

PTA Meeting Notes
Meeting @9AM
March 16,, 2022

Board Members Present:

Kate Rubin (Co-President), Dr. Meryem Bencheikh-Ellis (Co-President), Regina Thompson (Co-Treasurer), Julie Underwood (Fundraising Coordinator), Esra Dayani (member-at-large), Miguel Negrón (AP), Guidance Counselors: Marie Cadot, Fred Raphael, Renita Garrison, and Anna Karageorgis

At least 8 association members, including a minimum of 2 board members and 6 parent members present; a quorum was reached.

CALL TO ORDER Meeting was called to order by Co-President (Middle School), Kate Rubin, at 9 am.

Co-President/MS Kate Rubin pta@k497.org

Introduction to the meeting - IB principle is CARING

- All guidance counselors will be speaking during the PTA meeting today.

AP Miguel Negrón update (AP.negron@k497.org)

- Guidance counselors are here today; happy to have them talking with us.
- As many know, Principal Sam (Schmoeger) is expecting a baby in a few weeks, but fear not! AP Casey and I (AP Negrón) will hold down the fort. Please email us with any concerns.
- We have great team leaders, subject team leaders, restorative justice and will lean on our PTA for support during this time
- Thank you shout-out to the PTA for supporting Principal Shmoeger's baby shower event
- Reminder that parent/teacher conferences are this week

Update for Dr. Meryem Bencheikh-Ellis (Co-President, high school)

- Glad to see so many parents at the meeting this morning
- Would love to start thinking of an in-person PTA meeting (aiming for April meeting)
- Women's history month update
- Discussion of Mayoral control and accountability in schools; whether to give Mayor Adams control over the budget for the next four years. Vote happens in June. Many parents are organizing right now. Please email Meryem if you have any questions or want to get involved.

Guidance counselors' report:

(Ms. Renita Garrison (grades 6-7), Ms. Anna Karageorgis (Grade 8), Ms. Marie Cadot (grades 9-10) and Mr. Fred Raphael (grades 11-12)).

- Ms. Garrison (renita.garrison@k497.org): Helps at-risk students, kids who need to come in to talk about any issues they are having at school or home. Please feel free to email or call. Will usually get back to you within 24 hours.
- Ms. Cajou (marie.cadot@k497.org): Help with Regent's exams and the stress associated with them. Students will need extra support during that (test-taking and prep) time.
- Ms. Karageorgis (anna.karageorgis@k497.org): In charge of social emotional check-ins with students and the high school application process. I'm very proud of the kids and the parents. Regents exams are back on. Eight grade students are taking them for the first time in June. Our 8th grade kids are already taking high school level courses. I used to be the parent coordinator and I now help recruit students for BHS.
- Mr. Raphael (fred.raaphael@k497.org): College and career counselor as well as 11-12th counselor. We have wonderful guidance counselor resources at BHS. I help students who are ready to transition out of high school. I help them look at all post-secondary options, college, job training, going into the workplace, vocational etc. We can help with every part of the process (applying, financial aid, matriculation). We try to make it a very personalized process.

Question and Answer period

Parents asked questions of guidance counselors in the chat and in real-time.

Topics included:

- PSATs,
- SATs
- transferring to other high schools
- how many kids stay from middle to high school (normal retention is 60 percent of the student population according to one counselor, 50-80 percent of the students choose to stay according to another.
- Idea was floated for a school retention committee to keep kids moving up in the IB program from middle to high school. AP Negron acknowledged the need for better communication and in letting families and students know that BHS is a 6-12 school and more about the IB curriculum.
- *AP negron*: "If you leave after 8th grade it's like you're leaving at intermission. We have one of the best college offices in the city. You meet with the college counselor so many times. Also very attractive to have an IB degree if looking at colleges."
- Guidance counselor Mr. Raphael reminds parents that colleges are looking for students who are attempting or doing the IB diploma. Almost every college takes the college credits from the IB courses (anything over a 4 or 5 usually gets the credits). I.B is a signifier that these students are staying engaged all 4 four years of high school.
- Questions about where do students go from BHS? Students go anywhere from Northeastern, Cal Poly, Emerson, CUNY, SUNY, Hunter College, currently waiting to hear from the rest of the private schools. Even students who don't fully complete the IB program still get many college credits and are set apart during the college application process.

Call for final questions:

Question from chat: There's a new deli on Smith Street that is a vaping shop and deli and they are selling THC edibles to under age students. AP Negron responds that the school has reported this to the NYPD and the substance abuse guidance counselor has also reported it to the NYPD and staff is trying to be around/near the deli during school hours.

Treasurer's Report by Regina (ptacotreasurer@k497.org)

- Monthly profit and loss review (link?)
- Earned a few hundred dollars in Income from Amazon.com (Amazon Smile) this month
- Balance sheet looks great. Strong total assets.
- Teacher appreciation happened this month.
- We have some upcoming fundraisers. Email ptatreasurer@k497.org or Regina (ptacotreasurer@k497.org) if you want to help out, see any spreadsheets or help on the budget committee.

Approval of February 2022 minutes

Kate Rubin (PTA co-president) motioned to approve the February minutes. Motion was seconded by Esra Dayani and Julie Underwood.

Auction update from Julie Underwood (bhsfundraising@k497.org)

- Please help out with the auction. Donate an experience or item. Help make calls or contact businesses. Email Julie to help.

Other Announcements:

- Look out on Konstella for all announcements and save-the-dates.
- April 28th is the BHS Musical Showcase
- May 10th, free family tech talk
- Save the Date for the Spring Auction !!! (May 5th, 2022)
- May 13th is career day

TO BE APPROVED BY MEMBERSHIP AT APRIL MTNG.