

PS11 Post

Ryan Center Ends Partnership with P.S. 11

BY ZELLA BERKOWITZ

Sometimes, big things happen right in front of us and we don't have a clue about it. That's what happened recently when P.S. 11's Ryan Center announced out of the blue that they were closing without any warning! P.S. 11 was flabbergasted and I wanted to find out more so I dug into the issue.

Finally confirming rumors, the Ryan Center sent a letter to P.S. 11 families in November, informing them that it would officially be closing on December 13th.

When I spoke with Mr. Bender, he made it clear that he was furious about the Ryan Center closing. Even though the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) had approved the closure, by the time this information was shared with P.S. 11, it was too late for the school to take action. This is especially surprising because the Ryan Center has been so important to P.S. 11 for over 15 years.

The Ryan Center said that money problems had forced them to close. Council Member Erik Bottcher, the Council Member for District 3, kindly spoke to me about this situation. He told me that "one big concern right now is the financial difficulties that Ryan Health is experiencing, because apparently they [are short]

\$14,000,000." This is because over the years, the Ryan Center has gotten paid less and less by insurance for the same services. In other words, the Ryan Center and other health care providers are having trouble staying open because they do not get paid a lot of money to help keep people healthy.

When Mr. Bender found out about this, P.S. 11 worked quickly with Council Member Erik Bottcher and other community leaders to find a new school nurse. P.S. 11 was EXTREMELY lucky to have a full clinic with more than one nurse! I know it might sound crazy to you, but most schools in NYC only have one nurse, and for now we will be a one-nurse school.

It is so exciting that we found Danielle Terry, who used to be a hospital travel nurse around America, and said that this job brought her a lot of joy. Luckily for us, she fit all the criteria for P.S. 11's needs for a nurse, and accepted the offer! My conversation with Danielle Terry revealed some fun facts about her:

How long will she be here: No specific time but currently a permanent nurse!

How long has she been at P.S. 11: Since October!

"Rush Hour" is lunchtime onwards [1:30-2:50]!

While she doesn't treat teachers, she can be there for them in an urgent situation!



Our new nurse, Danielle!

PHOTO BY ZELLA BERKOWITZ

While P.S. 11 is very grateful for Danielle, there are some things the Ryan Center could do that she cannot. Specifically, Danielle cannot prescribe medications, diagnose illnesses or give shots. In their letter, the Ryan Center suggested places that families could go to get shots and other health care services. However, the shots are still a big concern because the Ryan Center was providing them to so many kids because they were easy to get during school hours.

During our interview, I asked Council Member Bottcher if there is anything that can be done to help families get healthcare. He said that "one of our primary goals is to ensure that everyone in our community has access

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Let's Make a Splash!



BY FINN BELLAMY-YEOMANS

PHOTO BY MAX NOY

Do you know how lucky we are to have a pool at P.S. 11? In fact, P.S. 11 is one of only 48 NYC public schools that has a pool, out of over 1800 public schools in total. And actually, only 33 of those are currently operational because 15 are being repaired.

I have been lucky enough to swim here since I was 6 months old - on Saturdays a man called Wafa teaches baby swim classes in our pool - and I want to share some history and facts with you.

The P.S. 11 pool was built when the school was made in 1925. That means the pool is 100 years old!

When I asked Mr. Nichols, Mr. M., and Mark what their favorite part of

the pool is, they all had good answers. Mr. Nichols said, “exercise,” Mr. M. said, “being underwater,” and Mark said “seeing students progress.”

Not only do we get to have swim lessons during school, there’s also the afterschool swim club. That’s my favorite because you learn a lot more and it’s more challenging than the regular swim periods. We end up swimming about 16-20 long laps in one session and the coaches make us do drills. They also help you practice your technique, for example, by doing an exercise called shark fin and another where you have to hold three ping pong balls in each hand while swimming freestyle.

It’s amazing how many kids have learned to swim here. The people I interviewed estimate that approximately 10,000 kids have learned how to swim at P.S. 11, based on 100 kids a year.

I have been swimming here for 8 and a half years because I had the baby swim lessons with my parents on Saturday mornings, and I am grateful for the pool.



PHOTO BY MAX NOY

PS11 is a school that celebrates people of all cultures and backgrounds. Each edition, we'll be writing one of our articles in both Spanish and English. Many of us at PS11 (24%) come from homes where Spanish is spoken. In future editions, we'll also have articles in other languages spoken by students and teachers at PS11. Contact us if you'd like to see (or write!) an article in your language.

¡Hagamos un chapuzón!

POR FINN BELLAMY-YEOMANS

¿Sabes lo afortunados que somos de tener una piscina en la P.S. 11? De hecho, la P.S. 11 es una de las únicas 48 escuelas públicas de la ciudad de Nueva York que tiene piscina, de un total de más de 1,800 escuelas públicas. Y en realidad, solo 33 de ellas están actualmente en funcionamiento porque 15 están siendo reparadas.

He tenido la suerte de nadar aquí desde que tenía 6 meses - los sábados un hombre llamado Wafa da clases de natación para bebés en nuestra piscina - y quiero compartir algo de historia y datos con ustedes.

La piscina de la P.S. 11 se construyó cuando se hizo la escuela en 1925. ¡Eso significa que la piscina tiene 100 años!

Cuando les pregunté al Sr. Nichols, al Sr. M. y Mark cuál era su parte favorita de la piscina, todos tuvieron buenas respuestas. El Sr. Nichols dijo: “hacer ejercicio”. El Sr. M. dijo “estar bajo el agua”. Y Mark dijo “ver el progreso de los estudiantes”.

No solo tenemos clases de natación durante la escuela, sino que también está el club de natación extracurricular. Ese es mi favorito porque



PHOTO BY MAX NOY

aprendes mucho más y es más desafiante que los períodos regulares de natación. Terminamos nadando alrededor de 16-20 vueltas largas en una sesión y los entrenadores nos hacen hacer ejercicios. También te ayudan a practicar tu técnica, por ejemplo, haciendo un ejercicio llamado aleta de tiburón y otro en el que tienes que

sostener tres pelotas de ping pong en cada mano mientras nadas estilo libre.

Es increíble cuántos niños han aprendido a nadar aquí. Las personas que entrevisté estiman que aproxi-

madamente 10,000 niños han aprendido a nadar en la P.S. 11, basándose en 100 niños por año.

He estado nadando aquí durante 8 años y medio porque tomaba clases de natación para bebés con mis padres los sábados por la mañana, y estoy agradecido por la piscina.



PHOTO BY MAX NOY

PS11 es una escuela que celebra a personas de todas las culturas y orígenes. Cada edición, estaremos escribiendo uno de nuestros artículos tanto en español como en inglés. Muchos de nosotros en PS11 (24%) procedemos de hogares donde se habla español. En futuras ediciones, tendremos también artículos en otros idiomas hablados por estudiantes y maestros en PS11. Contáctenos si desea ver (¡o escribir!) un artículo en su idioma.

The Deep Dive

BY CAMERON FOX

A lot of people think that they know a lot about the pool. I used to think so too but now I know there is actually much more underneath that mysterious blue. How do they clean the pool, *I wonder?* How much does the school fund for the pool? These and many more questions will be answered in this article.

