

PTA GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

March 14, 2018 at 9:45 AM

Meeting Open and Welcome Remarks

Meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance at 9:45 AM

Christina Walsh opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. She opened with a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the February meeting. Motion to approve Stephanie O'Hara and seconded by Sue Foran.

Teacher's Report

Mrs. Crimarco

- Older grades currently working on literary essays, they all just finished really cool books.
- 5th Grade just finished biographies
- They are all having fun with writing
- All are looking forward to spring and outdoor recess

Mrs. Landman

- Kindergarten loved Slime Time. It was really fun and you would be really impressed with the vocabulary and terms that they learned, for example - polymer from a Kindergartner
- They had a lot of fun making slime
- It is amazing to see the 5 & 6 year old students develop into the curriculum. They are working on non-fiction. Learning about the "table of contents"
- It is magical to get to watch them learn all these amazing things

Mrs. Crimarco pointed out that she has been teaching for a long time and there has been an amazing progression with students and their knowledge as they enter 4th grade. For example - knowing fiction vs. nonfiction, etc.

Mrs. Landman discussed an assignment for the Kindergartners that took place yesterday on "How to be a Principal". Kids answered with things like they make phone calls and go to college.

100th Day of School was great. Age progression photos were so fun and loved the posters and comments. "When I'm 100 years old..."

Principal's Report

Mrs. Dano

Code of Conduct

- Every year the district evaluates our "Code of Conduct" document. It outlines expected behavior of students, staff and visitors.
- It is a "living" document and needs to be revised based on changes - for example, there were no e-cigarettes included 5 years ago
- Parents can review document and language and suggest changes or edits
- Please send on comments or changes to Mrs. Dano or Dr. Fasano to be considered
- Same "Code of Conduct" for all buildings - elementary and secondary levels, addresses all
- Please email any comments

School Safety and Safety Drills

- Safety drills have changed - they include a lot of drills, bus drills, fire drills, shelter drills, lockdown drills, lockout drills. We do a lot of drills.
- Right now I think our world is very in tune with trying to keep our kids safe, I am talking about in schools.

- We are lucky in Massapequa that we have a security department, Don Flynn, Head of Security for the District. He is a retired police officer, he has a lot of training in this area when it comes to school safety. He meets with the district administrators and staff. He continually gets back to us within minutes when we have a question. He studies these tragic events and is able to give us advice or suggestions on how best to handle if something happens in our school.
- I cannot share the details of our security plans, those are confidential. Every staff member in our district is privy to that information. I can share with you that we constantly evaluate it.
- One thing that is a “hot” topic now is that we are telling kids to hide wherever they are, and that is where the subject of the bathrooms has come in. We had a staff meeting, it was pretty emotionally intense. We take our jobs VERY seriously. Our job is to protect your children and that is scary. We obviously do our best because we love your kids and we are responsible for them and sometimes there are questions that come up or “what ifs” - that we have not thought about. I have been doing this for 30 years and these are not questions that have come up from 30 years ago. These are questions I am asking the staff today and asking security today. So we are having conversations about telling children to hide wherever they are. In an elementary school sometimes that is the bathroom. Having to explain this to a Kindergarten child is very different than having to tell a 5th grade student. 5th Grade teachers shared and those kids asked a lot of questions in Kindergarten it is quite the opposite - happy go lucky, as it should be. So it’s really hard. Conversations have come up about where to hide in the bathroom, how to hide in the bathroom, do you stand on a toilet, do you not. Trying to explain it in a manner that is least scary to the kids. One of the conversations that come up amongst the administrators is that they have increased the number of staff members that are in the halls during a drill. In a real situation in our building, everyone, including all of you, need to hide and secure yourself. If we were ever in a real situation, they primary goal would be to hide and get out of site.
- During drills we have placed people near bathrooms so that can tell them what to do when in the bathrooms. Do not want to scare anyone, so I asked staff to do it with a smile on their face. Trying to teach them what to do if an adult is not there to help. It is much different telling a 12 year old vs. a 5 year old.
- The other night FF hosted the Central Council PTA. That is a meeting where all the heads of the PTA meet and Mrs. Iconis was there. One of the questions that came up was, one the parents that is responsible for different committees in different buildings wanted to know the plans. I cannot share the plans again, but need to be diligent. Look where you can hide, look for exits.
- We practice this and talk about it all the time, but can’t cover all the “what-ifs”
- Most drills you will hear a step-by-step plan from me or Mrs. Gerhard over the PA system. I would have time to give you information. If there is a threat from outside the building I would get on and tell you we are locking all our doors and give you information. Two drills I would not give you information is a fire drill or a lockdown drill. For a fire drill everyone line up and exit. For a lockdown drill, I would announce initiate lockdown procedures to the staff and that is all you would get. You need to know if you are not given further directions you are hiding.
- I said during PTA Council meeting the other night it is really important for us to know where you are in the building. Sometimes parents will come in and do work in the PTA office. It is really important for us to know where you are. We need to be alert to your presence in the building.
- The person at the PTA Council meeting was asking - what if I was in charge of the plant sale, how do would I direct people. Mrs Dano said the teachers there would know what to do, and if it was between periods - hide for a lockdown drill.
- Christina Walsh asked - Is there a list of drills and that can support this information? A support document about “how to have this conversation” with your child. Looking for a resource to talk to our children. How to answer the questions when they came home. Mrs. Dano pointed out you will not know about when these drills are happening. Every year you get a letter that states we will be conducting drills. I think that

we are more aware now and it is heightened. I think because it is now part of every conversation now, it is school safety. It is very scary. That is why we are doing our best to learn and to make sure what we do in this building is best for your kids.

- What I started to say - I cannot do a letter every time, 21-25 drills over the course the year.
- Christina Walsh said I agree, but maybe a list of what all the drills are to explain and then a support document on how to talk to your kids about these drills, based on grade level.
- Mrs. Dano - it is a great idea and we will bring it to the district.

Q: Lisa Brzezinski: my question is about the hallways and the bathrooms. At Berner and Ames, because of issues that happen in the bathrooms, they have monitors that sit outside in the hallway.

A: Mrs. Dano: Again we had this conversation, we had recently met with the Superintendent. I cannot promise you it will happen but it was brought up.

Lisa Brzezinski: Is this something that we should be writing to the Superintendent or Mr. Flynn about expressing concern?

Mrs. Dano: It is already up for discussion, but I will always good to let Mrs. Iconis know your concerns.

Q: Ms. Foran: As part of our security, I know we are still waiting for them, but are they talking about bulletproofing the windows? Or the glass outside the monitors desk?

A: Mrs. Dano: No. So if there is an external threat, bank robbery, weather, gas leak, for example, there are different degrees of threats outside the building, when there are outside the building threats there are certain practices that we put into place that are clear of the windows.

Q: Lisa Brzezinski: So when we got back to school I heard that they practiced during lunch and recess?

A: Mrs. Dano: Yes, every lunch and recess period yes, they practiced. We did not disrupt the whole school. The monitors and the kitchen staff really had great questions and are being mindful. They are really thinking about how to address different situations.

I received a couple of calls and email from parents thinking that we did several things at once, including new doors, new windows, and people thought that the ID carabina was a "red alarm", but it is for our keys and IDs. It is an easy way to access our keys. Doors were in the works, new communication was just done. It was all in the works.

Mrs. Crimarco pointed out a story from her class that when she was telling them if they are in the hallway go to the nearest bathroom and hde. They were concerned, "what if it's a girls room?" She explained nearest bathroom and then they were concerned about hiding because the boys room has less stalls.

Q: Chrisoula Fosorile: So in regards to the bathrooms, are there locks on the doors that they can lock another child out?

A: Mrs. Dano: So the exterior door of the bathroom does not lock, but the main door does not lock unless a staff member is there and can lock with a key. That is because on any given day we don't want kids locking themselves in bathroom.

Laura Lucchi: that is good, in case there is confusion between a lock down drill and a fire drill and a child locks themselves in the bathroom.

We practice at least 12 fire drills a year, and we have had leaves blow into vents and the fire dept does come. If a child is confused, we tell them look to your teacher. We have a really good system for accounting for every student. If you go by during a fire drill, you will see red and green signs up.

Q: Sheila Grauling asked about door wedges

A: Mrs. Dano: Door wedges are not permitted in a school. It is a fire safety issue.

Sheila said - I meant to use to keep it closed.

Mrs. Dano said - she would get there. You can't wedge a door open if there is a fire, it is more likely to spread to the room. There is actually a study saying kids bedrooms should be shut at night so a fire doesn't spread to their room. We are not allowed to have door wedges. Don Flynn said the only good use for a door wedge is to wedge yourself inside. We are not allowed to have them. The teachers have been informed during certain emergencies they can wedge something in their doors. We also know that you can barricade yourselves in it is another added layer. In the real life situations, our teachers know what they can move to barricade them in the room.

Q: Sheila Grauling: Safety pods - tented security. Big giant tents?

A: Mrs. Dano: I am telling you right now, I am getting at least 10 emails a day about safety/money making items. I am sharing them with Don Flynn and they are investigating everything to see the real possibilities.

Mrs. Dano you should also know they NCPD has been visiting the school a lot. They are increasing their familiarity with our school and all the other schools in the district and all schools in Nassau. We have had 3 visits in the past couple of weeks. That is something that the police department is doing.

Kelly Rowland commented that she was in the school on a day when the officers were there, and they stopped to ask how she got in, reviewed check-in procedures, etc. to familiarize themselves with FF procedures.

Q: Marie Festa: Question is about substitute teachers

A: Mrs. Dano: Every single substitute teacher has had to review the safety procedures. Our regular permanent subs, they have actually attended our safety meetings. Also a manual in our classrooms.

Q: Sheila Grauling: I got to see the documentary of "Screenagers" last week that they showed at Berner Middle School. Is there anyway that they could show that to at least the fifth graders? Since they will be the ones getting the phones as they go off to middle school?

A : Mrs. Dano: I will ask Dr. Fasano.

Q: Tatum Salembier: What about deliveries and people walking through the "circle doors" vs. vestibule doors? Why doesn't everyone have to enter through same entrance?

A: Mrs. Dano: we have a regular mail person and UPS person that enter the building. If it is food deliveries it goes through the vestibule. If it a large delivery, need to use main door. We are looking into it and discussing.

Q: Alisha Grimm: In addition to what Tatum just said, sometimes I'm here at 2:45 pm parked to pick-up I know that the "Y" is in the building and there are staffers that need to get in, but they are just granted access to this building with a knock at the door.

A: Mrs. Dano: When they are granted access, and I have spoken to the "Y" about this, they are employees, they are opening the door for employees only.

Alisha pointed out that we made the police officer go through the main entrance, these are employees from an outside agency.

Q: Christina Walsh: my daughter goes to the "Y", the monitor is at the desk until 4:00PM, why can't they go through the monitors desk.

A: Mrs. Dano: They are going straight to their program vs. walking our halls. I don't see an issue with letting an employee in.

Alisha Grimm commented: As long as they are monitoring their door. I know who is monitoring our door.

Q: Lisa Brezinski: It was not this year, but a few years ago, a person was walking down the hall and the monitor and the security guard asked how they got in. She said she was unfamiliar with the building and someone let her in. It was a kid, can you please remind them not to do that.

A: Mrs. Dano: That was a few years back and I was here when that happened and I will readdress it and ask the children to be reminded..

Tatum Salembier: It came up last year and now that the weather is getting nice, I know kids from high school or middle school jump the fence to play basketball, sometimes before the school day is over. I only noticed because I was parking on that side.

