



MINUTES

MS54 PTA General Meeting
May 11 @ 7:00 PM, Zoom Mtg
BTW54PTA@ms54pta.org

Guest Speaker - [DR. ERIKA ROONEY](#)

Dr. Erika Rooney from the Child Mind Institute discussion of MINDFUL PARENTING.

- *Dr. Rooney's workshop gave an overview of what Mindful Parenting is, summarized research on mindfulness strategies and their role in promoting mental health, and shared practical advice on how to incorporate mindfulness into our daily lives. She gave guidance on how to teach mindfulness exercises to our children and left us a one sheet on this powerful coping tool so that we have a resource*

Key points:

- *Lots of myths about mindfulness*
- *What is mindfulness? Life life with awareness of exactly what is happening in the present; increase focus; be present in the moment; non judgmentally*
- *Benefits for parents and kids - in control of your mind; choose behavior more thoughtfully; see reality; focus attention; increase compassion and empathy; non-judgmental experience of self; self-awareness and self-regulation; managing intense emotions; reduced anxiety/stress/emotional distress; increased resilience.*
- *Practical strategies - "How to Skills" (cheat sheet)*
 - 5 Tips: 1) Be fully in the moment; 2) Remain in the moment; 3) Acknowledge non related thoughts and let them go; 4) Observe and describe instead of judging; and 5) Use five senses within the experience
 - Breathing is a great strategy to focus
 - Schedule time to just be with your kids with no agenda in mind (connect in simple moments)
 - Give yourself permission to take time to reset if you are feeling uncentered
 - Practice compassion
 - Encourage your kids but speak to them in their language

Call to Order & Minutes (8:00 - 8:05)

- Approval of April '21 PTA minutes
- 88% Approved; 12% Abstained
- ~40 participants

Presidents' Report (8:05 - 8:12)

- Info Session + Elections Update
 - The outgoing PTA exec board members held an info session on April 27; if you missed it, no worries! Reach out to nominations@ms54pta.org and a member of the nominating committee can walk you through the various roles/responsibilities on both the PTA and SLT
 - We're hiring for all positions: Co-President, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Communications VPs, Fundraising VPs, Grade Reps for each grade, and (coming soon) Wellness Lead and Equity Lead, not to mention four SLT seats. Most positions have a returning veteran so you won't be alone. :)
 - May 25th is the last day to submit nominations ahead of election day, June 8, but we will also be taking nominations from the floor that evening
- Community Updates
 - "To Be Honest" - Wellness initiated, teacher supervised "chat group" for students to just "vibe" and discuss what's on their minds. Every Monday from 4-5. Students must register themselves.
 - "One Lunch" - Wellness grant will be spent on pizza picnics for each grade so kids can chill out and interact over lunch, just like in previous times! There will be icebreakers and discussion topics to encourage sharing and minimize awkwardness
 - An alum + his dad have built over 40 desks for our students this year. We still have 5 to give away! If your child could use a free desk, please reach out to [Anne Pejovich](#)
 - Food drive has been going strong for almost 11 months. You can't overestimate the incredible impact this has had on the 40+ families in our community who have needed the help. The link to the food wishlist is on MS54.org and in every Friday's blast
 - Thank you to the families who came out to "chalk the walks" last weekend for Teacher Appreciation week.
 - Thanks to Kyle for setting up the PayPal pool - raised almost \$10K for the child's memorial services + travel back to Africa - hugely appreciated by the family
- 54 for 54 Fundraising Update
 - Thank you to the 100+ of you who signed up and are making your way through your challenges. Andrew Kindred, Sandra Temko, [Marni Aarlev](#) and Sean Robin are all crushing it at over 200% of their goal already.
 - You can still donate to your homeroom! Homeroom donation pages are now up and Kelly Blanco + Franchesca Coppa's homeroom is the latest to cross the \$500 threshold. They've earned a \$50 gift card to the school store! And Team McEvoyagers and Ms. Johnson's homeroom aren't far behind!
- SLT Update
 - Preliminary data for middle school admissions showing that next year's students are still coming primarily from the same elementary schools
 - Also discussed graduation possibilities - parents were adamant about an in-person ceremony even if parents could not be there; as of yet, there is no venue, no date + no time for graduation, though several parents are working urgently on this problem. If you'd like to help, please email me at co-presidents@ms54pta.org
- Safety Update
 - All the necessary drills + training have been conducted this year, including CPR training for several staffers
 - Plenty of PPE
 - COVID testing is running smoothly
- CEC/D3 President's Council Update
 - Cost of After School Permits tripled - letter sent requesting more clarity
 - Tonight is last night for voting CEC representatives - so far low turnout

- Middle school admissions came out today

Principal's Report (8:12 - 8:20)

- 356 offers made to new students for 6th grade
- Meeting with parents recently on what kids will need next year (ideas will be shared with SLT)
- Met with 7th graders to share their ideas about next year as well. Theme: we're tired of zoom and we want to come back full time in person
- Superintendent from D3 interested in coming to PTA - elected officials are taking note of parent advocacy. Will hopefully come to a future PTA
- Kids using the outside space
- Encourage your kids to sign up for the One School pizza lunches
- Thank you for Instrument Repair for \$3K and other assorted supplies this month. Instrument repair funding Vote - 96.8% approved; 3.2% (1) no
- Thank you for Teacher Appreciation Week & Chalk the Walk

Treasurer's Report (8:20 - 8:35)

- Budget Update
 - Net Income: \$92k v. \$11k budgeted
- Grant Status
 - 2 grants in review with the city \$60 for band room renovations and \$30k for replenishing the 6th grade instruments. Expect to hear in June. Received previously approved grants - \$300K for AC and \$300k for band room so those projects can kick off!
 - Yard is on schedule to be done by the start of the upcoming school year. Ann Pejovic is on point following up with the parks department
- 2021-22 Budget - Proposed budget: \$390k income; \$697k expenses for a net income of negative (\$307k). PTA currently has ~\$800k in the bank. PTA typically budgets a loss but historically has not ever ended at a loss. Budget will be re-voted in the Fall if it needs to be adjusted (and also if needed throughout the year). Approved 100%; Abstained 0%

Community Updates (8:35 - 8:50)

- Fundraising: 54x54 is ongoing! Student Talent Show is June 10 @ 6PM
- Wellness Committee - Sunday Wellness Walks continue every Sunday @ 10am- all are Welcome! All are also welcome at the upcoming meetings!
- Equity Team - Asia Pacific Heritage Month is this month! All are welcome at the upcoming meetings!
- 108th St. Housing Development - Wishfish org building the new building across the street from MS54 is nearing completion. Provides shelter and permanent housing (and provides social services), primarily servicing older adults. Anticipate completing the project to allow occupancy in June 2021

New Business (8:50 - 9:00)

- Proposal to expand the PTA Executive Board to include Wellness/Equity Representation (up to 2 voting members from each which will be parent/guardians). PTA will host a special meeting in 2 weeks to vote on the proposed updates to the Board Bylaws.

Topics for Upcoming General Meetings

- June - Elections