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Minutes of Virtual Special PTA Meeting

December 4, 2020

Meeting called to order at 12:05 pm.

President, Cindi St. George: Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance. Welcomed all to our Special Virtual PTA meeting, introduced officers and noted that we have the proper number of members present to conduct business.

Introduced officers:

Kate Martin: Vice-President

Jessica Cona: Secretary

Nicole Annunziato: Treasurer

As you all are probably aware and hopefully saw a letter from Mrs. Iconis on November 23, 2020 which stated:

Governor Cuomo declared the zip code 11762 (Massapequa Park) as “Yellow Zones.” This designation indicates a seven-day rolling average COVID positivity rate above 2.5% for 10 days, having ten or more new daily cases per 100,000 residents over a seven-day average.

For our school district, this Yellow Zone designation also means that there is a COVID testing requirement that must be met in order for the schools to remain open. The District is currently clarifying with local officials and the district physician the requirement and impending plan for “testing” 20% of the populations (students and staff) of the three schools within the 11762 zip code, i.e. Birch Lane, McKenna, and East Lake.

This did not impact our school in zip code 11758, however, I put an email out on Monday 12/1/2020 to Unqua parents (through our PTA email communication system) and posted to the Unqua Moms Facebook page (more parents view that page) if any parent wanted to share feedback, had questions or concerns regarding Massapequa Park being designated a Yellow Zone and COVID-19 testing that I would share with Massapequa Council of PTAs on their behalf and to accurately represent what Unqua families were thinking.

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I had almost 35 parents respond, some speaking on behalf of their husband as well, and a summary of those responses were shared with the Council President.

I opened the floor to any parents that had any questions or needed clarification regarding the COVID-19 testing and how it would work in the yellow zone schools. A letter was posted to the district website on 12/1/2020 and sent to the affected schools and not sure if everyone saw it. No parents had any questions or concerns but I wanted to clarify some rumors and feedback that I heard circulating. The COVID-19 testing in yellow zone schools is for in-person students, staff and teachers. Parents cannot be tested as part of the 20%. Private health insurance is accepted, however no co-pay is required and for those without health insurance, the CARES Act will cover the cost. There is no out of pocket expenses to those volunteering to be tested. The school nurse doesn't perform the test and kids are not taken out of class randomly to be tested. An outside company, called ATC Healthcare Testing and Screening, will handle the entire process. They are trained testers and certified medical practitioners and have experience working with kids. Parents that consent to testing are asked to complete a form by a certain date and further information will be provided. There is a designated date, time and location for those consenting to come in for testing. The testing is completely voluntary and parents can be present. If you are not interested in having your child(ren) tested, do not complete the form and no further action is required.

I, along with Unqua's 3 Council Delegates, had an Emergency Council meeting on 12/3/2020 to discuss Advocacy Actions regarding COVID-19 testing in schools because PTA Council opposes the state-mandate that requires the Massapequa Public Schools to test students for COVID-19 as a contingency for the schools to remain open for in-person learning. Massapequa Council of PTAs supports in-person learning options for all students. Once again, Massapequa Council of PTAs is not opposed to COVID-19 testing, but it should not be tied into in-person education for our students. If numbers are high in a particular zip code, then the community should be tested in a controlled environment. The COVID-19 positivity rate is low in our schools. Our schools are a safe environment and have many safety measures in place, such as masks and desk shields. As a result, the following items were proposed and voted on by each school's PTA membership and below are Unqua PTA results.

- letter writing campaign proposal: Motion made, seconded and carried (unanimous in-favor of).

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- 4 letters to:

1 from Massapequa Council to Governor: Motion made, seconded and carried (unanimous in-favor of).

1 from individuals to Governor: Motion made, seconded and carried (unanimous in-favor of).

1 from Massapequa Council to elected officials: Motion made, seconded and carried (unanimous in-favor of).

1 from individuals to elected officials: Motion made, seconded and carried (unanimous in-favor of).

- press conference proposal: Motion made, seconded and carried (unanimous in-favor of).

**PTA membership was verified before each vote. The above documents were shared before the meeting and read aloud at today's meeting and any parent feedback or questions were welcomed before each vote was taken.

I will share the results from the Unqua PTA vote regarding the above issues with Massapequa Council of PTAs at an Emergency Meeting later tonight.

After all the letters were motioned as approved Jeanine Caramore spoke using her parent hat as she is on the BOE in respect to the yellow zone.

Local Government officials have been in contact with the Department of Health with regards to there not being a formula of why we are in a positivity rate. There is no formula for the number of people being tested and looking at the positive cases vs the negative cases rather they are looking at the entire population vs the positive cases.

They are also looking into finding out what we need to do as a Town/District to get out of the yellow zone. Other towns are at a higher rate but currently the zones are based on the % increase of a 7-day rolling average. There is such a gray zone with the Governor that is not clear to anyone what the rules are and hope to make things better-it is inconsistent and arbitrary. Jeanine just wanted to let our membership know that there is a team looking into all the guidelines and rules and the district/BOE will keep us all posted.

Please continue to follow the Massapequa District website for up to date information regarding COVID-19 in our Massapequa School District.

If no further business, meeting adjourned at 12:50 pm

Next Meeting will be Jan 13, 2021 9:45 AM