Mrs. Dano: we are aware and as the weather gets nicer we will be more aware of it

Ilene Hellman commented that her daughter got into the habit of talking through the window to a friend in the YMCA. Ilene pointed out that the YMCA staff quickly curtailed it and didn't want them talking through the windows. Mrs. Dano pointed out that the YMCA is having the same conversations that we are having.

Christina Walsh: It is apparent that the YMCA is taking same protocols. I have been reprimanded for holding the door for a parent I know. It has to be their staff letting them in.

Mrs. Dano concluded by saying as you think of things please do not hesitate to call or email me.

Treasurer's Report

Kathleen Romano

Opening Balance as of 2/1/18: \$35,222.53

Closing Balance as of 2/28/18: \$31,439.68

President's Report

Sheila Grauling

- Our PARP Program was a great success, we exceeded our goal of \$50,000 minutes and we had increased participation for all grades. Big thanks to Kim Mueller for making this one of the best PARP programs.
- We had a very successful blood drive. 65 pints were donated, which is a huge increase from the 14 pints donated last year. Thanks to Jen Devlin, Ilene Hellman, Christina Walsh and Kelly Rowland for all their hard work.
- Our 3rd paint night was a great success, thanks to Traci Lorenz and Kelly Rowland.
- We had our final Arts in Ed program from this year, Mad Science for our 1st graders. A huge thanks to Nalini Hayes for all her time. Planning and hard work ensuring our students had wonderful programs this year.
- Our membership as of 3/13 is 415 members.

BOE Report

Marie Festa

March 1 BOE meeting

- A short musical performance of Pippin
- Discussion on lines 61 to 149 of proposed budget for 2018-19 for instruction
- Mr. Alan Adcock said that no positions will be excessed but not filling any retirements, and there are no contingency positions in the budget.
- Mrs. Diane Haanraads, Assistant to the Superintendent for Instructional Support mentioned that there will be new curriculum K-5 in science and math and reading specialists. All students in 3rd and 4th grade will have FLESS Spanish

- Mr. Don Flynn gave a security update. He said that all guards in all buildings are trained law enforcement professionals. There is 24-hour monitored video security surveillance. We have new classroom doors and hardware. The tipline is (516) 308-5333 and is available 24 hours a day/7 days a week.
- There were some questions regarding the law and why these security guards are not allowed to carry guns in schools.
- A resolution was approved authorizing \$41,800,000 Bond Issue for improvements and alterations in district buildings and/or sites including \$9,000,000 from the Capital Reserve Fund.
- A mention was made at the beginning of the meeting regarding retirements which included Fairfield's own librarian, Sandra Dorfman who has served our children for 28 years. In addition, Mrs. Fasulo, computer teacher.

SEPTA

Marie Festa

Next meeting is on 3/21 at 7pm McKenna
Rock Your Socks Day coming up

Upcoming Events

Christina Walsh

- Mixed bags was extended. Please send it in
- Glam Night is next Thursday, 3/22. Big fundraiser with food and fun

Nominating Committee Updates

Ilene Hellman

Committee met on March 5 - Committee members are Ilene Hellman, Lisa Brezinski, Dawn Mollica, Sue Foran and Stephanie O'Hara

Following nominations:

- Co-Presidents: Kelly Rowland and Donna Scheuer
- 1st VP: Sheila Grauling
- Corresponding Secretary: Ilisa Polansky
- Treasurer: Kathleen Romano

Still need a Recording Secretary. Must have a recording secretary to have a PTA

Do have calls out for 2nd VP and Recording Secretary

This is just the announcement of the slate, this is not necessarily the board. If someone decides to run you have to let Ilene know 3 days prior to the next meeting, which is 4/11. So must inform by 4/8. If there are multiple people interested Tatum will need to provide ballots for a vote.

