



Floral Park Bellerose School PTA
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, September 29, 2020

Meeting called to order at 7:04pm

A quorum is present with 50 attendees on Zoom

Everyone is asked to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

President Rosalie Cancellarich proceeded to introduce the executive board and advised most positions need to be filled next year. Encouraged attendees to volunteer and/or indicate their interest.

Amanda Talty, Recording Secretary stated June minutes were posted to FPBSPTA.com and available. Made motion to waive the reading of the minutes.

Rosalie seconded motion. Motion granted.

SK Naraine, Vice President welcomed the PTA to first meeting and discussed the pandemic changing the way we do business. He proceeded to review the mission and goals of the PTA. To learn more visit <https://nyspta.org/home/about/values-mission-vision/>. SK then thanked all the members and offered PTA help to anyone who needs it during this difficult time

SK introduced Meg to read the treasurers report.

Meg reported there is \$18,537.58 in the PTA account to support activities and initiatives.

Reviewed tentative budget and identified its based on historical numbers. As 2020 continues to evolve we will have more concrete details on confirmed activities.

Rosalie added we are working with the school and are moving forward with picture day. It will be hosted outdoors with online ordering only. Social distancing regulations are being strictly adhered to. While most fundraisers are being postponed we are still exploring opportunities for the coming year.

We are asking for a budget vote based on the understanding things may change as the year goes due to COVID and any changes to the restrictions. We are taking it as it comes. Since this is all new to us its a bit of an experiment but we still need to vote to approve a budget.

Former PTA President Cheryl Spigonardo asked a question regarding Pre-K orientation associated expenses being identified at \$5k. SK explained the budget was misaligned on the screen. It's not \$5k for PreK but for PARP. Cheryl stated \$5k for the PARP program is reasonable.

Melissa Mazzocco, Corresponding Secretary, reviewed the updates on fundraisers and important dates regarding hybrid program and advised of t-shirt sales benefitting SEPTA.

Rosalie invited Superintendent Dr. Sottile to speak. Dr. Sottile commented on amount of attendees being good for first meeting of the year. She advised she has a hard stop at 7:30 to discuss the reconstruction project beginning on Floral Blvd. She will advise if it will impact any traffic flow or kids walking to the school, etc. She commended the PTA on the “most amazing celebration for our kids” the day of the 6th Grade parade. She received a lot of emails from parents requesting it be done that way every year. The administration loved it and would be happy to continue it that way in the coming years.

Dr. Sottile stated she is looking forward to moving forward to implementing plans and keeping everyone safe while monitoring progress.

DR. SOTTILE: I know it's not an optimal year. Lots of things happening but I'm hoping it won't affect Nassau county. With that said we need to prepare for events that may happen such as classroom quarantines. We have to stick together and do what's safe and that's what we are preparing for. We must be prepared to manage individual schools. I thank you for your support and emails. I've pretty much gotten bck to everyone. I want to echo Melissa, we are going to stick to the tieline as long as we can. Mentioned picture day under tents. We are awaiting large tents which are coming. Sticking to plan do the best we can in uncertain times and stick together. I thank you for your input and suggestions which have been helpful. I'd like to publicly thank Laura Trentacoste for her service on the board of ed as well as the other members. Want to publicly thank Dominique and Jaime. And Juli our director of curriculum and officer viscusi who is always good for a smile and keeping us safe. There were a few questions that came in late today. Concerns regarding 900 hours. We are phasing in on moving everyone back into the building. We are on a good role with hiring and meeting the 180 day requirement. Next Weds. 10/7 we will be adding more live zooms. Teachers are preparing for that. Again, I am always available. You can shoot me an email. For those who have my cell you can call. We implemented new tree nut and peanut policy since children are eating in the classroom and we felt this was best. Through the hacking. I can't tell you how it feels on the first day of school to have your entire system corrupted with ransomware. It was devastating. It's still under investigation from the FBI. We did not lose student data and are fortunate. Who hacked us we don't know and we may never find out. I wish you all an amazing year. I will always be available anything you need reach out. Teachers are amazing wearing masks like troopers and following guidelines. Just can't thank you enough. Have a great school year.

Rosalie Thanked Dr. Sotille and proceeded to wish Officer Viscusi a Happy one year anniversary. She introduced Matt for those who may be new to the PTA. Coming up on my one year wedding anniversary. He is the school resource officer. Born and raised in FP. Went to JLC product of school system. Mother was a teacher. He monitors and ensures there are safety protocols in the school as well as provide safety education to students around topics including stranger danger, Halloween, bullying, lockdown drills, etc. Commends school staff and is looking forward to the rest of year.

Rosalie introduced Nurse Nora to give a brief statement.

