



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

December 8, 2015

MINUTES FOR TAG PTA MEETING

Meeting Date: Tuesday, December 8, 2015

Meeting Time: 8:15 AM – 9:15 AM

Meeting Location: TAG Library

- I. Call to Order.** Co-President Anand Raghunath calls meeting to order at 8:21 am.
- II. Reading and approval of minutes.** John Johnson makes a motion to approve the last meeting's minutes, and Pamela Simon seconds. Minutes are approved.
- III. SLT Report** – Anand says that the meetings are always open to the public and the next meeting is the following day at 6:00 pm.
- IV. Committee Reports**
 - A. Budget** – Pamela Simon said that the Budget Committee is seeing what to put out for next year. They are working on a budget, seeing what is good and what needs to be changed. The first meeting will be the first week of January. Parents can go onto the website and type scholarparent (no space) for access.
 - B. Communications** – Pam said they are still looking for a Chair or Co-Chair, as someone who would be a liaison to parents, to keep them informed. The first meeting will be later in the month.
 - C. Membership** – Kasha Casey said that Cooking Night for the older kids was great. The cooking school is in Queens, and another one scheduled for the little kids is full, so they may add another one later in the year. Wednesday will be Family Night at the Book Fair and it will be a pot luck. It was done last year and the kids and parents loved it. Another ski trip is expected to be in Late January; info will go out shortly.
 - D. Fundraising** – Adrienne Shulte spoke regarding iPledge, and said that a lot of info went out, over \$69,000 was pledged in November with 30% participation rate. The goal is \$85,000, we're still receiving pledges and continuing to promote iPledge. Starting today the Book Fair is opening, and then Wednesday and Thursday. Something new will be Teacher Wishlists. Kasha asked how that is being communicated, and the answer was while parents are browsing for books the information will be given out. Candy grams – the forms went out and the assembly of the candy grams started the day before. The distribution date is December 22nd. Dine Out event – they have a restaurant planned but it has not yet been confirmed. Annual Auction – there will be a meeting today regarding the auction.
 - E. Enrichment** - Cathy Powell Manning said that the past year was mainly idea generation, and a substantial amount of funding went into Enrichment. Now it's about implementation. The survey results from Field Day will go out soon. In the first grade, a poet from CCNY has been with Ms. Liu and Ms. Joffrey's classroom, and for the first time for the 6th grade as well. On Friday, May 13th, selected poets from school will present at Aaron Davis Hall. Piano – the fall/winter session ends in February and the new session begins in March, with flyers expected to go out. Chess – in addition to in-curriculum and after school, we have a chess club led by the TAG parent of a national champ. There will be a tournament on January 9th and 10th at the Marriott. On Friday, December 18th, chess will have their first Pizza Night from 5:30 – 7:00 pm for anyone, even those

not in chess. Basketball – launched last Thursday. Patricia Sedah has done very much. We're now part of the Asphalt Green Boys Basketball Team. The new gym assistant is our new coach. Debate – the first public forum debate will be this Saturday. They are debating the merits of state testing. John Johnson asked how many kids are in basketball and debate, Cathy answered that they have a little over 20. She asked if anyone in the area knows of an additional space the kids can practice, to let them know. Anand said we have one day a week for practice, we need two.

Trina said that the Chancellor's meeting is actually the following day, we can stay in the library for this meeting.

- F. **Treasurer's Report** – given by John Johnson. Revenues were up, primarily through iPledge. Expenses are up, primarily for teachers assistants and middle school lockers. Total funds minus reserve is \$109,000. Total funds as of today, with the PayPal balance, is \$138,919.59.

Y Aftercare Director Andrea Scott – She spoke and said she sent an email with Ms. Bruno, she has slots available for kindergarten and 1st grade. We're working on it for 2nd through 5th, and there are middle school slots for 6th through 8th. Cathy said regarding her cohort who leads the middle school Y, Family Science Night will be here on December 16th if people are interested. There will be neuroscientists from Mt. Sinai.

