



Talented & Gifted School For Young Scholars Parent Teacher Association

Anand Raghunath
Nina Reiniger
Co-Presidents

Jennifer Fiore
Ilaria Mogno
Co-Vice Presidents

Rebecca Yoftahie
Trina Edmundson
Co-Treasurers

Laura Lampert
Rasheedah Harris
Co-Secretaries

MINUTES FOR TAG PTA MEETING

Meeting Date: Tuesday, May 8, 2018
Meeting Time: 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM
Meeting Location: TAG Cafeteria

I. Call to Order

- A. PTA Co-President, Anand Raghunath, called to order the TAG PTA meeting on Tuesday, May 8, at 6:09 pm in the cafeteria of the Talented and Gifted School for Young Scholars.
- B. Co-Secretary, Rasheedah Harris, made sure parents and TAG teachers signed the attendance sheets.

II. Reading and Approval of the Minutes

- A. Hard copies of the April PTA meeting minutes were distributed.

Anand made a motion to approve the April minutes; Rasheedah seconds. Minutes approved.

III. By-Laws Vote

- A. PTA Co-President Nina Reiniger explained the April 1, 2018 proposed amended bylaws. Pamela Simon said a stipulation needs to be made, to account for the meetings in June. Nina suggests adding an Executive Board meeting regarding the transfer of the records. All parents can attend.

Nina reads from the handout.

1. Parliamentarian. Regarding adding the Parliamentarian position, she says she was asked to go over it as a separate point, to do the vote on it separately.

A vote is prematurely taken and dismissed as full explanation of the Parliamentarian role hadn't occurred.

Nina reads from the handout regarding the Parliamentarian and asks if everyone understands. A parent questioned what would happen if there is a disagreement, what is the resolution? Rasheedah said we have to go by the rules. Nina said we'd have the bylaws and Chancellor's Regulations to consult with. People were concerned that it could be biased. Pam said at the end of the day, certain things are purely factual because these items are laid out in the bylaws. There's no power there regarding the Parliamentarian's actions. Rasheedah said it's not about final say, it's about cohesion and order. Nina said the Parliamentarian is to remind people of what the Chancellor's Regulations say. A parent asked about ambiguity in the Chancellor's Regulations. Eric said he envisions the role of Parliamentarian as someone who pledges themselves to read over the regulations. Anna Pan asked if the Parliamentarian can vote, and Nina said not as an Executive Board member, but as a general member. Ingrid said she believes the Board is supposed to know all of these things and they then may decide to not read up on all the regulations, to rely on the Parliamentarian. Eric said it's a non-mandatory position; we don't have to have a Parliamentarian each year. Luigi Pajak wants clarification – it's non-voting, purely advisory. If there is a conflicting idea, it's non-binding. Nina said that is correct. Rasheedah said that the person will point things out to us. Anand added that it's like legal counsel.

Vote - Those in favor of accepting the proposed bylaws exception of adding the non-mandatory elected position of Parliamentarian – 12 votes in favor, 7 votes opposed, 5 abstain. The motion does not pass. Bylaws amendments have to be passed by 2/3 vote.

IV. Update on 501(c)(3) Filing

A. New Proposed Bylaw amendments: Nina explains that our bylaws never stated under the duties, who was supposed to be in charge of filing and this led to problems. This will be voted on next month. (She reads aloud from the handout).

Update – We are very close, tackling the last few forms. The 990EZ's and 990 full forms should be done in the next few days. Regarding the 1023 form, Nina said she's about halfway through.

V. Nominating Committee, Election and June Meeting

A. The Nominating Committee gets put together, for the elections coming up next month.

B. The election for the 2018-2019 Board will occur and the Budget will be passed.

C. That June meeting will be changed from June 12 to June 19, 2018.

VI. Treasurer's Report

1. Rebecca Yoftahie said there wasn't a significant amount of news. Expenses were most for the Enrichment coordinators; the after-school dance program was paid through funds collected through PayPal. The largest expense was the second half of SciTech, for \$7,500. Clarifying, Rebecca said the first installment was paid in February and the second was paid in March, they were two payments of \$7,500.

