

PS 87 PARENTS ASSOCIATION General BOARD MEETING

September 18, 2017
8:30AM

MINUTES

Attendance:

Board Members: Jackie Dolson-Shewchuk, Debby Saito, Rebecca Solano, Doug Creps, Shari Greenspan, Gillian Mollod, Megan Hoffman, Lisa Procopio, Isabel Vaz Pires, Dara Cremin, Stacy Cousino, Samantha Benowitz

Guests: Monica Berry, Wilson Cano

Quorum was met

Called to order by Jackie Dolson-Shewchuk, Debby Saito

Principal's Report

Monica reported an amazingly smooth start to the school year. There was a significantly smaller student population enrolled at the beginning of the school year than anticipated for most grades. An exception was 2nd grade, where another class was added. However, the student population will continue to fluctuate throughout the school year, as usual.

The Kindergarten grade has been adjusting to school very well, and the outside line-up in the Pre-K yard will start September 19. The timing varies from year to year, and this year's class has been doing very well adjusting to school.

We now have a wheelchair accessible bathroom (for students only) located on the Basement floor, per DOE mandate.

There have been a number of staff changes, including "new" teachers (most "new" teachers were previously student teachers at P.S. 87) and movement of teachers to new grades.

There are various Middle School events for our upper-classmen, so be on the look-out for further emails from Jacqueline Morrison. The next event will be the Annual Middle School Principals' Forum is on September 27th, from 6-8pm at PS/IS 76 (220 West 121st Street). There will also be a Middle School Fair on October 10th at 5:30-7:30pm at PS242 (134 West 122nd Street)

Q: Where is drop-off for 1st through 5th grade?

A: They can enter through either the front door on 78th or the Big Yard on 77th.

Q: Will PS 87 be hiring a new computer teacher?

A: The 3rd through 5th grade currently have a cluster teacher teaching computer literacy in computer lab, focusing on subjects related to internet safety and following the common sense media curriculum. A full time teacher would be require additional budget.

Q: Is foreign language taught in school?

A: Dual language classes are the only ones with a foreign language component. Chorus (1st and 2nd grades) will incorporate Spanish songs and culture.

Q: How did Primary Day (Sept 12th) go?

A: Very well. We had extra staff in place to monitor the hallways. Students ate a picnic-style lunch in the Big Yard and enjoyed the extra time outside.

Q: What are the 4 tenets of PS 87?

A: Be Kind; Be Wise; Be Honest and Be Brave. There is also a 'Book of the Month' to highlight these tenets. The book is the same for all grades, though the supplemental classroom discussions and activities are grade-level appropriate. Monica will announce the book in BPN and hold an assembly to kick-off the program.

Q: What does lunchtime look like for kindergarteners?

A: There are assistants and other adults directing and helping the kids to unpack lunch. However, ask that lunch from home is easy to open. For those students having school lunch, they are called up by table to take a full plate of food and helpings at the salad bar.

Q: Where can I find the lunch menu?

A: It is on the PS 87 website – the front page under "Lunch Menu". It is updated each month.

Q: Can a student that has eaten their home lunch also get a school lunch?

A: We do not turn away any hungry child.

Q: How long do students have to have to eat lunch?

A: 22 minutes

Technology Team

Gillian is looking for volunteers to support the maintenance of the PS 87 website. Please contact Gillian if you would like to help.

Fundraising Update

Back to School Breakfast and Volunteer Fair to be held on Wednesday, September 20th from 8:30 am - 10:30 am in the PS 87 Auditorium, for parents.

Harvest Festival will be held on Saturday, October 21 from 2-6pm. To make it a success, we will need parent involvement, including marketing (class parent to send emails), volunteers for set-up on Friday (Haunted House, Yucky Room, decorations) and Saturday (Activities, clean up etc.). While PS 87 does not allow students to wear costumes on Halloween in school, they can wear them to Harvest Fest.

There is a bin in the lobby to donate old Halloween costumes (will be there until Harvest Fest).

Other Reminders:

- Modell's – mention PS 87 for a discount and 5% goes back to the school
- Fairway – use the Community Partners card (can get from Officer Ayala) and 4% goes back to school.
- Using the PS 87 link to Amazon and 10% goes back to the school
- White Gold Butchers will be open at 8:00am for coffee & breakfast for PS87 families. Additionally they will have "lunch boxes" for sale. Ongoing fundraising partnerships are in the works.

