

**Museum Alliance for Science and Technology**  
**P.S. 154 PTA - General Membership Meeting**  
**Tuesday, October 7, 2008, 6:00pm**  
**Multi Media Room**

**Introduction and Welcome**

Deb Capone, President, began the meeting by welcoming everyone and thanking the Pre-K classes for hosting the potluck for tonight's meeting. She reported that September was been a great month for the PTA. The International Food Festival was a great success in terms of participation, attendance, and raised \$701.41. The membership drive has been bringing in a substantial amount of income.

**Elections for PTA Executive Board**

The Vice President of Membership and the Corresponding Secretary positions remain open. Additional Members at Large added to tonight's ballot were Amy Wei and Sherry Dietchman. Voting for Members-at Large and the PTA budget were up for election tonight.

**New Lunchroom Parent Volunteer Program**

This is a new program will be organized by the PTA and run by teachers in the lunchroom. The goal of the program is to have two parent monitors for each lunch section. Lunch is scheduled from 11:15am 12:15pm and 12:20pm to 1:20pm. Each lunch period has two sections. For example, K and 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade lunch at the same time. K children play outside first and then eat lunch. 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> graders eat first and go outside afterwards. The parents would stay with the classes they are assigned to in the lunchroom and follow them outside (or visa versa). The parent would act as a monitor and liaison to the teacher in charge. A 45 minute training is being devised for parents interested in this volunteer position to give an overview of school and lunchroom rules and regulations, and how to address various behavior and interactions with the kids. The training will be scheduled in the next week or two with the hope to have the program in place by the end of the month. (Note: Parents will not be placed in the same lunch section as their children.) Also, in general, if a parent hears of an incident or witnesses an incident of concern between students, please report it to you child's teacher.

**Green Team Update**

5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, Melinda Fought has volunteered to lead PS 154's Green Team. The goal of the team is to lesson the school's impact on the environment by emphasizing and setting up systems to effect and educate about Reducing, Reusing and Recycling. Ms. Jamboy will be training monitors in the three Rs and setting up a kind of summons and rewards system. Toner cartridges have started to be recycled and Ms. Pateson is working on a website with recycling resources. The Green Team is instituting a policy so that school wide notices will only go out to the older of two siblings in the school or the only child in order to reduce paper use. Other plans include a school wide and/or community wide

recycling project, research into composting in the classroom and recycling old used sneakers with Nike. Melinda invited everyone to participate and is hoping for parents to reinforce what the children are learning in school about the Rs at home. The Green Team is looking for parent volunteers. Please check the “volunteer” link on the PTA website.

### **Design Team**

Three parents who are graphic designers are volunteering their time to create a PS 154 logo to be printed on various products. Plans for a school store on in the works.

### **Playground Update**

Deb explained that she is working with a contact at Marty Markowitz’s office in regard to the stalled plan for the new schoolyard. The school petition was sent via email to the School Construction Authority (SCA), but to no avail. They have been extremely uncooperative and have canceled seven meetings set-up with Bill DeBlasio’s office. Marty Markowitz mandated a “determination” meeting for this Friday afternoon with the goals being, a start date for the work, a phase plan worked out, and a four month project time goal. Deb, Principal Ortiz, Assistant Principal Havlek and the principle players at the SCA are supposed to be at this meeting.

### **Upcoming Events and Fundraisers**

There are still a few openings in the **After School Clubs** including the sports club and chorus. If students need scholarships, this is also possible.

Sherry Dietchman spoke about the upcoming **Boo Bash** which is planned for Friday October 24<sup>th</sup> from 5:15 to 9:00pm. It will start with a parade at 5:15pm and pizza party from 6-6:30pm. The lunchroom will have activities for younger children while the upstairs will have dancing and DJ more geared for the older children. Baked goods will also be sold. Along with announcement for the Boo Bash, a Dance-a-thon fundraising form will be distributed soon. The Boo Bash is \$5.00/person. Sherry is looking for volunteers to work 1 hour slots or longer if desired.

**Parents Night Out** is scheduled for Monday night November 3<sup>rd</sup> at Nicole Bilubrier’s hot new restaurant, Hi-Bar at West 48<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Manhattan. It will be an open bar cocktail party with passed hors d’oeuvres. The cost is \$60.00 per person. The PTA is encouraging class parents to ask parents to kick-in \$3.00 a family toward a ticket for their children’s teachers. Invitations via evite will be circulated soon.

This year’s **Music Concert Series** organized by Annette Tacconelli will kick-off on Wednesday October 15<sup>th</sup> with Jim Whitney’s Bluegrass Band. November 14<sup>th</sup> features a singer songwriter and December 17<sup>th</sup> promises a Jazz combo. All performances are at 1:10pm for Pre-K, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grades and at 2:00pm for

3<sup>rd</sup>,4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders. All parents are welcome to come.

Eva Lewandowski spoke tonight about the **School Band** for 3<sup>rd</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> graders. Band happens during lunch period Tuesdays and Thursdays. On Tuesday, October 14<sup>th</sup> there will be a **Band Open House** in order to meet the director and learn about band and the instruments available to learn to play. The school has a nice selection of instruments. Students are required to put down a \$75.00 deposit for school instruments and there is a \$25.00 fee for participating in band for 20 weeks. Parents are strongly encouraged to volunteer to help the director organize the students and distribute instruments, etc...

### **PTA Budget for 2008-2009 School Year**

Diana Plunkett explained how the budget was laid out and took questions regarding line items. A long discussion concerning Lice ensued. Principal Ortiz reviewed what the school policy is in regard to nits and lice. Germaine Grecci reviewed what Licenders provides to the school. Licenders catches cases of nits, will check family members and will follow-up with checking the students in the class of the child identified with nits. It is a preventative program that provides mass screenings for the student body four times per year. In the 3 years that Licenders has been enlisted, the number of cases of nits reduced from 18 to 5. Jeremy Matz provided research that he did since the last PTA meeting on alternatives to mass screenings and differing points of view. His research indicated that screenings are not cost effective, that lice is not a health issue (just an annoying, labor intensive, expensive inconvenience), and that lice are not easily transmittable. All sources indicated that education to recognize nits and symptoms of lice was recommended. A suggestion to reduce Licenders' visits to two per year and increase educational efforts was put on the floor. Following this discussion, the budget was put to a vote. The next PTA meeting will be on Friday morning, November 14, 2008 at 9:00am.

Respectfully submitted by Carolyn Altman