

WESS PA MEETING

April 24, 2018

Guest Speakers:

Principal Jessica Jenkins

Upcoming Dates:

- Next PA Meeting: 5/24/18, 6:30 pm
 - CABARET Night: 5/1/18
 - Parent Ed Night: 5/30/18
 - 8th Grade Regents: 6/12 – 6/13/18
 - 8th Grade Graduation (Passages): 6/22/18
- =====

8:45 am: Meeting commences.

- **APPROVED MARCH 2018 PA MINUTES**
- **BYLAWS UPDATE (Eric)**
 - With a new high school coming in, and the assumption that the PA would be dominated by Middle School parents, we wanted to ensure that high school was still represented. Here are changes proposed:
 - (1) Adding on 3 new positions:
 - 2 High School Representatives
 - 1 additional 6th Grade Rep (there will be 3 in total now)
 - (2) 3 VPS: Will now consist of one with child in high school, and one with child in middle school, and one VP-at-Large
 - (3) Term Limits for PA officers: Increasing from 2 years to 3;
 - (4) Also added some language to 6th grade Reps about areas they should assist in, but nothing too specific so that there is flexibility.
 - MOTION TO APPROVE. APPROVED.
- **CABARET NIGHT (Mark Lovci gives brief presentation encouraging attendance)**
 - This is our first one ever. It is for WESS PARENTS only.
 - Talent is booked. It's going to be a very entertaining evening.
 - Reminder: It is next Tuesday, May 1st – 7:00, Venue is closeby: on 72nd street. Ends by 9:00 pm. Tickets are currently on sale
- **PARENT ED NIGHT (Gretchen)**
 - Topic: The role of technology in young people's relationships and how parents can work through these challenges. Aristo will be moderating.
 - Link with specific details is forthcoming. Will be sent to all parents via email.
- **STORAGE ISSUE AT WESS (Parent Volunteer Kimberly Kay speaks)**
 - I cleaned the temporary storage area in the Black Box theatre. Got 5 huge garbage bags.
- **SPIRIT WEAR REMINDER**
 - Try to put your kid's name in WESS shirts so that if goes to lost and found (which many do), it can be returned.
 - Also – reminder that Weds and Friday is SPIRIT WEAR that day.
 - Per Jessica, crew shirts CANNOT be used in place of WESS shirts on Spirit Days. Jessica wants this reinforced so please remind your kids.

- **RENOVATION UPDATE** (Christine DiPisquale)
 - Overall, things are moving along nicely. Everything is on track. Here are the updates:
 - Brand new roof is coming. (FYI: This is NOT something we pay for)
 - Kitchen issues are getting resolved. It should be ready by beginning of September
 - Black Box theatre also moving along: It should be done by beginning of school year
 - The 3rd floor, the hallways – all on track
- **VOLUNTEERING** (Gretchen/Luisa)
 - Could use more volunteers. Pls see Gretchen or Luisa to add on your name.
 - There are opportunities like chaperones for the 6th or 7th Grade Social coming up.
- **P.A. UPDATES** (Eri)
 - PA ELECTIONS
 - Elections are coming up. Set for the next PA Meeting/ MAY 24TH/ in the evening.
 - All positions are open. We don't take nominations in advance.
 - For the SLT – there is ONE POSITION open. This is much more curriculum-focused.
 - We need volunteers to be on Election Committee. (FYI - Election Committee members cannot also run for office.).
 - BUDGET (2018-19)
 - We are in the process of developing next year's budget. We discuss it in May, then vote in June. Much is the same as the year before, but there will be new items reflecting high school needs, like new teachers.
- **TREASURER'S REPORT** (Andreas)
 - In general, we did very well this year.
 - We outperformed our expectations for the WESS Auction by over \$30K. (Applause). We have almost collected everything.
 - In total we have raised \$153,745.06 this year, combined with our expenses of \$122,033.43. That gives a resulting net revenue of \$31,711.63.
 - Reminder that Fairway and Family Giving are still open
 - FAIRWAY: So far, our Fairway partnership has raised over \$2,000. And it is "free", that is it doesn't involve us doing anything.
 - Family Giving Update: We received 64,565.43, slightly below our target of \$70K. But the year is not over yet.
 - Reminder by Eric: Don't forget about the Corporate Match option (another way to get "free" money). Also stock donations are an option. So far we have gotten \$5,600 in stock options.
- **PARENT SOCIAL**
 - Working on a date. (Last year we had a bit of a weather fiasco).

GENERAL Q & A

- Q: DO WE OWN OR LEASE THIS BUILDING?
- A: This building is a lease. Last summer, we found out that the roof had some major problems. We engaged with elected officials and the landlord. Now it will be repaired.
- Q: THE BLACK BOX RENOVATION: WHAT DOES IT INVOLVE?
- A: We will be getting new lighting, new audio, technology upgrade.
- Q: HAS THERE BEEN A CHANGE WITH INDOOR RECESS? We HAD TO SIGN PERMISSION SLIPS. IS THERE AN ISSUE WITH NO MONEY BEING LEFT FOR IT?
- A: Not a change. At first, indoor recess was being handled by teachers. Now that we are bigger, that is no longer feasible. We now use Manhattan Youth. If there is a money issue for next year, we are not aware of it.