Co-President's Report

Thank you to all new and vintage parents for coming to the meeting and being part of our school family. Thank you to Lainie and Alex to a wonderful International Dinner Dance on Friday.

The co-president position is a 2 year term and this will be Jackie and Debby's last year. We are looking for individuals interested in the position for next year to job shadow this year.

Class Parents are vital to our school. In the role, the parent(s) will organize the class parties and cascade communications to other parents in the class. At least one class parent or a designee should attend each PA General Meeting.

In addition to the Back to School Breakfast and Volunteer Fair, parents can also submit a volunteer application on the PS 87 website. For example, we ask vintage families to sign-up as a welcoming family to new families joining PS 87. This can be a simple phone connection or a play-date.

Given the diversity we have in our school, we have established a new International Network to connect families. Please sign up to help support families new to the school as well as the country. Our ESL teacher Allison Hawke is also helping us get started.

Kids on the Run:

- Girls on the Run – this is a social-emotional program for 3-5th grade girls (including any student that identifies as a girl). There are 2 running teams coached by volunteers and parents. Sign-up ended today and training starts next Monday.
- Boys on the Run – this is an equivalent program to Girls on the Run, but cannot be activated until we have the full involvement of a teacher (this cannot be solely run by parents due to liability and insurance risks). We are looking into the NYRR Mighty Milers program for support and would include boys (including any student that identifies as a boy) for all school ages.

Reminders:

- All meetings (PA General, PA Executive, SLT – Student Leadership Team) are open to all parents.
- The PA General meetings are primarily scheduled for Friday mornings. However, the next PA General meeting is scheduled for Oct 12th at 6:30pm and will have babysitting for school aged children. The PA Executive meetings are primarily scheduled for evenings and will have babysitting for school aged children. SLT meeting do not have babysitting.
- The PA Executive meetings are held in the Library and PA General Meetings are held in the Cafeteria.
- See the calendar on the school website for the meetings planned for this school year. You can sync the calendar to your personal calendar. There were a few people having trouble with the sync and new instructions will be sent out.

At the next PA General meeting (Oct 12th) will include a special election for the open positions of Administration VP and SLT Parent member.

Our crossing guard at 77th and Amsterdam was relocated to another school. We will initiate an effort to contact the local precinct and request a new crossing guard, or get back our former crossing guard.

Treasurer's Report

Please contact the Treasurer team if you have any questions on the PA budget using pa-treasurer@ps87.info. As a reminder, the PA Executive meeting is where new budget items are discussed and items are voted on during the PA General meeting.

The budget as of August 31, 2017 was included as an attachment. We currently have a deficit however that is typical and we generally break even by the end of the year. Revenue is primarily generated through family giving and the Auction, as well as grants. Harvest Festival will be our first incoming producing event of the school year. Our biggest payment was made in July and additional payments are made throughout the year.

Today, the following budget amendments were voted on and approved:

- Wellness (new chef)
- Kindergarten Social

- New carpets for the classrooms (higher quality carpets that will not need to be replaced annually)

Family Giving

Many of the expenses for our school are not covered by the DOE. For example, the library, assistants in kindergarten and 1st grade, computer, Boost Up literacy and math program, the 4th grade trip to Philadelphia, Lice checks and other enrichment classes (Dance, Chess, NDI, etc.) If we had to rely only on city funding our school would look very different. Your funds truly help shape our school.

This year we have changed the suggested donation to \$960 to provide these programs for our school. We now have monthly giving program where you can opt in and set up regular payments of \$80 per month. Payments can be made via the website or a check can be submitted in the lock-box in the front office. Be sure to ask whether your company supports corporate matching for school donations.

Additional

Myra Lotto spoke regarding her concerns on the water quality at the school. She questioned the testing protocols performed by the DOE last year and the accuracy of the results. She has requested that the Chancellor re-test the water, test more frequently and provide bottled water for the students.

Debby Saito cited another PS 87 parent, who is an environmental specialist, who attested to the water quality at the school and reassurance that all active faucets in the school meet or exceed the standards. In addition, as bottled water is not regulated it can often contain increased levels of lead.

There were several questions regarding students using water bottles in school, as well as suggestions to “flush” the water for 30 seconds prior to use.

Other Reminders

- This year's Auction is scheduled for April 21st and will be held at Rodeph Sholom (same as last year)
- Dual Language Committee meets the third Tuesday of each month
- Dual Language Movie Night will be held by Oct 27th at 6:30pm and will benefit victims of the recent hurricanes (will be first come, first serve)

Meeting Adjourned at 9:57am.