

Minutes for the 1/21 PTA

By Karl Greenberg

“Sometimes fresh, usually accurate, and always with just a touch of creative license...”

Last Thursday's PTA meeting covered a lot of ground, from the trip to Albany next week to ELA.

We have had an excellent response to our Annual Fund appeal letter, per PTA treasurer Adam Schecter, PTA treasurer. We have received \$7,075 from about 20% of school families. Thanks to all who have donated. There has been a wide range of giving, from \$25 to \$1,000 per Dan. “But any amount is welcome,” he said. “we want to encourage all families to contribute at whatever level they can.” He said the goal is raising \$20,000 to make up for the gap in State funding for charter schools. You can send in a check made out to Prospect Schools or click the “donate” button on the school’s website (www.brooklynprospect.org) and use a credit card.

Also a shout out to everyone who helped with organizing and volunteering for the Barnes and Noble Gift wrapping event. We raised \$186 for the PTA and generated lots of publicity and good will for the school. Carla, Tilda and Nina made it all happen.

Next up: the Annual Fund drive and a school photo day for which a percentage of sales will go to the school. Stay tuned.

Next up: the big trip to Albany. Vegas it ain't. I take it back. Maybe it is Vegas. Anyway, students who are coming along will have a training session with Miss Beerman on how to handle those horrific legislators on advocacy day. She will give them a rundown on how policies and laws are made on the state level. Tell me as long as you're at it. I'd love to know. Students and fam will travel to Albany, interact with staff and lawmakers, and generally kick bureaucratic butt. Then students have an opp to explain their experience in Albany.

The idea, expressed by someone at the PTA (Ms. Wilner) is that more parents than kids is good though kids are good to bring out what little humanity is left in the halls of government up there.

Speaker events speaker nights? Anything of topical interest? Parents can do an evening either large or small groups. Speak to Carla about volunteering to do that if you are interested.

Chelsea, head of the student council then came up and gave a presentation about what the kids are doing vis fundraising for Haiti.

Then came a massive presentation by Mr. Citrulo on E.L.A and how it works, which I will try to delineate below, though I can't vouch for the accuracy.

"I got involved because of the idea that charter schools are mission-driven institutions. When school has a clear understanding what it stands for there's a clear reference point from which to be judged. Everything from how administrative teams are organized to what text book we use in ELA." - Mr. Citrulo

Choice: reading logs, library books. it's based on research at Teacher's College: access to books. student choice in reading and students being matched to reading level. Students become better readers and writers when they read books that are appropriately challenging to them. We try to practice that in ELA. Nightly reading assignments toward building reading stamina. relevance comes into play when we talk about books we selected. In line with BPCS mission the books follow a global citizenship schema.

Esperanza Rising: young mexican girl to U.S.

Catherine Applebee: Home of the Brave about a Sudanese boy who leaves war torn hell hole for Minnesota.

Brothers in Hope: a read-aloud that looked at those left behind in Sudan, refugees. Brother's in Hope is picture book memoir about the several lost boys of Sudan. One displaced boy's family was killed by invading soldiers and suffered a 13 year effort to find refuge. This introduced us to non fiction work about studying and investigating current events in Sudan, and becoming aware and excited about vote for independence this year, very few times a country votes for independence instead of having to go to war for it, so it's of major historical significance.

"Self reporting that they are reading in different genres than they have before. Beowulf is coming up. as well. other thing we try to do to maintain learning is provide challenge for all of our students: Making sure on daily basis students touch on or improve in some way these large collection of skills: not just reading skills but 20th century skills. challenges are to provide access and challenge for every student. how?

vocabulary: I teach vocabulary as a problem-solving activity, arming students with skills to solve problems. I'm reading a book and come to word I dont know. prevents me from understanding story. students actively engage with language, emotional connection with it because of enjoyment of story.

What the brooklyn prospect class room looks like: Student engagement, that kids are active and working on task at hand. that students are working with eachother. and differentiation. zone of proximal development. put student in position where they are confronted with something new.

Target skills students need to improve on. Mr. Brink Washington and I launched for the last two months of school an autobiographical inquiry that is to be turned into a dramatic

performance. how we can turn that into wonderful product we can watch and participate in. there will also be an assessment coming up.

A parent asked whether he could help students choose books. he encourages parents to get students to come find him during break and ask about books.

someone asked if we are working toward typewritten essays and homework. not resolved. tech literacy is a problem

next PTA Meeting is March 18.