

WNS PARENT ASSOCIATION MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 7, 2015

INTRODUCTION

Jade McLachlan and Ali Karshan, Co-Presidents opened the meeting.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND DATES

Monday, January 12th - Vision Committee meeting at 6pm in the Lower School Library. This is not a PA sponsored committee or meeting, but rather is being overseen by the WNS administration. Parents are invited to participate in a discussion with the administration to share how we envision the school growing going forward, ideas regarding the Reggio influence, and how we are presented as we become a more established independent school in NYC.

Friday, January 23rd - PS Food, Health and Wellness Committee Bake Sale from 3pm - 4:30 pm. The PA is looking for volunteers for the set up and strike of the event, as well as for donations of baked goods. Let the kids run around and have fun while eating a healthy snack.

Friday January 30th - PA Diversity Committee Multicultural Night in the Pre-school gym from 5:30-8pm. All families are invited and encouraged to attend. While event details are still being finalized, the PA is tentatively planning a potluck dinner based on the family table which will be open to all students from the ITC, WNP and WNS. There will be kids activities and possibly entertainment. The focus is to bring the community together and start discussions about diversity within the school.

The NAREA "Wonder of Learning" exhibit opens the week of January 12th at the Lower School. While the PA is not involved in the running of this exhibit, parents are encouraged to visit and volunteer.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE UPDATE

The PA has created and now posted a monthly paper calendar on the events bulletin board in the lobby of the Lower School building (with similar calendars to come for the ITC and Pre-school buildings). Meeting participants also expressed interest in one paper calendar with both PA and school events listed (similar to what is currently available on the school's website).

Sarah Mangerson, Co-chair of the PA Communications Committee will be having a meeting with Gina Farrar and Tara Mastin on Jan 21st to discuss multiple aspects of the school's overall communication vision and how to possibly simplify emails, paper forms, etc... If you have suggestions please email either Sarah at magnusmoon@mac.com or Pamela Schwilk at pamela@evolvinx.com.

Beth Cronk and Sarah Mangerson are also working on the creation of a school mascot design and tying it into merchandising and spirit wear for sale to families by the PA. The WNS mascot is the Owl.

SPRING FUNDRAISING GALA

The Spring Fundraising Gala date is set for Saturday, April 25th in the Pre-school gym. An overview of the event was provided to new parents stating that it is an annual event that has food, wine and a silent auction to raise funds for the PA Diversity Scholarship and Hardship Funds. Volunteers are needed to help plan this fun event and interested parents can contact Beth Cronk at bethpellegrino@icloud.com. Additionally, donations of all kinds will be needed for the silent auction so please let Beth know if you have any items to donate. Much more detail about the Gala will be sent out to parents in the coming months.

MID-YEAR REVIEW OF THE PA

The Co-president's mentioned that it is now halfway through the year for the PA and they welcomed feedback on how families thought the PA was progressing to date. The floor was opened to discuss the process of the PA, as well as to solicit any thoughts or comments. While no suggestions were made by those in attendance, it was stated that the PA is a collaborative team effort, and they are open to discussing how to take actions forward, how to run meetings, etc.

Jade discussed her interest in seeing WNS produce a children's holiday show in December starring WNS students and many agreed that they would be interested. She compared what Seth the Lower School music teacher does with his summer camp "CAMP" show and suggested whether we might be able to do something comparable. Others agreed that it's great to see their kids perform and for some it forces them out of their comfort zone. It was mentioned that most schools have some kind of "artist in the school" program where teachers in the performing arts from within the community come in to run workshops in drama, dance, yoga, or some other performing arts.

The creation of an annual Track and Field day was also discussed. One was planned for the Lower School last school year, however, it was canceled due to rain and the school hopes to plan it again for this spring. Parents agreed it would be a great event for the kids.

OPEN FLOOR ITEMS AND OTHER BUSINESS

There was a continuation from last month's discussion about greening up the Lower School building on the inside as well as landscaping outside on North 7th and on the terraces. It was mentioned that parents could call 311 to request that trees be planted near the building, however, there was a concern that trees may not be able to be planted along North 7th street due to the proximity of the underground L subway line. It was suggested that large potters could be placed at the front entrance and that perhaps the school could partner with local businesses such as Sprout or Jungle to obtain wholesale prices. Most agreed they would like to see more green throughout the Lower School on the inside of the building including in classrooms, in the cafeteria and definitely on the 5th and 9th floor terraces by the spring. The school is still working on getting bike racks installed out front.

There was also more discussion about street safety in the surrounding areas of the Lower School including several blind corners and near the playground where the kids go frequently. Marissa Buick offered to assist as the PA Safety and Traffic Coordinator to handle the creation of a signature or call list to the city in an effort to get more stop signs or crossing guards.

PA FINANCIAL UPDATE

A financial update was provided by the PA Treasurer, Cynthia Fox. The PA currently has \$38,273.00 in its bank account. The PA spent \$200 on holiday gifts for the school administration staff and there have been very few expenses thus far (the bulk of all PA expenses are incurred in connection with the Spring Gala). The PA has finished filing tax returns for the years 2012 and 2013 and doesn't owe any money nor is it getting anything back at this time.