

Briarcliff PTA Meeting  
May 19, 2016

Attendees: Meredith Gruber, Staci Morris, Sheila Cain, Betsy Gómez, Sara Harsel, Mimosa Hines, Amy Kiser, Dan Madding, Paule Myre-Bisaillon, Kimberly Richards, Sagrina Serrano, Brian Seymour, Craig Shapiro, Amanda Vanega, Matthew Yesko.

Staff: Stephanie Raiford, Angela Maynard, Donna Allen, Heather Dannelley, Isabel Hidalgo, Carol Huggins, Mary Jane Kipp, Joy Klingbeil.

Meeting Start: 5:40pm

**Nominating:**

The following Slate of Officers for 2016-2017 was nominated and elected by a vote of those present.

President:	Brian Seymour
Vice President of Volunteering:	Abra Rearte
Vice President of Special Events:	Sheila Cain
Vice President of Hospitality:	Elizabeth Kahn
Treasurer:	Amanda Vanega
Secretary:	Craig Shapiro

**Budget:**

Staci clarified that that we cannot attempt to obligate the next year's Board by voting on next year's budget items now. Next year's Board must approve items coming from next year's budget.

For next year's expenses that are needed prior to the adoption of next year's budget, the PTA votes now on those items in somewhat of an advisory capacity so that the members that must pay those bills early next year have confidence that there will be no controversy over paying those bills prior to the budget's adoption. In that way, the following budget items were approved for the beginning of next year:

PTA Insurance	\$250
(last year was closer to \$200; \$250 was approved as an approximation to allow for any yet-to-be-known increase)	
Open House	\$200
Meet the Teacher	\$200
Family Game Night	\$500
Spirit Wear Inventory	\$2,000
Agendas	\$1,500
(PTA requests \$5 from the parents of 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> , and 5 <sup>th</sup> grade students, and typically received approximately 70% reimbursement)	
Battle of the Books	\$600
Teacher T-Shirts	\$600
(These must be ordered by Ms. Raiford in July)	
(Next year the PTA Board will revisit this expenditure to determine if the funding will differ based on the type of shirt or possibly buying new shirts every other year instead of every year)	

The following budget items were approved for the remainder of this year:

Get Movin' Crew	\$499
(the Bulldog Bolt Fun Run fundraising website, which the Fun Run Committee will experiment with over the summer so that it can be up and running at the beginning of next year)	
New Soccer Goals	\$150
Paint for the state map	\$100
Plaque	\$150
(this is a plaque to honor the service of a long-time staff member at Briarcliff; it will be a permanent fixture on the outside wall of one of the building wings)	
Cultural Arts overage	\$500
(this resulted in an artist-in-residence that helped Briarcliff students create the permanent, beautiful mosaic that is on the outside wall of the Kindergarten wing)	

There was a brief discussion regarding purchasing an iPad for the PTA for things such as accepting credit card payments at fundraisers and recording/streaming PTA meetings for anyone that cannot attend. The discussion was effectively ended when Kimberly Richard and Matthew Yesko kindly offered to donate an iPad.

Ms. Raiford described a new writing program that she intends to purchase, which will give additional tools to Briarcliff teachers to help students become better writers. The cost is \$149 per kit, with one kit needed per classroom (approximately \$4,000 total). Ms. Raiford requested the PTA to fund the purchase. Briarcliff would use the funds (if not used for the writing program due to the PTA funding it) for basic needs like paper, projection bulbs, and other basic school needs. This led to discussion regarding some members' desire to have the PTA fund special projects instead of making up for state funding shortages at the school. Ms. Raiford stated that for school funds to be used for anything, the expenditure must be in line with Briarcliff's school improvement plan. The PTA decided to table until next year the issue of funding the kits that Ms. Raiford plans to purchase.

As the PTA has a surplus of funds from the 2015-2016 school year, there was discussion regarding other uses for those PTA funds generally. The discussion included items such as developing the outdoor classroom space, providing Ms. Allen and Barber funds for their (denied) grant application for things such as STEM books, media center tables, and snap circuits for use in teaching about electricity and electrical circuits. Other suggestions included microscopes for student use, Lego blocks (for building, engineering, and other science-related uses), updating the technology lab, and astrourfing the soccer field to address drainage issues that affect the students' time spent outside, the running club, and classroom-cleanliness.

Mr. Madding suggested increasing the teacher grants from \$200 to \$300 per teacher. While acknowledging that increasing the teacher grants would provide a benefit to the teachers and students, there were some members concerned that the increase would not address larger special projects that might benefit more than one teacher/class and cost more than \$300.

The discussion regarding the use of PTA surplus funds led to a discussion regarding establishing a formal process for both teachers and parents to submit ideas for the use of PTA funds. Everyone appeared to agree that the process should be easy to understand, easy to implement, and predictable/common sense. Ms. Raiford wants all teacher ideas to go through her so that she is aware of the developing

school needs. She will survey the teachers regarding this before and at the June staff meeting and will report back to the PTA. There was a suggestion of using Google forms for teachers and/or parents to suggest ideas. Ms. Vanega provided information from her own experience with evaluating and approving grants, including suggesting basic information to be solicited from teachers/parents for suggesting ideas for the use of PTA funds: 1. cost; 2. use; and 3. impact (i.e., # of students/classes to be impacted by the use of PTA funds). There was discussion regarding requesting additional information related to implementation (i.e., who is willing and able to implement the use of the PTA funds).

#### **Additional PTA Meetings for 2015-2016**

There was discussion regarding whether or not to hold a final PTA meeting on June 7. There are conflicts for many parents that day due to local swim team trials. It was decided that there would not be another PTA meeting for the 2015-2016 school year.

Meeting End: 6:20pm