October meeting minutes read by secretary and approved by membership.

Mr Havlik discusses emotional learning at BSI [https://youtu.be/2aAYzFsJZHMc]: This topic is extremely important to me, personally. If kids aren’t excited to go to school, it interferes with a child’s ability to learn at full capacity.

As a school administrator: big part of my training at Teacher’s College and Principal’s Academy was mindfulness. If you can’t manage yourself, how can you manage others? That was a big takeaway for me. If you aren’t open and accepting of those around you, you can’t be effective.

Quote on screen: “Social Emotional Learning is intended to teach children specific social-emotional skills like self-awareness, self-management, empathy, perspective taking and cooperation. In short, these are the lessons of emotional intelligence.”

We hear about bullying and it’s a big concern for parents. Sometimes there’s confusion between what bullying is and what a conflict is.

Slide on Bullying v. Conflict

Bullying: is a pattern of behavior intended to cause harm, imbalance of power (physical or social). Targeted person (group) is harmed by what is said or done.
Conflict: Struggle between two or more people with incompatible desires. Frustration and anger may escalate a conflict.

It’s important for parents to know that a disagreement isn’t necessarily bullying.

Slide on DOE guidelines
Range of Consequences for Bullying Behavior:
K-2. Staff/Student meeting — Principal’s suspension
3-5. Parent conference — Principal’s suspension
6-8. Parent conference — Superintendent’s suspension

I want the children to be happy here. I want them to love being in school. When I hear about problems, I am going to address and deal with it. I want them to feel safe and happy.

Methods used by staff to manage behavior issues:
First, as a staff, we discuss suggestions for teachers for how to manage disagreements and disruption in class. Then we have a chain of referrals. Next person to bring in, usually Ms Ferguson, then Ms Moshura, then Mr Havlik.
Restorative Circles: Used in middle school but may bring it down into lower grades. Having conversations about how a disagreement has affected each person. This is extremely effective.

Logical consequences: example. If you mess up your cafeteria table, you are going to clean up the cafeteria table.

NYC DOE Discipline Code guidelines are here.

Next steps slide:
BSI is working to improve through these programs: No place for Hate, Just Say Hi, December 7th (new initiative by chancellor, will involve all 3 schools), Upstander Presentations, Teacher PD, seeking more professional development to support students that are twice exceptional or “2E” (gifted with learning or attention issues) This is an area of growth for the school. Rights, Respect and Responsibility Health Program—K-8 health/sex ed program brought to Havlik by group of parents. Encompasses a lot of social emotional learning. Piloting program in the spring. Advisory — Empowerment/Inclusion. Having rich conversations in advisory. Buddy classes: (showed photos of BSI students meeting with buddies) Kids are very excited. Mindfulness: teaching kids to check in with their bodies and breathing.

Buddy classes. 5th and 2nd grades are paired together. They recently interviewed one another. 6th and 3rd grades also interviewed each other to forge bonds.

Update on lower grade Science: Ms Kenny was hired as part time science teacher. 3 days per week. She’s working with Ms. Christy on classroom management, blogging and planning. Christy and Ron are working hard with her to support her. 4th graders were excited about lizards and grasshopper ecosystems that they’ve created. There will be a TA in science to help with materials management.

Here’s what is going on curricula-wise in lower grade Science:

3rd grade: Students are observing and identifying energy in various forms, including: sound, heat, chemical, mechanical, and electrical. We will be observing how energy is transformed and how it travels through matter in different states. Something students can look forward to: building their own wind-ups!

4th: Ecosystems and interdependence Unit: Students have planted grass seeds (testing different variables that affect plant growth), observed live crickets and now anoles and lizards! Students are focusing on the needs of different living things and how they adapt to their environment.
5th: Variables unit: We are at the height of our variables unit, conducting various experiments, identifying and testing variables. By the end of the unit, students will be designing their own experiments using the scientific method.

Reminders: Cold Weather! I’m going to say it again. Really important that they are dressed appropriately for recess. If you are wondering if they will go out, they are probably going out.

Grade meetings: Dates are coming. Likely going to be on Tuesday mornings. These are meetings for parents of specific grade to have a targeted discussion of what is happening in each grade.

Spanish teacher was finally processed by the DOE. She will start at the end of Dec or beginning of Jan.

Family Friday inclusion: When you go into your child’s classrooms, please visit and talk with other students who may not have their families here this morning.

Parent Q&A:

Q: Why don’t teachers in lower grades use School Loop?
A: School Loop is generally used by the classes that have homework, assignments to track and number grades.

Q: What are grade meetings?
A: A place for parents of a particular grade to ask questions of teacher and administration.

Q: How many science teachers does the school want to have? Can K-2 have separate science instruction next year?
A: They are seeking a full-time science teacher for lower grades. Would like to hire someone who can work in the STEMLab after it is built. Thinking now how to best use it and have every kid have access the lab. It’s critical that we have a teacher who can work in the lab and also in the classrooms. I’m not sure from a budget standpoint if we can have 3 science teachers in the school. If it’s K-5, it’s tricky to have that person also work in the STEMLab. Looking for someone who can deliver a curriculum for 3-5 in the lab. Working on finding the best scenario for next year. Has calls into the principals of PS 84 and PS 333 about how they use their rooftop labs in science instruction.

