



**PTA General Meeting
November 18, 2022
Meeting Minutes**

Welcome

- 9:05 am
- Zoom meeting - 70 attendees

Principal's Report - Bob Bender

- DOE has acknowledged that it owes the school funding; we have received more than half thus far and the remaining money should be coming into the budget in January
- We were able to hire a new ENL (English as a New Language) teacher, who will start on November 28th
- There is currently a hiring freeze on paraprofessionals, but we have been given permission to hire Spanish-speaking paraprofessionals for the classrooms
- Spanish chess lessons with Russ began today for the new students; lessons will be happening every Friday in the classrooms. Chess lessons are held in classrooms for grades 1-3. Currently 2nd graders are receiving chess lessons; 1st graders will have it in the next cycle, and then 3rd graders
- Realized there is a need for bilingual counseling sessions; will have them available for the next 3 Fridays
- 3rd grade show is next Wednesday, November 23. Attendees must show proof of vaccination.
- There was an incident outside the school building yesterday; an individual made verbal threats to the school safety officer, who then called the police. The systems in place to safeguard the school and students worked perfectly. The shelter-in lasted about 8 minutes, NYPD stayed on site until 6 pm.
 - During a shelter-in, the school is in “business as usual” mode inside. An announcement is made to say the building is in shelter-in; the kids inside are free to move about the school. Any kids on the playground are brought inside. A member of the building response team stays at each entrance to ensure no one is coming in or out
- Girls' locker room has been flooding due to hair in the drains; custodian will be alerted



- A location was found for Project Rousseau meetings with the new families at a church in Chelsea
- Gratitude to Jeff Gardner for introducing PS11 to the organization, Helen Keller International. When new families crossed the border, many kids and adults had to give up all their eyeglasses. The organization will provide free exams and eyeglasses to EVERY child at PS11 where needed!

SLT Report - Bob Bender (ps11SLT@gmail.com)

- Family Fridays are being brought back on a smaller scale to prevent classrooms from being overcrowded. Classes will be divided into two cohorts, A and B, and will alternate visits; there will also be grade level activities to enable families to engage with the school
- Discussed services for new families

Parent Coordinator's Report – Stephen McGill

- Middle school application deadline is December 1st. Anyone who has not received their welcome letter to log in to MySchools should contact Christine Leonhardt immediately: cleonha@schools.nyc.gov. She is the middle school liaison for PS11. Families can contact her for their welcome letters with their MySchools login information and any questions about school options
- NYC Schools account - many families still do not have their accounts set up. Please make sure your account is set up and check that your address is correct. The welcome letter gets mailed to the address in that account. Completing a “blue card” for school does not change your address in the DOE’s system. If you need to change your address, you must show proof of your new address to the school secretary and she can manually change it in the system. It is important to have a NYC Schools account so that you can access your child’s records, grades, etc.
- DOE has a “No Head Lice” policy in schools, which means schools cannot have head lice. If you discover that your child has head lice, it is very important to inform the school so that the school can inform everyone else in class to keep an eye out for it, to prevent an infestation. The official policy is to have your child’s pediatrician clear your child before they can return to school. To clear up any misconceptions, clean hair is a breeding ground for lice. The school conducts lice checks twice a year - once in the fall and once in the spring. If you do find that your child has lice, there are companies that conduct head lice checks and treat it. There is also a wealth of information available online



President's Report - Lisa Cox & Joanna Cohn Weiss (ps11ptapresident@gmail.com)

- Expressed gratitude for the Fall Festival
- Dave Cox provided a safety update: there was a recent meeting with the DA; there is a follow up meeting to come, with a smaller group of PS11 and other members of the DA's office, including Captain Gault, Senator Hoylam, and Councilmember Bottcher. They are continuing to go across agencies to push for more NYPD presence, to secure properties under construction and scaffolding, and to keep an eye on problematic establishments. They are working with Housing Works, Hudson Guild, various social services - the more voices advocating for our children, the better. If you see something, please call 911 - it helps to document what's going on. If anyone has any questions or is interested in reaching out to the various agencies, please feel free to contact Dave Cox: davemcox@gmail.com, 646-408-1011

Budget / Finance Report - Maria Melendez & Kunal Prakash (ps11treasurerchelsea@gmail.com)

- Net fundraising from the Fall Festival came out larger than expected; book fair also went well
- Current net income is in line with the budget forecast

Events Report - Lucy Flint & Amanda Moskowitz (ps11ptaevents@gmail.com)

