



**Talented & Gifted School For Young Scholars
Parent Teacher Association**

Kathy Fernando	Pamela Simon	Johnae Ferguson	Laura Lampert
Denada Ramnishta	Mark Levin	James Vasile	Rasheedah Harris
Co-Presidents	Co-Vice Presidents	Co-Treasurers	Co-Secretaries

PTA Meeting Minutes – Tuesday, March 19, 2019

I. Welcome & Call to Order

- A. PTA Co-President, Kathy Fernando, called to order the TAG PTA meeting on Tuesday, March 19, at 6:05 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.
- C. Pam Simon gave an update on the Nominating Committee. All positions on the Executive Board are up; President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary. Please let Kathy and Pam know if you are interested to be on the Nominating Committee. Three people are needed; however, those on the Nominating Committee cannot be nominated or elected to office.

II. Reading and Approval of the Minutes

- A. Hard copies of the February PTA meeting minutes were distributed. Johnae Ferguson made a motion to approve the February minutes; Brandee Williams seconds. Minutes approved.

III. SLT Report –

- A. Pam Simon said they talked about future planning for the CEP. They are waiting for the template which comes from the DOE. They discuss the socio-emotional goals we want to set, ways to build community. They talked about the newly elected Student Administration which is new this year.
- B. Assistant Principal Mr. Dascal found two 7th graders from Student Council; they came to a few meetings. AP Dascal said one of the most important issues to the Student Administration is that they really want PTA support for events that middle school is interested in, thus Admin wants to tailor events to what they'd like. He said hearing this was a real eye-opener.
- C. Mr. Dascal said Principal Cesar sends her regards; she couldn't be in attendance this evening. He said if you need to schedule more time with a teacher than you had at the Parent Teacher Conference, sign up for a Tuesday meeting on the website. State tests are coming up.
- D. Pam said the next SLT meeting is on the school and PTA's calendar on the websites.

IV. Budget Committee –

- A. Yuko and Sharayfah said the next meeting is Thursday at 8:15 am in the library. If you have any ideas for next year's budget, please attend. Kathy explained that Budget is very key; attend and see how funds are spent.
- B. Yuko and Sharayfah said the 2018/19 budget is \$304,000. They predict \$35,000 will be unspent; \$33,000 of that is from late start of TA's. \$105,000 thus far from iPledge. \$54,000 from the Gala, Talent Show, both of which are major revenue bringers plus smaller revenue from other fundraisers. They said we need to raise \$110,000 more from iPledge. There is a call to action or we can't have all of our programs.
- C. A parent asked if the shortfall might be a result of the tax status issue, and Kathy said yes, and parents are waiting so they can utilize corporate matching. Kathy checked the IRS database yesterday. Our

501(3)(c) non-profit tax status hasn't been reinstated yet; we don't have an estimate of when it will go through, and we filed the paperwork in September 2018.

D. A parent asked when the decisions on cutting programs will be made, what is the deadline? Kathy said we need an approved budget by June 18th.

V. Treasurer's Report –

A. Johnae said she will have the report tomorrow. There are approximately 10 more items which need to be ready; the Treasurer's Report will be on the website. Approximately \$200,000 was spent from July 2018 through February 2019. We are far from the \$204,000 we had this time last year. Email tagscholarspta.org with questions/suggestions.

B. Pam explained at as an Executive Board member she can say that Johnae has done a lot of work but we've run into issues with the co-VP which has been going on. She said we made a motion to remove him from the Board and are looking to make a formal review committee which will be presented at the next meeting and we can see about electing a new co-VP to run with Johnae. Pam will be on the review committee and said to please see her by the end of the meeting if interested. We want as many parents on as possible to make a fair process. Kathy added that we didn't do this lightly. It's an important position; overseeing filings, financial reports need to be submitted. Parents who don't think he should be removed should join the committee also.

VI. Special Guest Presentation: Parent Focused Group

A. Courtney Hillesheim, founder of Parent Focus Consulting explain how they bridge the gap between support to kids at school and at home. She said it seems there is no solid space to give our kids the foundation they need, so that is what she is trying to do. She is a high school English ESL Special Education teacher. Parents sit, learn strategies, learn how to help their child be a successful, self-motivated student.

VII. Committee Reports –

A. Audit Committee –

1. Brandee Williams said they are hoping to have the Audit completed soon.

B. Grants –

1. Participatory Budgeting – Makiko explained the proposals go to the City Council, become ballot items, and get voted on. A local delegate got TAG on the ballot for hydroponics; small systems / units, sizes, colors, shapes. Voting is from March 30th to April 7th; to vote you must be at least 11 years old and live in District 4. She said once we have sites for online and physical voting we will get flyers out. Principal Cesar agreed to let middle school students vote on one day, and will speak to Esperanza regarding their students voting as well. Makiko asked for those who have good ideas on how we can advertise this, to please share.