NURSE NORA: Welcome back everyone hope everyone is well. Lots of kids feeling anxious coming back and I've gotten calls about that. We have the resources with school based mental health professionals, teachers and administrators. Thank you for your understanding regarding the COVID guidelines and restrictions. I know its frustrating because its allergy season but because of guidelines we have to get clearance letters from physicians. If it changes anytime soon we will change accordingly. I'm not looking to take up your time but its what we have to do right now to make sure everyone is safe. A few kids have gotten sick, but no one has tested positive for COVID. If and when it does happen we will deal with it. You can email or call me. I hope everyone has a great year.

Rosalie thanked Nurse Nora and introduced Mrs. Adams.

MRS. ADAMS: Good evening it's great to be together. Welcome to a most successful, albeit unusual, start to the school year. Parents have done a fabulous job for adhering to the guidelines. Thank you Officer Viscusi for helping establish protocols for traffic flow outside and inside of the school building. We had our first lockdown drill and we were opening a Kindergarten classroom and then the kids started coming out and they thought Officer Viscusi was a superstar. I felt like I was with a Hollywood star you've already made an impression. Thanks to Mrs. Epstein who is always there for us. The measure of a truly successful school year are the smiles we see on the kids faces. We see smiles through their eyes. They are talking about things happening they can't wait to come into school. They are excited about the day and its a testament to the parents and teachers despite the changes. We've implemented mask breaks we have handwashing breaks and recess everyday. If you've had an opportunity to view them we have three tents put up and classes immediately went out for reading and yoga. We thank the district for putting outdoor tents into practice. Our PTA is doing a great job. We talk all the time and we are happy our picture day is going forward. We are finalizing the schedule. Remote by choice will also have an opportunity to participate in picture day. All that info is coming out soon. Me and Ms. Seibert are super excited to welcome PreK back next week. As we look ahead, we always talk about antibullying inclusion and kindness. We will continue Unity Day. It's a time we all join together. We really highlight that day through some of our activities. We want to thank everyone and please thank your children. They are coming to school and learning academically, social emotionally... they are fantastic. It's a pleasure to serve them. Thank you to the PTA. We know this isn't how we anticipated starting the school year.

Rosalie stated we will be staying late for picture day so all children can participate. I've gotten many questions regarding the Halloween party and dance. Normally we have 150 or more people and cannot now because of the 50 pp restrictions. We will not have the halloween dance because we don't want to have to turn any child away.

Melissa Mazzocco suggested having a Halloween house decorating contest. We have to figure out a way to get that done to vote and participate. People can sign up you post your address and the kids can visit those houses and they can vote for the best house. Winner gets a prize so we can do something fun for kids.

Rosalie opens the floor for comments. For those not comfortable commenting publicly please do so via email. Membership expires so if you are a current member please be advised 9.30 is the last day of last years membership so its time to renew. We will send a textcaster with the link. You can pay right online. We would appreciate it if you would do so online. On the main website there is a link to join or renew. We express sincere gratitude to all essential workers and front line responders. So remember our loved ones and those we've lost. We aren't guaranteed tomorrow so appreciate today.

SK just advised he is a den leader at the school and his wife and Amanda Talty are involved with Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts. You can reach out to us to sign up. Ms. Adams stated there is now a district community site for flyers, announcements, etc. Rosalie provided information re: SEPTA and contacting Lois.

Public Question and Answer Session:

Q: What does it mean to be a member of the PTA?

A: Rosalie: Our primary purpose is to advocate for the children. We engage volunteers to provide programming and support and excitement to the lives of students. We cannot do things the way we have. We try to ensure children's home lives are sound and if there are any issues we can help advocate for the children. You can visit NYS PTA website for more information. Melissa adds the membership dues you pay are one of the biggest sources of revenue to underwrite programs we host.

Q: Do you have to be a member to benefit from the services provided?

A: Rosalie: You do not need to be a member to benefit from services. In order to vote you must be a member. If you require assistance that is available regardless of membership status. You can email the PTA if you need support. You can contact administrators. If you feel intimidated, you can speak to Nurse Nora or Officer Viscusi.

Q: Thanks to the PTA and Rosalie for hosting, I wanted to respect Dr; Sottiles time, but I want to revisit the questions about the 180 days and 900 hours. If the kids are supposed to get 5 hours a day of education but it comes to 4 hours and 10 min how does that work?

A: Dr. Mulcahy stated we are looking at the programs and phasing in students. We are looking at Specials. We are looking at getting everyone in for more hours. When we look at 900 hours, how do we count, do we count, "teacher contact time" toward that number? Our intent is to look at that after getting in 4-6 grade 5 days. Then we will send a letter to families asking about any changes to remote self selections. Next conversation will be about expanding the school day.

Q: My understanding is that the day was shortened to move prep period and lunch to end of day. The schedule I was provided and reviewed shows there is prep and lunch on the remote schedules. Can you explain?

A: Dr. Mulcahy: Remote is on the JLC schedule 815-245 and provides teachers latitude to do social emotional learning or provide flexibility to accommodate family schedules. If we did go all remote the schedules would move to same schedule. If you received a schedule that says something different please send a copy of the schedule to review so we can discuss with teachers.