- Comedy for a Cause will be held on January 24th. Tickets will go on sale beginning November 29th; will feature 8 standup comedians at Gotham Comedy Club. This event always sells out and is a great way to raise money for PS11
- Gala will be in May
- Anyone who wants to volunteer to help out with the gala or Comedy for a Cause, or other events, please reach out to ps11events@gmail.com
- In partnership with the volunteer team, there was a Family Liaison event held recently. Family Liaisons who are trying to organize any class holiday playdates and potlucks, please be sure to get these on the calendar as soon as you can, since schedules fill up quickly

Programs Report - Kristina Hammond & Kirsten Magen (ps11ptaprograms@gmail.com)

- Reminder about the school lost and found - need more volunteers. There have been some requests to have a day to "shop" for lost items. In the meantime, please label all items with your child's name and classroom number so that volunteers can return items to the correct place



- Art to Remember - deadline is Monday, November 21st. Please use the code on your child's sheet. If you can't find your code, you can search the website using PS11 and enter your child's name
- Chess team is still accepting Halloween candy donations
- Young Artists Program is an 8-week program starting in mid-January. Each class consists of 10 kids; there will be multiple classes, depending on the number of parent volunteers and kids. The program takes place during lunch, and at the end of the program, all art projects are put on display. Projects in the past have included: collages, portraits, photography, cake decorating, yoga with a drawing component, claymation, and more.
 - Parent volunteers must go through the fingerprinting process because it involves parents teaching in the school. It would be appreciated if parents can pay for their own fingerprinting so that funds can be used for art project materials. This is an incredibly rewarding program for parents - volunteers don't need to be professional artists; they just need to have crafting skills and be good at creating projects for the kids. The committee needs to understand over the next 2-3 weeks who is interested in helping out; Please contact ps11youngartistsprogram@gmail.com if you would like to volunteer. The more volunteers available, the more students who can join. The program is always oversubscribed
 - Any volunteer should also let us know if you speak Spanish
 - The program takes place one day/wk during lunch/recess for each volunteer. Volunteers share their availability and will be assigned to a day/time based on their availability

Fundraising Report - Tess Knoebel-Peterfreund & Mori Ninomiya (ps11annualfund@gmail.com)

- Annual Fund is behind target, so please get your donations in. If you submit by December 31st, you can include on your taxes for 2022
- Mori will make himself available to anyone who wishes to make a donation by check. He will also be attending the 3rd grade show and will accept checks then. Please make checks payable to "Friends and Family of PS11"
- Any questions about corporate matching, please contact ps11annualfund@gmail.com. Corporate matches often need to be completed by year-end. We are in Guidestar, which often makes it easier for companies to contribute a corporate match
- Facebook match: please note that it's important to get your donation in by 8 am because funds usually run out in 2-3 minutes



- 11 for 11: there was about 30% participation and brought in approximately \$5k. Still figuring out grade-wide participation. Any grades that reached 65% participation will receive prizes on Wednesday, right before Thanksgiving
- Read-a-thon: the committee has been hard at work and is making a call out for donations for prizes they would appreciate if anyone with connections can please help generate donations. They are looking for \$5 gift cards and experiences - e.g., Sloomoo Institute, Museum of Ice Cream would be great experiences
 - The Read-a-thon is a fundraiser that takes place in February where kids are tasked with reading as much as they can for two weeks and record their hours. Parents create web pages for their kids. Last year the Read-a-thon raised \$80k and the kids read so much. The top readers receive individual prizes; there are also classroom and grade prizes given
- Bender Bars voting results: S'mores flavor won. If interested in being part of the Bender Bars committee, please reach out

Membership Report - Jen Dickson & Sarah Kim (ps11volunteer@gmail.com)

- Thanks to all for helping with and attending the Fall Festival
- Many more volunteer opportunities/events coming with the gala, Comedy for a Cause, the Read-a-thon, and Bender Bars
- Contact ps11volunteer@gmail.com if interested in helping

Communications Report - Pia Padukone & Julie Carpenter (ptaps11@gmail.com)

- If there's any event/activity happening that you'd like to include in the PS11 Digest, please email ptaps11@gmail.com. No need to worry about drafting the content - simply provide the details and Pia/Julie can craft the communication for submission to the digest

Community Q&A

- Currently, 2nd and 4th graders receive a DOE eye exam. A PS11 staff member administers an eye chart for new children/Kindergarteners. The Helen Keller organization will provide an actual eye doctor for their eye exams
- The school washing machine broke over the summer; a new one should be arriving early next week, so the school can again start to offer to families the option to wash swim gear
- PS11 teachers teach about cultural differences and similarities, as it is foundational to how we teach



Adjournment 9:56 am