



AGENDA

MS54 PTA General Meeting
April 13 @ 7:00 PM, Zoom Mtg
BTW54PTA@ms54pta.org

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

- ~46 Attendees
- March '21 PTA minutes approved (91.3% yes; 8.7% abstained)

Presidents' Report (7:05 - 7:15)

- Crisis Communications
 - Larry + Lee shared an update on the school's "Support for AAPI Families" in the wake of recent events (ie fireside chat, statements, etc.). ~60 attendees at the fireside chat which was very well received. MS54 shared overview and resources with D3 and on MS54 website. Thank you to the volunteers and for your support!
- Talent Show - Spectacular Event! Raised \$6500. Thank you Anne Pejovic and Mr. Fagen, the teachers and those who attended!
- 54 for 54 Update
 - Off to a great start with 100 participants + almost \$5000 raised so far toward our goal of \$20K
 - Top fundraisers so far are Mr. Bergen's Homeroom + Dr. Elster!!
 - How can you participate?
 - Register! Just by signing up you raise \$ for the school. Adults are \$30, kids are FREE
 - Fundraise! Ask friends and family to support you
 - Donate! If you don't currently have the bandwidth to participate, please donate, either to your homeroom, a friend, one of your child's friends, or Dr. Elster!
 - Note: Grades + homerooms are starting to have outdoor meetups to help with mileage based challenges, and of course, there are wellness walks every sunday at 10:00 in riverside park
 - We are NOT having an auction this year so please consider contributing the time and money that you would have spent on that to this fun, community-based effort!
 - Lastly, if you ordered 54 x 54 merch or Class of 2021 sweatshirts, they were shipped yesterday and will arrive at the school on Thursday. Anne P and I will sort them and deliver them to classrooms; your kids will get them next week!
- SLT Update
 - Looking at logistics for state tests + regents
- Safety Update
 - All mandatory drills have been completed to date; staff CPR training is this week
 - This week's staff member aside, there have been no COVID cases since we returned to school, which Dr. Elster credits to parents being really vigilant and responsible about not sending their children to school if they were symptomatic - thank you!
- Community Education Council for D3/President's Council Update
 - 60 candidates; 3 from MS54. Every parent can vote!
- Nominations are open for next year's PTA + SLT - hiring for all positions! (The nominating committee of outgoing board members is planning Q+A/Info session for those interested; stay tuned for date/time.) Looking to bring more diversity to these important positions!

Principal's Report (7:15 - 7:20)

- Thank you for sponsoring me on my 54x54 challenge!
- Testing - ELA tests week of 4/20 (~566 opted in out of 837 total). Results won't be available until the end of August
- No update on Regents tests yet
- The change from 6 feet to 3 feet social distance rule in the classroom is pretty much on hold for middle schools. (the school and the SLT has been planning for this but looks like it won't happen). Might try to start rotating the cohorts in on Fridays beginning on 4/23 = stay tuned
- 1 recent positive case from random testing (non-teaching staff member)
- 25 additional families opted into blended during most recent opt in period - they will begin to be in person towards the end of April

Treasurer's Report (7:20 - 7:25)

- Budget Update
 - \$217k of \$243k budget of annual appeal
 - \$33k of \$50k budget of other fundraising income
 - Expenses generally lower than budgeted across the board
- Grant Status
 - Hit all the deadlines to apply for space/instruments for the band room. Will be voted on by the city in June/July by NYC
- [Changing to Chase Bank](#)
 - Recommendation from TD Bank to Chase Bank due to several reasons discussed (convenience, better fraud protection, lower fees, etc.). Approved 89.7%; 10.3% abstained

Community Updates (7:25 - 7:35)

- Fundraising
 - 54x54 going well - participate and donate!
 - May Student Talent Show in the works - stay tuned!
- Wellness Committee
 - Wellness Day on March 16 was a huge success! Thank you for all your help! Topics covered ranged from Anxiety, Ally, Mental Health, End Silence, Making New Friends, Prejudice, How to Get out of Thinking Traps, Need for Science, etc.
- Equity Team
 - Looking to increase representation on the Executive Board and the SLT
 - Check out the resources - wide range of resources available on our website!
 - Get involved in the meetings and take advantage of all these resources!
 - ANother AAPI firesite chat is 4/22 as well as an AAPI picnic on 4/25- all are welcome!
 - Also planning a meeting to set guidelines as to who gets to speak at PTA meetings - if you want to help or join please contact the Equity Committee!

Guest Speakers:

For those of you who attended last month's Fireside Chat, you know that public harassment and intimidation of Asians is real and ongoing. But anyone can be the victim. And witnessing it can be almost as traumatizing.

*Tonight, our guests are two **prevention and response experts** from Spelman College's bystander intervention program, Nicole Johnson and Kristin Couch here to teach us how to safely step in when we see someone -- **ANYone** -- being harassed.*

Their work has empowered thousands to stand up and speak up!

Key Points:

- Intervention comes in many forms - you don't have to always be the one to put on the cape! It is situational - simple things matter (just ask if they are ok?), call professionals (ie, 911), personally intervene, etc.
- Defining social norms - unwritten rules for how to behave in different situations! Certain norms are harmless and others are harmful. When one person has the courage to speak up against harmful social norms others will follow! We want bystander intervention to become a social norm!
- Bystander intervention
 - Bystander effect - when there are a lot of people around there is less likely for an intervention to take place. This is partly due to social proof - they copy behavior of others around them; diffusion of responsibility; fear of being wrong; fear of conflict; fear of personal safety. Need to move from passive to active bystanders!
 - How to Intervene - notice there is a problem going on! And then decide if it is important. If we notice things are escalating, then we are going to become an active bystander and take responsibility. Decide what needs to happen and take action. 5 D's of Bystander Intervention:
 - Direct - intervene in the moment to prevent a problem from happening
 - Distract - interrupt the situation without directly confronting anyone
 - Delegate - get help from someone else who may be more equipped to handle the situation
 - Document - take pictures and videos of the incident happening. If safe enough you can alert the person you are recording - it might deter them
 - Defend - Check in with the victim after the incident has occurred to see if you can do anything to help them
 - The goal is to diffuse the situation - many people find the distract method easiest since there are many ways to distract/diffuse.