Plans of Work

Plant Sale

Christina Walsh presented

- Dates: May 8-10
- Thinking of doing pre-sale differently and offering to all PTA members so all FF families benefit from presale. Friday will be courtyard sale with whatever is left and donate the rest
- Motion to approve Sue Foran and seconded by Dawn Mollica

Field Day

Stephanie O'Hara

Date: June 8 and rain date is June 15

- Theme this year is "Welcome to the Jungle" in spirit of Jumanji
- The day will promote teamwork and the children will have to work together
- Using the "Brain Game" game show again with pillars on the stage
- DJ on the playground
- There is a special treat/surprise that day
- 4 teams - Jaguar, Rhino, Elephant and Snake
- Volunteers will need to wear white
- A letter will go out right after April break
- Must be a paid PTA member to volunteer. There will be a list at the door with a strict cut-off date to volunteer. Your name must be on that list in order to enter.
- It has worked really well in the past to have the class parents bring coolers of waters for their class

Motion to approve Lisa Brzezinski and motion seconded by Sue Foran

School Supply Kits

Tatum Salembier

Working with SchoolKidz again to order school supply lists for 2018-19 school year

Kits will be delivered to homes again this year

Action Steps:

- Work with school/Lisa to get approved teacher lists from each grade
- Work with SchoolKidz to set-up portal and input updated lists
- Finalize lists and pricing
- Distribute forms via email and hard copy
- Submit order and final payment to vendor

Motion to approve Stephanie O'Hara and seconded by Sue Foran

Family Fun Night

Committee Chair: Donna Scheuer

Committee Members: Julia Santiago, Tatum Salembier, Alisha Grimm

Date: April 26

Location: MHS

Goal: Coordinate a Family fun night for all Fairfield families to participate in

Action Steps:

- Book School
- Create flyer and get approval to send
- Coordinate activities, set-up, snacks, drinks and volunteers for the evening

It is a night with relay races and activities, parents vs. the children. I went to Schwarting to check it out and it was a really fun night. There will be two 1-hour sessions. We can add selling snacks, etc. to raise money. The price is \$20 per parent/child and \$10 each additional person. If you have children in both sessions you still pay per parent participating in each session. There was then a discussion on cost that followed.

Motion to approve: Stephanie O'Hara and was seconded by Dawn Mollica

Long Island Ducks Game

Committee Chair: Candace Averso

Date: May 26 (it is a fireworks Night)

Cost per ticket \$22

Actions Steps:

- Contact ticket sales to select a date and confirm date with the PTA
- Review flyer approved by Ducks and then get approval from PTA
- Print flyer and distribute
- Collect ticket requests and money
- Deposit funds and request check from PTA to pay for tickets

Motion to approve Laura Lucchi and seconded by Stephanie O'Hara

Sweetheart Dance

Committee Chairs: Jen DeSousa and Stacey Lessne

Date: April 13

Girls attend the dance with their special someone

Action Steps:

- Secure Berner for 4/13
- Design and gain approval for invites
- Secure vendors - DJ, food, decorations, photos
- Buy paper goods and favors
- Organize volunteers and food donations

Motion to approve Laura Lucchi and seconded by Stephanie O'Hara

Additional Comments:

Ilene mentioned that you can serve on the Board and the 5th grade committee, but you can not be a President or Co-President.

Also, Ilene asked about Opt-outs/Test Refusals - can I send them in late?

Mrs. Dano - yes, but they will be marked late

Lisa Brezinski asked about morning announcements and why all classrooms were seeing/hearing them. Are they optional?

Mrs. Dano; that are not optional and I will remind teachers.

Lisa Brezinski also commented on the dismissal form the Prospect Place doors. Apparently there is a lot of pushing on the stairs there. It needs to be better monitored.

Mrs. Dano said she was unaware and will look into it.

Meeting adjourned

Meeting attendees:

Colleen Amaya, Alisha Grimm, Donna Scheuer, Tatum Salembier, Lori Dorsi, Dawn Mollica, Lisa Brezinski, Laura Lucchi, Sue Foran, Allison DeLuccia, Kathleen Romano, Stephanie O'Hara, Sheila Grauling, Christina Walsh, Kelly Rowland, Mrs. Landman, Mrs. Crimarco, Mrs. Gerhard and Mrs. Dano