VII. Committee Reports

A. Budget

1. Eric Crump said that last week's meeting was about 3 hours long talking about all different budget lines. The handout (given out at the meeting) is our slate of budget proposals, and what we recommend. Parents can adopt it or make some changes, therefore the draft may be different from what you see proposed. The May 17th Executive Board meeting will be going over everything and try to clear out any discrepancies. That report will be given to parents at the June meeting. The lines you see here were either approved unanimously or through vigorous debate. We try to give each committee enough for their needs plus sufficient amounts for other committee needs. The Theatre program disappeared this year; there weren't enough kids and we're hoping to have more student interest in the upcoming year. Regarding defunding TAGwear, we have other initiatives; we can let that \$2,500 come from general funding.
2. Principal Cesar asked if there is enough funding for this year's 8th grade senior package. Eric responded that there is enough for this year. For next year there are more students so the amount will be higher.
3. SciTech – a parent asked if there was any feedback. Ananda responded that Principal Cesar said it was good that they bring in their own equipment though their teaching method could be stronger. He strongly suggests anyone with a proposal please email before the June meeting so we can work out any disputes. Kathy Powell Manning said proposals should also involve the Enrichment VP.
4. Recess Support – Eric said regarding the recess support package we continuously see parents wanting more recess support to get the kids moving around. Ananda said it would give the kids activities on a rainy day, in the auditorium. Ananda said we'd only be paying for the time we use the recess support. Namita said we came up with a flexible module.
5. Eric said the next Executive Board meeting is Thursday, June 19th. The next Budget Committee meets Tuesday, June 3rd.
6. Nina wanted to again state that only 12 of 24 votes were for the Parliamentarian, which is only half and two thirds are needed for the change to the Bylaws, therefore it didn't pass.

B. Family Engagement

1. Johnae Ferguson said the committee needs volunteers. Thursday morning is the Teacher Appreciation Breakfast.

2. June – coming up that month is Spa Day, the overnight water park trip to Kalahari, the Welcome Picnic, which is tentatively June 23rd.
3. Multicultural Day – Ingrid asked for an update and Johnae said they are still trying to work out the logistics.

C. **Communications**

1. Ming-Yi said they have a new website, and for parents to check it out.

D. **Enrichment**

1. Sheri Simmons said she will be staying on as Debate Coach as she expects to have an Assistant Debate Coach, Rafaela Gittens. Tomorrow night, two TAG students will be in the final round in Debate in front of many Tech companies, at the Debate Headquarters on Wall Street. In June, the scholars will be going to the Nationals in Florida, and there is a GoFundMe account to help them generate the funds to attend. Rasheedah clarified that an individual parent created the account; it's not PTA-sponsored so it is by word-of-mouth. Kathy Powell Manning said their goal is \$7,000 and they currently have just short of \$2,000.

In response to a parent's question regarding the possibility of the PTA assisting with funding, Rasheedah said it's late in the game, reallocating funds. In the future we'll try to allocate funds for Debate in advance of these Nationals. A parent said Debate is supported throughout the year but when they are at the end is when they need us most, we must be there for them. Co-President Nina Reineger said if we do it for one group, we need to do the same for different groups.

E. **Fundraising**

1. Anand spoke on behalf of Fundraising. He reminded everyone that the Talent show is this Friday at 5:30 pm and encouraged everyone to please come.

VIII. **Grants**

- A. Anand spoke on their behalf as they were not there. We expect to have \$100,000 coming in from one grant, and another \$100,000 from the Manhattan Borough President's Office, Gale Brewer.

IX. **SLT Report**

- A. Kathy Fernando said they are working on the Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP). The survey just went out today. The SLT is meeting again over the next few weeks.

Kathy Powell Manning said fellow PTA members suggested she make a proposal to support our scholars who made it to the Nationals. Kathy said there was a lot going on last year and she didn't realize the additional funds last year were cut. Going to the Nationals raises the profile of our school to show how amazingly talented our kids are.

Budget Co-Chair Ananda said we have surplus in our Galaxy account as the money is not needed for the extra Teacher Assistant (TA). The GoFundMe account has already raised \$2,000, there could be a way. Anand said we'd have to vote on that fast, we could vote on it.

X. **Principal's Report**

- A. Principal Cesar greeted the parents and said regarding the Debate Nationals, we don't mind participating but we would have to send someone from the DOE because we would need to take responsibility, so she thinks for next year she would be more than happy to ask a teacher to be a part of it, and thinks it would be a great initiative. We have students involved in the Guppy Tank App Challenge, which is sponsored by pencil.org. Kathy Powell Manning said Agape comes to TAG every Friday. Principal Cesar said she would have to send DOE personnel, and Kathy countered that it isn't done for Chess. We have a TAG parent - his daughter has been competitive. We work with an organization which goes out with us to local tournaments. It's open to further discussion; we've been doing it for other initiatives, and our kids are really amazing and we want to be able to showcase their talents.
- B. Big Apple Teachers – three TAG teachers have been recognized for this award, including Ms. Donnelly several years ago, and now Mr. Hatrum and Ms. Blount this year. They will be on the set of Jimmy Fallon and you may

be able to see them when the show airs tonight. Principal Cesar also acknowledges Mr. Roberts, our middle school Science Teacher present.

