

Museum Alliance for Science and Technology
P.S. 154 PTA - General Membership Meeting
Tuesday, September 22, 2009, 6:00pm
Multi Media Room

Welcome

PTA President, Deb Capone opened the meeting by welcoming all who attended, introduced the Executive Board of the PTA and highlighted open positions. Deb also proposed an amendment to the bi-laws that would allow for 2 year terms for Co-Presidents to the PTA. An experienced Co-President and new Co-President would work together each year, allowing for the experienced person to train the new person to be the lead Co-President for following year. Deb also announced that orientation for lunch time volunteers will begin soon. Parent volunteering at lunch was very successful last year and a great help to the current staff overseeing the children. This year the lunchtime program will be especially important as the lunchroom and playground staff has been reduced.

Nominations

Deb opened up the floor for nominations to the open positions of the PTA Executive Board. Those nominated were:

- Co-President: Chris Werben
- Executive Vice President: Tracy Armstead
- Assistant Treasurer: Diane Bromberg
- Members at Large: Eva Levandowski and Christine McArdle

Voting on these positions will take place at next month's PTA General Membership Meeting on Tuesday, October 6, 2009.

The PTA is also looking for volunteers to fill the following positions:

- PTA Coordinator, to organize, set-up and breakdown meetings and arrange for childcare
- In-Class enrichment coordinators for each grade
- Class trip coordinators for each grade
- Class Parents

Future PTA Meetings

Each PTA meeting will have a featured presentation. For example, in November, the presentation will focus on multi-media projects and using today's media options safely and creatively.

Upcoming Events

Fund Raising Events:

- International Food Festival: Friday afternoon October 16th at 3:00pm
- Boo Bash: Annual Halloween Celebration on the evening of October 23rd, contact Sherry Dietzman if you are interested in volunteering your talents.
- Parents Night Out: One planned for November and another in April.
- Winter Festival: Saturday, December 5th

Overview of PTA events and activities:

- School Concerts
- Meet the Author
- Theatre Program
- Movie Night
- Green Team is teamed with the sister schools in Zimbabwe Program: PS 154 won an Honorable Mention from the Sanitation Department for their recycling efforts last year.
- "Oldest Only": School wide notices will soon go out to your oldest child and not be duplicated

unnecessarily for each of your children.

- Sponsorship Committee: Finding corporate sponsors to fund enrichments programs and activities (The PS 154 PTA is not yet a 501C3, but it's in the works.)
- Grant Writers Committee: Contact Connie Walsh at celiaconnie@yahoo.com.
- 5th Grade Committee: Four fundraising activities and the graduation event. Maxine Park is chairing.

Budget

Diana Plunkett reviewed the 2009-2010 Budget, explained the organization of the budget and fielded questions.

Lice Busters Inc. Presentation

Dalya of Lice Busters, Inc. presented and demonstrated on lice and knit detection and removal with her family and staff members. She recommends a chemical free approach and explained that lice are immune and unaffected by chemical shampoos and other lice removal products. She differentiated between dandruff and knits, explaining that dandruff crumbles while knits do not crumble. In her practice, Dalya uses Pantene or other similar conditioner on dry hair, brushes the conditioner into the hair and combs the hair through with a special fine toothed metal comb (which you can purchase from her or go on-line to purchase) and wipes the lice onto a paper towel. At the end of the treatment, the lice are tied in a plastic bag and thrown out. Lice take on the color of the hair. Do not check for lice in dry hair. Make sure to wash all clothes, pillows and bedding. Please refer to Dalya's website, www.liecbustersnyc.com for her recommendations. You can also refer to the Department of Education's policy on Lice at <http://schools.nyc.gov/offices/health/pediculosis/default.htm>. For prevention of lice, Dalya recommends a drop of Garlic Extract (tincture) in the hair each day.

Principal and Vice Principal's Update and Overview of the 2009-2010 School Year

Mr. Ortiz and Mr. Havlik gave an update of current issues affecting the school, student body, and families of PS 154. Firstly, the Parent Coordinator, Shikka Dalal, retired. Mr. Ortiz has been receiving resumes and will be starting the interview process. Mr. Ortiz and Mr. Havlik prevailed on parents to please return your lunch forms both 1) to see who qualifies for a lunch subsidy and 2) if enough families qualify, the school may be eligible for a substantial amount of funding through the Title 1 program. Curriculum Night is scheduled for Wednesday, September 30th from 5:30pm -7:20pm when teachers will present their grade's curriculum to parents.

Mr. Ortiz then reviewed the school's mission, vision, and core values that were written after many months of hard work by staff, administration and parents last year. PS 154 is embracing a new program called Caring School Community that will enable class meetings, cross-age buddies, and activities that will assist in realizing the school's mission. This year and moving forward, there will be a focus on improving the Social Studies curriculum with a staff developer, Renee Dinnerstein and Teachers College to assist.

Other good news includes:

- Each class will have two extra periods of Physical Education per month. In addition, the school is exploring the possibility of using the new armory space at 8th Avenue and 15th Street that promises to open in January. It is a phenomenal space with inside track, fields, and courts.
- PS 154 received an A on its Progress Report
- Increase in % of students scoring 3 and 4 in literacy
- Increase in % of students year's progress

Testing for this year:

- Grades 3-5 ELA: April 26th- 28th
- Grades 3-5 Math: May 5th -7th
- Social Studies Grade 5: November 16-17th
- Science Grade 4 (Performance): May 24th – June 3rd
- Science Grade 4 (Written): June 7th

Mr. Ortiz and Mr. Havlik fielded many other questions including the following: The gate to the schoolyard will open at 8:35am and 2:55pm. The schoolyard is closed at 4:00pm each day to accommodate the after school programs. Please use the main entrance to enter the building. Regarding H1N1, Mr. Ortiz and Mr. Havlik emphasized good hygiene, washing hands before coming to school, and frequent hand washing during school. The D.O.E. will be offering flu vaccinations in October. The school nurse has been trained to administer. No exact date set yet. The Music Program in school will begin the 2nd week of October. Occupational Therapy was reduced from 4X per week to 2X per week. However, arrangements are being made to increase the frequency of O.T. back to 4X weekly with an additional O.T. coming into the school. The playground is due for completion in December.

The meeting came to a close at approximately 8:30pm. The next PTA meeting will be Tuesday October 6, 2009 at 6:00pm.

Respectfully submitted by Carolyn Altman