

IPA Independent Parent Association meeting

Meeting Minutes_ Open forum_US Cafeteria

- IPA President, Amy Miller, opened with IPA Team Introductions with those present:
 - Amy Miller, IPA President; Amy Fernandez, IPA VP; Dustin Thiry, IPA Treasurer; Meagan Resch, IPA Lower School Division Rep; Cara Gerhart, Middle School Division Rep; Jade Vickery, Booster Parent Rep; (FOFA, ELC and US Division Reps not present)
- FYI Our accreditation organization, ISACS, in town for a visit in October. We are planning a social gathering with them at TIS on Tuesday, Oct. 28 from 10-11:15am for any who can attend. Please reach out to IPA or Mrs. Bolin in the LS Library.

Division updates:

- **Lower School update, Erin Wilson, Head of Lower school (LS)**
 - Homecoming Oct. 3- info and signups will be included in upcoming Panther Post
 - Lower School continuing the popular Cupcake Contest, donations go towards the IPA fund
- **Middle School update (per Erin Wilson in for Jodi Todd, Head of Middle School (MS))**
 - New this year for Middle School (replacing former Chili Cookoff) will be “Tailgate Treats”; families encouraged to make and contribute their favorite tailgate treats to be sold at our tailgate event, donations go towards the IPA fund. Info to follow.
- **Upper School update, Monica Patino, Head of Upper School (US)**
 - Homecoming is the big focus right now. This year’s theme is “Secrets of the Sea”/ “Under the Sea”
 - Spirit week will be announced soon, all schools!
 - **Seeking parent volunteers** for many areas of Homecoming, if interested please reach out to Ms. Patino
 - Homecoming game will be Oct 3, a Powder Puff Football Game (flip the script: girls will play football while the boys cheer)

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

For those new: TIS Homecoming is a super fun event that gathers all TIS families for an afternoon and evening of fun! Pep-Rally starts at 2p in US gym (all welcome), then Douglas is closed off to traffic from Rock Rd. to Webb starting at 245-3pm, Parade with the children starts at 345. Parents and families can park in the Church parking lot across the street, bring lawn chairs/blankets, etc., and gather as a group along both sides of Douglas in front of the school, to cheer on each grade level and TIS staff as they walk/drive down Douglas in the Homecoming parade -dressed up and on themed floats. At the end of parade, students and teachers will be organized by grade on the south side of Douglas and parents MUST physically check-out their child with their teacher. Families then proceed to the field behind the Lower and Upper School for tailgate activities including bouncy houses, Cupcakes Contests, Tailgate Treats, and socializing before proceeding to the game at the Football Field 6p. Concessions WILL be OPEN!

Guest Speaker, Paul Druzinsky, Head of School, presenting on what it means to be a part of The Independent Schools, what makes us unique and what we can expect from administration.

Q & A & Comments:

- Parent Question: where can they send their ideas for the school
 - Paul directed to send ideas to IPA Amy Miller and/or Amy Fernandez who can also funnel them to the appropriate areas as needed.
- Parent Comment: Requested descriptive a volunteer requests. Knowing specifically what is needed (time commitment, specific items, etc.,) super helpful.
- Parent Comment: Parent noted that they have felt communication has been better
- Parent Comment: Parent feeling the effects of a reduced enrollment. Requested for administrations or the Board to underscore the TIS Mission, Vision & Strategy
- Parent Comment: Piggybacking on above, parent asked for TIS to make the Mission, Vision and Strategy available so that parents have ability to reference/ align
 - Mr. Druzinsky assured administration will work with the TIS Board to clearly outline
- Parent Question: Where are we now, financially speaking?

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- Mr. Druzinsky expressed that he feels we have successfully withstood the low point and are now on the upswing with a spirit of growth and community. Immediate goals include: recruiting new students, retaining current students and fundraising.
- Parent Questions: Parent shared question and concern about a recent change to the handbook regarding attendance and excused vs. unexcused absences.
 - Mr. Druzinsky ensured he will look into it further, apply a balanced perspective and circle back with those involved.

Introduction: Jessica Stong, TIS Admissions, Marketing, Communication & Fundraising; offering assistance for any ideas or conversation regarding these areas.

Fundraising update

- The Fall fundraiser is in planning stage and will be presented soon. Fundraisers are IPA's main source of financially supporting the school, teachers and students. Participation in any and all is beyond appreciated. Funds go to assisting in the grade level field trips, special projects and other needs not typically funded through the school.

Parent Volunteer update

- Amy & Amy have a 2025 focus to create one central area for parents of students in all divisions to easily access what parent volunteer opportunities are available and needed. Please feel free share ideas or suggestions as we develop this. Will share updates at future IPA monthly meetings.

General Reminders:

NOTE: New Meeting Info...IPA meetings are now the **third Tuesdays** of every month 8:15 to 9am in the Upper School **Cafeteria**. Each month will have a different guest speaker but will follow a similar format with division updates, parent volunteer opportunities, general school-wide updates and Q & A. All parents are automatically included in IPA and encouraged to attend, get/stay involved and meet new people!