



AGENDA

MS54 PTA General Meeting

January 12 @ 7:00 PM, Zoom Mtg

BTW54PTA@ms54PTA.org

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

- Attendees (~74+ attendees)
- Approved December 2020 General Meeting minutes

Presidents' Update (7:05 - 7:10)

- 2020 Accomplishments: overhaul of website, digitalized the entire PTA knowledge base/shared drive, budget, fundraising, community building, and giving was unbelievable and continued throughout the entire year.
- SLT Update: Held special meeting on 12/21 to discuss impact of lottery admissions
 - School will have very little data about the incoming students; hope to have some kind of assessment before school starts to help build classes
 - Booker will continue to offer a rigorous curriculum
 - Added another open house
- President's Council Update: Planning to share some of our fundraising strategies with ALL D3 schools
- Safety Update - Meeting was last Friday: Building is ready for whenever school reopens again
- After School - After school programming kicked off yesterday! Thanks to the efforts of Anne Pejovich and 20 teachers, there are nearly 20 offerings M-Th. The most popular programs were Artificial Intelligence and the sixth grade math team. Other hits included: Chess, crocheting, comic book legends, witches, wizards + wands and assorted art offerings. Payment has been a donate as you wish option, which has brought in nearly \$6000. If any family still wants to sign up, please reach out to parent coordinator, Anne Pejovich

Principal's Update (7:10 - 7:20)

- Update: On behalf of the teachers/facility, thank you for the generous holiday gift. Admissions updates for middle schools and high school criteria will be up on 1/19 for the selection process. SHSAT must be taken in person and no remote exceptions. Middle school principals will plan to speak directly to all the elementary schools as part of the recruiting process.
- Attendees voted to try to get school pictures taken (~70% approved). Dr. Elster will follow up

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

- Overall Update ([See budget](#))
- Annual Appeal @ ~\$160K. Matching gifts are way down vs. last year
- Grant Status - Considering follow up to last year's band room renovation

Community Updates (7:25 - 7:30)

- Fundraising
 - Fundraising meeting 1/12 at 9:00
 - Upcoming efforts include: 54 for 54 and virtual events
- Wellness Committee: multicultural cookbook and/or remote dish share, teacher strategies for beating zoom fatigue, kid/family game nights to combat winter doldrums
- Equity Team - No update

Guest Speaker

- Stuart Servetar, former MS54 parent, founder of iBid Prep, a well-known UWS tutoring service, and SHSAT expert spoke to eighth grade students and teachers about the SHSAT and how best to prepare.
- Bio: After working for decades as a private tutor, Stuart Servetar formed ibidPREP in 2006. Stuart has published seven textbooks in the ***Remain Clam!*** series and helped thousands of students through the middle, high school and college entry process.

Key points

- 9 specialized high schools (incl. Laguardia which doesn't take the test)
- You can prep yourself (DOE makes available a handbook with 2 practice tests), courses or 1:1. Take the baseline for free and put together a plan. Traditionally prep starts after the State tests in the Spring. Some prep over the summer. Fall is late.
 - If you want to take the test from Stuart's company email info@ibidprep.com. Mention the PTA meeting for a discount. His baseline is meant for 7th graders to get a ROUGH idea where you are.
 - Visit the IBID website - Spring classes start in April/May
- Different mentality on scores than other tests - Don't need to "master" the test, just need to maximize your score. High 80% is good! You can still get into the specialized schools with a grade 72-86% - Stuy average was 86% in 2019. It is graded on a curve!
- 3 hour test. Practice and prep in advance. It is free and nothing happens to you if you don't do well. Test doesn't need to be done in order - you can self-direct. It is advised you start with the sections you are strongest. You don't get points for finishing, you ONLY get points for questions you get CORRECT. There is no guessing penalty -- try to get as many of the ones you can right but don't leave anything blank. More time permitted if you have IEP accommodations. No second chances on the test (it's one time!).
- Might not be for everyone. It is a chance to control the process. Take a practice test to see how far away you are from a good score. If it is within reach, it is worth the shot
- Test is organized into 2 sections (57 questions each).
 - Verbal: Revising and editing (aka grammar!); punctuation; Majority is reading comprehension. Requires more analysis and details. Non fiction with data, fiction, and poetry
 - Math: Arithmetic; **NO calculator allowed on the test!** Need to do long division (into decimals); Fractions; Algebra; and Geometry