

# **MS 54 Booker T. Washington Middle School**

## **PTA GENERAL MEETING - DRAFT**

**MARCH 8, 2007**

**HANDOUTS:** Auction donation forms, Minutes of the February 8, 2007 General PTA meeting, Tonight's Agenda, PTA Announcements, Budget update, Information on NY Children's Film Festival.

The meeting began at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was chaired by Mary Beth Walsh and Mark Diller.

### **I. PTA Welcome/Announcements**

- A.** Minutes of our last meeting of February 8, 2007 were distributed and parents were asked to email Mark Diller at mdiller at nyc.rr.com by next Wednesday with any comments.
- B.** Citywide school lobby day to Albany – March 13, busing will be provided.
- C.** Jennifer Freeman, an MS 54 parent, will be running for the CEC.
- D.** Talent Show – The BTW Talent show will be April 26; auditions will be March 20 and 21.
- E.** High School Awareness Week: April 17, 18 the Guidance Counselors will give a forum on different high schools, they will have BTW Alumni speak.
- F.** May 10 PTA meeting will be dedicated to Robin Raskin's internet safety presentation. She will lead an assembly the following day for the children; one for each grade.
- G.** The SLT is in the process of re-doing the CEP (Comprehensive Education Plan) for the school.

### **II. Principal's Report**

- A.** Tuesday and Wednesday were simulated Math exams – real tests March 13 and 14; students are reminded to bring #2 pencils, get a good night's sleep and be on time, 8:50 start. Students who arrive late must take the test on make up day.
- B.** Science fair for 8<sup>th</sup> graders is March 30 – March 30 is also the end of the marking period.
- C.** Projects/Grants – Special Ed grant will be used to study curriculum for next year. ELL program also being developed further for next year. A \$50,000 RESOE grant has been received for technology.
- D.** High school admissions – 126 8<sup>th</sup> graders have been accepted to specialized high schools on the first round (highest ever for BTW).
- E.** BTW Admissions – 236 incoming 6<sup>th</sup> graders have been accepted to BTW for September, of a total 250 seats to be filled, all from the CORE program; Delta is full. A parent asked why the Delta decisions were so late this year, usually they go out before the private school deadlines. Dr. Elster explained that the Region was involved in the admissions process this year; it used to be handled by the District's Middle School Choice committee.
- F.** Children have been in for lunch due to the cold.
- G.** Model UN – Mr. Barton and Ms. McNulty led 6 students as outstanding delegates, both Core and Delta students working together on addressing women's and children's issues as refugees.

**III. Special Guests** -- Mike McCourt, who is the District 3 Rep to the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) and Teresa Andersen, Parent Liaison of the UFT introduced themselves and discussed common concerns with schools in the city; the region/district reorganization, class size, school budgets. Many of these issues will be addressed on Lobby Day 3/13, parents are strongly encouraged to attend. Teresa is involved in organizing parents to support UFT issues. The UFT library is available to parents for research. Michael's contact info is [mmcourt at uft.org](mailto:mmcourt@uft.org), Teresa's is [tandersen at uft.org](mailto:tandersen@uft.org).

**IV. Treasurer's Report**-Updated financials were distributed

- A. Capital Fund Drive-- Is slightly above last year's levels, a third drive will be made after the auction. Spending is about 43% of the level from last year.

**V. School Uniforms – discussion**

Chancellor's Regulations state that the SLT votes on the uniform/dress code issue every 3 years, and the parent input should come through the PTA Presidents. The official parent vote will be held at the next PTA meeting, but opinions and concerns were expressed, including the moral and free speech issues, financial issue, feelings of anger and differences between kids, concerns that the policy is changing after students were admitted based on the status quo, the inevitability that school uniforms would be modified and adapted by students and would not be "uniform", objection to a perceived climate in public schools for regimentation, concerns that a uniform policy would require administrators to discipline children, possibly to include sending them home, which would discourage attendance, and a general perception that the current dress code forbidding inappropriately revealing or provocative clothing was sufficient. No parent spoke in support of a uniform policy or a more restrictive dress code.

**VI. PTA – Other – By-Law Amendment**

By law, Chancellor's Regulation A660 requires us to amend the PTA by-laws to, among other things, ensure that the PTA and SLT elections are coordinated with the Community Education Council elections (held biennially). Since the DoE has not finalized the revisions to Regulation A-660, and since it takes two meetings to notice and then adopt amendments, an addendum was prepared and referred to the General Meeting by the Executive Board that would bring our PTA and SLT election schedule into line with the proposed Regulation. An addendum, unlike an amendment, can be adopted at a single meeting.

After due discussion, and upon motion duly made and seconded, the addendum was unanimously approved by the PTA at the General Meeting. A certificate containing the language of the addendum was presented and signed by the Secretary and the co-Presidents and delivered to the Parent Coordinator to evidence the adoption of the addendum.

Nominations for next year's Executive Board and MS 54's SLT are being accepted immediately. The Nominating Committee is headed by Joe Gurvetz ([jgurvetz at gmail.com](mailto:jgurvetz@gmail.com)). We need 6<sup>th</sup> grade parents to step up as many members of the Executive Board will be graduating next year.

#### **IV. Fundraising/Events/Committee Updates**

- A. Auction** – Although pre-registration is requested, walk-ins are welcome. We will have the ability to take credit cards this year. We have a boutique, and a lot of great stuff is coming in! Scott Stringer, Melissa Vivarito and Danny O'Donnell are expected to attend.
- B. Recess Committee** – There was a discussion about the funds allocated for Conflict Resolution and if there has been any progress with the group from Teachers College. Some parents are considering the option of a Recess Committee. Dr. Elster said she is not considering Open Recess at this time.
- C. Summer Program** - Dr. Elster explained that she was not sure of the status of the summer program that had use of the building last summer. There were many problems when we resumed school in the summer. There was a discussion about having the parents do something to prevent the same thing happening again.
- D. Technology** – The PTA has purchased a new sound system, which will be tested at the auction.
- E. Eighth Grade Dance** – Is scheduled for next Friday, 3/16. Parent chaperones are needed.

#### **2006-2007 Executive/General Membership Meeting Calendar Dates:**

May 10

June 7

**Meetings are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month unless there is a conflict on the school calendar. Executive board meetings are at 6pm prior to the general meeting unless noted (September 13, 7:30 am; October 11, 7:30 am)**

***If a meeting needs to be changed due to an unforeseen reason, a notice will be sent out as early as possible to let you know of the change.***

***Want to be up-to-the-minute on upcoming school and PTA events? Join the MS 54 E-mail update: subscribe to the BTW e-mail alerts by sending a blank e-mail to: BTWMS54PTA-subscribe@yahoogroups.com***

***Not able to make the meeting but want to keep up with events? You can access previous months' PTA meeting minutes at: <http://www.ms54.org/PTA.htm>***