Q: Is it a question of funding for science? Can PTO support?
A: We can be creative about budgeting. There are possibilities. As we get closer to next year and how he understands the school budget and PTO fundraising, we will work to make sure we are putting forth the best school product that we can with the money.

Q: Math coach or literacy in 2nd grade?
A: Don’t have the funding for that right now. I think there would be value in that. We have shifted teachers for maternity leave, so there’s no extra time in teachers’ schedules. But that’s something I’ll evaluate for next year.

Q: How are the younger grades interacting with computer labs?
A: Don’t have a computer lab. Have a media literacy teacher who works with classes and uses the computer cart, which moves from room to room. Would love to bring more coding to the school. This is another area for growth. Thinking of that as a lunch club. In previous school, PS154, started coding in K. There’s a lot of value in it.

Havlik introduced Ms Ferguson, Dean of school culture. She has been a tremendous resource and knows kids so well. She is well-versed in positive forms of discipline. She has run the Tribes program. She is available for you.

Carlie and Claire, PTO co-president: introduced Valerie, 1st and 3rd grade parent and BSI PTO volunteer of the month. Valerie made the connection to MoMath to bring in their presentations to 1st and 3rd grade. With school support, the MoMath program has been extended to 4th and 5th.

Claire, PTO Co-President: Want to appreciate the teachers who are here. If you have a question about what is happening in your child’s class, reach out by email to the teacher. Give them time to respond. School administration is very responsive.

If there’s something you can do to help the school, no matter how big or small, please do it! If everyone in the room (approximately 120 parents) would commit to helping on one project, we could really make great things happen. The MoMath program is a big example, but we also need help with smaller projects.

Annie, co-VP of PTO Parent Involvement: Overall goals: 1. Collect and organize information that will make it easier for parent volunteers to make things happen. We want to get all the information together. This way, it’s easier for parents to plug in and give their time. Want to make it easier to volunteer at any level. 2. Communication with parents 3. Supporting parent volunteers who want to revitalize old initiatives and start new ones.

[Survey on BSIPTO.org](https://www.BSIPTO.org). If you filled it out. You will get emails from the people who will run those events.

Ask of you right now: think about all of the BSI activities that you have taken a part of. Talk to someone you don’t know.

Q: Noticed a drop in participation in middle school. When parents don’t have to bring students to events, parents and kids have lower attendance at events.
Answer: So there’s a need more middle school family appropriate events. We can work middle school parents to help make that happen. I’m also hearing you say that we need a parent karaoke night. (Laughter) Willow and I are already working on it.

Parent comment: Toy drive for recycled toys. Would love to have more kids involved in the spring. Please keep toys that are in good condition for donation. It’s a great program.

Maura, PTO Executive VP: We are revamping and revitalizing key committees. Please sign up to help with committees; sign-up sheets are circulating.

Two events: Skating Social January 28th, 3-5pm Prospect park. Chess Tournament Feb 11th all day at BSI.
Coat Drive in the office: Sponsored by the Giveback committee. Will collect coats in good used condition at the 4th floor office.

T-shirts are being sold until December 6th

Gala: disco theme in June. We need folks to help us kill this event.
Nominating committee:
Chess tournament on Feb 11th: needs volunteers.

Mikael: Treasurer.

Highlights of December 1 report [Can we add link to final report]
Top third: income
Middle: expenses
Bottom: funds that will be transferred
Bottom right: funds in accounts.

We had income from the Harvest Festival, about $7.5k.

Q: Are we on track for fundraising?
A: We are ahead of where we were last year, but we also want to do a lot better than we did last year.

Mai, Co-VP of Fundraising:

Our goal is to raise $526,000 for next year’s programs. The biggest and most efficient fundraiser is through the Direct Appeal, or what we call the DA. We prefer check to keep processing fees down. End of the year is important date. Corporate matching is key--please check with your employee to see if your donation qualifies. Signed up service Double the Donation. Plug in the name of employer, will give you form and number to call.
March 2-11. We already have a donation from Mill Basin Day Camp. We are looking for camp donations. You will hear from us soon. We really need parents to solicit donations from the programs they use in order for the auction to be successful. We hear that Camp Halfblood is popular and Brooklyn Game Lab. Please reach out and ask for a donation!

June 9th, Saturday is gala. Last year we brought in 75k. This year we want to double that. Going to sell lots of ads for the gala program. We are looking for “experiences” that we can auction off. A special tour of a city landmark, a dinner at a restaurant, a class. We hear that many retailers in Park Slope and other neighborhoods are having a tough time making ends meet, so we may not be as successful getting gift certificates as we have been in the past. Asking for a donation that doesn’t cost an organization much money is a great way to get around this.

Need more donations for the gala. We have two tickets for a Saturday in September to Dear Evan Hansen! If anyone has a connection to Urban Sitter, reach out.

Adjourned 9:15am