Sep 18, 2026

PTA PS 31 Agenda

Zoom Link:
https://nycdoe.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJErdOusrjorEteTd8bAYdWyWxELeSnlhiXe

Agenda

Topic
1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Update from Principal Scarlato
3. Kara's Korner (Parent Coordinator Reminders)
4. Overview of PTA-funded enrichment programs
5. Discussion of PTA events and fundraising initiatives
6. Share out of the 2026-27 budget
7. Chess
8. Ideas & Suggestions

Sep 18, 2026 | PTA Fridays

PS 31 PTA Meeting Minutes | September 18, 2026

PTA Executive Board Members Present
Lauren Fernandes, President
Michael Motykiewicz, Treasurer
Holly Adams, Board Member
Alex Bavelas, Board Member

Meeting Share Back

Welcome + School Update

Principal Scarlato shared an update on the start of the school year, which has begun smoothly. PS 31 is currently the largest elementary school in District 14, with approximately **715 students**. The school has welcomed a new gym teacher and is aiming for students to participate in at least two field trips during the year.

A number of programs and activities are planned or returning this year, including:

- **Green Team + Hydroponics:** Opportunities will extend from Kindergarten through Grade 5.
- **Student Council:** Available for Grades 4 and 5.
- **Chess:** Kindergarten students will be introduced to chess in the classroom in the spring.
- **Math Contests:** Opportunities planned during the year.
- **Book Nook:** Will reopen.
- **Culinary Program:** Planned to begin in January.
- **Music:** PTA funding continues to support music programming across K–5.
- **Robotics:** Continuing as part of the school's programming.
- **School Musical:** Plans are still being finalized, with discussion about beginning rehearsals earlier this year.
- **St. Nicks:** Approximately 210 children are currently enrolled in the after-school program.

Kara's Korner + Family Reminders

Kara shared several upcoming dates and resources for families:

- Families should have received a packet with important dates and information.
- **Picture Day:** October 22.
- Crafting workshops with Ms. Parpadopolus are planned.
- A **CPR workshop** is scheduled for February 3.
- PS 31 is introducing its core values through **"PS 31 Stays on TRACK."**

With approximately 20 different after-school programs collecting children from PS 31, families were reminded to communicate any changes directly with their after-school provider to help make dismissal and pickup as smooth as possible.

PTA-Funded Enrichment

The PTA shared an overview of some of the programs and resources supported by family fundraising. This includes **art and music programming across K–5**, with two art teachers and a music teacher supporting students, as well as assemblies planned throughout the year. The PTA also provides teachers with **$250 in back-to-school classroom support**.

A more detailed overview of PTA-funded programs and where PTA dollars go will be shared with families.

Events + Fundraising

A number of community events and fundraising initiatives are planned for the year:

- **Fall Fest:** Saturday, October 24, 12–4 PM. This is a major community event and will require lots of family volunteers.
- **Pledge Drive:** Last year's drive raised approximately $50K, with a goal of $60K discussed for this year. The team is looking at ways for the whole school to share in celebrating the fundraising effort.
- **Winter Shop:** Returning as an opportunity for children to shop for gifts.
- **Spring Party:** The team is aiming for March and is exploring a more relaxed party format rather than the traditional gala.
- **Auction + Raffle:** Planned as part of fundraising efforts.
- **Coin Drive:** Planned to return.

- **Kids Party:** The hope is to return to the Loft. Setup and breakdown are the biggest volunteer needs, and the PTA plans to introduce shorter volunteer shifts to make it easier for families to help.
- **Scholastic Book Fair:** Planned to return.

Recess + Play

Families discussed the role of **Asphalt Green** during recess and the importance of maintaining opportunities for children who prefer unstructured play rather than organized activities. Teachers plan to continue working with the program to find the right balance, particularly while playground space is limited.

There was also discussion about making more play equipment available during recess, including basketballs, jump ropes and hula hoops.

Chess

The PS 31 chess program continues to be a strong part of the school community. The team participates in tournaments and some tournaments also provide fundraising opportunities. Families interested in chess can connect through the existing chess WhatsApp group.

The PS 31 chess team was reported at the meeting as **ranked fifth nationally and first in the state**.

Ideas + Suggestions from Families

Families raised several ideas for future programming and school improvements:

- Exploring ways to improve access to recess/play equipment.
- Continuing discussion around the school mural and potential improvements around that area.
- Starting planning and rehearsals for the school musical earlier in the year.
- Exploring an age-appropriate family health and development program. Kara expressed interest in partnering with parents to explore options, potentially as a PTA-funded program involving both caregivers and children.

Actions + Next Steps

- ☐ **Fall Fest:** Recruit volunteers for October 24, with shorter shifts to make participation easier for families.
- ☐ **PTA Funding:** Share a more detailed overview with families showing PTA-funded enrichment programs and how fundraising supports PS 31.
- ☐ **Pledge Drive:** Finalize this year's fundraising goal and school-wide reward/celebration approach.
- ☐ **Recess:** Continue discussion with Asphalt Green and teachers about maintaining both structured and unstructured play opportunities.
- ☐ **Play Equipment:** Explore additional recess equipment such as basketballs, jump ropes and hula hoops.
- ☐ **School Musical:** Explore starting planning and rehearsals earlier in the school year.
- ☐ **Family Health Programming:** Kara and interested parents to explore options for an age-appropriate family program.
- ☐ **Mural:** Continue exploring ideas for the mural and surrounding area, including how the new **"PS 31 Stays on TRACK"** values could potentially be incorporated.
- ☐ **Upcoming Events:** Continue sharing volunteer opportunities for Fall Fest, Kids Party and other PTA events as plans are finalized.