



# Talented & Gifted School For Young Scholars Parent Teacher Association

Trina Edmundson &  
Anand Raghunath

**Co-Presidents**

Tim Oxborough

**Vice President**

John Johnson &  
Rebecca Yoftahie

**Co-Treasurers**

Sara Coates &  
Laura Lampert

**Co-Secretaries**

October 13, 2015

## MINUTES FOR TAG PTA MEETING

Meeting Date: Tuesday, October 13, 2015

Meeting Time: 5:45 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, October 13, 2015 at 6:06 pm in the cafeteria of the Talented AND Gifted School for Young Scholars.
- B. Co-President, Trina Edmundson, 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 September 29, 2015 PTA meeting minutes were made available for all attendees.
- B. Pamela Simon made the motion to approve the minutes. Catherine Levine seconded the motion.

### III. SLT report

- A. Anand Raghunath, PTA Co-President, speaks about vacancies in the SLT positions. Calls on parents to fill 3 positions that are open. Consists of monthly meetings and make sure we are sticking to the comprehensive administration plan as it is given to us.
- B. The next SLT meeting is Thursday, October 15, 2015 at 5:30pm.

### IV. Committee reports

- A. Enrichment Committee –
  1. Kathy Powell-Manning, Co-Chair, thanks parents for showing up and participating in Field Day. We will inform parents of which color won.
  2. There is collaboration with the New Victory Theatre and the kindergarten classes are going on their first trip there this Wednesday. We also have collaboration with CCNY and the Poetry outreach center they will be working with the 1<sup>st</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders.
  3. Piano enrichment starts this week. There are currently 41 students registered. Non-Y aftercare students will start tomorrow Wednesday, October 14<sup>th</sup> and Y aftercare students will start on Thursday, October 16<sup>th</sup>. Chess enrichment starts Friday, October 16<sup>th</sup> and there are 43 participants. Chess is part of the curriculum for K-1 grades.
  4. Middle School updates:
    - a) Theatre - \$3500 in the PTA budget. We are in collaboration with The Shakespeare in School Organization and they argued on or behalf for more robust funding and it was a success. They have doubled our funding.
    - b) Debate – the first debate of this school year will begin October 24<sup>th</sup>.
    - c) Basketball – we're working to get a league.

5. Parent Question: Are there still chess spots? Answer: There are still spots for chess, register quickly. What is the benefit of taking Chess enrichment when my child receives it in curriculum? Answer: The student would be receiving more opportunity to learn and participate.

B. Fundraising Committee –

1. Catherine Levine and Adrienne said that there are two more days for TAG wear sales for the first order of sweatshirts. Make the order by Thursday for delivery in the beginning of November. Sweet Harvest bake sale will be October 30th, there will be juice, apples, candy apples, popcorn, etc. Send the children with a bit of money, and donations are welcome. Career Day for grades K-2 will be October 30th also. iPledge – It is the direct appeal to parents. It funds our programs for the following year. There will be a raffle and prize. Info will be going out, and it is the biggest fundraising event of the year, look out for emails and flyers. Ms. Bruno said for parents to let her know if they are not receiving her emails.

C. Membership Committee –

1. Kasha Cacy, Co-Chair, has been working diligently on getting class parents. There are two training sessions for class parents: October 21<sup>st</sup> at 8am and also October 23<sup>rd</sup> at 5pm. The next meeting will be on October 23<sup>rd</sup> at 8 am in the library.
2. They are planning Coffee & Tea with Ms. C, a ski trip and spring trip will be planned as well. Co-Chair urges parents to volunteer at any of the events coming up. Help is always needed and welcomed.

D. Budget Report –

1. Ms. Pamela Simon, Chair, said that at last month's PTA meeting we approved revisions. The Budget Committee's role is to assess and get feedback. The first Budget Committee meeting of the school year will be Friday, November 6th at 6pm in the library. The approved budget is on the PTA website. The password is scholarparent (no space).

E. Communications –

1. Ms. Pamela Simon, Chair, requests for someone to please step forward to take over Communications. There is plenty of room for improvement and ideas to share to improve our modes of communications for parents. The first meeting of the school year will be Thursday, October 29th. Parents want to improve the website and funnel information more efficiently.

## V. Treasurer's Report

- A. Rebecca Yoftahie and John Johnson explained increases in income. Checks trickled in from corporate matching. Recurrent payments through iPledge, and big change in TAG wear income. TAG wear has brought in almost \$6,000 minus expenses, \$3,000 profit.
- B. Rebecca Yoftahie, Co-Treasurer, gives up to date budget to the parents and explains these funds. (Ms. Yoftahie hands out a treasurer's report; it can be found in the Secretary binder).

## VI. Principal's Report

- A. Jennifer Cosme, Interim Assistant Principal, gives the report. She thanked parents for their support on Field Day.
- B. November 5th will be the Parent-Teacher conferences. The school day is a half-day which will end at 11:05am. There will be two sessions, day and evening. Sign-up will be on the TAG website, which is currently under construction. This year the format of the Parent-Teacher conferences will be different. As per the new initiative from the Chancellor and the district, we are encouraging parents to bring their children with them to have the children be more accountable for their performance in class. Students will be prepared to speak about their academics and what their next steps will be for their progress.
- C. October is Breast Cancer month. On Wednesday, October 14<sup>th</sup>, the children can dress down and wear pink to show their support. Students can also donate \$1.00 with 100% of the proceeds going to cancer research.

## VII. Question and Answer

- A. Parents are concerned about insufficient time for lunch. A: Ms. Cosme, I/A, said lower grades are sent first, 11:15 am, sometimes earlier and they are given approximately 25 minutes to eat. Then they are lined up and have about 20-25 minutes for recess. This time includes buying lunch, lining up, sitting and eating. Parents remain concerned about recess time. Ms. Cosme states she will bring it to the attention of Principal Cesar and share with her the concerns of parents.
- B. Third grade parent asks who does Fundraising support, TAG or PTA? A: Ms. Edmundson, Co-President, said funds generated through TAG administration are allocated to areas of need through TAG administration. Funds generated through the PTA are allocated to areas of need as determined from the PTA. We feed funds toward TA, lockers, Physical Education assistant, etc.
- C. Parent asked how is the money allocated by the school administration? A: Ms. Cosme said that financial operations are covered under Vice Principal, Mr. Dascal, and she will touch base with him.
- D. Parent: Kathy Powell Manning asked Ms. Cosme if Jupiter is coming back. A wonderful app, because at the end of the week you would see what is going on with your child. A: Ms. Cosme confirms it is in practice. Teachers are now inputting all of their data. She explained that it is an online grading system giving full access to how your child is doing, including data from the cluster teachers. If you need your username and password, please contact Ms. Bruno.
- E. Parent: Catherine Levine asked about Spanish class and expresses her concern that her child is not showing progress in the language. A: Ms. Cosme said that a schedule specialist came in over the summer to better our schedule. The thought behind it is that the first half of the year some classes have it more frequently, then they swap. Ms. Cosme confirms it is a full year of Spanish, but it is condensed. Instead of once a week, they meet with Ms. Castaldi twice a week. Ms. Cosme confirms it is particularly scheduled to be balanced for every student. It is a pilot program at this time.
- F. Follow-up question from parent of how this change in schedule gets communicated to parents. Ms. Cosme said that they are experimenting, seeing how it's going before we present it. However, thank you for the suggestion and yes we will look into communicating with our parents the changes.
- G. Why is language not a part of lower grade curriculum? A: 8th graders have a language proficiency program. Serving grades 3 – 8 is what our funds can support right now. Co-President, Mr. Raghunath, said the PTA funded K-2. We didn't have anyone to man it or lead it. Parent involvement would help. Kathy Powell-Manning said we had the money but the budget changed so we needed to reallocate. We need space, we need for administration to allow it and we need administration to schedule those classes in curriculum.
- H. Parent Catherine Levine asked who is evaluating the Spanish program, as 40 minutes a week is not enough for her child to get anything out of it. A: Ms. Cosme agreed that we need more time. Regarding scheduling, other mandatory classes are required. The condensing of the schedule, the pilot program, is part of the experiment. The evaluation is Administration reviews and State test in language proficiency.
- I. Parent Pamela Simon asked if TAG usually performs well and Ms. Cosme said yes.
- J. Parent John Johnson mentions financial training is sending emails about District 4 participation. Co-President, Anand Raghunath, responded regarding the Citywide District Council and the President's Council. We do have a parent on the council. We need to delegate someone to go to the meetings.
- K. Co-Presidents, Anand and Trina, said that Wednesday, October 14th there will be interviews for a TA for 1st grade and for a PEP Physical Education assistant. Lockers for middle schoolers will be installed tomorrow at 2:30 pm.
- L. Parent was concerned about a student going to the bathroom by himself in a public area on Wednesday during

gym. Co-President, Trina confirmed we are funding and Assistant PEP Teacher. Ms. Cosme also follows up with the parent and says she will speak to her after the meeting.

M. Parent asked about using the online form for the lunch program. Ms. Edmundson, Co-President, said to follow-up with Ms. Bruno

**VIII. Adjournment –**

A. Trina Edmundson, Co-President, motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 pm. Co-President, Anand Rhaghunath, seconded the motion.

**Minutes submitted by:**

Sara Coates, TAG PTA Co-Secretary

**Minutes approved by:**

Trina Edmundson, TAG PTA Co-President