

Parents' Association of the Bronx High School of Science
General Meeting
April 19, 2016
Draft Minutes

Call to Order: Called by Co-President Betsy Newberry and Ellen Dubin at 7:00 p.m.

Approve March 2016 General Meeting Minutes The minutes were unanimously approved and adopted.

Treasurer's Report Treasurer Heidi Moustakos reported on the current balances with school merchandise sales at a whopping \$13,000! Hurray!
Total income is almost \$202K with \$179,000 expenses spent so far (which includes \$35,000 towards technology from a PA surplus from prior years). National Honor Society, sports teams and all school departments received money. First installment was made on the approved computer expense (\$35K) and one quarter of those computers are here. Parent body did not have any questions.

Technology Spending update Ellen Dubin reported that 80 computers are being installed as we speak and all is going well with our new technology.

The internet / broadband upgrade project has been stalled due to a potential reversal by the DOE in its commitment to fund infrastructure improvements to allow for private internet. Talks are on-going.

Nominating Committee Report Heather Gible reported that all nominations should be made by the next general board meeting. Heather shared a list of the positions on the PA Executive Board and School Leadership Team. She asked parents to run in the upcoming elections for all PA Board positions and open SLT positions. "You can nominate yourself or a friend," said Heather, who offered her e-mail address, gibleheather@gmail.com, for nominations.

Bronx Day and Bronx Parade Ellen reported that Bronx Science will be marching in the Bronx Parade, which is part of the Bronx Week Celebration sponsored by the Borough President's office. This is an opportunity to cultivate the school's relationship with the broader Bronx community. The organizers have agreed to give Bronx Science a space in the festival at the end of the parade free of charge to promote the school and create excitement for Bronx families. The robotics teams will be there with some robots. The parade and festival will be held on Sunday, May 15th on Mosholu Parkway. Marchers can expect to participate from 11:30 am to 2:30 pm and will get a t-shirt.

Sports Teams Ellen asked team sports parents to step up to the plate. Each of our Bronx Science Teams needs a designated parent whose job it is to act as a liaison between the coaching staff and the parents. You send out an occasional email, and help out where you can. Please consider serving as one!

Here are the teams that still need Team Parents:

Girls or Boys Badminton

Cricket

Girls or Coed Golf

Girls or Boys Fencing
Flag Football
Girls or Boys Handball
Girls JV Soccer
Girl's Wrestling
Boys Varsity Volleyball
Just send us an email at president@bxsciencepa.org. Thanks.

Incoming Freshman's Parent Breakfast

Volunteers will be needed on June 9 for incoming freshman parents breakfast while their children (8th grade) take BHSS assessment tests. BHSS administration will be very busy, so the PA will host a light breakfast, as well as a meet and greet. Please join us and please volunteers!

School Leadership Team Barbara Reiser reported that the SLT met today and completed the C30 process and is pleased to announce that Mr. Andrew Nasser is now the Assistant Principal for Guidance. Ms. Reiser encouraged more parent involvement. She also reported that only 30 percent of BHSS parents returned the DOE school survey. That means that 70 percent of our parents did not return the survey as compared to the citywide return rate of 49 percent. If you want to learn more about BHSS SLT, please contact them at sltparent@bxscienc.org.

Principal's Report

Dr. Jean Donahue reported that 150 BHSS students were recently inducted into the National Honor Society. "It was nice for us to thank our honor students for all of the things that they do around the school, open houses and tutoring, etc." said Dr. Donahue.

Dr. Donahue reported that U.S. News and World Report rated Bronx High School of Science number seven in New York State! The magazine uses the percent of students who participate in AP classes as a measurement in their rankings, and 91% of our students take Advanced Placement classes.

On the cultural front, we had the lovely Nagaland performance on Friday with colorful Indian dancers. It was well received and very much enjoyed by our school community.

School supplies: Currently, the science department administrators are gearing-up -- with accessing and ordering -- science supplies for the benefit of our BHSS students.

Safety issues: The BHSS Safety Committee became aware that two freshman students had planned a fight on social media which then played out on Harris Field, attended by a crowd of fellow students. The other students knew about the planned fight from social media, but it wasn't until minutes before the fight that one student notified Ms. Loukissas (the school's safety director). When she arrived, it was too late to stop things. Parents are encouraged to remind their students that if they know of something that is not right, they should notify an adult quickly.

Dr. Jean Donahue, "I want to give big thanks to the BHSS PA for the generous donation of technology," said Dr. Donahue with a heartfelt smile and warm appreciation. "Our computers

are very old and we really needed the new computers,” said Dr. Donahue, whose comments were met by applause from the PA body. “Enjoy your Spring Break and Happy Passover.”

Upcoming Events:

April 25 – 29 – School Closed for Spring Break

May 2 -- thru 13 AP Tests

May 4 -- College Fair

May 15 – Bronx Week Parade and Fair

May 20 – PA Spring Auction & Dinner

May 21 -- Princeton Review Free ACT Practice and Diagnostic Test

SPECIAL PROGRAM:

Darby McHugh (Co-Director of the BHSS College Office) and Denise Longano (BHSS College Advisor) presented the 4-year college process at Bronx Science. Their presentation can be found on the PA website. Below are some of the questions that parents asked.

Parent Question: “I am shocked to hear all of this...particularly at the April meeting. Maybe I am ignorant, but this is the first that I am hearing about these details of what should happen – why haven’t I been told this information?”

McHugh responded “That’s why we are having this meeting tonight - to better inform the parents about the process to help them navigate the college process with their children.” Ellen quickly added, “Absolutely, that is why our PA is hosting this event!”

Parent Question: How does BHSS help students to be more competitive? How many APs should our students take?

Response: We take course selection and advisory very seriously. There has to be a proper balance of Advanced Placement classes, extra curriculums, strong junior year academic performance, etc.. You have to build a foundation first before taking too many AP classes.

Parent Question: How are Grade Point Averages calculated?

Response: Bronx Science does not weight GPAs. Colleges know that we send our scores *unweighted*. We believe that *unweighted* scores are cleaner because all high schools differ on whether and how they weight grades, so colleges recalculate them anyway, based on their own method. Also, colleges know about the rigor of BHSS classes. Physical Education grade is not included in GPA. We don’t rank our students either.

Parent Question: How many essays do our students have to write?

Response: In addition, of the Common App essay, some colleges and programs require additional essays. Students should be prepared to write supplement essays based on each college’s or program’s specific requirements.

Parent Question: Subject tests?

Response: There is a finite amount of time and test dates, so students should try to get everything done before the end of Junior year.

Parent Question: What happens if my child does not get into college?

Response: Ms. McHugh said this never happens. The College Office advises all of our students to apply to CUNY which has open enrollment (everyone is accepted).

Parent Question: How many colleges should we visit?

Response: Try to visit the colleges that you might be interested in attending by September to November of your child's senior year. We do have some college day trip to colleges in the region, said Longano. If a college is within a few hours from your home, it is a good idea to visit it, especially if it is a small school that tracks demonstrated interest. If it is far away and difficult to visit, your student should see if the school has local alumni interviews.

Parent Question: How many Ivy League acceptances do BHSS students receive?

Response: Over one hundred. We do very well said Darby.

Meeting adjourned at 9 pm

Attendance -- 121 people signed in