundraising for the school year so he urged everyone to donate. Rebecca said procedures for the treasurers can be found in the by-laws.

**X. Question & Answer for PTA –** Trina opens up the floor for questions.

1. What does the Audit Committee do? Anand answers that it goes over checks, monies against our budget, accounting. We do financial disclosures in December and June. Make sure our books are good. Due to compliance issues our treasurers can't do it.
2. Parent asks about playing during recess. The answer was there was organized play but that person moved on. We're going to put an ad out to hire someone for organized play.

**XI. Adjournment –**

- A. Anand Raghunath motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:23 pm. Laura Lampert seconded the motion.

**Minutes submitted by:**

Laura Lampert, TAG PTA Co-Secretary

**Minutes approved by:**

Trina Edmundson, TAG PTA Co-President