Q: Regarding the Cohort A loss of Mondays, is this time going to be added back for those children?

A: Dr. Mulcahy stated they were discussing how they were using Wednesday to normalize the amount of days prior to determining kids would return 5 days a week. While I don't believe we are going backward at this point, at any point in time all our programs are vulnerable and we may have to go back to hybrid or all remote. We are all crossing our fingers but should we have to do that we will look at the lost Mondays to normalize for the rest of the year.

Q: Can Nurse Nora review again if we decide to keep them home if they are sick what do we do?

A: If I call you that your child is sick or you call them in sick and they have symptoms that are COVID like – I can send around the CDC's list but mostly its what you already know ie loss of taste and smell, sniffles, etc. It is a wide range of symptoms. If they have any of that they need to go to the physician or walk in clinic and get a letter from the physician that they are cleared to go to school. Some children have come back immediately with a letter, some have been tested for COVID. Its up to the physician.

Q: Last time we met the nurses station went to the PreK room for space. Where is PreK being held?

A: Mrs. Adams stated we have 2 classrooms. One is next to nurse and, after construction this summer concluded, now the art room is a PreK room.

Q: Where will art be when we get back?

A: Adams: We are in discussion about that. They did construction in science room so it may go there. Final decision is pending

Q: I got notification that they aren't giving nebulizer treatments in school.

A: Epstein, the state is asking nurses to have parents ask for an inhaler instead of the nebulizer. When I reached out to state, the first choice would be for me to have a room just for them which we cannot accommodate. The second option was a well-ventilated area with windows and a door. If I have to give a nebulizer treatment I'll move them to the door and allow them to use nebulizer there.

Q: In the event we have to go full remote, is there any planning to put a specialized teacher for the Remote ICT classes instead of pulling them out for 40 minutes.

A: Mulcahey: One of the struggles districts are having is managing their programs (ICT/Special Ed). We are monitoring how students are responding. Special Education parents had an opportunity to review growth and IEP goals for which teachers are responsible for progress monitoring. For students receiving accommodations, if they aren't progressing accordingly we revisit their plan. To match the integrated co-teaching and 1:1 aides is an impossible situation. Our 40 minute groups are small. We were able to create an even smaller group and we will reevaluate our programs. Focus is on IEP goals and progress.

Q: IEP's state its supposed to be integrated co-teacher.

A: Mulcahey: Its being reviewed on ongoing basis.

Q: I was wondering how the PreK rooms will be cleaned between am and pm?

A: Adams: They will be cleaned when morning session leaves and the teachers and aides will clean prior to next group entering including toys, sneeze guards, etc.

Q: Will aide be escorting them to bathroom?

A: Adams: Yes.

Q: Curious regarding Cuomo's 5% vs. City's 3% (COVID Positive Rate to trigger closures) What's the threshold for us?

A: Nora: Nassau hasn't said yet. Its on a case by case basis. We have to advise when we have cases but the state will guide us.

Q: There exists a possibility that JLC could close but not us?

A: Adams: Yes, if we get a case in the classroom we quarantining the class. If its more the state will guide. I think it will be a percentage of the total school population but we don't know for sure yet.

Q: If art goes into science where does science go?

A: Adams: Science is in the classroom. We do not have a science teacher.

Q: Will this continue in the future? Is this a forever change or a temporary change due to COVID restrictions?

A: Adams, teachers are expanding program with STEM. The former science teacher is a 4th grade teacher now.

A Continued: Mulcahey, The conversation is ongoing and will be revisited at the end of the school year. We collapsed approximately 4 classes in the district into 11. To maintain staffing levels, we will start conversation in January.

Q: Block discussion has been discussed, how does adding science into class room curriculum impact the math and ela blocs?

A: Mulcahey, it doesn't impact it. Part of our inspire program includes STEM classroom projects. We talked on other occasions that the inspire program is a learning curve because its geared to add STEM into the classroom. Our intent is to bring in Inspire professional development which is scheduled for this year. We have to discuss how that will work.

Q: I apologize as I think I may have missed something. Taxpayers just authorized the funding of a new extension with the promise of state-of-the-art science labs and now we have no science teacher. What is going on with that space?

A: Mulcahey, Classroom teachers will use that space.

Q: Please clarify if the children will return to school on the 13th.

A: Rosalie answered that everyone is returning to the school on the current classroom schedule.

Q: For clarity, my 5th grader will leave at 2:10?

A: As I explained earlier we are beginning conversations with building administrators and union presidents on how to extend the school day.

Q: When you say union you mean teachers union?

A: Mulcahey stated yes and provided the names of the union president and vice president.

At this time the open question section concludes.

Rosalie was asked about the raffles and stated we are looking at how we can get it done for the next PTA meeting.

Rosalie motioned to adjourn meeting, Amanda Talty seconded

Meeting adjourned at 8:13pm.