

**Stuyvesant High School Parents' Association
General Meeting
February 27, 2018**

Minutes

The meeting began at 7:00 p.m.

Welcome

Belinda Leung called the meeting to order and welcomed parents.

Approval of Minutes

On motion duly made and carried, the minutes from the January 2018 meeting were approved.

Principal's Report

Principal Contreras reported that the official opening and ribbon cutting event for the Innovation Lab will be held on Friday, March 2. He noted the focuses on civil engineering and aerospace engineering and that, in the short time that the center has been open, the Stuy team has gone to first place in the city because they now have the space in which to work and innovate. The next project will be creating a robotics engineering facility over the next two years. He also noted a goal to align current graduation requirement to college and career objectives.

Principal Contreras congratulated the Stuy Speech and Debate Team, which he reported has the most successful coach in the last 30 years and won two national titles last week at Harvard.

He noted that a Stuy student is only one of 112 with a perfect score on the AP Computer Science exam, which reflects well of Stuy's computer science program that is still growing and developing. He invited parents to send any questions about computer science to him and he will forward them to program director.

Principal Contreras spoke at length about the school shooting incident in Florida and the continuing discussion during the February break. He expressed his great joy in working with students and the resulting resonance of the deep pain in losing young people. He summarized some of the school's safety precautions and some of the challenges that exist for educators. He noted that he encourages the school's social studies teachers to discuss the issues in class and the challenges of trying to keep politics and policy out of the discussion. He believes that students should have an open place to discuss how they feel without being told how they should feel. He described the plans for discussion and a safety meeting next week and promised always to review safety protocols and to protect students to the best of his ability. He asked parents to download the school's text message notification system, and noted that it will always be used. He also advised that students are organizing marches throughout the city, including March 14 walkout and discussed the school's approach and policy, but noted that he does not know what DOE policy will be. He has asked NYPD to provide more safety.

He responded to parent questions: He explained that students must wait outside when they come back from lunch because the card reading machines must be reversed for egress or ingress. In response to a parent request for an event about academic integrity, Principal Contreras explained that he had held a five-hour breakfast with the principal to address the current issues and that he would be happy to share some of the ideas at a future PA meeting for working parents who cannot attend during the day. He notes some of the approaches discussed at the breakfast.

Parent Coordinator Update

Dina Ingram provided a flyer about the school survey and informed parents that they would receive an email with a survey code this evening and asked them to go online to complete it. She advised that

parents can pick up a paper copy if they prefer at parent-teacher conferences. She encouraged parents to complete the survey and explained the process and how the survey impacts the school and its goals.

In response to a parent inquiry, she explained the process for signing up and uses for the text emergency communication service, including that it is used for communicating with students as well. She provided instructions for finding it on the Stuy website on the Parents tab. Principal Contreras noted that the system is paid for with PA contributions and described some recent uses for the system.

In response to a parent inquiry, Ms. Ingram noted that parent-teacher conferences are different than dates on DOE website. She explained that Stuy teachers have option to vote on a school-based option to change dates, based on grading periods and grades on which to base conferences, and that fall and spring conferences are both changed.

English Department Presentation

Eric Grossman gave a presentation on the Stuy HS English department grading rubric. He explained the need and concern of students for a consistent grading, and the priority given to the rubric by Mr. Grossman and the department. He explained the process for creating the rubric, including his collection of data. He explained convergent versus divergent responses and reviewed certain examples of the descriptive rubric elements. He explained that students are graded on reading, writing and speaking; writing rubric is just one piece and the department has recently created a rubric that addresses all of those elements. In addition, participation is not just the number of times one speaks, it is judgment and adding value to the class discussion, being prepared, active reading with notes, post-its or underlining. Those elements allow the teacher to assess the student's learning and understanding, in addition to the student's participation in the discussion.

He responded to parent questions, including expected/reasonable time for grading, which is usually approximately two weeks, sometimes longer, but should never go longer than a month. He explained that teachers have a tremendous amount of freedom to choose the books that they assign for reading in their classes. They must touch upon all of the major eras and styles, and may or may not overlap with other classes. He noted that there has been a wide discussion regarding teachers posting individual grades, which is not mandated. Mr. Contreras addressed the issue of posting grades as well, and suggested that the process will evolve, but is not likely to be mandated. An online platform has been introduced and the goal is eventually to land on an agreed system within a few years.

Mr. Grossman explained that there are generally fewer assessments in English department. The rubric is available to students and is referred to by teachers.

He noted that for students who struggle with writing—he noted that every student struggles in different ways—the writing center is a resource open every day through the lunch periods (4 to 8) and is staffed by teachers and junior and senior students who have applied and been approved. In addition, structures are available in each class to assist students.

Mr. Grossman explained the available AP classes in the junior and senior years and that they culminate in the same AP exam at the end of each year. He explained that each department head chooses the students in the AP classes based on a GPA requirement. He noted that English requires a 92 cumulative GPA, but students without that may be accepted if there are reasons for not having the requisite GPA.

Treasurer's Report

Iris Lam gave a financial report pursuant to the written materials provided at the meeting.

Spring Elections

Ms. Leung and Suzanne Cruse noted Spring elections, timing and process.

Spring Feast

Susan Fennessey gave a brief update regarding Spring Feast.

Upcoming Events

Richard Bernstein, programming committee chair, noted upcoming meeting presentations and introduced the meeting's scheduled program.

Featured Speaker: Jed Applerouth

Jed Applerouth of Applerouth Tutoring gave a presentation regarding SAT and ACT preparation.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:40 pm.

Submitted by Susan Fennessey, Recording Secretary