- C. NYC Parks Department upgrading Poor Richard's Park and play area – They were here approximately one and a half weeks ago. It was awarded \$1.9 million. They will be revamping the park, securing the fence hopefully.
- D. We are expecting every student to have a laptop next year.
- E. Two new school aids have been hired (Danny Johnson and Robin Rivers) and they will assist with lunch, hallway and office monitoring. A new TA, Ms. Martinez, has also been hired.
- F. In-curriculum Chess has extended to grades 2 – 7, no longer only K – 1.
- G. Awards Assemblies – As of the 2017-2018 school year, Grades 2-8 will have their assemblies twice per year and Grades K – 1 will celebrate in their own classrooms. Principal Cesar said every decision isn't popular but she met with her cabinet and that's what they came up with.
- H. Chancellor's Regulations for bed bugs and lice – One bed bug was seen on a student's jacket. We had to freeze it, put tape on it and mail it downtown. After they make the identification they make an appointment within 48 hours.
- I. Principal For a Day at TAG, coming soon.
- J. Upgraded Technology Lab – It opened to K-5 students last week, and the students pledge to take care of the lab. Principal Cesar said there are still some final touches, and she wants to thank Michelle Macaraig and David Kwok (from Grants). Student's projects will be up on May 23rd from 4:30 – 7:30 pm, and it is the last Parent Engagement event of this school year. She expressed her appreciation of parents' collaboration with TAG.

XI. Question and Answer

Jennifer Fiore recommended more classroom management support from the Tech Lab. Ilaria Mogno said we had problems understanding when homework was due. Points were taken from students; we didn't know there was a deadline. Ingrid said the teacher posted on Jupiter that there was a project due but we didn't know what it was. Ilaria said we appreciate she wants the kids to be independent but it's good for parents to know the deadlines. Namita asked what Principal Cesar would like to see the PTA focus on in STEM. Principal Cesar said she'd like the teachers to know what we expect, how things develop, that they follow the systems we use with the students to keep their routine the same.

Namita asked, if SciTech cost increases next year is there a way it can be funded? Principal Cesar responded that we need to know the needs of the students. Maybe the teachers could choose a few main topics and then the program can focus on that.

Johnae asked if that means she'd want a STEM program in-curriculum funded by the PTA, and Principal Cesar responded that yes, they'd want a program where they can go deep in understanding the topics. Nina said we should sit down and discuss priorities such as supplies for the science classes, and Principal Cesar agreed, saying we have to plan along with the teachers.

Luigi Pajak asked if they plan to replace the full time science teacher for the lower grades. Principal Cesar said it doesn't leave a lot of teaching time; to get something you wind up losing something. The teachers do a really good job. The lab portion of when SciTech came in was the enticing part. Next year the science standards are for science to be taught 3-4 times per week; it's currently 2 times per week, however there is no plan to replace the current science teacher.

Anna Pan said she thinks the teachers are doing a great job this year, and she asked if there is a way we can pay for labs to be done in class to help these excellent teachers to do with labs with the materials SciTech was bringing in? Principal Cesar answered that SciTech brought in 2 - 3 people, which is important when doing the labs. Ingrid asked if that meant that ideally we would be able to get a vendor to come in and plan / collaborate with our existing teachers, Principal Cesar said yes, and Ingrid asked if we should focus on finding a different vendor. Principal Cesar responded that they (Sci Tech) were focused on keeping current with our needs, and she added that she wants the teachers to be fully involved.

Nina said we have a Budget Amendment on the floor for a vote, and reminded parents to keep in mind the money we're voting for now, that the pro is that yes there is money from the surplus. She explained if we take the \$5,000 now it is \$5,000 less that we have for next year's budget, and that the con is that there are fewer students in Debate than the number of students who would benefit from the extra TA. Luigi said he recalled there were two buffers – the mandatory \$7,000 we had to keep in the account, and another \$5,000. Nina said that was correct. Ananda said regarding the surplus it's just an estimate. These are funds from this year that can either be used this year or just roll over to next year. Kathy Powell Manning said she is proposing the PTA spend up to \$5,000 to cover the amount remaining for the Debate line, to pay for the scholars attending the Nationals in Florida. She said the four students who would be competing in the Nationals have already been given permission to go. Sarah Coates said she wanted confirmation that the surplus would not be touching any other committees' money. Ananda confirmed this. Eric Crump said the request is to spend \$5,000 from this years' surplus, which if not spent would roll over to next years' which could be used to fund something else. Johnae said she would like to see an outline of what the \$7,000 would be covering, and Kathy said she can get that to her but we need to vote now. Luigi asked if we're donating to GoFundMe or adding to the Debate line. It would be added to the Debate line. Co-Treasurer Rebecca Yoftahie clarified that we would be allocating \$5,000 but if they raise more than they have we would just pay the remainder.

VOTE: Nina said for all in favor of allocating \$5,000 from the surplus to help fund Debate going to the Nationals in Florida. 17 voted in favor. 1 opposed. 2 abstained. Vote passes.

XII. Adjournment

8:02 pm - Anand motions to adjourn the meeting. Laura Lampert seconds the motion. Meeting is adjourned.

Minutes submitted by:

Laura Lampert, Rasheedah Harris, TAG PTA Co-Secretaries

Minutes approved by:

Minutes approved by:

Nina Reiniger, TAG PTA Co-President