



75 MORTON | MS 297 NYC

PTA Executive Board Meeting
December 14, 2022 at 9:30 am
Join via [Zoom](#)

Meeting Minutes

- I. Call to Order
 - a. Welcome
 - b. Approval of the minutes of November 2022 PTA General Meeting
- II. Principal's Report
 - a. High school applications are complete
 - b. Winter showcase during school day - Vocal and instrumental majors performing for peers. Tomorrow at 6 p.m. performing for families.
 - c. Field Trip to Whitney next week for 7th and 8th grade visual arts majors.
 - d. 12/20 a half-day for professional development with Change Impact. Childcare available from 12-3. Dismissal at noon
 - e. Morton Day 6-8th period fun days with advisory on 12/22. Movies and popcorn.
 - f. Ice skating at Wolman rink
 - g. Theater for a New Audience will come in once/week to do scriptwriting and Shakespeare.
 - h. Urban Word to work with students. Work on poetry slams.
 - i. 6th Grade will have one English class/week starting in April. Focus on poetry
 - j. New bilingual guidance counselor in the building three days a week, plus a new bilingual social work intern.
 - k. New school aide beginning in January to work in the cafeteria, halls, and stairwells.
 - l. Assistant Principal will go on Maternity leave in January. Grace Howe will join in January and Feb as interim AP. Val Boos will support the AP duties as well.
 - m. Safety:
 - i. Two incidents where students were given pepper spray. Illegal for anyone under 18 to carry pepper spray. It's an immediate superintendent suspension. Illegal to have pepper spray in the school building.
 - ii. Fight in the 8th grade between 3 students. Immediate suspension per DOE policies.
 - iii. Issues are not with the entire 8th grade, but a small group of students. This is resulting in misconceptions, particularly among younger students. Need to

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Treasurer (ptaTreasurer@75morton.org): Florin Dorobantu

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- address culture concerns.
- iv. Student surveys. Students who put 1 or 2 low scores, Valerie meeting with these students to hear concerns. Seeing tensions between new students and English-speaking students. Listening circles allowing for better integration. 3 listening circles in the 8th grade.
 - v. Youth Community Officers from NYPD having safety discussions with new students.
 - vi. Question re: issues outside the building. What is the school's role?
 - School safety officer stands outside Ray's Deli and bus area, as well as outside the building. No patrol around the school building currently.
 - Can consider patrolling the area to address concerns.
 - If an altercation happens in the area but outside the building, disciplinary measures can and do apply.
 - A lot of rowdy play in the morning that the administration is working on addressing with students. Will work on getting people outside to address.
 - vii. What are the consequences for students hitting a teacher?
 - There has been no incident where a student hit a teacher. Valerie will follow up to investigate the source of misinformation.
 - Consequence would be immediate suspension.
 - viii. Safety on the stairs. Concerns about what's going on. How is it being addressed?
 - Issues above the first floor. Can there be someone above the first floor between periods?
 - Teachers are not required to stand in stairwells and hallways. Additional security in these spaces requires the school to pay extra to staff to monitor these spaces between periods. School will look at options to pay staff for additional supervision between floors.
 - School Culture: Ideas to address school culture. Interventions to address attitudes of a small group of students and younger students misperceptions of 8th graders.
 - a. In addition to disciplinary actions, the school needs to emphasize culture. 8th grade class has had a particularly challenging middle school experience with Covid. Need to address this as well. Issues are not with the entire 8th grade, but a small group of students.
 - b. Previously had a "buddy program". Older students can mentor/support younger students to help address concerns and

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- dispel misconceptions.
 - c. Student Ambassadors - the plan is to have older students interact with 6th graders and have a point of contact.
 - d. Parent suggested that every 8th grader should be a buddy, not just an ambassador.
 - e. Students are intimidated by older students, but this is largely a misconception. Need to increase opportunities to interact between grades. After school programs are great for this.
 - n. Phones:
 - i. Goal is phone-free school. School policy is that the phone stays in the locker, but students are not following the rules.
 - ii. Issue with violation of cell phone policies. Admin collecting a lot of phones. Becoming a large distraction. Affecting the quality of education and confiscation of phones increases negative interactions between students and staff.
 - iii. Adopting Yondr Bags to address the issues. Used by Wager, Baruch, MS131, East Side.
 - iv. Implementation underway with Yondr rep. Updating phone policies to be shared with families and students.
 - v. Parent Zoom meeting on Yondr and new policy in January.
 - vi. Advisory lessons for students to learn how to use this.
 - vii. Students can use phones during out lunch. Parents feel for safety reasons, students should be able to use phones.
- III. Treasurers' Report
- a. Budget
 - i. Bake sale on election day raised \$550
 - ii. Family Giving is only ~10% of the goal. Falling short. A push needed to address this forecast shortfall.
 - 1. Participation rate by # of students - only 5%. A parent suggested that we emphasize this to families. This should be publicized with parent body.
 - iii. Expenses: classroom supplies, enrichment programs, tax filing, bookkeeping software. On target. Spent ~14% of the year's budget.
 - iv. Accounting and legal services budget
 - 1. Need to increase by \$2500 to file 2017 & 2018 taxes. Wasn't required at the time, but is required now. Cost will cover the accounting fees.
 - 2. Motion to increase budget to \$4000 approved by PTA at the general meeting. 14 votes in favor, none opposed, 9 abstentions.
 - a. Yeas: Jen Gravel, Rebecca Lupardo, Florin, Lilibeth, Thom, Elly,

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Deborah, Karl, Jasmi, Danielle, Sharon, Corinne, Grey, Antonio,

3. Budget increases to cover ice skating and a seasonal party for the 8th grade to allow for a special event for each grade. \$1,000 increase. Vote on this in January.

IV. Presidents' Report

a. Upcoming Events & Initiatives

i. Holiday Gift Giving for teachers and staff

- Participation is low. % participation is ~5%. Need to get the word out to support faculty and staff. Less than \$10/teacher with current participation rate.
- Typical donation is \$100-\$150 per teacher.
- Need to send daily email.
- Suggestion to have additional face-to-face interactions at pickups and drop-offs. Backpack a card for holiday gift card to send home.
- Bodies on the ground - need volunteers to help with this. There's a real lack of engagement by parent body which makes it hard to fundraise and support events.
- Parent volunteered to take on backpack cards and a box at the winter showcase.
- Collection from kids/per class. Competition to see who participated the most. Winner got a pizza party.
- Dropbox for kids - \$1 of outlunch \$?

ii. Holiday Taste of Home Potluck

- Canceled due to lack of interest.

iii. Calendar of Events

- PTA working on improving both admin and PTA communication with parent body.
- Google calendar of school events is available. Available on school website [75morton.org/calendar](https://www.75morton.org/calendar).

iv. Committees

- School store
- Auction Committee
- 8th Grade Committee - 8th Grade breakfast 1/12/23 | 9am - 10:15am
- Yearbook
- Graduation

V. Parent Coordinator Update

a. Coffee Talk with Hope Flamm

- i. 1/20 @ 9:30 a.m. with Shawn Grover, a family psychologist who does parent

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- workshops. Working with Hope on a special workshop on bullying- 1/20 at 9:30 a.m.
- ii. Skipping December due to busy calendars.
- b. Received large # of donations. Not currently accepting more until after current donations are organized. A request will go out in the new year if specific categories of items are needed.
- VI. Old Business
- VII. New Business
 - a. Consideration of ways to increase parent involvement in PTA.
- VIII. Adjournment @ 11 a.m.

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