

PS Backpack87News

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The Weekly Newsletter of the PS 87 Community | www.ps87.info

March 10, 2016



From the Desk of the Principal

Dear Families,

This week, we have sent home a green envelope containing the 2016 NYC School Survey.

Please complete the survey and return it to your classroom teacher by Thursday, March 24.

Your voices matter! The School Leadership Team carefully examines our survey results when advancing school initiatives that may impact the quality of your child's education. We greatly appreciate your trust in our administration, teachers and staff, and with greater survey participation, we can ensure that our efforts are fully informed by the thoughts and ideas of the parent body.

We are counting on you! In previous years, our response rate has been significantly lower than the citywide average, with last year's 34 percent response rate placing us among the lowest return rate of any school in the city. Without accurate data, we not only lose the opportunity to make informed decisions, but we also struggle when we lobby the district, the DOE and local leaders for support. An improved response rate will give us considerable leverage.

We are asking every family to help us reach our goal of 100 percent participation. We want to improve our school, to institute programs and procedures that are responsive to the needs of our community, and to serve all of our families to the best of our collective abilities. Please help us to meet our goal. We are grateful for your participation.

Thank you, in advance, for helping to make our school one of the best in New York City.

— *Monica Berry, PS 87 principal
and the PS 87 School Leadership Team*

State test info session Wednesday

Please join Monica Berry, Suzan Federici and Jacqueline Morison on Wednesday, March 16, from 8:35 to 9:30 a.m. in the auditorium for a discussion of the ELA (English language arts) and Math state tests. Teachers representing the 3rd, 4th and 5th grades will also attend.

This year ELA exams will be administered on April 5-7, with make-up exams on April 8, 11 and 12. The Math exams will be administered on April 13-15, with make-up exams on April 18-20.

PS 87 CALENDAR	
MARCH 2016	
12	PS 87 AUCTION 7 – 11 p.m., Rodeph Sholom, 7 W. 83rd St. Tickets still on sale online and at the door. Volunteers needed. <i>Details on Page 2.</i>
13	Daylight Saving Time ends — move clocks ahead one hour
15	District 3 Community Education Council meeting, 6:30 p.m., PS 87 auditorium. <i>Details below.</i>
16	ELA and Math State Test Info Session, 8:35 – 9:30 a.m., auditorium. <i>Details below left.</i>
21	BROADWAY NIGHT , 6:30 p.m., auditorium. Tickets now on sale. <i>Details on Page 2.</i>
25	NO SCHOOL , Good Friday
28	SLT meeting, 4:15 p.m., location to be announced
APRIL 2016	
5-7	NY State English Language Arts testing
6	PA EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING , 6:10 – 8 p.m., library
18-22	Everybody Reads Week. <i>Details on Page 2.</i>
21	PA GENERAL MEETING , 8:35 a.m., cafeteria
25-29	NO SCHOOL , Spring Break. 87Afterschool will be offering Spring Camp this week; go to www.87afterschool.org for more information.

Get informed: Potential District 3 rezoning

All parents are invited to join the Community Education Council (CEC) for District 3, Principal Monica Berry, our Community Affairs Committee, and fellow parents and educators on Tuesday, March 15, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., in the PS 87 auditorium, for "School Zones, School Choice," a District 3 information session for parents. Due to various factors including a boom in new construction, increasing segregation, intense overcrowding and the largest waitlists in New York City at our neighborhood elementary schools, District 3 is slated to be rezoned for the 2017 – 2018 school year. There are various options being considered by the DOE and our CEC, including tweaking some version of traditional catchment zoning by neighborhood, abolishing zoning lines altogether in favor of "controlled choice," or some blended hybrid in between. Come learn about the various admissions policies and enrollment options on the table and how it will affect your family going forward. Get informed and involved in shaping District 3's enrollment and rezoning policies — make your voice heard!



Pitch In: Volunteer Opportunities

THIS WEEKEND! Auction needs food servers, photographers, greeters and more: We're looking for our amazing community to step up and volunteer to make this a magical night for all. Grab a friend and sign up for one of many great two-hour slots on for bartenders, photographers, greeters, checking and more! Visit www.ps87.info to sign up. E-mail Christen Bishara (cmbishara@yahoo.com) or Jessica Baskin (jl0212@hotmail.com) with any questions.

Calling all bakers and dessert lovers: The Auction team is looking for parents to bake or buy desserts for the Auction. Due to popular demand from parents and staff, cakes will be back as the centerpieces of each table at the Auction. How fun to sit at tables and sample desserts with the people next to you! The Auction needs 20 to 30 cakes and pies as well as an assortment of brownies, cookies and all other sweets. Donated cakes and treats are also welcome. Please e-mail Samantha Benowitz (salvarezbenowitz@msn.com) or Polly Lagana (laganap@gmail.com) if you are interested in baking or donating.

