

June 11, 2024 - rm. 124

**In attendance:**

Corissa, Danielle, Michaela, Amy, Justin, Amy, Shelly, Mahshad, Hannah, Ariella, Randa, Nili, Christy, Krystina, Hallie, Nicole, Laura, Shalisha, Sharelle, Nissa, Christian, Melissa, Kate, Monique, Kim, Andrea, Tracey, Diane

**Discussion topics:**

- Budget approval - need to vote on line items over \$500.
  - Barbara has requested payment for the second half of the year (for which she has already worked). The bill is for \$4000. Show of hands who votes to approve this budget line item?
  - Vote results: *Unanimous approval*
- Highlights - will be starting meetings with sharing highlights and gratitude
  - Dancing! So many opportunities for dancing.
  - Arts Committee and making parent community
  - Field trips and getting to ride the school bus with the other parents.
  - Ecorama
  - New found independence for our kids
  - Our kids sharing they are sad school will be ending
  - Camping trips
  - Making new friends from different grades than our kids
  - So many loving adults at this school, and each kid has at least one adult who sees them for who they are
  - Being part of a school community
  - The cafe at Makerfest that Justin and Nili ran - and my daughter ate a sandwich!
  - Getting to be a parent
  - Growth and learning through 1st grade - vocabulary, reading,
  - Feeling energized by all the folks willing to lend a helping hand, volunteer, want to collaborate and make great things happen for our kids
  - How much space there has been for people to offer their skills and talents. Being can participate and create space. Great prescient for next year.
  - Seeing my 1st grader really blossom into the person he is. At his previous school, he had difficulty making friends and knowing how to learn, but one day

here at BNS he came home and asked for homework! I am so grateful that I found this school and I am glad to be here.

- Community has been amazing and I signed my parents up to work at ECOrama!
- All 700 of my children live with you... (their parents)
- My child can do research!
- Next year will be my 11th and final year as a BNS parent. And that has been my highlight - working with other parents to figure out how we can extend BNS into middle school and beyond. And making community from all over the place
- 4th grade musical
- Makerfest
- Camping trip with the 5th graders - if your classroom can run well when you're gone means you have community, and as a principal it was amazing that this school could run with me gone for 3 days
- I have 1200 parents, and for the most part BNS parents are amazing. I have had such a great time meeting, zooming, etc. with parents. Parents are so respectful and have felt so comfortable coming to me with all sorts of things. I am very grateful
- In August of 1996 when I got the phone call from Mary Ellen Bosch, the Principal before Anna, and she was calling kids off the waitlist. I got the call and said, of course I'll take it! That child is now 32. He just had dinner with his best friend from Kindergarten all the way up.
- Drop the mic!
- Nominations - for next year, we are reducing the exec committee into a smaller group to allow for more communication more quickly, and then disseminate more easily
  - Co-Presidents
    - Michaela Daniel - confirmed
    - Melissa Wu - confirmed
  - Co-Treasurer
    - Krystina - returning member (confirmed)
    - Justin Field - confirmed
  - Fundraising
    - Amy Osekowsky Davis - confirmed
    - Jennifer Mielke - confirmed
  - Recording Secretary
    - Hannah - returning member (confirmed)
  - DEI Rep (TBD, pending job description)
    - Sharelle (nominated, confirmed)
  - Members at large
    - Nicole DeFino (confirmed)
    - Nili Ohayon (confirmed)

#### Other committees

- SLT (School Leadership Team) - meets 1x a week (7 staff, 4 families, 1 admin, 1 district rep, 1 PTA)