I interviewed Mr. Nichols and he said that a lot of time goes into maintaining the pool. We are extremely lucky to have it because we are one of just five public elementary schools in Manhattan that have a pool! According to Wikipedia, only P.S. 11, P.S. 125 in Harlem, the Julia Richman Education Complex on the

Upper East Side, and P.S. 20 on the Lower East Side have a pool. So we should be grateful for what we have.

The temperature of the pool is a lot warmer than you might think. It's around 82-85 degrees Fahrenheit! Our pool is big too: It is 60 feet long and 18 feet wide. The pool is full to the brim. There are approximately 5,280 gallons of water in the pool! That's crazy! Only 43 people are allowed in the pool at a time, but that's okay because the biggest classes usually have 26-32 kids in them.

The school spends \$600 on equipment every year! That's a lot! Mr. Jose uses two different chemicals to clean the pool. This wipes away all the bad germs, skin oil, and skin

flakes so the pool is clean for us to swim in. Hip hip hooray for Mr. Jose! One of the chemicals is the common chlorine, which is used in most pools in the world. It spreads throughout the pool, killing germs. Mr. Jose puts in one gallon of chlorine daily. The other chemical is called pH, which stands for the power of hydrogen. Too much pH (over 7.8) or too little pH (below 7.2) means the water will irritate your eyes, skin, and mucous membranes which makes the pool uncomfortable. Too much pH will also reduce the effectiveness of the chlorine. Mr. Jose does readings in the number of the pH to make sure it is just right.

In conclusion, these are the functions and characteristics of the pool and the pool chemicals and how they work. This is the mysterious blue that was unknown... until now.

What Can Students do About the Problem of Too Much Plastic Waste?

BY LOLA MARLOWE KECK

A lot of students at P.S. 11 bring single-use plastic bottles and other plastic containers to school. I hope that by reading this article you'll be persuaded to not bring your lunch in single use containers and to not use single-use plastic bottles. It is really bad for the environment, and plastic waste in particular kills so many animals.

Why is plastic waste so bad for the environment?

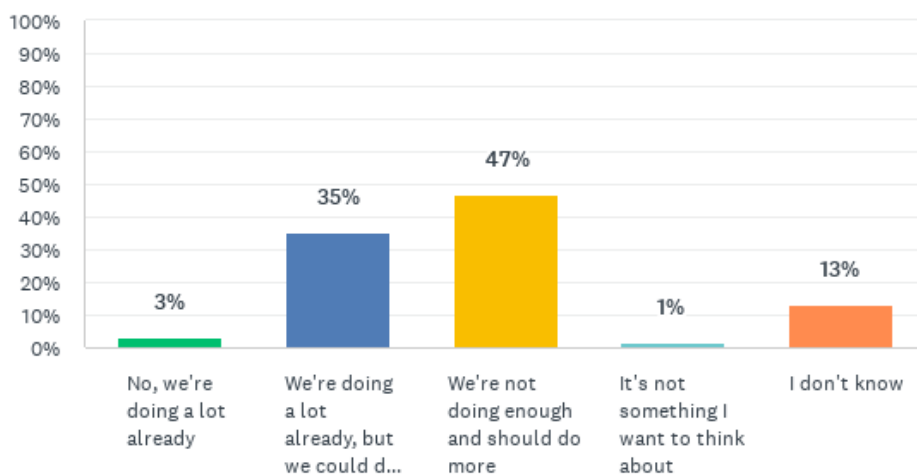
Because plastic does not biodegrade, or break down, like other foods or plants and that causes it to build up in rivers and oceans. I found an article that said almost 400 million

metric tons of plastic tend to build up in oceans and rivers.

Also, animals might try to eat it and sometimes get stuck in it. For exam-

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How important do you think is that we improve recycling efforts at P.S.11?



P.S. 11 Celebrates its First Dress-up Halloween

BY ELLA COFFEY

Have you ever thought about Halloween at P. S. 11 and realized that there barely is one? Mr. Bender has never let us wear our Halloween costumes until this year! Yeah, sure, we do fun things on Halloween to celebrate, but wearing our Halloween costumes is one of the most fun parts of Halloween!

This is a big and exciting difference from past years. Mr. Bender changed this policy after 19 years of being principal at the school. He told me that back then “the students were allowed to wear their costumes, but it didn’t go so well, so [he] changed the rules.” Ever since, kids could not wear their costumes on Halloween. This rule made it tricky to go to school and then change into costumes afterward. Also, you didn’t get to see your friends’ and classmates’ costumes, which took away some of the fun of the holiday. So for many reasons, this is what now makes the holiday way more fun!

To get the full scoop on what students really felt, I interviewed our classmates at the school, and asked them about Halloween. When I went to see Mr. Bender, he told me, “I brought my pet dinosaur to school, and he dressed as a cool dude with sunglasses.” I asked Sadie if she was happy about wearing Halloween costumes this year and she said, “Yes.” I also asked what she was for Halloween, and she told me, “Luz from the Owl House.” Sadie told me that she was surprised that Mr. Bender let us wear our costumes this year. I also interviewed Vihaan J, and when



PHOTO BY MS. KAWA

I asked him if he was happy that we got to wear our costumes this year, he said, “YES!” He also said, “I was a Minecraft character wearing diamond armor.” The last thing that I asked him, was if he was surprised that Mr. Bender let us wear our costumes, and he said, “Yes! Very!”

To get a teacher’s perspective, I asked Mrs. Rapisarda, a 3rd grade teacher, if she thought that wearing costumes was stressful for her as a teacher. She said, “No, I think it was great. The kids were so excited, and they were really good at following the rules.” I also asked her what she did that day for W&W and math, since Mr. Bender told the teachers that they still have to do something educational, but can be fun too, and Mrs. Rapisarda said, “For math, we did a math mystery, and for W&W, we made Tim Burton style portraits and did a Halloween read-aloud!”

Wearing costumes added a new and fun aspect of learning, and it is an active way to participate in the curriculum! Although some people were upset about this new thing we get to do on Halloween, others were not, and we have to respect that, but it has been really nice to be able to do this for the first time at P.S. 11! And, when we asked P.S. 11 students, a whopping 96% said that they enjoyed Halloween at P.S. 11 this year! Wow!

They also provided a few suggestions for future Halloween celebrations at our school. Here are a few of their ideas: more Halloween decorations around the school, trick or treating between classrooms, candy for all students at lunchtime, a best costume competition for each grade. But the most popular suggestion was to have a Halloween party.

The Inner Workings of Lesson Planning

BY NIRALI SAKARIA

Every day we see lesson slides made by our teachers. But have you ever thought about what goes into lesson planning? If you were a teacher how would you plan the lesson? There is a lot to think about, when you're going to plan, who to plan with, and much more to ponder.

Teachers, they're just like us.... they get really busy with other things in their lives after they get home. This probably happens to you as well. I asked my teacher, Ms. Covington, how her personal situation, which includes a long commute, and family obligations, affects lesson planning. She answered, "I have two kids so it's really busy at home. Because of this I try to use my time really wisely at school. The 5th grade teachers share the work, but it is harder because we're still learning the new curriculum."