C. Enrichment Committee –

1. Sheri Williams said Spring Registration is open until Friday, March 22 at 5pm.

2. Field Day will be May 7 – 9th and volunteers are needed. May 7th will be for grades K – 2. May 8th will be for grades 3 – 6. May 9th will be for grades 7 - 8. Our rain dates are the 13th, 20th and 21st.

3. E3Sports is our recess support vendor, and we discovered they are better utilized indoors than outdoors; we will not be continuing with them.

4. In-curriculum Chess – For grades 2 – 7. We are looking at the 8 weeks after spring break.

5. We are looking to do CPR & AED training.

6. Debate Team – 4 of our students (8th graders) were finalists and semi-finalists recently and took home trophies. 5th graders are debating next weekend in Queens. There are thoughts of adding 4th graders next year. April 5th is the Debate Team Tournament and is open to all parents and scholars, 4:30 – 7:00 pm in the auditorium.
7. The next Enrichment meeting is March 27th at 8:15 am.
8. Olga asked about reimbursement of STEM materials. Kathy responded that we have in our approved budget a line item for STEM. Some parents wanted a STEM program. Some parents wanted it at Admin's discretion, so we had Principal Cesar give an idea on supplies and then we'd go over them. STEAM, in which art is included, in the \$10,000 and STEM was approved, not STEAM. Trina Edmundson said parents should have an idea of what they're voting on; a visual of what parents are paying for. A visual, a piece of paper with the breakdown. Kathy said Principal Cesar was going to explain it tonight but couldn't be here. Olga said continuing to postpone the projects the teachers planned is not good. Rasheedah said it's incorrect; teachers have already purchased the supplies - this is a vote to reimburse.
9. Swimming – Kathy said the Dwight school is no longer able to offer the swimming. Johnae said there's a school in East Harlem who offers it and it is free; she will get the information to Sheri regarding TAG's participation.
10. Parent Coordinator Daniel Johnson introduces Ms. Terzi and Ms. Arabia, who are 1st grade teachers. They thank the PTA for their support. Mr. Johnson said there's a 1st grade play coming up. The teachers said the children wrote it, designed the costumes and props.

D. Family Engagement Committee –

1. Trina Edmundson said the Parks Department added a fence at the playground in front of the school. Her co-VP Kate has been working extensively on this. Principal Cesar has 1 volunteer and needs 4 more for a pilot test of the fence from March 25 – March 29th, for 11:00 am – 11:30. Please email Family Engagement. An email will be going out about this. Rasheedah added that the playground is fenced in with the exception of the ramp. For the pilot we need help to usher and manage the children and the public. Eric Crump said we've had an ad-hoc committee working on this for years; Rasheedah said Kate Chechak should get the biggest applause.
2. There was a Kindergarten mixer, apple picking, iPlay, ski trip. In May we're focusing on Teacher Appreciation Week, May 6 – 10. Every day will have a theme. Come and show teachers support. We're clearing the events with Principal Cesar first, like a Teacher's Night Out, a sip & paint, dinner, music. We'll need donations; we have a small budget.
3. Kalahari indoor water park trip has been rescheduled to June 22. It is \$295.65 per room, for 4 people in each room and kids 3 and under are free.

E. Communications Committee -

1. Pam said the next General PTA meeting will have an expedited election to officially elect Marco Tomaschett whoever else is interested. The next Communications Committee meeting will be April 10 at 8:15 am. They will be discussing website updates, parent database, etc..

F. Fundraising Committee –

1. Talent Show May 17 - Ami said auditions will mostly be online. They will try to have one in-person audition. Auditions must be submitted by April 5. They are getting dates for the dress rehearsal. They need volunteers to help with food, organizing. Olga said Mr. Johnson will be helping us organize. There will be 3 rehearsal dates which they are still finalizing with Principal Cesar, and

they will likely be the 3 Wednesdays before the show. Please let them know if your child needs a live audition and they'll get a group of judges together.

2. TAG Gala, May 4 – You can now buy tickets online. Prices will increase April 1st. You can also sponsor a teacher or an administrator to attend. If you have any items to donate, please do so as soon as possible. There are not as many contributions this year. Good sellers are children's classes, summer camps, certificates, gift baskets.

We may have to consider prioritizing events for next year in terms of how much financial support we receive.