- Andrea
    - Michaela
    - Hayley
    - Kim
    - Cate
    - Andrew
    - Joi
    - Hillary
  - Social Media
  - Communications
    - Newsletter - biweekly
    - Konstella
    - Calendar
  - Merchandise
  - Farm Stand
  - Face painting
  - Arts
  - Lost and Found
  - Nutrition?
- **Fundraising totals**
    - Spring Fling
      - Tickets - \$4600
      - Auction - \$18,000 (\$14000 - auction; \$4000 for raffle)
        - Raffle winners will be announced soon
    - June is the most expensive month
      - \$188,000 raised so far
      - \$215,000 likely to spend for 2023-2024 year
    - One last push (two weeks left) to raise final funds
      - Possibly at June Share until 10
      - We will pull out the Fundraising Thermometer
      - Staff Lunch (Friday at gym Set up @ 11; lunch @ 12)
      - Bake sale - June 20
      - Merch sales at the Farm stand

March 19, 2024 - rm. 124

**In attendance:** Elena, Melissa, Christian, Hannah, Amy, Arielle, Reyhan, Amy, Shalisha, Krystina, Laura, Kristi, Diane

**Discussion Topics:**

- NYC Opt Out (Reyhan)
  - More standardized tests than ever, including screeners now for Kindergarten

- You can still opt out. The data goes to the district, and it goes to the company that administers the tests. Districts know if a school doesn't submit data, and they need to see that parents have opted out.
- There is also new mandated ELA curriculum for pre-K and K.
- The scores are going up because the curriculum is test prep curriculum (like 90 minute blocks for kindergarten to learn rigorously paced curriculum)
- District 15 is doing [Wit and Wisdom](#) for ELA. The only other district doing this one is District 19, and the parents are super happy.
- Even BNS has to administer these tests, though it still has a very strong opt-out parent community. Every opt-out request for NYC screeners requires a meeting with Diane and she needs to have a record of a meeting with parents to convince them to not opt-out
- School budget is devoted to supporting substitutes so teachers are not required to administer the screeners
- BNS has a 95-98% opt-out rate. Most students at most schools take these tests. Services are not available during testing days/weeks
- Teachers have to also spend time grading the tests
- Most teachers say that none of the data from any of the tests has any value to instruction. Kids get scores, but the breakdown of why a student gets it wrong does really tell you why the child got the question wrong.
- Scores are correlated with income
- The state changes every year what the 1, 2, 3, 4 mean. They come up with a raw score with teachers, but they adjust the meaning of the 1, 2, 3, 4 so they can politically motivate for certain types of messaging. They will change the scores to show poor performance if they want to deal punishment to the school; if they want to good performance by the chancellor, they will adjust the scoring system to mean something positive.
- One year they released questions to showcase
- A good or bad score on the test does nothing for a kid. Teachers unions have fought hard to make sure that the bad score doesn't affect teachers or schools either. So, it's really mostly impacting the teaching time.
- These don't prepare you for the tests at other schools because they are not structured the same way (including regents, etc.). Especially because these tests don't test what you learn in the classroom, they test on very obscure types of questions.
- Since the pandemic, middle schools do not use test scores from elementary school for admissions purposes. Many students come in without any tests, or transfer from other states, etc.
- Students get the experience of testing their knowledge, just not using the NY State tests
- If you want to opt-out, here is the
- Other events
  - April 8th - book event with an author
  - May xx? - Spring Fling & Auction
  - May 17 - Kidchella - Family dance party
  - Week of April 6th - participatory budgeting (to bring AC to the auditorium.... Everyone can vote!). Working on getting 610 Henry street as a polling option
- MakerFest
  - Very successful!
  - Still counting final numbers from all funding sources
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December 18, 2023 - rm. 124

