

Parents' Association of The Bronx High School of Science Parents Association Meeting January 11, 2023 (remote)

PA Presidents

Christine Kattan

Jayesh Patel

Elizabeth Polkovitz

Christine called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm

Christine welcomed everyone to the first meeting of 2023 and presented the agenda slide. She asked for a motion to approve the December meeting minutes and they were approved.

1. Principal's Report

Rachel Hoyle mentioned the winter concerts, the much-needed break, and acknowledged the good spirits among students heading toward mid-years. She said it was the first time in 3 years they were being held. She stressed they were not as high stakes and the focus was being placed on reassuring students and providing them with adequate support and instruction on how to prepare

The Robotics team had its kick-off at the school. They have a new game and are excited about it.

In the Regeneron talent search, 6 Bronx Science students were named among the 300 scholars. Two of the 6 students were in math, 1 was in social science (a homegrown project working just with her teacher) and 3 were in bio.

2. SLT Report

Deborah Alexander recapped the meeting earlier in the evening where they reviewed by-laws, and CEP goals to increase attention and support for students. Looked at various bench marks and shared updates. In summary, stress levels among students are fairly stable. 2 and 3 out of 5 which is the same as last year. Out of 370 respondents. 63% were favorable. The goal of the CEP is to increase the response to 70% and reduce stigma to 86%

3. Treasurer's Report

Kai Lu shared the latest financial results and shared them in slides.

For the period July-Dec 2022;

target revenue \$443k, actual revenue to date \$249k,

budget \$443k, actual expenses to date \$91k

\$250k revenue has been generate so far until the end of December

Donations by month; September \$18k, October \$109k, November \$47k and December \$73k. Have reached 56.3% to target. Rolling ask

Expenses breakdown; PA admin expenses \$22k, student electronic subscription naviance and ny times) \$19k, student expenses \$36k, others \$12k.

As of 12/31/2022, bank balance was \$805k.

Kai is currently working on interim financial report due at the end of the month

December cheques have not been processed yet but expecting \$20k from them.

4. Fundraising Updates

Yan Yu shared the positive news that over 530 families have made donations. This is a 50% increase in terms of participation level. She encouraged more donations by phone, through the PA website, by regular mail and by asking employers to match. She thanked all families for their donations

5. Spring Gala Updates

Gabrielle Koelbel, one of the co-chairs (along with Shirah Werberger) spoke and shared details about the Spring gala, the school's second largest fundraiser. It will take place on May 11 at Rodelph Sholom on West 83rd Street. The theme is Reach For The Stars to tie in with the new Manne building.

Asking for volunteers for the donations committee. Need inventory for the auction and asking families to solicit donations and to reach out to neighborhood businesses. Also looking for help in working through a list of previous donors and sending requests out to donate again. Proposing to give 10 business names to a person. It's a well defined task and can be done from home. Parents are asked to reach out to Toni Kousoulas at auctiondonations@bxsciencepa.org if they can help.

6. President's Report

Elizabeth gave a presentation on Fair Student Funding. It's the main source of funding for school budgets for hiring staff. The DOE is trying to reduce spending and to increase money spent on students in transitional housing. Noone knows how the portfolio weights were awarded in the first place.

It is significant for our school because if they overhaul the allocation of weights to students, it will affect the money the school receives to finance staff. Currently, each student has a weight of 1 and high school students have a weight of 1.03. A poverty weight applies only to grade 4 or under and a range of weights are applied for English language learners and to special education students.

Bronx Science is considered an academic portfolio school and right now, the majority of schools are getting 100% of funds allotment. However, in the last budget, 3 changes were recommended, one of which was to add a weight for students in transitional/temporary accommodation and one of which was to expand the poverty weight for all grades.. It's hard to know for sure what effect it will have on the school but the most concerning recommendation was to remove the academic weight which applies in academic schools such as Bronx Science. This could cost the school \$3.1 million in annual funding which is very concerning.

The PEP notified community councils on January 4 to say they will be presenting proposals.

The first item on our list is to ask parents to find out when your local CEC is having their presentation. Parents are asked to please notify the PA with the details and if attending, please let us know what's in the proposal. We cannot plan until we know what we're reacting to. PA presidents are trying to get a hold of the report. The working group is not unanimous in supporting the proposal. A minority group recommended keeping academic weight. The process is not transparent. Timeline is January 19 through early March. Parents are also asked to write a letter to PEP, education council and borough presidents. Please base any claims on the proposal itself and not on reports.

7. Special Presentation: What I Wish I Knew Before My Kid Went To College

Cliff Stanton hosted a panel of parents of alumni students for a questions and answers session.

Panel made up of parents whose children are attending Cornell, University of Arizona, Yale, Tulane

Stanford, Suny Binghamton, Michigan and Berkeley.

What to consider and remember;

Your child is an adult

Get a medical proxy. It's good to have in case of an emergency.

Don't expect to see grades

Other than paying their tuition, they want privacy to their information

Schools have very different schedules

Don't make vacation plans around their schedule

Prepare for their departure in the summer months leading up to their start in school

Don't try to control what you can't

Bronx Science prepares students well

Need to be cognizant of mental wellness

Encourage them not to overload in 1st semester

Only 10 hours a week in college

Encourage them to explore new activities.

Loneliness piece can be a problem

There are a lot of great online groups for parents (facebook groups) where parents are looking for advice or have concerns

Accept that where your child might want to go might not be your ideal. It's their call and most important that they are happy

January meltdown in senior year is common with application fatigue

Students can read their application file to see what got them into a college.

Students should always have a 'safety' school they would feel good about going to.

If you want to keep them close, let them go

Beware of the power of social media

Roommates can be challenging but don't choose your roommate. Let the college match you

Find smaller communities, consider Greek life and become familiar with rushes

Most students start visiting colleges around February of junior year

Guidance counselors are helpful

Kids don't need cash, just a credit card

They'll get sick a lot

Book recommendation: How to raise an Adult: Break Free of the Overparenting Traps by Julie Lythcott-Haims

8. Other business

Christine thanked the panel and asked parents to please keep looking at weekly email letters. Wellness Walks starting up this weekend at 3 pm with Alison Gardy. Finally, a reminder that the February meeting will be in person and the special presentation of the night will be about course selection

Christine adjourned the meeting at 9:01 pm.

