

Museum Alliance for Science and Technology
P.S. 154 PTA - General Membership Meeting
Tuesday January 12, 2010, 6:30pm
Multi Media Room

Welcome

PTA President, Deb Capone opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and then encouraging parents to bring in their Box Tops shop One Cause and Amazon to benefit the school with “free money.” Deb announced that the Vice President of publicity resigned and that the position will remain open for the rest of the school year. Deb also floated the idea of a “school night” fundraising event with the Staten Island Yankees. The school would make 25% of the ticket sales. The idea was positively received.

Upcoming Events

- The Read-a-thon is the next PTA fundraiser
- Cinco de Mayo coming up in May – Planning meeting is on January 21, 2010
- Art Crafts Fair
- Spring Carnival
- Spring Book Fair
- Theatre production
- Music Matters – January 21st - Jazz and Blues Jam and acoustic duo warm-up playing old time music
- Next Music Matters – May 14th – All school concert – Traditional Folk Haitian Band
- Movie Night – January 22nd – Back to the Future
- CEC Community Education Council Trainings – ask Dianna Plunkett if you are interested

Budget Update:

Diana Plunkett stepped in for the treasurer for tonight’s update. The budget is on track. The Grandparents campaign has raised \$6,000.00 so far. The Winter Festival has had excellent results netting almost \$9,000.00 and still waiting for some additional revenue.

501C3 Status

Deb updated us on the 501C3 application process. Preparation for the application has been taking some time. Brand Lander’s wife, Meg Barnette is an attorney and a PS 107 parent who worked on their 501C3 status and has volunteered with another parent/attorney from PS 321 to help us with our application. The application will take about 2 months to complete and then will take 6 months for approval. Grants can be applied for with status being applied retroactively. A grant researcher is currently doing research on the Grant Writing Committee. Substantial grants will be needed for sound proofing in the lunch room, the ground floor bathroom renovations, and in an ongoing way for arts related and enrichment related programming.

School Leadership Team (SLT) Committees

- The **Capital Projects Committee** has been focusing on:
 1. MMR redesign
 2. Bathrooms
 3. Basement Renovations
 4. Sound Proofing in lunch room

The **downstairs bathrooms** are beyond fixing and need major renovation. Deb is working on appealing the SCA’s decision to fix the downstairs bathroom and is working together with the school administration to get money from politicians to fund the work on the downstairs bathrooms. The plan is to hit up the City Council for

funding and involve the Department of Health. The other bathrooms in the school have flushers that are very difficult to operate. So far the school used discretionary money to replace the 1st floor flushers. The improvement is amazing. However, money is needed to replace the 2nd and 3rd floor flushers. The cost at this point is \$330.00 per flusher. Since last month, the PTA has found a competitor with a cheaper price. **Sound proofing** in the lunchroom: Originally, the lunchroom was a storage room for the school. The acoustics are very bad and cause people to scream in order to be heard. A sound engineer has been in to consult on this issue and has recommended the installation of acoustic panels to lessen the intensity of the sound reverberations in the lunchroom. The acoustic panels being recommended would be vertically installed. Sound proofing is expected to cost \$18,000.00. A concert event is being discussed in order to raise money for covering some of the costs. Perhaps the baseball game event proceeds could go towards sound proofing. It may also be possible to draw on some other PTA funds for sound proofing.

- **The Garden Committee**

This committee's chair is Marian Marinovich. The garden in the schoolyard is a 60 x 15 plot of land. The goal is to prepare 7 raised beds for curriculum based gardening. To start with, the hope is for 1 to 2 beds to be ready with organic soil for a groundbreaking ceremony for Earth Day. The committee is working on grants for funding.

- **Got Talent Committee**

Teachers have been asked about their interest in the program. A discussion ensued for follow up with teachers and parents who have talents they would like to share with the student body.

- **Caring School Community**

This community building program which includes the very successful buddy program that has been working wonderfully this year is also launching the "Book of the Month" program. Books will be chosen to highlight themes around character building with an effort to help all students work on the lessons from each of the books. The books will be read throughout the school. The next book chosen for its themes is Tacky the Penguin.

Educational Budget Cuts

Mr. Havlik discussed budget cuts. 1% of the overall budget has been cut (approx. \$40,000.00) which twice as much as was expected. Mr. Havlik expressed how he and Mr. Ortiz are trying to achieve minimal impact on the day to day operation of the school. This year Family Science Night will be cut. Another money saving measure will be to pull funds from the substitute per diem pot and cover teachers' absences by splitting classes amongst the other grade's teachers that day. They expect the cuts to continue into next year.

The meeting came to a close at approximately 7:30pm. The next PTA meeting will be Friday, February 12, 2010 at 9:00am. Respectfully submitted by Carolyn Altman