Have you ever wondered how they make all these slides, for not just one subject, but for math, ELA, social studies, and other things we have to learn in class? If you think about it, we have many teachers for most grades, so when you split up the work, there is less work for each teacher to individually work on, but there are certainly several tasks needed for lesson planning.

I also wonder how other schools plan their lessons, could they possibly have similar ways to lesson plan? So I asked Ms. Covington, were there similarities in lesson planning at her old school she worked at? She replied, "There are lots of similari-

ties and we worked in teams a lot, but we had a different curriculum." Working in teams is the main way to plan lessons. Can you imagine one teacher making all those slides?

Our speciality teachers have different curriculums and work differently because there is only one of them in the school. Do they work with anyone? I asked Ms. Bruen how much she works with other teachers. She replied, "I don't work with other teachers at this school. I do meet once a month with the other District 2 science teachers to discuss what we could work on and what we're already good at." Some of our specialty teachers make all the slides by themselves. For all the grades! Can you envision that?

So far, we have learned that we have a curriculum that teachers follow and also make slides based on that. Some additional questions to consider though still. What is required for teachers to teach? Do the teachers decide what they want to teach? I questioned Ms. Bruen how much of her lesson planning is focused on what she is actually required to teach by the DOE? She answered, "I think in the past I felt less pressure to teach, until the science standardized test for 5th graders. I felt like I had more freedom to teach what I and students are passionate to learn. This year I am more focused on required standards." The way the teachers teach changes when the curriculum and the DOE requirements evolve.

The curriculum provides most of the slides to the teachers and the

teachers edit them. They add in timers and graphics to make the slides more clear for the students. Sometimes the teachers make their own additional slides as well, using the curriculum book as a guide. They also use all the parts in the curriculum. They don't remove any portion of the curriculum while teaching. Sometimes a teacher will work on a topic longer based on the class's needs.

Lesson planning is very time intensive and requires a myriad of efforts not just from our teachers, but also from the district/city curriculum planners. In addition, what is fascinating is that our teachers have to use the curriculum that is presented to them and encompass it in a way that best suits the needs of the children in their class. Our teachers' goal is to ensure every child in the class absorbs the material required on the curriculum. Our teachers work tirelessly to ensure we grasp every concept at school. Every single day our teachers are trying their hardest to make our education meaningful to the utmost of their ability.

LOOKING FOR PARENT VOLUNTEERS!

Many of our kids are graduating this or next year, and we want to make sure the P.S. 11 Post continues on after we leave. Yes, there is time and effort involved, but that's nothing compared to what we've gained in friendship, insight into investigative reporters' minds, and the sheer joy of helping them tell their stories. No journalistic experience necessary. ps11postnewsroom@gmail.com

Bon Voyage, School Lunch!

SANA SIRA KAWASAKI

For those of you who eat school lunch, have you ever wondered where it comes from or how it gets to your plate? And if you don't eat school lunch, you might still find this article interesting. What is the journey behind school lunch, or is it even a journey at all? Let's find out together!

Lilia's Thoughts:

To start my adventure, I interviewed a student named Lilia. She eats school lunch regularly. Her favorite school lunch is the pizza because, as she says, "I feel like I know what's in it, and it tastes good." However, her least favorite is the tortilla/burrito. When I asked why, she explained, "I don't know what the meat is, the tortilla tastes weird, and I don't know what's inside the burrito. I don't like it." Lilia thinks that school lunch is sometimes made in the kitchen and other times are ordered in by a cheap food company that does large quantities of food.

Lara's Take:

Next, I asked Lara a few questions, a lot to be exact. She said that she loved the mozzarella sticks because of the crispy outside and gooey inside. Her least favorite is the dumplings because she doesn't know what the sauce is and it feels like veggies and meat clumped together into rubber. She feels that the chicken tenders are in the middle of her ratings because they are good, but she wants barbecue sauce on the side.

To improve the meals even more, she thought that adding more veggies to the salad bar would be great! For example, baby carrots, more cucumbers and good looking spinach. Lara told me that her opinion of where school lunch comes from is that the Department of Education (DOE) has contact with cheap food companies that ship food to be put in the oven. She thinks that food made from scratch in the school with organic ingredients would taste and look better.

Mr. Bender's Perspective:

After that, I spoke with Mr. Bender. I had a lot of questions. I started by asking where school lunch is made. He explained that several food companies prepare the food, and these companies are paid by the DOE. Then, I asked if the school lunch is pre-made or if the ingredients come separately to be cooked in the kitchen. Mr. Bender said that sometimes the food is pre-made, and other times, the ingredients are sent separately and prepared at the school. Finally, I asked if he has ever tried school lunch. Since he's a vegetarian, Mr. Bender said he has only tried the black bean burrito, cheese sandwich, and sunflower butter and jelly sandwich. His favorite is the black bean burrito, and his least favorite is the sunflower butter and jelly sandwich because he doesn't like the jelly.

To wrap it all up, school lunch is made in different facilities and the DOE tells them what to make. Here are a few links:

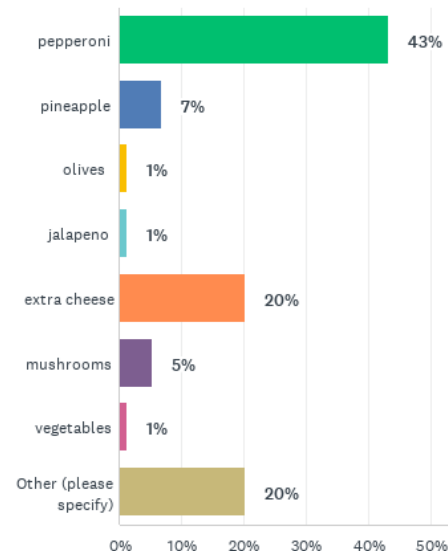
School menus - <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/food/menus/breakfast-meals>

DOE survey to give feedback on the school menu - <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/surveyofnfs>.

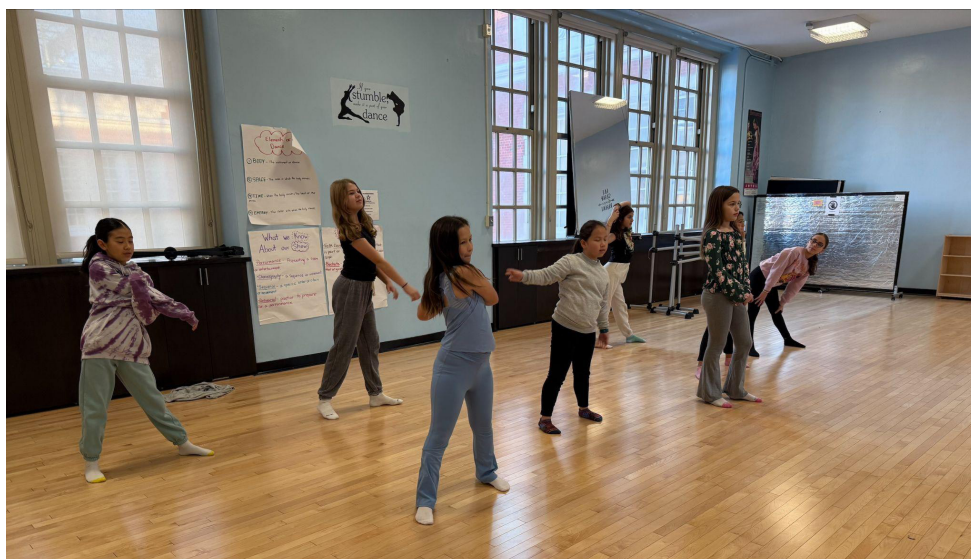
I believe that the DOE has good intentions to serve high quality lunch and the menus are well thought, but the companies prepare it differently than envisioned. Some interesting ideas from students to the DOE are, create school gardens, add more variety of food to the menu, and provide pre-sliced fruits.

