



**Minutes of the PTA Special Meeting
May 10, 2024**

Amy MacLeod, PTA President

- The meeting was called to order 5:49 pm on Zoom.
- A quorum was present.
- Mrs. MacLeod introduced Gracemarie Rozea, our parliamentarian, who will help run the meeting.
- Mrs. MacLeod discussed the reduction of class sections from six to five for the current fourth grade class for the 2024-2025 school year, inflating the class sizes to 25-26 students. The only way that this can be prevented is if we try to advocate for our students. Last year this was attempted with the rising fifth grade class. The district wanted to reduce the classes sections from five to four. Parents attended and spoke at Board of Education meetings, met with the superintendent, staged a letter writing campaign, spoke at the PTA meeting that Dr. Brennan attended, and were successful in keeping the five sections.
- Mrs. Rozea read the results of the Class Size Poll: 100% of parents on the Zoom believe class size is important to them and are willing to advocate to keep the six class sections for the current fourth grade classes. Mrs. Rozea shared information about class sizes in New York State. The NYC class cap is 23 students for this grade level. Our district class cap is currently at 26. Once the precedent is set to have higher class sizes, then it can impact every student in the Massapequa elementary schools. Mrs. Rozea shared a series of slides about class size at Birch Lane. Dr. Brennan and Mr. Ruf will be at the May 14th PTA meeting presenting the proposed budget. This would be a good time to come and advocate for our students. The Board of Education meetings will be on May 23rd, June 6th, and June 20th. Please consider coming and making a statement. Please remember to be both respectful and professional with any comments at any of the meetings in order to achieve the most impact. Parents have been provided with a sample letter to use in a letter writing campaign (addresses provided in the attached slides). Please send letters individually to each of the addresses provided.
- Dolores Esposito thanked Mrs. MacLeod and Mrs. Rozea for their leadership and advocacy. This would be a very bad precedent to set if we allow for class sizes to rise. We need to advocate for our teachers and students.
- Mrs. MacLeod and Mrs. Rozea opened the meeting to questions. A question was asked about who makes the decision about class size. This is a Board of Education issue that they would need to vote on. The Board of Education should be representing the community and should take what we feel is important into consideration. Mrs. MacLeod will find out if this is happening in multiple schools or just at Birch Lane. If it is happening district-wide this will require a huge amount of advocacy. Mrs. MacLeod and Mrs. Rozea will also bring this issue up at Council. A question was asked about if this is a space issue. It is not a space issue. A question was asked if the proposed budget has a change in dollars per student. The budget slideshow is available on the Board of Education website. We can also ask for clarification when Dr. Brennan is at the PTA meeting on Tuesday. A question was asked about what happens if more students move into the district and if the classes go over the cap. The cap is a guideline, and the school should stay within the guideline. A question was asked if parents should take their children to the PTA meeting on May 14th. It might be more effective to bring them to the Board of Education meeting. A question was asked if parents should share the information provided at the special meeting. The more people that know about this issue, and the more people that show up to the PTA meeting, the more effective it will be. Mrs. MacLeod suggested that parents come with questions and statements to both this meeting and to the Board of Education meetings.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 6:30 pm.

S/

Secretary

Stephanie Iannuzzi

Approved: _____

The time to act is now! What can you do to help? Email the Superintendent and/or attend a Board of Education meeting and make a statement advocating keeping the six classes! We also have a Birch Lane PTA meeting with district administration on Tuesday, May 14, at 6:45 PM, where you can ask questions about the district budget, specifically the reduction of classes at Birch Lane.

If you do nothing, this will happen – the only way to try to prevent it is to take action and petition our school board to preserve the quality of education we've all come to expect.

Time is of the essence. There are three BOE meetings left before summer – May 23, June 6, and June 20, each at 8:00 in the District Board Room in the Administration wing of the High School (entrance in the back parking lot on the east side of the high school). Speaking at a BOARD MEETING is an effective effort.

Here are the email addresses of those who should receive your letters:

- Dr. Brennan, Superintendent: wbrennan@msd.k12.ny.us
- Board of Education: boe@msd.k12.ny.us
- Mr. Gilbert, President of Teacher Union: mgilbert@msd.k12.ny.us
- Mr. Ruf, Assistant Superintendent for Business Operations: ruf@msd.k12.ny.us

Here is a sample letter: (GIVE EXAMPLES OF HOW YOUR CHILD HAS BENEFITED FROM THE CURRENT CLASS SIZE)

Dr. Brennan and Massapequa Board of Education,

Our son/daughter is a 4th grader at Birch Lane Elementary. It has come to our attention that a plan is in place to reduce the number of class sections from 6 to 5 next year, thereby increasing class size by 25%.

Presently there are 126 students enrolled in 6 sections, approximately 20 students per classroom. Removing a section will increase each class to 25-26 students per classroom without additional enrollment. NY State has enacted legislation which caps NYC classroom numbers to a maximum of 23 children per class in Grades 4-8. Currently, both the Senate and Assembly have a bill in committee (S7235 and A7056) to reduce class size in grades 4-8 to 23 for public schools outside of a city. Why do our students deserve less opportunity than students in the surrounding boroughs? Are our exorbitant tax rates not substantial enough to prioritize class size?

If our district is truly dedicated to enhancing the social and emotional development of our children, how can it promote an environment that is not conducive to achieving this goal?

Massapequa "prides itself" on "excellence in education". The district's website declares that it is MSD's mission "to educate all students to their highest level of academic potential and to teach them the skills and knowledge to become capable, creative and responsible members of our society". We are seeking your assistance and implore you to take action that will ensure that our students are provided with every opportunity to thrive at the elementary school level and beyond.

Current Class Size Guidelines		Average Class Size 2019-20						
		Birch	East Lake	Fairfield	Lockhart	McKenna	Unqua	
K	22	18.7 (6)	17.5 (4)	18.2 (5)	21.7 (3)	18.5 (4)	21 (4)	
Grade 1	24	24.3 (4)	19 (3)	20.5 (4)	20 (3)	20.3 (3)	21.5 (4)	
Grade 2	24	23.3 (4)	18.5 (4)	18.8 (4)	16.7 (3)	21.7 (3)	20.5 (4)	
Grade 3	24	22.6 (5)	21.8 (4)	21.3 (4)	21.7 (3)	19 (4)	20.3 (4)	
Grade 4	26	22.4 (5)	21.8 (4)	20.3 (4)	21 (3)	23.3 (4)	19.6 (5)	
Grade 5	26	18.6 (5)	22 (4)	22 (4)	22 (3)	19.5 (4)	23 (4)	