



High School of American Studies

**PTA GENERAL MEETING**

Zoom meeting held on line November 24, 2020

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 6.03 PM BY PRESIDENT NICOLE ROTHSCHILD**

Executive Board members present: Nicole Rothschild, president; Joanna Brody, vice-president; Jorge Ramirez, co-treasurer; Eric Weinberg and Niki Singh, fundraising; Stephen Friedgood, communications secretary; Nora McCauley and Melanie Perlstein, co-recording secretaries; Maria Kiriakova, member-at-large

Administration members present: Alessandro Weiss, principal, Paula Trebo-Fiore, Parent Coordinator

**PRINCIPAL'S REPORT, ALESSANDRO WEISS**

I don't know anything that you guys don't know. No inside scoop.

Mr. Halabi's programming anticipated this, so our transition to full remote is seamless as far as instruction continuity

Some teachers are teaching from school rather than home—their choice.

Reasonable people can disagree on whether opening schools is safe enough, although we all miss something when school is fully remote.

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT, NICOLE ROTHSCHILD**

*Ongoing Business*

Mailing just went out for the Annual Appeal. One pager, used leftover envelopes.

Online spirit wear sales closed. Made \$600-ish. Lots left over from last year's order since in-person sales scheduled for March were cancelled. We hope to be able to sell again in-person, and will try again on-line one more time.

Thanks to the parents who coordinated returning text books to school from other boroughs.

Please send in donations for the annual appeal—any amount. Participation is key.

Please fill out contact forms and volunteer forms for the PTA—we would love to be in touch.

**Questions for Principal Weiss:**

*Grading period report cards?*

Shortly after Thanksgiving, there will be an email indicating that grades are posted. You will be able to see them on the parent portal. If you have trouble or don't know about that, reach out to Paula (Parent Coordinator) and she will help you.

*The in-person day—will it be something else?*

Not at present. Nothing teacher-led or counselor-led. Student government is doing a self-care check-in.

*News on SHSAT?*

None whatsoever. Also no information on high school admissions process.

*Report cards*

High schools have semesters, not trimesters. One grade at the end of January; one at the end of June. Those grades are separate—blank slate in February.



## High School of American Studies

Later this year, the counselors will be running a workshop for parents of 9th graders about semesters, etc. How high school works, now that you're more enmeshed.

### *Office Hours*

Even fully remote teachers have office hours now: hours are posted in their google classrooms. They will have emailed it to students as well.

### *Advisory*

In terms of advisory, we are thinking about it. Everyone is struggling right now. I'd rather do fewer things well, rather than more things not well.

### *SAT Tests*

No information on SAT. Nearly every college has waived the requirement for the current application cycle; some have even waived it for next year's cycle. This is probably the beginning of a trend towards moving away from standardized testing. It's physically impossible right now to take it in NYC.

### *Homework over winter break?*

Assignments should be the equivalent of a one-night's worth of homework... Anything larger than that has to be assigned in advance. Those have always been our policies

### *College courses?*

Beginning the process of discussions with Lehman College

### *PSAT?*

I don't think it's going to be possible to give it in January. It would take us days to do the testing at HSAS. Multiple days, including accommodations.

NYC is not giving it for free this year. There is an alternative method for juniors to approach National Merit scholarships—counselors have been and will continue to be in touch.

### *Spring semester?*

Usually we start that planning in mid-December... this year we will probably give ourselves more time.

I don't think that at any time this year we will have the whole community back in the school at the same time. I would be the happiest guy around if a vaccine gets rolled out quickly! But the most likely outcome is that won't happen until September.

### *Parent-Teacher Conference follow-ups*

If you didn't hear back from a teacher for conferences, reach out to Paula. She is your one-stop shop for all communications with teachers.

### *Thankfulness*



## High School of American Studies

We're all ok—struggling, but ok. Theme of the year is doing the best we can—"good enough under the circumstances." Covering the curriculum with as much fidelity as we can, and taking care of each other. That's what I'm thankful for this year.

### **TREASURERS' REPORT (JORGE RAMIREZ)**

*Summary: Account balance solid. Income down, expenses down.*

\$300,000-ish in bank

Fundraiser is down 25%

We have brought in \$60,000

Comparable to last year, but that was significantly less than the previous years

November is a significant drop compared to last year's November: \$24,000 vs \$60,000

Expenses are way down too, though. No teams traveling etc.

Lehman college last year asked us last year to pay for classes, which we hadn't done before, so we just don't know

### **FUNDRAISING REPORT (NIKI SINGH)**

Phone-a-thon will be remote this year. Week of December 14th

Hopefully you have received in the mail the PTA fundraising request

The purpose of the phone-a-thon is to remind people

Each volunteer will get a short list of names

Script is to remind people to send in a donation

Any amount is ok. We're all having downturns in our businesses and works.

100% participation is goal: \$5 or \$10 is ok. A monthly contribution is ok.

Suggestion from the chat: explicitly say in fundraising literature that \$5 is ok

### **OLD BUSINESS**

*Open House?*

Paula: Principal Weiss is waiting for DOE to get back to him. Wants parents to help produce a video.

*Grade-level social zooms*

10th grade parents had one last week—thanks to the parent reps

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Jacques Nir, social worker from Jewish Family Services, to talk on Zoom on Dec. 2 about issues kids are going through



High School of American Studies

PTA Meeting tentatively scheduled for Tues, Dec 22nd—want to space it out in case DOE has new information

Please, if you got the email about this meeting from Paula from the school, and didn't see it from the PTA, get in touch so we can get you on the list and you can get invited to grade-level events, for example

Happy and Healthy Thanksgiving!