**In attendance:**

*Exec committee:* Hannah, Christian, Krystina, Elena, Diane

*Committee leads:*

*Parents:*

*School leadership:* Shalisha, Malicka, Amy, Shelly, Amelia

Admin announcement and requests

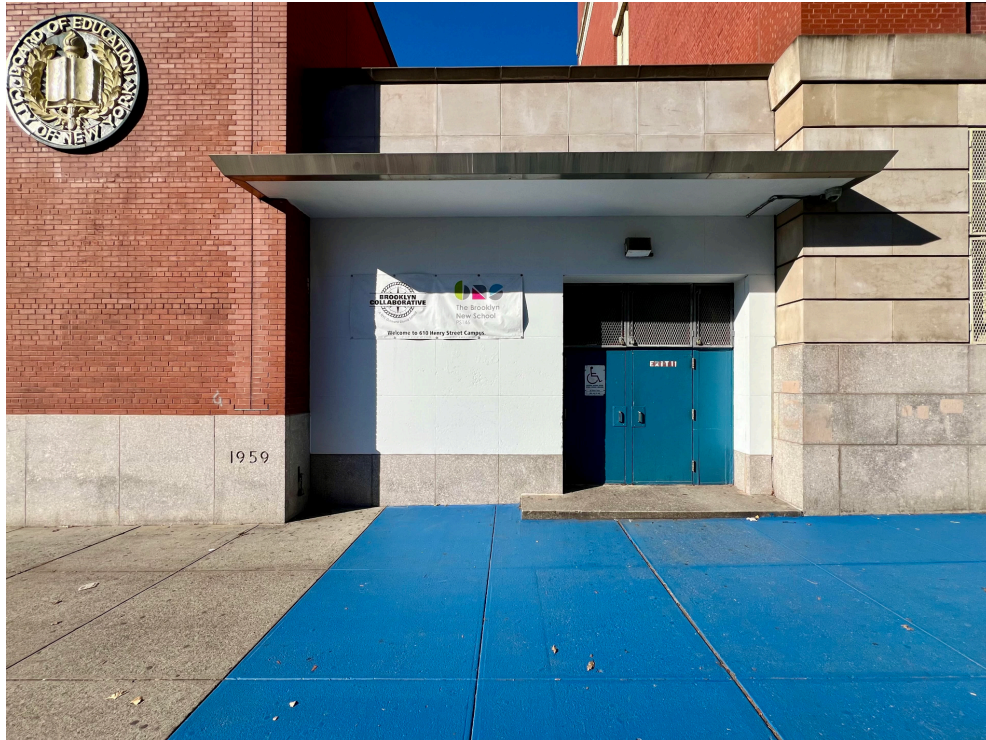
\*\*\*ANNOUNCEMENT\*\*\* Malika Johnson-Willis is moving to be the Project Director at P.S. 456! The vision is to bring the experience of BNS to a new school. [Open houses are ongoing](#), it will start accepting applicants in January. It's similar to BNS - non-zoned school in District 15 (State Street, near Whole Foods). It will just start with kindergarten (3 classes to start.) It's sort of like a "BNS 2".

\*\*\*ANNOUNCEMENT\*\*\* Amy Sumner shared that she is retiring at the end of the school year. After 20 years, we will all miss her so much! Keep your ears and eyes open for someone (or several people!) who may be a good fit to fill her enormous shoes.

*Other admin updates:*

- A new fridge will be bought & donated to the staff lounge (current freezer is broken)!
- Looking for parent volunteers to help paint the bathrooms
- We got a good response for Great Leaps literacy help...yeah!

Ongoing issues with late drop off - will send out communication that **School Starts at 8:10**. Any late drop off (after 8:30) needs to enter on Henry Street:



### Finance

- Still have lots of money to raise. We are at 28.6% of our annual budget. We are technically on track, but we would like raise more than our budget to build up a buffer.
  - Lots of corporate matching this year.
- Spend is happening, mostly on supplies.
- Participatory budgeting - we got two proposals. One is to renovate the cafeteria (it will possibly be on the ballot) and we will want folks to vote on things. Anyone 10 and up can vote.
  - Should we volunteer to be a voting site? YES!

### Ideas to implement

- Proposal to combine communications fundraising with other events (movie night, school play, etc.), so we can have greater outreach to fundraising and financing needs.
- Looking for a popcorn machine - it's how we make our fundraising money at movie nights. A new (fast) one is \$1000.
  - Ameila offered to bring the popcorn machine from her party company to the next concession event.
- DOE has a restriction on bake sales - only once a month. It relates to specific types of baking (but doesn't apply to chips or other packaged food). We could sell other things, popcorn, etc.
- Other kinds of fundraising methods: Mabels Labels, See's Candies (Amelia offered to do some research on this).