**** PRINCIPAL JESSICA JENKINS SPEAKS:**

● **SOME BRIEF UPDATES:**

- John Carullo (our Guidance Counselor) will be shadowing me for the next few weeks as we discuss High School.
- We are keeping SLT's (Student-Led Conferences). Many schools throughout NYC are now implementing them.
- INFO ABOUT "PASSAGES" (We require this for 8th Graders at the end of the year):
 - It is an opportunity for your student to walk thru their journey here at WESS - from start to finish. Eighth graders are working on their presentations now. Some of the students have been referring to it as a "really fancy SLT."
 - We ask each student to invite a community member - one who he/she does not know - to observe it. Sometimes a Board member comes, someone from a local business.
 - We always let the parent know in advance who the community member will be (to make sure there is no particular relationship with that individual).
 - There will be a panel. Members will ask the student questions. THE QUESTIONS ARE NOT SCRIPTED.
 - Our 8th graders are currently preparing for this in Crew. Parents – feel free to discuss this with your child at dinner.
 - WE HAVE A SAMPLE video of a former student of mine (now an adult). It is important to note that this student was NOT an expert WITH PUBLIC SPEAKING. I presented it to one crew, and it was fascinating to hear their feedback. Students benefited from seeing an actual passage in action.
 - Jessica can send other sample PASSAGE VIDEOS to 6th and 7th grade parents if they are interested.
 - We then celebrate Completion of the passage at the "Passages" ceremony.

Q&A for JESSICA re "PASSAGES"

- Q: WHAT ACTUALLY HAPPENS AT THE CEREMONY?
- A: There are awards, but no caps and gowns.
 - A: Students can FAIL the passages first time around. We make sure that students have multiple opportunities to get to passing should this be the case.
 - A: (John): In the past, if students failed, it was for not trying. We completely understand that some kids are not great public speakers.
- Q: SHOULD KIDS BE PRACTICING THEIR "PASSAGES" PRESENTATIONS AT HOME?
- A: Not right now. But the week prior, yes.
- Q: CAN THE PRESENTATION TAKE PLACE SOMEWHERE BESIDES THE CREW ROOM?
- A: Wish it could, but it's where we have space.
- Q: WHERE IS PASSAGES CEREMONY?
- A: John Jay
- Q: WHO SHOULD COME TO THE PASSAGE?
- A: We encourage your child to invite a community member. Could even be a coach. Parents are expected.
- Q: WILL THERE BE A SOCIAL EVENT AT THE END FOR 8TH GRADERS?
- A: We don't have a party scheduled.

- **INTENSIVES** (Jessica)

- Explains basically what they are: a 2-3 day field experience using NYC as our classroom. And it really is fun. We are planning now. Example: 2 of the Intensive topics are rock-climbing. Another one is a hip-hop dance tour. Intensives always take place at the end of June. ** IT'S ALL ON THE GOOGLE CALENDAR. **
- They are not Crew specific, and they are not grade specific.
- We also need parent volunteers to chaperone.

GENERAL Q&A FOR JESSICA

- Q: RE REGENTS: MY SON THINKS THERE IS NO SCHOOL ON EXAM DAY. IS THAT RIGHT?
- A: Yes. If a student is taking the Regents exam, he will come in, take the test, and then leave.
- Q: WHEN DO WE KNOW IF OUR CHILD IS TAKING THE REGENTS?
- A: You should decide as a family. Then, afterwards, we will consult with you, if we disagree with the decision.
- Q: (Jessica G.): MY SON THINKS THAT EVEN AFTER THE COURSE IS DONE, HE WILL NOT KNOW EVERYTHING FOR THE REGENTS EXAM.
- A: Not true at all. All classes are prepping.
- Q: WHAT ABOUT REGENTS EXAMS FOR IEP STUDENTS?
- A: If your child has an IEP, he/she still takes the Regents – on the same day as everyone else. If student is supposed to get extended time, we give it. Extended time can even go into the evening, if necessary.
- Q: (SANDY): ARE THERE AFTER-SCHOOL & WEEKEND CLASSES FOR REGENT STUDYING?
- A: After school.
- Q: DO YOU KNOW WHAT THE TEAMS/CLUBS WILL BE FOR NEXT YEAR?
- A: Club/ team scheduling getting planned now.
- Q: INDOOR RECESS: HAS IT STOPPED FOR 7TH AND 8TH GRADERS?
- A: Yes, that's about to end (for budget reasons). However, Eric suggests giving \$5000 technology surplus to an Indoor Recess Support line so that we can hire a Manhattan Youth person to man that indoor classroom.
 - Motion approved.

----- Meeting adjourned: 10:00 am -----

Minutes taken by Emily Ramsay, Recording Secretary, WESS PA