Biobus helps students explore science

Did you notice a mystery bus parked outside the school this week? On Tuesday and Wednesday, our 2nd-graders and 5th-graders jumped on the "Biobus." It's a high-tech lab on wheels outfitted with equipment such as solar panels and microscopes connected to screens that students explore in hands-on experiments. This program was made available through the PA's Enrichment Committee.

If you have a child in 2nd or 5th grade, be sure to take a moment and ask her what she explored on the Biobus. Who knows? You may learn a thing or two yourself.

Coming soon: Everybody Reads Week 2016

Everybody Reads Week (April 18 – 22) is an annual in-school literacy celebration, with invited authors, illustrators, publishers, playwrights, poets, community leaders, TV and music journalists, actors and lovers of the written word sharing their work and passion for writing with the students at PS 87. If you know anyone in the literary, publishing or media fields that would be willing to volunteer some time to be part of this annual celebration, please e-mail the PS 87 Library Committee at pa-librarycommittee@ps87.info. As always, Tuesday of that week will be Cap Day, and Friday will be Come As Your Favorite Book Character Day. (Creativity is key here; please do not purchase a special costume.)

	PS 87 Parents Association 160 West 78th Street New York, NY 10024
	E-mail articles for <i>Backpack News</i> to backpacknews@yahoo.com . For details on how to sponsor <i>Backpack News</i> , go to the <i>Fundraising</i> bar at www.ps87.info and click on "Advertising & Donation Opportunities." Or just click "Backpack News" in the Quick Links.
The PS 87 PA does not endorse any of the services referenced in the classifieds or represented by any paid sponsorship.	
Deadline for Mar. 17 issue: Sunday, Mar. 13, at midnight	
Editor this week: Stacy Cousino	

Auction magic happens Saturday night

Do you believe in magic? Don't miss the PS 87 Auction, the biggest party of the year, this Saturday, March 12, from 7 to 11 p.m., right in our own back yard, at Rodeph Sholom (7 W. 83rd St.). If you haven't bought your tickets yet, you can still buy them online for \$75 at www.ps87.info until Friday at 9 a.m. Tickets prices will increase to \$90 at the door, so be sure to buy them before they go up!

It will be a fabulous night filled with delicious food, drinks, desserts, entertainment and more than 500 items to bid on (both live and silent auction). Find the catalog and all the pertinent Auction information at <https://ps87.ejoinme.org/2016>. Plus, there will be so much more ... a little magic plus a chance to hear Principal Monica Berry perform with the PS 87 parent band, Metal Park. It's truly a night you won't want to miss, and all proceeds will benefit the children of PS 87. See you there!

Rock the vote to improve our neighborhood

A much-needed library at PS 191 is one of the items under consideration in Councilwoman Helen Rosenthal's Participatory Budgeting process, in which enough votes from New York City District 6 (Upper West Side and Upper Clinton) residents get projects funded from a \$1 million budget. Bring an ID showing residence in the district and cast your votes (you get five) between March 26 and April 3 at Rosenthal's district office (West 87th Street and Columbus) or any of the other voting stations (www.helenrosenthal.com/pb). Bring the kids and make it a family voting experience. While there, mention how much we appreciate her support for PS 87 (our auditorium renovation, and hopefully future security camera installation). Questions? E-mail Debby Saito at pa-membership@ps87.info.

Don't miss out on Broadway Night

Tickets are going fast for PS 87's annual Broadway Night fundraiser. The performance begins at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, March 21, in the auditorium. It will feature parents, PS 87 staff and special guests in a one-night-only, always-sold-out show. Tickets for the one-hour show cost \$15 for adults and \$10 for kids. There will be no ticket sales at the door. Purchase tickets online at <https://ps87pa.wufoo.com/forms/broadway-night-2016/>.

If cost is an issue, please do not hesitate to contact broadway-night@ps87.info. All proceeds benefit PS 87.

Buying Film Fest tickets? Mention PS 87

The 2016 New York International Children's Film Festival is underway through March 20th. Set sail on an incredible journey, befriend a monster, uncover a mystery, visit a foreign country — or a foreign planet. New York Int'l Children's Film Festival invites families to explore new frontiers through the best new films from around the world. There are 35 countries represented and more than 100 films to choose from.

For each purchase in which you mention PS 87, the school PA receives a donation so go watch some films and enjoy! <http://nyicff.org/>.