- Social media action: add passive income streams into Linktree on Instagram

### Fundraising

- Annual appeal (Laura) fundraising is happening now, and it's going out through the class parents in each classroom. Ideas have been shared (like gift cards for teachers to buy classroom needs)
- Grants committee (Melissa / Ani) - there are 4-5 parents who are starting to write grants. Three different groups (Band, BAX, Science). Thinking of adding more categories (like Art, etc.). The idea would be to form these groups of parents, start doing research, and start applying to grants).
- Jennifer created an awesome form to collect interest from parents who want to participate or lend skills.
- More ideas about our next event, and need more people and will need volunteers to make it all happen. We want to raise \$20,000.
- Kids to create envelopes and can put the letter inside (or even a QR code) to encourage more donations.
- Thank yous for everyone's fundraising effort will go out soon.
- Hakeem Jeffries' Kids went to BNS
- External Alumni newsletter
- Picture day is a fundraiser

November 21, 2023 - rm. 124

### **In attendance:**

*Exec committee:* Hannah, Christian, Krystina, Elena

*Committee leads:* Laura, Tracy, Kristi, Merve, Melissa, Nicole, Lisa, Carissa, Taryn, Ani, Jennifer, Amy

*Parents:* Michaela, Paula, Ariella,

*School leadership:* Shalisha, Malicka, Diane, Amy, Shelly

### **Minutes:**

#### Social Media

Melissa voted in as social media co-chair: **APPROVED** by show of hands

Please send photos to the social media team - must ensure that faces are not shown clearly, or include names so they can be checked against media releases.

### Fundraising

- Pies are for sale today
- Chocolate fundraiser is being prepared - school gets 20% of proceeds

### Grant writing

- Grant writing needs new leadership
- Looking for: Someone/a few people who each have a few hours a month to get this off the ground. Minimal amount of effort because of the existing writing that has been written.
- Looking for someone to come in now for this and take over all the documents
- Responsibilities
  - Researching new grants
  - Following up / project management with writers and grant outcomes

### Lost and found

- Emptying out the shed
- Needs bins to hold clothes

### Calendar orders update:

- A parent who is also a photographer offered his services, and took pictures of all the art on the walls for the calendars.
- They are in pre-order phase right now

### Fundraising ideas:

- Want to find a way to send out to parents what we made in fundraisers, and what we spent in terms of costs/program spend. Also interested in whether we can track what percentage of parents give, and how to increase the percentage.
- Envelope campaign - decorate envelopes and encourage people to add whatever they want - coins, dollars, etc. and also a QR code for people that don't have cash.

### Open questions / general discussion:

- Where is the best place for parents to put out a request for help with volunteers for various events or committees?
  - What if we created a list for people who can be "on-call" list?
- If parents have a talent, how can they offer their skills?
  - What if we created a form, and have it send to an airtable that's searchable?
- Can we reach out to the kindergarten and Pre-K parents specifically to invite them to get involved with committees (Tim Smith Allen?) They tend to be more engaged.

### School leadership updates:

- We are working on four projects right now
  - Auditorium overhall
  - Window repair
  - Updating to bathrooms
  - Playground needs updates
  - Other things
    - New chairs, new ceiling
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October 11th, 2023 - Over Zoom

In Attendance:

Christian Leue  
Diane Castelucci  
Krystina Athas  
Elena Tate  
Lisa Walsh  
Amy Davis  
Melissa Wu  
Alejandro Triana  
Anna  
Cassie Fromowitz  
Corissa Trani  
Denise  
Diandra Verwayne  
George Chan  
Hayley Hernandez  
Jennifer Mielke  
Jenny H  
Laura Wood  
Lizzie Hemming-Spier  
Marisa Kurland  
Meg Lemke  
Michaela Daniel  
Nili Ohayon  
Phebe  
Sara Gable  
Sarah Clore  
Shelley Bissessar  
Tracey Toole

Mentioned open positions on executive board: social media co-chair, co-treasurer. Ongoing search for these two key roles.