Q & A - Trina said that we'll do a Q&A while we're waiting for Principal Cesar to arrive. Q: Re robotics program, the parent through there was an issue with not having someone to teach it. A: Trina thought that they were actually receiving robotics. They had a meeting with the Borough President yesterday. Cathy said we have a lot of robotics sets which aren't being used. This is one of the grants Catherine Martinez is working on. Trina said that we do have teachers on staff trained to teach robotics. Principal Cesar arrived and said that Mr. Aibinder is more of a coding teacher than a robotics teacher, and she will invite him to speak to address those concerns. There is a google competition for the 8th graders so we started a coding after school program for middle-schoolers. Trina said he's trained to teach robotics, and Principal Cesar responded that he can, he's a better coding teacher than robotics. He explained that coding is better for the children's future than robotics. We can only have technology for everyone once a week, it's 16 classes and they have to have it from kindergarten on, they must have it because it's so important. In terms of paying for another teacher, that would cost, but in terms of a space, we have that. But we only have from 8:05 to 2:25 every day. If something comes in, some must go out. Pamela Simon asked if it is required as with art, they have it for the full year or could it rotate? Principal Cesar replied that is what they are figuring out.

- V. **Principal's Report:** The lockers are working out, several students are still with their bags and the bags are blocking the way, we've asked them to get string bags – they can take out the books they need as needed, and she's wondering if we could sell the bags for \$1 or \$2. Vice Principal Dascal spoke regarding the only time we could get the third grade awards ceremony. Principal Cesar said that after the ceremony you're welcome to go to the classroom and ask general questions. In response to a new parent asking about the awards ceremony criteria, Principal Cesar said that children stand up for core subjects, attendance, homework, citizenship. For middle school students who achieve 90 and above for core subjects they come up and receive a pin. Mr. Dascal said the K – 5 students who achieve 4's in core subjects get a pin as well. Mr. Dascal spoke regarding entry proceedings. School starts at 8:05, middle school kids need to get to their lockers beforehand. We've explained to them that if they stop and get to class at 8:10, technically you're late, and you must get here earlier. We don't have outside lineup for 6-8, they need to get here 10 minutes to 8 and come in. When it's 40 degrees or below they can come in earlier. Middle schoolers 7:45 or later come in the 3rd Avenue entrance. There are four times they can get to their lockers during the day but not between classes because they only have two minutes between classes. Principal Cesar said that letters are going out to parents

of 7th graders regarding a new vaccination. Ms. Cosme is officially an Assistant Principal in the school. There was a question regarding the winter concert. The response was that the 3rd graders are performing under the direction of Ms. Revi this Friday at 6 pm and the 7th and 8th graders are performing under the direction of Mr. Faulkner, featuring Latin Jazz and regular band.

Principal Cesar said that a 7th grader's family was burned out of their home in a recent fire, they're staying with a friend and we are taking donations and giving them uniforms and supplies.

- G. **Grant Committee** – Catherine Martinez said that we have a grant due on December 12th to recognize a science teacher, and we're going for a google grant. She is talking to Mr. Aibinder regarding a simple coding grant due in January. We received \$700 last year through a Louis Armstrong Foundation grant, and we can take students to their museum in Queens. A parent is taking the lead on the Small Grant Didario Foundation, and there is a Hyde and Watson music grant due in February. The big grants we're going for are the city grants. We've received about \$350,000 over the last two years. We want to upgrade our technology with new smartboards and such, and to buy more laptops. We're also trying to advocate for our parks. Yesterday at the meeting they said to meet with Community Board 11. We are looking into other capital renovations like the library, an HVAC system for the auditorium. We're guessing it would be around a quarter of a million dollars for the renovation. The next meeting is December 22nd in the morning.

VI. **Adjournment** - 9:15 am Trina moves to adjourn. Travis Specht seconds. Meeting adjourned.

Minutes submitted by:

Laura Lampert, TAG PTA Co-Secretary

Minutes approved by:

Trina Edmundson, TAG PTA Co-President