Finally, our school survey offers some suggestions for pizza toppings here at P.S. 11. The top extra topping students would like to see is pepperoni (43%) followed by a mix of other meats like sausage, bacon or chicken (20%) and extra cheese (20%). One student is keen to see zucchini added!

If you could choose any ONE topping to add to the school lunch pizza, what would it be?



Legally Blonde Junior - the Insider, Directors' Perspective



BY ISHA VARMA

PHOTO BY P.S. 11 POST TEAM

Each year, three teachers at P.S. 11 direct a musical performed by the 5th graders, while 4th graders get to be stage crew. This year, it's *Legally Blonde Junior* and performances will take place at the school on March 28-29. Have you thought about the musical this year and want to get some info? How do the teachers get it running? How many times have the directors disagreed in the past? What is their background? And what is the hardest part in teaching? I'm going to answer that and more.

In the past, the 5th grade shows produced by P.S. 11 have been a huge success. We've done *Wicked*, *Frozen*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Shrek*, *The Wizard of Oz*, and more! Based on this track record, we can be quite sure that the directors, Ms. Sarah, Ms. Kost, and Ms. Fives are going to put on another amazing one this year!

I checked in with them to get the scoop on the upcoming production.

Ms. Sarah, who has been teaching at P.S. 11 for 18 years, told me that she picked *Legally Blonde Junior* for the show because there was a lot of girl talent this year and strong boys too. It's also a good show. When they start directing the musical, they start with a read-through. And even though many teams can have disagreements, Ms. Wurman, Ms. Kost, and Ms. Sarah have not disagreed a lot in the past. Even when one of them joined for the first time, Ms. Sarah says that it was a pretty easy transition!

Now, let's get the scoop from Ms. Kost. While one amazing perk about teaching is that she gets to see us grow, teaching us things in 5th grade that we couldn't do in 1st. There are some obstacles. For example, she believes that she never gets as much time as she'd like. Why did she pick teaching music for her career? Why not become an actor? A singer? Ms. Kost decided to teach music because she really enjoys working with kids and loves teaching them to do some-

thing they couldn't do. Plus, it's fun and games all day. Guess what... Ms. Kost's first instrument was the flute. She started playing flute in 2nd grade and it was almost as big as her! She acted in school and in public plays around high school and college. The first place she taught kids was a school in New Jersey.

Now, for the final scoop from our new dance teacher this year, Ms. Fives, who was a substitute for the second half of last year. She was in college and substituted in Long Island, but P.S. 11 is her first full-time teaching job. She informed me that after dancing for 23 years, she is going to use her experience in performing theater and her dance background to brainstorm some cool choreography. She also told me that she is "soooo excited" to finally help direct the 5th grade show and, after seeing *The Addams Family* production last year, is super excited to help direct another fabulous play.

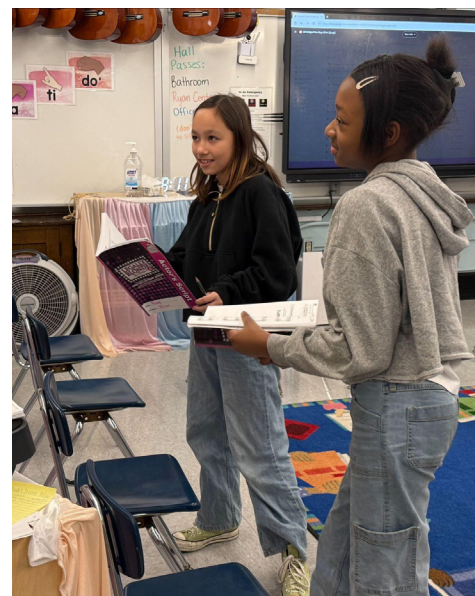


PHOTO BY PS11 POST TEAM

Spotlight on the Stage Crew

BY ELEANOR HARTMAN

Have you seen the black shadows that move the sets for the 5th grade show? Have you ever wondered

tall people to lift things up into high places. Once you are selected for the stage crew, you go to a rehearsal to practice and learn what you need to do for the show.

was told she was on the stage crew, by getting an email with a list showing the people on the stage crew and their role.



PHOTO BY PS11 POST TEAM

how the lights, sound, or music are operated? Keep reading and you'll find out. In this article I am going to teach you all about the P.S. 11 4th grade stage crew!

The P.S. 11 4th grade stage crew is a program run by mostly parent volunteers. The stage crew helps with the work for the P.S. 11 5th grade show. I interviewed Ms. Sarah in the auditorium and she told me that the stage crew moves the set pieces, manages the props, and makes costumes. She also told me that when she picks the people for the stage crew, an application goes out. You write why you think you should be on stage crew, and they look at your track record. Sometimes they need

The P.S. 11 stage crew is made up of 4th graders who dedicate their time to help influence the 5th grade show. I interviewed Gaelle G., a 5th grader who was on the stage crew last year when she was in 4th grade. She told me that when she was on the stage crew she thought it was very fun. They got to see the 5th graders practicing, and they got to participate in the show without being seen. She was given the role of costume helper, which is a role that helps the actors change. When she was "trying out" for the stage crew, they gave her a piece of paper. She had to write why she wanted to be on the stage crew, why she should be on the stage crew, and what role she wanted to be. She

I asked Gaelle for any funny stories when she was on backstage crew for *The Addams Family*. One time while they had a practice, Ms. Sarah told them that this was the first time they were practicing by themselves. But, they accidentally set up the set for 2 scenes later than they were supposed to. The scene that they were supposed to set up had chairs, but the scene that they skipped to had no chairs. So when the actors got on the stage, they were confused because they thought they were supposed to have chairs on the set. But the actors continued anyway, and actually got the chairs themselves instead.

In case you're interested in being on the stage crew but don't know what to do for it, or have no idea what job you want, there are so many jobs and they are all so fun. Here are just a few: Light Board Operator and Trainee, Sound Operator and Trainee, Stage Manager and Assistant, Prop Master and Assistant, Make-up/Hair Crew, Spotlight Operator, Costume Crew (which Gaelle G. was on), and the Backstage Crew who move everything on the stage to where it needs to be for the scenes. They are the shadows on the stage.

So for everyone who wants to be on the stage crew, or whoever is interested, sign up! And for whoever gets on the backstage crew, I hope that this article helps and that you have so much fun on the P.S. 11 4th grade backstage crew!

For the Love of Music

BY AVERY MARTIN

P.S. 11 is the luckiest school in NYC. The reason I think this is because not many schools have a music program. Some schools don't have a music program because the DOE (Department of Education) does not pay for music classes in school. So P.S. 11 parents have raised money for P.S. 11's music program because Mr. Bender thinks that music is really important to have in schools. He told me, "I think music should be a big part of most people's lives. Music is something that brings people together and I want kids to learn as much as they can about music."

I learned so much about Ms. Kost while writing this article. She told me that music was always her favorite part of being in school. She was part of the chorus and band and also joined the marching band in high school. "I was lucky to have really amazing teachers growing up and my hope is that I can help my students learn to love music as much as I did." She said this helped her realize that being a music teacher should be her career.

Ms. Kost is the musical lead for the 2nd grade, 3rd grade and 5th grade shows. She told me that she helps choose the theme and songs, making sure they will be achievable for the kids to learn and that they are in a singable key for the students. "We work on the songs during class time, in conjunction with our other music learning," she said, adding, "I am able to cover various musical skills and concepts during music class through the work we do on these songs."

I love music too. My favorite instrument is the piano because when I play piano I feel like everything around me is flowy and calm. Mr. Bender's favorite instruments are strings such as cello and piano, he says, "Because they have lots of emotion." Ms. Kost's favorite instrument is also the cello.

I interviewed a fellow student named Gigi and asked her what her favorite instrument is and what she likes about our music program. She said "The piano is my favorite because there are different sounds and it makes me happy, calm and joyful. I like P.S. 11's music program because we play happy music and sad music. It has lots of different emotions."

We ran a survey at the school and the results show another reason why music is so important. The forty three percent of students that don't play an instrument have a chance to play an instrument at school. Not everyone is able to play an instrument because they are expensive, it takes up space, and they have to practice (which is really important but worth it because music is such a great thing), which are all reasons why it's good to have a school program.

I love our music program because there are so many instruments already in music class such as drums, shakers, rhythm sticks, tambourines and xylophones. Ms. Kost said, "Xylophones are great for students to start off with to practice the skill of reading and playing notes. When you're in 4th and 5th grade you get



PHOTO BY SHELLEY O'SULLIVAN

to play the ukuleles because we have a whole class room set of them."

Before Covid we used to teach the recorder. Many elementary schools also teach the recorder because they are inexpensive, small and durable. "That is something I think our students would benefit from, and something I would like to bring back next year," said Ms. Kost.

I think the music program at our school is fantastic because music is so important to me and lots of other kids. I've learned that so many kids want to be a part of the music program and I'm so thankful for the music teacher and Mr. Bender as well as the P.S. 11 community for supporting the program because we all think music should be a big part of people's lives.

All About Colors

BY LARA GOLCMAN MASLOWSKI

Colors can make you feel so many different emotions. The color yellow, for example, brings out joy, energy, and optimism. Did you know that popular brands use color psychology to get people more interested in their products? Like our school logo has the colors red and teal which can bring inspiration and renovation – something that teachers are always trying to teach kids at school. It turns out that our school has a favorite color too!

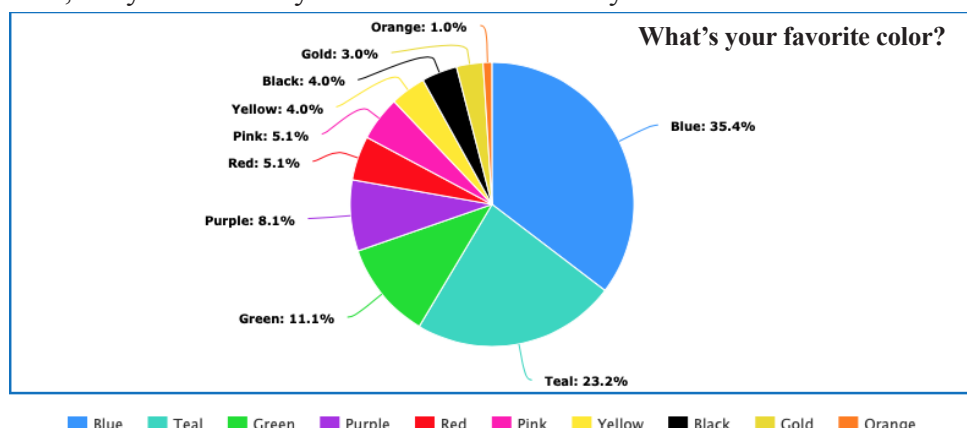
I took a survey around P.S. 11 asking students what their favorite colors were. When the results came in, I saw that the favorite color of the school is blue. This can mean that the students here at P.S. 11 are very trustworthy, confident, stable, and calm.

I asked 3rd grader Jane C. why she chose the color blue. She said, “I like the color blue because it’s not too crazy, like yellow.” Peter N. from 5th grade chose it “because it is a very simple, fun, colorful color.” I also interviewed 5th grader Nolan G. She said, “My favorite color is the color blue because it can come in so many different beautiful shades like baby blue, navy blue and royal blue.”

Color psychology is the theory that colors can affect your mood and subconsciously change it. It is used to understand how our minds are affected by colors and then we can use colors for persuasion and motivation. Let’s say you wanted your mom to buy you new pants, you would do something with the color orange because orange is a very persuasive and convincing color.

Color psychology can be used for so many things. When you think of the color red you probably think of Valentine’s day and hearts. That’s because red brings out passion, energy, power, determination, and confidence. Want to know something incredible? Boys and girls see color differently. It’s true! Boys are better at detecting fine details that change quickly from afar, while girls are better at distinguishing shades of a color.

Colors are an amazing way to trick your brain and convince so many. Overall they are a great way to expand your creativity and thoughts! Can you just imagine a world without colors? I certainly can’t! My favorite color, personally, is red. What’s yours?



Ryan Center continued

to healthcare, whether it be through the NYC public hospitals, whether it be through our privately run clinics or through non-profits like Ryan Health. We have to make sure that there is a wide variety of options that are affordable and accessible to all people in our districts.” Overall, Erik Bottcher was trying to tell us this: a big focus is for our community, including low-income families, to get health care services that they can afford.

Next up, I asked Erik Bottcher, “How does the Ryan Center closing affect the Ryan Center employees themselves?” He responded by saying, “Well, it’s possible that some employees at the Ryan Center will lose their jobs. We are working with the Ryan Center to try to ensure that they can stay financially solvent (solvent means able to afford things) without having to lay off many workers.” In other words, Council Member Bottcher said that he is working hard with the Ryan Center to help them fix their money problems so they don’t have to get rid of staff.

Last but not least, I asked Erik Bottcher, “Have you read the *P.S. 11 Post*?” He responded by saying, “I love the *P.S. 11 Post*. It’s my favorite paper. I was in the *P.S. 11 Post* around 2018. I got interviewed last year as well, I got interviewed about a dog run, AND I gave a scoop to the *P.S. 11 Post* when we had benches installed on 14th street for the bus service; and instead of giving it to *The New York Times*, we gave it to the *P.S. 11 Post*.”

continued on page 15

Elephants Migrating Across Manhattan

BY GAELLE GOUNY

Did you know that elephants are an endangered species in the world right now? People around you are trying to save them. Recently, a herd of elephants was in our neighborhood, right outside Chelsea Market and around Meatpacking. These elephants were created by The Real Elephant Collective to raise money and awareness to support protecting elephants in India. They are a community of 200 local Indian artists who have spent the last five years studying these elephants and building the statues.

You might wonder why the Real Elephant Collective decided to do this. I learned that the human population of India has doubled to 1.4 billion people in the last 30 years. Since India is home to the largest population of Asian elephants, you might think that it would be harder for elephants to live in India. But, surprisingly, the population of elephants there has also doubled. The humans and the elephants have found a way to live beside each other by sharing land so they can all live relatively peacefully.

Can you imagine what it would be like if you had to live with those big elephants instead of pigeons and rats? I think that I would almost never leave my house unless I had to, otherwise I would get crushed! Also, where would the elephants sleep because they can't go underground like rats and mice? When I interviewed Alix G about sharing space with elephants, she said "I would try to give them a house and food so then they will like me and I can pet them." I also interviewed Abby N. who said "I think ev-

erything will be crushed because the elephants will crush everything."

The elephant statues were first on display in Newport, Rhode Island before they were in our neighborhood. They were also in Miami, Florida and next they will go to Texas, Montana, Wyoming, and California. In my research I learned that the Real Elephant Collective wants the exhibit to give people the feeling of living with wild animals and inspire us to share our world with them. The exhibit is free to the public, but the organizers are hoping to sell the 1,000 elephant statues to fund projects that help people and wildlife share space.

I asked Alix G. and Abby N. how seeing the elephants made them feel. Alix said "they made me feel surprised and I was curious about

them, but it also felt normal because they were big and some had flowers on them." Abby said, "It was kind of cool to see some elephants had flowers on them. It kinda made me feel amazed."

I also asked them if they would want to buy an elephant statue. Abby said "No, because I have nowhere to put it and what would I do with it, stare at it?!" Alix said that she wouldn't want one either because she doesn't even like elephants, she likes horses instead. I think that I would want one because I could put it in my lobby and anyone who lived in my building could see them. What about you, would you buy an elephant? If not, maybe there are other ways to protect animals. There might be an endangered species nearby and you could help!



PHOTO BY MAX NOY

Cats vs Dogs - Which is the Best Pet?

BY ROBIN LINDVEIT

If you could have one pet, and one pet only, would it be a dog, or a cat? Well, you're about to learn all about the history of how both dogs and cats were domesticated, and also P.S. 11's general opinion about this popular question.

When dogs and cats were first domesticated, they were not really brought into the household just for having them around. People mostly used cats for catching vermin, and dogs for herding sheep. If you go even farther back, cats were a sign of leadership for the Egyptians because one of their gods was part cat. And dogs started following cave people around for their scraps of food. Fun fact: according to a survey conducted in 2024 by the American Veterinary Medical Association, almost 46% of homes in the U.S own at least one dog, and 32% of homes own at least one cat!

When I asked Ms. Debbie about her opinion on why she chose dogs over cats, and what she liked about dogs, she said "I've had both dogs and cats as pets... but I feel like my



PHOTO BY ROBIN LINDVEIT

dogs were a bigger part of my life." When I asked second grade teacher Ms. Forschine why she preferred cats, and what she thought the upside and downside of having a cat were, she said "during a rainy day I can just sit around and snuggle with my cat, but with dogs you have to take them out every day."

I also asked fifth grader Charlotte about the matter and what she enjoyed about having two dogs. Charlotte said, "I can run around with dogs more, but cats just like to sit around all day." However, I also talked to fourth grader Finn about what appealed to him more about cats than dogs. He said "cats are basically like having an extra family

member around that can also be used as a hot water bottle."

I also took a survey with 44 P.S. 11 students and grown-ups. The tally was even, but probably if I asked more people, it would be different. This shows just how different everyone's opinions are, everyone has a separate opinion, so it would be fun to ask some people in your house about what they think about the matter! Personally, I like cats. What about you? Well, if you want to do something like this at home with your family and friends! Try it, and see what the results are!



Fifth grader, Lena O.'s favorite pet, Ivo

PHOTO BY TERESA EDLESTON

Plastic Waste continued

ple, birds can get their heads stuck in a Coke bottle or some sea turtles think that the plastic waste is jellyfish and eat it and a lot of the turtles die.

So what can individual students at P.S. 11 do?

Bring reusable containers instead of single-use plastic bags that you have to throw away

Bring a reusable water bottle to school instead of plastic water bottles

Bring metal or other durable lunch boxes instead of plastic bags

Recycle things that can be recycled instead of throwing them away

What else can be done?

The good news is that I learned that there are ocean-cleaning sea bins that will gobble up plastic waste to recycle. Also, there is a robotic marine

trash collector that has started making waves in Hong Kong.

Recycling can also help because if a plastic water bottle is still in good shape then there is a good chance that it could be used again for other things, for example plastic containers or lunch boxes. The P.S. 11 survey shows that almost half of the respondents think we could do more to improve our recycling efforts.

Who's the GOAT?



PHOTO BY MAX NOY

BY ABBY NOY

Did you know that there are camels living in upstate New York? Did you know that you could train goats to balance on a ball, that you should be very careful around an alpaca, or that a donkey can be second-most respected in a herd of horses? I learned this at the Vidbel Homestead Farm camp and interviewed the owner, Jenny Vidbel, to find out even more.

Jenny's farm is in Windham, N.Y., only about 2.5 hours from P.S. 11, but it feels like a different world. Rheas, alpacas, llamas, camels, goats, bunnies, horses, donkeys, and ponies all live there. Jenny says that many of these animals came from people who couldn't take care of them anymore. She grew up on this farm. Her grandparents were animal trainers and communicators and they inspired her. "When I watched them connect with animals in a respectful and loving way, I knew that I wanted to dedicate my life to these beautiful creatures," she told me.

Camels may be the most surprising animals at Jenny's farm. Jenny

worked closely with camels at a zoo for five years before owning her farm and learned that they are extremely intelligent, but also sensitive and loving. "I have always loved camels," she says. "I knew that one day there would be camels in my life!" Jenny now has two camels, Humphrey (get it? it's because of the hump) and Josh. You may have even seen them in New York City – they are the stars of the Rockettes Christmas show at the Radio City Music Hall!

Usually, we think of camels as living in deserts, so I asked how the camels adjust to the cold. Jenny explained camels evolved in North America 44 million years ago during the Eocene period. Around 7 million years ago, they started leaving North America by crossing the Bering Strait. Fast-forward to the last two hundred years, camels were brought back to the United States in 1855 by Jefferson Davis. It turns out that camels are very adaptable to changes in climate.

Jenny says that she chose goats for her summer program because kids and goats share one thought – "HAV-

ING FUN!!" I remember walking into a barn and seeing a ladder on the ground, a tunnel like I used to crawl through when I was little, a ramp that you could jump off of onto a pillow, traffic cones, and other obstacles. It looked like a goat playground. I trained a goat to walk on a bench, then turn around and walk to the other side. You could also train them to go to a frisbee, balance on a ball, walk through a tunnel and along a ladder. What I will remember most from this summer is making friends with my goat, Ally, and seeing her every day.

Jenny has a love for horses that started with the first animal that she was responsible for, a pony named Midnight. This summer I learned that in a herd of horses there are ranks and you don't even have to be a horse to be included. For example, in the herd at this farm, there is a donkey in the second most important rank. I guess that it doesn't really matter how big or strong you are, it matters how much you believe in yourself.