Mentioned open position for merchandise sales coordinator. Search continues here as well.

Voted in Jennifer Mielke as fundraising co-chair, no nays.

Krystina presented our budget for 2023-24. Voted on and approved, no nays.



## September 19, 2023 - First General PTA Meeting of the school year

*If you attended the meeting, we take roll by email. You can say you were here by emailing [BNS2023@BNS146.org](mailto:BNS2023@BNS146.org)*

### **What does the PTA do? How is it similar to other schools? How is it different?**

We are here to support different programs that aren't supported by the DOE. The farm, the science program. We are also here to help foster parent participation. We are the best way for you to get in touch with the admin.

We are completely open. We don't have closed executive meetings. We are fully participatory.

### **Upcoming Events**

#### *Unity Fest*

@ 610 Henry Street - to welcome all families Pre-K-12th grade.

Saturday Sept 30

Food, games, Arts and Crafts, Clothing swap

#### *Curriculum Night*

1-night for each grade level, during September.

Information will come from your teachers

#### *Farm Stand*

Monthly, on Wednesday afternoons on Rapelye and Henry

Sell farm-sourced food at cost (not a fundraiser) and leftover food is donated to families and afterschool. Goal is to make local produce available for all.

### **Budget**

Last year, we raised \$182,000 (goal was \$280,000). We spent \$220,000.

Direct giving is the primary method of fundraising. We don't hold as many events as other schools

We used to have 720 kids 8 years ago. Over the course of the pandemic, we reduced class size to 25-27 but keep the PTA and DOE fundings the same. Now we have 660 kids, smaller class size, but balanced offerings and staff numbers.

### **Executive Committee openings and other Volunteer roles**

Social media chair (open)  
Fundraising co-chair (open)  
Treasurer-in-training (open)

*Introductions by all executive committee members*

## **Merchandise**

We do merchandise sales at every event. We do sales online. If someone orders a product online, someone will deliver it to your child's classroom.

Tracy is looking for a co-chair to help with merchandise.

## **PTA Voting**

### *PTA Positions*

Tracy added as PTA member-at-large

*Approved by raise of hands*

Jocelyn added as PTA member-at-large

*Approved by raise of hands*

### *Budget votes - anything new in the spend ver \$500 needs to be voted on*

Requesting A/C units added to common spaces (cafeteria, gym, auditorium). Units were donated (\$6000), but cost is for installation and cleanings costs ~\$2500 (split with BCS). This is a once off cost.

*Approved by raise of hands*

Maintenance team requests for snow plow for the school yard / ~\$15,000

*Suggestion made to look into grants and donations for equipment*

"Learn to Bike" Program - run by Anna Allanbrook. Bikes need overall tune up by a professional team to get them ready for the school year. The tune-up is \$1500.

This budget item will be added to the annual budget to support the "Learn to Bike" program every year.

*Approved by raise of hands*

## **Other events**

### *Book Fair*

Happens on the first floor - all classes go during library slot  
Every child who wants a book gets a book.

8am-4pm Today-through Thursday

*Tuesday mornings events*

We are pouring a lot into our family series. Mark Tuesdays on the calendar. All the events will be uploaded onto Konstella. Families as learning partners. We cycle through different sessions: math, mindfulness, social emotional learning, nutrition, etc.

*Grade-level family meetings*

Facilitated by Diane and Mailka in partnership with teachers.

*SLT meetings - School Leadership Team*

Monthly leadership team. Required participation of staff, parents, administration. Analytical conversations. Like a think tank. DOE required. Open meetings, all are welcome.

Dates not set yet. Trying for a hybrid in-person and Zoom.

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**October's PTA meeting will be in the evening, at 7:30 over zoom**

Topics include: Budget review, Fundraising plans and activities