



Yonkers Council of PTA/PTSA
Monday, September 18, 2017 • 6:30 PM
Saunders High School
MINUTES

Welcome: Sally Pinto, YCPTA President started the meeting at 6:45 PM.

Introduced special guests: YCPTA Executive Board Members, Dr. A Coddett-Deputy Superintendent, Representative from Assembly Woman Shelly Meyer's office, Ms. Hattar (AP Lincoln HS), Margit Spector (WEPR), Jose Montas (WEPR), Karen Beltran (WEPR), and State Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins

Announcements:

YCPTA website has a list of Membership How To's to help in increasing PTAs membership and the Community PTA form can be found on the website as well.

Karen Beltran gave a brief breakdown on the different branches of the PTA was discussed. The hierarchy of the PTA is as follows: National PTA → NYS PTA → WEPR PTA → YCPTA → School PTAs
WEPR PTA events: Fall Luncheon in October, Advocacy Breakfast in November and NYS PTA Convention in Niagara Falls will be held in December.

Minutes and Treasurer reports for our last meeting in June 2017 will be submitted for approval in October 2017 due to technical difficulties in copying the documents.

New Business:

- 1- **Charter School:** Sally provided an overview of the charter school proposal and why this issue is important. The following questions or points were brought to the table to ask Dr. Quezada.
 - a. We would like to know the position of the mayor because his name was included in the proposal. (Karen Beltran)
 - b. We would like to know who actually makes the decision to approve the Charter School? **The Board of Regents makes the decision.**
 - c. Are they expanding the existing school or will this be a new school? **They are expanding the current school to 12th grade.**
 - d. What is the new location for the expanded school? Not sure if there will be a need for a new building.
 - e. What percentage or amount of the school tax revenue goes to the charter school?
 - f. Concerned because of the poor transparency of the current charter school.

- g. Have they ever trained Yonkers teachers in their methods, as this was one of the initial criteria for having the elementary charter school?
- 2- ADVOCACY EFFORTS: As a collective unit we must send e-mails, use social media outlets (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram), call and write letters.
- 3- Copy of the Agenda for the School of Instruction was handed out. Typo on the actual day of the week.
- 4- Sign-up forms were passed around for the various committees that are part of the YCPTA. Sally described each committee: Advocacy Committee, Audit Committee, Board of Education Committee, Audit/Finance Committee, Facilities Committee, Parent Advisory Title I Committee, Compliance Committee, Health Safety and Wellness Committee, Scholarship Fundraiser Dinner Committee, Citizen Scholarship Recipients Committee, Sport Scholarship Committee and By-Laws Committee.
- 5- Code of Conduct is being discussed at the Board of Education Meeting that is being held tomorrow. This code is more kid friendly and parent-students have responsibilities and rights.
- 6- Let's Chat with the Superintendent will start. The first one will be held on 10/04/17 at Enrico Fermi School. Members asked if at least one of these meetings could be held in the evening.
- 7- 2017-2018 Calendar was reviewed

State Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins spoke about her experience with the PTA and concerns for advocating for our schools. She advised that we must come together with one unison message as the collective strong voices do make a difference.

Guest Speaker, Dr. Edwin Quezada, Superintendent of Schools

- Discussed opening of the school year, went without many problems. He thanked Sophia Wu for helping the main office during the first weeks of school in the registration department. 3,196 new families were registered during this new school year. 1200 Pre-K students are enrolled and 400 Pre-K students are on a waiting list. The Grant for the Pre-K program is supposed to go until 2020.
- Commented on the Gear Up Conference where the Yonkers School district had the most representation of students. Robin Brumfield attended the conference as well.
- Parents can now e-mail teachers via their board of education email account. If the teacher is using another application for communicating with parents, then that program should be used. This was a point that the YPS won in the negotiation process.
- Open House schedules have begun.

- Budget is in place, very few vacancies that will be filled soon as Dr. Quezada is interviewing the last candidates.
- He has visited all of the schools at least once and will continue to visit schools.
- Election Day, 11/7/17, is a day of instruction. Parent volunteers should help their schools, as long as the principal would like the help, to keep children safe by “monitoring school doors”.
- Smart Bond delivered technological equipment to the schools over the late summer, 3000+ laptops.
- Next Generation Science standards have been implemented in response to the new Board of Regent’s standards. On June 5, 2018 there will be a new social studies exam. He is in communication with the Commissioner of the Department of Education to inquire what were the reasons of the 5th grade underperformance on the regents.
- MAP testing (Measure of Academic Progress assessment) some schools did not have their laptops configured and ready to use for this test since the equipment was just recently delivered. Students will be tested at least twice a year with the MAP as this is being used for the APPR for teachers.
- Empire Grant awarded \$1.4 million in After School targeted funding for 6-7 schools.
- **Questions:**
 - o PEARLS Pre-K program appears to have space can the children waiting for placement is placed there? (asked by Nelly Nelfori) NO, as children who attend PEARLS must pass the test to get into the school. Children who scored within the 5th percentile were accepted into PEARLS this year. There are other programs that appear to have space but the administration must first verify that those seats are in fact open. Calls must be made to those parents to verify if the children will not be attending the YPS, then they can be removed from our active list and the new seat can be offered to the families that are waiting.
 - o Jose Montas reviewed the questions that were made earlier during the meeting with Dr. Quezada. Yes Mayor Spano did write a letter of support for the charter school.
 - o Karen Beltran inquired if a grant writer had been hired. Yes a person was hired for this position.
 - o Special Education Update: there are a large number of referrals with little manpower to meet the timeline (45-days) set forth by NYS. Due to YFT bargaining agreement, the YPS cannot outsource evaluations and must rely on staffed positions.
 - o Concerns about the class sizes in some schools as k-6 grades are having 27+ children enrolled in a classroom.

Sally Pinto thanked all of our guest speakers and the hosting school, Saunders High School. Meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM.