



MINUTES

MS54 PTA Executive Meeting

October 5, 2020 @ 7:00 PM, Zoom Mtg

BTW54PTA@ms54PTA.org

Call to Order & Minutes (7:00 - 7:05)

- Attendees: Laura Adams, Marni Aarlev, Anne McIntosh, Larry Lee, Colleen Walker, Sandra Temko, Ann McIntosh, Kyle Clayton, Marianna Crespi, Denise Broady and Tekla White
- Approved September 2020 PTA EB minutes

Presidents' Update (7:05 - 7:20)

- Good News:
 - Class parents coming together with kick off mtg tomorrow night led by Marni and Anne
 - Fundraising meetings well attended w/solid ideas & the people to execute them (well, except the Auction) - already had 2 meetings
 - School Store should be up this week with future ecommerce portal from MS54 site
 - Auction - found a treasure trove in the PTA closet - now about connecting the dots and Sandra leading the way on the auction
 - Website: aesthetics, architecture & content updates look FANTASTIC! Big thanks to Yun Joo Shin a big gratitude of thanks for all the updates of the website
 - A very helpful, engaged group of parent volunteers coming out of the woodwork
 - Instagram
 - Track program
 - Virtual 5K
- Big Picture Election Update - DOE came out with the election guidance and fortunately we already aligned with the DOE guidelines from our Spring election
- SLT Update: lost ~100 students; still giving out MS54 devices, but families need wifi for them to work; enrollment office seems a little loose with placements this fall; kids are desperate for social interaction; no updates from DOE on HS/MS process yet this year
- CEC/Accelerated Learning Update - PLACE letter - VOTE
 - The CEC has created the PLACE letter enclosed below asking "What is the plan and what is the contingency plan to administer the SHSAT?"
 - Opportunity for PTA boards and parents to sign up to get updated on this
 - Feedback: support the letter, but go back to the CEC with refinement of the questions and add a plan to present or come back with a proposed plan
- President's Council Update - focus is on helping PTAs execute their elections this month
- Safety Update - meeting was Friday and update from Dr. Elster
 - Got an update on Level 3 safety for entrance and dismissal

Principal's Update (7:20 - 7:35)

- Have had 3 very good days and it was great to see the kids in the building
- Small class sizes create a very different teaching environment for teachers with 7 to 8 kids
- Teachers asking for guidance for how much movement in the classroom
- Kids were compliant with procedures and all good!

- Put the tent on hold right now because it takes DOE about 3 months to approve the permission and looking at a backup scenario. Will make a decision on whether we will need the funding for the tent.
- The Equity team is requesting funding for a reading program and working to put the proposal in front of Dr. Elster.

Treasurer's Report (7:35 - 7:45)

- Overall Update: budget of net income = \$78K
- Annual Appeal - ~\$85K raised from 68 donations, but giving has slowed down, so investigating other options
 - Alumni Appeal/Giving Tuesday postcard ~ \$2K (misc fundraising exp) targeting Thanksgiving timeframe
 - Also looking at Facebook, Instagram and social channels
 - To pull together a subcommittee to pull together different options such as postcard, electronic flyer, etc. to focus on the Annual Appeal to reach beyond the current families
 - Vote via Zoom - 57% yes, 14% no and 29%
- Grant Status - no additional update
- Funding Requests - no funding requests

New Business (7:45 - 8:15)

Elections/PTA Openings/Help Wanted

- Elections will be held October 13 @ 7:00 with live streaming and Zoom Polling
 - Option 1: do what we did in the Spring with the parent registering before the meeting and the parent coordinator verifying their email
 - Option 2: generate unique random codes for each family to vote
 - Vote: 100% vote to support the Spring process
- Board Openings
 - Co-Treasurer - Aleksandra
 - Co-Assistant Treasurer - **No nomination yet**
 - Co-Corresponding Secy - Yun Joo Shin
 - **Co-Fundraising VP - No nomination yet**
 - 6th Grade Rep - Alison Gardy & Lee Uehara
- Non-Elected Openings
 - **Online Auction Chair - No nomination yet**
 - School Store Manager - Eve Epstein, Fabiola Diamond, Alison Nagel
 - Class/Cohort Parents - Still recruiting/twisting arms
 - Nominating Committee - Evie Porwick likely to help out
- Election Process @ Meeting
 - Registration + Anonymous Polling - TEST

Changing Title of Co-Corresponding Secretary to Co-VP of Communications

- Updates archaic title, more representative of the actual responsibilities: email marketing/content publishing, social media management, class parent leader, and website content, curation, design, and architecture
- Vote via Zoom: 100% vote to support the role change to Co-VP of Communications

Instagram Relaunch

- Sent email last week - G6 parent Lauren Parker is interested in relaunching the MS54 Instagram with more “editorial” style visuals, inspirational quotes, recipes, wellness tips, etc
- Lauren is also interested in writing up some profiles of our administrators/teachers -- this could also support the Annual Appeal
- Vote via Zoom: 100% vote to support the re-activation of the MS54 Instagram and have Lauren own it

PTA Google Drive

- To work with Anne/Kyle to see if we should move the Treasurer drive content into the current share drive

Community Updates (8:15 - 8:30)

- Fundraising:
 - Annual Appeal/Alumni Appeal
 - Working on postcard too ~3000 current + former families
 - Voted to move forward with the postcard and different ways to “advertise” the appeal beyond weekly newsletter
 - Considering separate Alumni Appeal page to track these donations separately
 - Suggested Virtual Events/Activities:
 - HUGE: Broadway Night
 - Big: Talent Show, Teacher Game Night, etc
 - Niche: Drogin Art Class, Speaker Series, on-line Book Fair, on-line wine event (potential a fall and spring event)
 - Sell Virtual background with MS54 logo
 - Virtual Races
 - 10K/5K/1 Mile Turkey Trot in fall
 - 54Miles for 54 in spring
 - Revenue comes from registration (\$20 pp) + optional fundraising
 - Will need incentives for fundraising milestones
 - School store
- Wellness Committee - no updates and next meeting at Friday, October 30 at 7:30 pm
- Equity Team - lots of discussion on how to approach equity this year and resources for different families
- 108th Street Construction - started the field today and no additional update on the 108th construction
- Grade Rep Updates
 - 7th Grade update - kids are very happy to return, but they are clustering after school.
 - 8th Grade update - everyone is excited and engaged, but long day on Zoom. Anxiety is increasing around the high school process and questions on electives of pass/fail like Music/Art elective. The Music/Art electives that are 2 days a week are graded, but electives that are one day a week are pass/fail.

Potential Topics for Upcoming General Meetings

- October - Elections
- Non-PTA Mtg Webinar - Adolescent Nutrition during COVID
- November - Student HS Panel
- December - Supporting LBGTQ Youth?
- January - Resource Fair? (probably not having)

- February - College Financial Planning w/George Schneiderman?
- March - TBD
- April - TBD
- May - Budget Vote + Student Panel on Admissions Process
- June - Elections

Next EB Meeting: Monday, November 2

SHSAT Letter from PLACE

Dear Mayor de Blasio and Chancellor Carranza,

The Covid-19 pandemic has forced students, parents, teachers, and administrators to confront unprecedented challenges. At a time of enormous uncertainty, clear and consistent communication by the Department of Education (DOE) is more essential than ever. However, despite being one month away from the scheduled date of the Specialized High School Admissions Test (SHSAT), tens of thousands of middle school students have been denied their right to register for the exam, presumably because DOE intends to postpone the SHSAT to another date or otherwise alter the administration of this year's exam.

At a recent event, Chancellor Carranza [suggested](#) that new information may become available in "mid to late October." That is too late. Thousands of students have been studying for the SHSAT for months. Non-profit organizations and working class New York families across the city have expended enormous resources to help these students get prepared. As students make their final preparations for what could be a life-altering exam, they each deserve more than a few days notice of how and when DOE's plans will change.

We have three simple questions today:

- 1) When will the City administer the Specialized High School Admissions Test (SHSAT)?
- 2) What is your plan?
- 3) What is your backup plan?

As you know, the SHSAT is mandated by state law; there is no other way of determining admission to the city's Specialized High Schools. Therefore, the question of the SHSAT is one of when, not if. Students have been studying for the test and are prepared to take it on the published dates of Nov. 7 and 8. Delays may expose students to serious health risk as almost all experts predict the Covid-19 infection rate will rise with each day closer to Winter. Further, at a time when we, the undersigned, are vigorously supporting

expansion of the SHSAT into more communities of color and ultimately to increase access to our specialized high schools, it is crucial that DOE makes it easier, not harder, for parents in every community to receive information about this critical admissions test.

DOE owes parents, teachers, and most of all its students, immediate guidance on this issue. Our hard-working and bright young students deserve nothing less.

Sincerely,