Even though all the animals at Jenny's farm are amazing, you still need to be careful around some of them. For example, the alpacas can kick or spit at you if you aggravate them or make them mad. And Elizabeth, the rhea (like an ostrich, except smaller), can peck you if you stick your hand into her stall.

At Jenny's farm, I got to see animals that I never saw before and learn about them too. It has also made me think about how thankful I am for everything that P.S. 11 does to help us connect with nature, like our P.S. 11 chickens, the farm stand, and the 3rd grade farm trip.

How is Social Media Affecting the Next Generation?

BY SADIE J. MITCHELL

Hey, do I see you scrolling down to see if your favorite social media influencer has posted lately instead of reading this article? Well, you're going to regret doing that after reading this. Keep scrolling - I mean reading - to learn more.

First, let's talk about what social media even is: a website or app that helps people share their life. These include TikTok, YouTube, Twitter/X, Instagram and Facebook. About 5 billion people use social media!

I asked a few of those people about their life and social media, and this is what I found out. Mr. Diaz and Mr. Simmons, both teachers at P.S. 11, told me that it helps them connect with far away family members.

But some others expressed caution. For example, Mr. Bender said social media can contribute to students' anxiety.

In fact, the connection between social media and mental health was a major theme that came up during my reporting. You may be surprised to learn that many experts believe social media can negatively impact our overall well-being.

Social media can make you feel bad. You can spend way too much time hunched over your phone or computer, from day to night, and miss the lovely sunset.

It can also make your grades go lower because you didn't have time to study.

"But how do we stop it?" you might be asking. Well, first consider not following influencers' advice. Don't "like, share and subscribe" and don't comment on posts. That's because doing this tells the content creators that you want more, and the algorithm will keep feeding it to you until you're sent down a spiral.

Most experts agree that you should also limit your social media use to 45 minutes per day. So, don't keep looking at those amazing trips and experiences because it can make you feel bad when you compare yourself to theirs. Enjoy the real experiences you do have and don't pay too much attention to what you see others showing you - also remember, it's not always the whole story!

You should also always ask one of your grown-ups to check out what you're watching on social media, be-

cause even if you are watching your favorite creators at the top of your feed, as soon as you scroll down, there are often more and more shady things. Some might not be bad at all and you discover new favorites, but some could be weird and not appropriate for you to watch.

In conclusion, social media can be good and bad. So, put down your phone! Spend time with your family and loved ones without screens. Enjoy your meals and go outside. Be nice to people and complement them. Because life is so much more than what you might see on your phone.



Ryan Center continued

I was planning on getting more details from the Ryan Center on this topic, but unfortunately they never got back to me.

In addition to Council Member Erik Bottcher, Danielle, and Mr. Bender, I also interviewed some

P.S. 11 students! For starters, one student in 4th grade said, "I think that the Ryan Center is really nice because they help you, they help your body and make sure everything is going alright." In addition to that, Finn B.-Y. in 4th grade added, "I appreciate it mostly because if you get hurt or something

happens to you they can just really help you with really anything."

In conclusion, the Ryan Center shocked P.S. 11 when they left with little notice and we had to move quickly to go deep into the issue. We appreciate the Ryan Center's time at P.S.11 and are grateful for Danielle being here.

New-look Knicks Still Can't Beat This NYC Classic

BY MAC KNOEBEL PETERFREUND

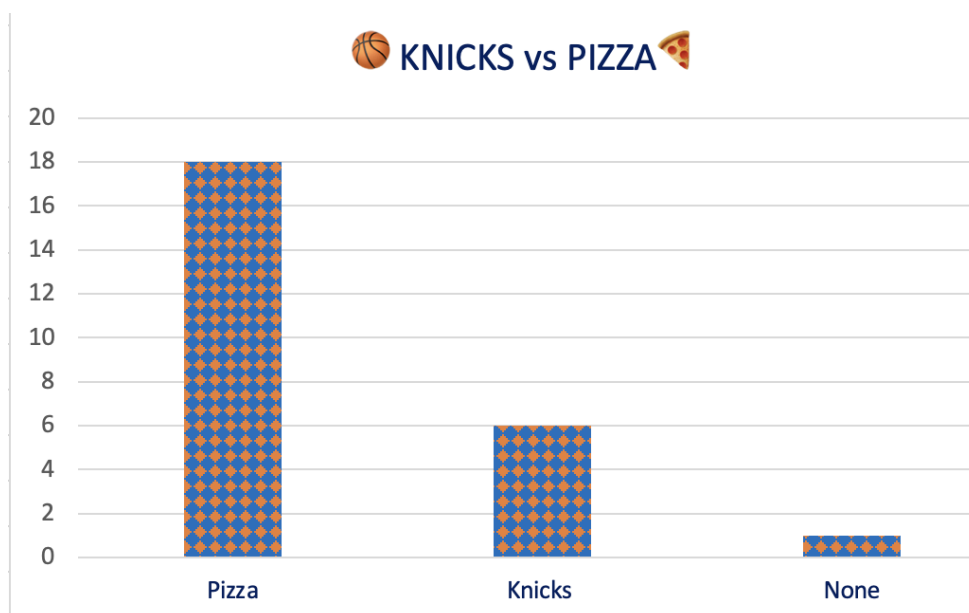
The New York Knicks are an NBA basketball team and New York City's home team. They play at Madison Square Garden, just 10 blocks away from our school, P.S. 11.

Like so many other New Yorkers, I am very excited for this season. So, I asked three people if they were excited too. To see how excited New Yorkers really were about the Knicks, I also took a very important vote, more about that at the end of this article.

The first person I interviewed was Ellie S. (you may know her from the P.S. 11 Library). She has been a Knicks fan for about fifteen years. She told me, "I started following the NBA shortly after I moved to the United States and chose the Knicks as my home team since New York City is my home here. It's been a long journey."

This year, Ellie really likes, "the chemistry and camaraderie between the Villanova boys - especially when JB and Josh are chatting on their podcast - but Josh Hart is my favorite! He's so funny and just a chill guy, but he hustles hard and always gives maximum effort on the court."

She also told me that she is hoping for a healthy season and for the Knicks to dominate during the playoffs, "I am very excited for the season! Trading away Donte made my heart sad because it would've been interesting to see Jalen Brunson, Josh Hart, Donte DiVincenzo and Mikal Bridges on the court together



again as a team, but we really needed a center and KAT definitely fills the spot." KAT is the nickname for Karl-Anthony Towns

I asked Ellie if there is any sport better than basketball, but for Ellie "nothing's quite as exciting as basketball... except maybe when the Chelsea Chessmates are playing chess!"

Remy G., a 1st grader at P.S. 11, has been a Knicks fan for three years. His favorite player? Jalen Brunson. He is excited for the season, but he did add that he thinks soccer is a better sport.

Sascha P. has been a Knicks fan since 1985. His favorite current player is Josh Hart, but his favorite forever player is Patrick Ewing. Sascha told me that he is very excited for the season. He does not think there is a sport better than basketball.

I also asked Sascha my favorite of all the questions, "Knicks or Pizza?" He said, "I would be heartbro-

ken to not be able to eat pizza ever again, but there is only one Knicks and there are lots of foods other than pizza. So, I would have to choose the Knicks."

