

**DRAFT Minutes**  
**Stuyvesant High School Parents' Association**  
**General Meeting**  
**Tuesday, Jan. 21, 2003**

Co-President Judy Moore called the meeting to order at 7:05 P.M.

**Co-Presidents' Report.** Judy Moore announced that:

- 19 Stuyvesant students were named semifinalists in the Intel Science Talent Search. She congratulated all semifinalists and participants, as well as faculty advisors and mentors who helped the students.

- Mayor Michael Bloomberg has announced a major reorganization of the New York City public school system. Principal Stanley Teitel and the PA will inform parents about any effects on Stuyvesant.

- Volunteers are needed for a nominating committee for the spring PA elections. Parents interested in serving should contact the PA co-presidents via e-mail. In addition, parents interested in running for office can talk with PA officers about responsibilities and election procedures.

- The Phonathon, the PA's main fundraiser, will probably be May 12 – 14. Volunteers are encouraged to contact Harvey Blumm, Phonathon chair.

- The PA Executive Board is looking into the school's participation in a health registry related to the World Trade Center attack.

- Parents are encouraged to return a consent form recently sent home about a mental health survey of Stuy students. The survey is designed to identify students suffering emotional distress related to the World Trade Center attack.

- College Night, set for May 1, will offer parents and students a chance to talk with visiting college representatives.

- Graduation is scheduled for Wed., June 25.

- The centennial of Stuyvesant will be celebrated in 2004. Details will be announced as the date nears.

**Minutes.** The minutes of the Dec. 17 PA general meeting were approved as written.

**Treasurer's Report.** Donovan Moore reported that the PA has income of almost \$500,000 this year. Teachers are being encouraged to spend their allocated money. In response to a question, Donovan said the Appropriations Committee will meet in February to consider further allocations. He also said the PA cannot put money into an endowment fund because money must be spent the same year it is raised. He also said that the proposal to bring the College Coach program to Stuyvesant remains under discussion. College Coach would provide an individual college counseling session for juniors and their parents.

**School Leadership Team.** Ellen Krug said the following topics were discussed at the Jan. 14 SLT meeting:

- College Office issues such as allocating money for computers and conducting a survey of the office's strengths and weaknesses;

- Guidance policies on students who fail classes;

- Diversity, including questions such as, Why do groups of students isolate themselves? Is that a problem? If so, how much of a problem?

Parents are welcome to attend as observers. The February meeting of the SLT has yet to be scheduled.

— PROGRAM —

**Beyond the GPA: Navigating Adolescence**

Judy Moore introduced Dr. Marsha Levy-Warren, a clinical psychologist and author of *The Adolescent Journey*. Joining Dr. Levy-Warren in a roundtable discussion of adolescent issues were Dr. Lawrence Aber, a clinical psychologist who is a professor at the Mailman School of Public Health (Columbia) and Director of the National Center for Children in Poverty at Columbia; Pat Cleary, Stuyvesant College Advisor; and students Arthur Burkle, Yitian Liu, Abhinav Nafday and Amalia Della Paolera.

Dr. Levy-Warren began by describing stages of adolescence and related issues. Noting that children enter puberty earlier than ever (girls at about 12 years old and boys at 13 1/2 to 14), she said kids often aren't ready for the change and may feel pushed out of childhood. In this early stage of adolescence, children often alternate between wanting to be treated more as grown-ups and more as they were before. Some children feel disappointed and lost when they realize that growing up is irreversible and they can't go back to childhood.

Within groups of children, the onset of adolescence creates divergence in previously homogeneous groups. Same-sex relationships often become extremely important at this stage as children define their self-image.

A child's effort to define self-image continues into middle adolescence (the early high school years) and explains why children form groups around interests like sports, politics and music. Children also begin to think about themselves in terms of gender and their attractiveness to others. They must also answer questions such as Who am I? How am I the same as my family? What do I think about my religion? According to Dr. Levy-Warren, this is important psychological work that requires kids to become self-involved so they can resolve their questions.

Children's thought processes also change as they mature.

Middle-adolescent kids live in the here and now. By late adolescence, kids begin thinking about their future. If older adolescents can see themselves becoming what they want to be, they can feel good about themselves.

A challenge for parents is to help young people feel empowered so they will stay engaged in the world and become committed, effective adults. Parents must also help children learn to relax and have a good time without abusing alcohol or drugs. Dr. Levy-Warren said kids ask her, "What is the difference between me smoking marijuana and my parents coming home and having a couple of drinks?" She said parents should be as knowledgeable as possible about these substances and recommended the book *Buzzed, The Straight Facts About the Most Used and Abused Drugs from Alcohol to Ecstasy*, by Cynthia Kuhn, et al. of the Duke University Medical Center.

Dr. Aber invited comments from panel members, and questions from the audience.

Topics included race at Stuyvesant and whether social cliques based on race or ethnicity are bad. Dr. Levy-Warren noted that early in high school, students often find comfort among friends of their own race but should make friends

beyond their own racial or ethnic group as they progress through school.

One parent asked how parents can encourage kids to continue to talk with them. Dr. Levy-Warren suggested letting kids set the agenda by talking about whatever they're willing to talk about. With this approach, she said, there will be moments, often at midnight, when your child will want to talk with you. Ms. Cleary of the College Office suggested parents schedule "quality time" by taking walks with their children or going out for breakfast with them.

Closing comments included the suggestion from a student that parents give advice in moderation — because otherwise kids will rebel.

Judy Moore closed the meeting by thanking the participants and also Robert Carr, who helped arrange the program. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Ritter, Recording Secretary

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### Help a Student — Be a Mentor

The Stuyvesant community is looking for parents/guardians to mentor our students in their research projects in chemistry, physics, economics and other applied math areas. Each student would be matched with a mentor working in the student's interest area. We need a large pool of mentors to help our children. If you would like to volunteer or know of others who can help, please complete and return the form below to the Independent Research Committee, c/o Parents' Association, Stuyvesant High School — Room 211, 345 Chambers Street, New York, NY 10282 or contact Bonnie Song (nykapa@aol.com) or Roger Kim (rkim@brookdale.edu), Independent Research Committee chairs.

I am interested in mentoring a student doing independent research.

Parent Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Student grade \_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Area of expertise \_\_\_\_\_

Please return to the Parents' Association, Stuyvesant High School — Room 211, 345 Chambers Street, New York, NY 10282 , or e-mail Bonnie Song (nykapa@aol.com) or Roger Kim (rkim@brookdale.edu), Independent Research Committee chairs.