

## MINUTES

### MS 54 General PTA Meeting: 11/14/17

The meeting was called to order and presided over by co-presidents Katie Miller and Jerome Kramer.

Quorum was achieved.

### CO-PRESIDENTS REPORT

- **Thanksgiving Pie Sale**
  - Last day to buy pie was 11/14/17
  - Pick up pies on 11/21/17
- **West Side Campaign Against Hunger Turkey Drive**
  - Encourage people to donate money or turkeys
- **Broadway Night**
  - Big success, raised more than \$7,000
- **Red Cross Babysitting Training**
  - All day (7 hours) in early February includes CPR training
  - \$85 per person
  - Sign-ups later in November
- **Construction:**
  - Reconstruction of handball courts
    - Handled by Parks
    - Met with Steve Simon, head of Parks, additional netting was added
  - West Side Federation for Senior and Supportive Housing (WSFSSH)
    - Multi-year project
    - Met with WSFSSH leadership and Community Board to raise concerns
    - November 20 public meeting scheduled to learn more about the project
    - Meeting scheduled for December 13, 8:00 AM for the school community to ask questions
- **Community Service @ MS54**
  - December 4: Natalie Silverstein, NYC coordinator of doinggoodtogether.org, will speak to students during the school day about the importance of community service and teach students what they can do and who they can approach
  - December 5: Natalie will meet with parents to tell them how to get their child involved in community service
  - Community Service fair will be held in the spring
- **MS Admissions**
  - Implementing blind ranking of schools for 2019-2020 academic year
  - More sweeping changes may ensue
  - CEC meeting on December 13 at PS 241, 240 w. 113<sup>th</sup> St.
- **SLT Update**
  - Discussed blind admissions
  - Community Service
  - SLT meetings are once a month on Fridays at 7:20 AM, all welcome; dates on MS54 website

## **PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

- **Booker T Day**
  - Thanked everyone who participated
  - Had ample hosts and chaperones
  - Received positive feedback
- **Open School Week**
  - November 27<sup>th</sup> & November 29<sup>th</sup>
  - Can sit in on your some of your child's classes
  - Sign up via School Bookings
- **Parent Conferences on November 30**
  - Sign-up Thursday, November 16th at 10:00 AM
  - Not always possible for teachers to meet everyone
  - 5-5:30 conference slot is open so you can come if you didn't get an appointment with a specific teacher
- **Report Cards**
  - Distributed Friday afternoon at Dismissal

## **TREASURY**

- Budget Overview given as of November 13, 2017:
  - Balance in Checking Account: \$260,624.40
  - Balance in Money Market: \$250,803.85
  - Total Income: \$187,881.25
  - Total Expenses: \$393,043.76
- Significant expense this month was purchase of a laminator for ~\$1,700
- Significant income was Broadway Night which brought in ~\$7,000
- Use Amazon link on website

## **ANNUAL FUND / AUCTION / FUNDRAISING**

- **Annual Fund:**
  - Need everyone to donate
- **Auction (March 3, 2018):**
  - Solicit donations asap
  - Use donation form on ms54.org website

## **GUEST SPEAKER**

- Lenore Skenazy, "America's Worst Mom"
- To be a good mom today, society states you must imagine the worst for your child or you must be re-educated
- Started blog <http://www.freerangekids.com/> about how to raise self-reliant children (without going nuts with worry)
- Why are we so afraid?
  1. **Media:** Loves to play up kidnapping/murder stories of children, then stories recycled in drama shows to keep you watching to make money
  2. **Litigious Society:** Start thinking about risk related to everything, one school district removed all swings because they were the most dangerous of the playground equipment
  3. **Expert Society:** Experts are there to tell you you're doing it wrong or that it's your fault
  4. **Marketplace Exists:** Market makes money by making people afraid

- Expectation is that if we're not with our kids, they are in danger. Now there are apps to track everything with your kids.
- Cellphones give parents less confidence (if child doesn't pick up, parents think the worst)
- Bringing "Let Grow" Project to schools:
  - Teachers will have kids ask their parents to do something that they haven't done yet on their own (make dinner, walk the dog, take the subway, etc.)
  - Will distribute before/after surveys and metrics will be shared afterwards
- When kids figure it out on their own, then they will find what really interests them.

PTA and SLT information, member lists, meeting dates and minutes are on the school website under the PTA and SLT tab. The PTA Exec Board welcomes your comments and suggestions any time. Email us at [pta@ms54pta.org](mailto:pta@ms54pta.org).

**Next PTA General Meeting:** December 5 at 7:00pm.