But did my classmates feel the same way? Are they so excited about the Knicks that they would choose them over pizza? This brings me to the vote that I mentioned at the beginning of this article. I wanted to know if people like Pizza or the Knicks more. It turns out, it wasn't even close. Pizza won – by a lot!

THE P.S. 11 POST ADULT VOLUNTEERS

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Julia Gouny
Cara Berkowitz
Yvonne Yang
Maks Noy
Teresa Edleston
Igor Pušenjajk

Calling all Gymnastics Lovers

BY EMILIA WONG

Gymnastics is awesome because anyone of any age can participate with different levels for everyone depending on their skills and experience. Even though gymnastics is an individual sport, you can build friendships and develop teamwork skills because you train and compete with teammates. The gymnasts in a team work together to learn new skills and support each other to build our confidence. Gymnastics can also improve your flexibility, strength, balance and focus.

The problem is that we do not have a program at P.S. 11. I asked Ms. Debbie if the school ever had a program for gymnastics and she said, “we used to have a program, but the gymnastics teacher that we had left and then we just stopped the program”. Also, before the pandemic in 2020, students from the school were also able to participate in an after school program run by Chelsea Piers that offered class options for sports, including gymnastics. I asked Chelsea Piers about the program and found out that it was discontinued after 2020 because of lack of student participation.

Compared to other sports, gymnastics is really expensive because a lot of equipment and space are needed to have a gymnastics program. It also requires a coach that knows how to keep students safe while teaching without anyone getting injured. When I asked Mr. Nichols and Mr. M about what we would need to be able to start teaching gymnastics at P.S. 11, they told me, “The gym

would be the best place because there’s a lot of room and space.” Mr. Nichols and Mr. M said, “There should be about one teacher and five students because there can’t be too many students and a few teachers.” Also, Mr. M. said that he would like to teach gymnastics but only if there was a professional gymnastics coach to help him.

I interviewed some students to ask them what they thought of having a gymnastics program at the school. Lara said, “I would like to do gymnastics but would only do it depending on the day! I think it would be safer to do it at Chelsea Piers because they have people there who have experience in teaching. I would like the people at after school to take us there like they take us to ice skating!” I also asked some other students about gymnastics. Riley and Sophie both said “I absolutely want to sign up and they would love to try it out! At school it would be safe but at Chelsea Piers it would just be extra safe!”

An after school gymnastics program at Chelsea Piers would be good because there are coaches that have taught before and they have a lot of equipment to make sure that everyone is safe. To figure out how to start a new after school program for students to go to Chelsea Piers for gymnastics classes, I interviewed Ms. Debbie and Chelsea Piers.

Ms. Debbie said, “We would definitely consider partnering with Chelsea Piers to offer gymnastics. We have reached out to them a few times but they have never gotten back to

us. We can try again.” I asked an Assistant General Manager at Chelsea Piers and found out that Chelsea Piers “would be open to discussing a new after school program with P.S. 11 considering the amount of interested participants.” When I asked how many kids would be needed to start a program, Chelsea Piers said, “We would need an interest list of at least 8 participants for one of our scheduled classes based on which day of the week would work best for the class/group you have in mind. We can schedule a meeting to discuss a tentative schedule”. According to Chelsea Piers, the programming would be available for ages 5-10 years and the cost would be different depending on the class level.

I passed along this information from Chelsea Piers to Ms. Debbie to follow up and see if there would be a way to bring a gymnastics program back to P.S. 11. At first, Ms. Debbie said, “We will see if they are interested in working with us. If not, we would need to find or hire a gymnastics teacher. But we will look into it.” Less than one week later, Ms. Debbie sent an update that “It looks like we will be able to add gymnastics at Chelsea Piers for the Spring Semester. More information to come soon...”

And now you know what we would need to start another gymnastics program at P.S. 11, how many kids we would need to participate in the program, and that Ms. Debbie likes the idea of bringing it back!

So all you gymnastics lovers step right up!

Riddles

BY LARA GOLCMAN MASLOWSKI

1. What begins with an “e” and only contains one letter?

An envelope!

2. It can't be seen, can't be felt, can't be heard, and can't be smelled. It lies behind stars and under hills, and empty holes it fills. What am I?

The dark.

3. With pointed fangs it sits in wait, with piercing force it doles out fate, over bloodless victims proclaiming its might,

eternally joining in a single bite. What am I?

A stapler!

4. I beam, I shine, I sparkle white. I'll brighten the day with a single light. I'll charm and enchant all. I'll bring the best in you all.

What am I?

A smile!

5. I speak without a mouth and I hear without ears. I have no body, but I come alive with the wind. What am I?

An echo.

6. I can't be saved, though people try. When fun is had, they say I fly. They say I'm money, I can be spent, I can be wasted, But never lent. What am I?

Time!

Can you Guess the Mystery Person?

BY ROBIN LINDVEIT

Here's how this game works: we interviewed a random teacher at P.S. 11, and you have to figure out who we talked to based on their answers to the questions below. You ready?

P.S. 11 Post: Where were you born?

Mystery Person: New York

P.S. 11 Post: Who was the president when you were born?

Mystery Person: Ronald Reagan

P.S. 11 Post: What are your hobbies?

Mystery Person: Reading and hiking

P.S. 11 Post: What is your favorite ice cream flavor?

Mystery Person: Mint chocolate chip

P.S. 11 Post: Do you have kids?

Mystery Person: No

P.S. 11 Post: Do you have any pets?

Mystery Person: No

P.S. 11 Post: What is your favorite thing about P.S. 11?

Mystery Person: All of the amazing and creative kids here.

Answer on page 19



Congrats to the P.S. 11 Math Club!

The P.S. 11 math club which meets during lunchtime participated in the national Noetic contest just before Thanksgiving. Of our 60-ish participants, we earned 20 honorable mentions (top 50% nationally) and 3 national honor rolls (top 10% nationally)! We are so proud of our P.S. 11 mathematicians!

The head teachers of the math club are moving on to middle school next year and the club is in need of new volunteers if it can continue. Anyone mathematically, scientifically, or computer oriented could lead sessions, and will be trained and supported by the former teachers. It's a very rewarding volunteer opportunity.

Please contact ptaps11@gmail.com



Guess the Mystery Person
answer:
Ms. Covington



P.S. 11 Post investigative reporters: Zella Berkowitz, Emilia Wong, Ella Coffey, Sana Sira Kawasaki, Finn Bellamy-Yeomans, Isha Varma, Nirali Sakaria, Avery Martin, Sadie Mitchell, Mac Peterfreund, Abby Noy, Lara Goldman Maslowski, Nora Hartman, Cameron Fox, Marlowe Keck, Robin Lindveit, Gaelle Gouny, Remy Gross

THE P.S. 11 POST IS LOOKING FOR PARENT VOLUNTEERS!

Many of our kids are graduating this or next year, and we want to make sure the P.S. 11 Post continues on after we leave. Yes, there is time and effort involved, but that's nothing compared to what we've gained in friendship, insight into investigative reporters' minds, and the sheer joy of helping them tell their stories. No journalistic experience necessary.

We want to hear from you!
ps11postnewsroom@gmail.com