Please let us know if you are waiting on the pending tax status or corporate matching.

Johnae said today she went to a meeting re non-profits, and much of the waiting for tax status may not happen; there are services and resources we can utilize, specifically with the auction.

Valerie said in January we spoke of a letter going out regarding how much money was brought in by class / grade. Olga said Communications VP; wasn't able to send and Marco is helping and is working on preparing the letter and we're expecting it to go out this week.

Pam suggests Communications sends out emails to the parents; Mr. Johnson could possibly help with that information. Mr. Johnson said he would have to clear it with Principal Cesar, but he has the capability. Johnae suggested looking at Google analytics to see the clicks on our website; if parents are going there and not donating we need to look at that as well.

Johnae said some parents have said they're not engaged with by Fundraising. Olga responded that it would be a job for Communications to engage with the parents.

Olga said there is \$6,122 in expenses approved, the vendor is secured, and we're asking for an additional amount of \$972. Parents would have to vote and approve. Pam asks if Lorenz Dance is the dance group, and Olga says we have several possibilities. Pam said they've performed for us at the Gala for free. Olga said we're not sure if they will so we're looking at other options. Olga said they based the \$972 on last year. Once we estimated expenses such as number of people, etc., we estimated \$972 extra. Pam said Fundraising has had three other events - \$100 iPledge, \$600 Holiday Grams, \$183 Talent Show, so you'd really only need \$477; where did the number come from, and you should be working at the \$7500 budget and working back from that. Olga said the \$6122 was voted and approved by parents at a previous meeting. Pam asked if Olga was saying she just needs to re-allocate from own budget, correct? Olga said it depends where you're starting from; if you're starting from \$7500 – Pam said that is Olga's budget; the money approved plus re-allocating within your own budget. Olga said we are low in funding that we've raised this year. Pam said it's more prudent to say we have what we need, let's rethink the things we want. Sharayfah said we have to pass out the form. Pam said the PTA needs to establish a budget process, which we did. Olga said she's trying to make sure we have a successful year. Sharayfah said we already voted on a process, we need to follow that process. Olga said we don't have any more money; this is our biggest event. Trina asked where the accountability is if we have a budget and go over our budget? Olga said that Family Engagement isn't as important to the school. Trina asked Olga if she (Trina) could try to get Lorenz to donate their performers, especially as they requested to use our auditorium for one of their events. Olga responded that we are the Fundraising co-'s and are trying to organize the best way possible. Trina said yes but she (Trina) has a relationship with them and negotiating skills.

Kathy said we have two viable options right now, let's move on.

VIII. Principal's Report

A. Mr. Johnson gives the report on behalf of Principal Cesar.

1. Parent-Teacher Conference – over 400 parents attended. The parent survey went home; please complete it online or mail it in. Students in grades 6 – 8 are doing an environmental survey at school this week.
2. Community Consortium at the Boys Club this Thursday morning, from 9 am – 12 noon. (East 111th St., between 1st and 2nd Avenues). He has to RSVP so please let him know if you are planning to attend.
3. 3rd Grade Parent Workshop to discuss the State test, this Friday at 8:15 am.
4. Internet Safety Workshop with Ms. Erica next Thursday, March 28th at 8:15 am.
5. Makiko said she was speaking as a parent – TAG 2nd grade and 7th grade siblings' father has Stage 4 lung cancer and need financial support. There is a GoFundMe account; you can google ALAM Family and find the link. As of today \$3,500 was raised, we need to continue to please support.

IX. Fundraising Committee (continued)

Kathy picked up at the 3rd option for the Gala. Yuko said in the by-laws it shows an emergency process without filling out the form. We vote and it needs 2/3 of the vote. Olga said if we don't have support from parents, this will be a failed event. Pam asked if we don't vote, then what? Johnae told Olga that she stated Family Engagement is not as important but you're asking for help. Brandee Williams asked regarding support for fundraising, are we going to stick with the protocol for this process? We'll continue to support Fundraising and maybe we need to sit down and discuss. Olga said they don't feel supported this year.

VOTE: Sharayfah Proposed a vote on taking \$500 from the 1st Grade TA lines to move to Fundraising. 7 vote in favor. 11 vote against. 3 abstain. The motion does not carry. The funds will not be moved.

X. SHSAT – Eric Crump said another round of the SHSAT was done. At Stuyvesant, 895 students were accepted, only 7 are black. It doesn't seem like the Assembly and Senate are going to make a move on this. New York State Senator John Liu is scheduled to speak with this Friday, 10 am, at 250 Broadway.

XI. Adjournment

7:47 pm – Kathy Fernando 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: