

PUBLIC SCHOOL PRESS

Latest News for Parents from the NYC Department of Education

Through the Zero Waste Schools initiative and other sustainability-focused solutions, City schools will play important role in helping New York reduce greenhouse gas emissions 80% by 2050.



Preserving Our Environment Today for the City of Tomorrow

As the effects of climate change begin to play a greater role in the day-to-day lives of New Yorkers across the City, it has become clear that we must all do what we can to preserve our environment while educating future generations to do the same.

This September, over 100 New York City public schools will help kick off the launch of the [Zero Waste Schools initiative](#), a partnership between the NYC Department of Education (DOE), the [NYC Department of Sanitation](#), and [GrowNYC's Recycling Champions](#)

[Program](#) created to help manage waste in school buildings more effectively. The goal of Zero Waste Schools, which is part of [Mayor de Blasio's Zero Waste Initiative](#), as well as the greater [One New York: The Plan for a Strong and Just City](#), is to decrease the amount of trash sent to landfills by participating schools and reach zero waste in five years.

To achieve the initiative's zero waste goals, the DOE's [Office of Sustainability](#) will work with the 100-plus district schools included in the first phase of the program kicking off in September 2016 to improve

Continued from previous page



their recycling and organics separation, which is already required by City law. Each participating school will receive free bins, signage, and education materials to help spread the word about the zero waste goals. Once these recycling practices have been implemented, participating schools will see a significant reduction in the amount of garbage they send to landfills, as all suitable materials would either be recycled or composted.

The schools chosen for the first round of the Zero Waste Schools initiative are all already part of the Department of Sanitation's [NYC Organics Collection](#) program, which is currently operating in over 730 schools or about 40% of City public schools. Zero Waste Schools will also expand the DOE's partnership with [GrowNYC's Recycling Champions Program](#), a nonprofit initiative dedicated to developing model recycling programs and education tools for students and staff members. Students attending the first group of Zero Waste Schools will receive lessons and instructional materials about the environment and the importance of maintaining environmentally sustainable lifestyles.

When announcing the launch of this program, Chancellor Carmen Fariña said, "As educators, we must teach our students to be environmental stewards and instill teachable moments in all that we do – in the classroom or as we recycle. This initiative will provide opportunities for conversations and lessons about protecting the environment in our classrooms and beyond."

This work is part of the DOE's larger [Sustainability Initiative](#), an ongoing effort by the DOE's Office of Sustainability that is focused on launching and expanding a variety of programs across the City centered on school sustainability, energy conservation, and waste reduction. Some of this work includes:

- 1 Utilizing the Demand Response Program to help the City reduce energy use during peak demand periods and avoid power outages during hot summer and cold winter days
- 2 Phasing out the use of highly pollutant No. 6 fuel in all school buildings
- 3 Working with [Grow to Learn NYC](#) to create and maintain 550 school gardens
- 4 Collaborating with the NYC Department of Citywide Administrative Services to install solar panels on DOE buildings across the City.
- 5 Partnering with [Solar One](#) to teach students and other school community members about solar installations through workshops and training sessions.
- 6 Fostering green roof programs, which help schools plant vegetables as well as install solar panels and rain catchment systems
- 7 Working with the NYC Department of Environmental Protection to install high-efficiency water fixtures in the bathrooms of over 500 school buildings

"Schools are essential to achieving the City's zero waste goals," said Kathryn Garcia, Commissioner of the NYC Department of Sanitation. "Not only will they serve as examples of what can be achieved, they are also educating our next generation of environmental stewards."

For more information about the DOE's Sustainability Initiative, visit our website: <http://schools.nyc.gov/community/facilities/sustainability/home/DOEHome/>.

Getting to Zero:

Interview with Meredith McDermott, Director of DOE's Office of Sustainability



PSP: As Director of the Office of Sustainability, could you describe what you do in your role? What does your day-to-day look like?

Meredith McDermott: The Office of Sustainability is housed within the Division of School Facilities, and I get to lead what is probably one of the fastest growing teams within the DOE. We are in the process of building a team that is dedicated to ensuring that all City schools are zero waste by 2030. It is an aggressive target, but we are working in building a solid foundation for moving forward systemwide. City Hall also recognized the DOE's potential to reduce waste, especially given the size of our school system, and now the DOE has the opportunity to support this initiative better. With increased capacity, it'll be the first time that the Office of Sustainability will really be able to offer greater ground support to schools as they build their sustainability programs.

With that said, I have not had a single day that's been the same. Every day, I meet with people across multiple agencies and community-based organizations, members from my team who work on different initiatives and programs, as well as staffers from the City to discuss strategies to make systematic improvements that ensure the DOE's compliance with the Department of Sanitation's collection rules for recycling and organics. I sit at a lot of tables with people from different organizations and agencies to try and figure out optimal strategies to tackle various sustainability topics, which is really interesting and really exciting. We also work very closely with fantastic nonprofit partners, who fortify a lot of our sustainability goals.

PSP: About 100 schools will kick off the Zero Waste Schools initiative in September 2016. What would

you say that schools are doing now that reinforces the City's sustainability message and helps meet the citywide goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by 2050?

MM: We run the gamut. For us, it's helpful that recycling's been around in NYC for quite a long time, as we are not asking our schools to do anything they aren't already supposed to be doing, anyway. In addition, one of the parts of the Zero Waste initiative is the City's Organics Collection program. Citywide, we have about 733 schools that participate in the organics program, which, while not quite half the number of City schools, still represents a very good chunk of City schools. When you really think about it, this portion of City schools is already larger than the vast majority of entire school districts in the United States! Each school presents different challenges. The fact is that zero waste does not mean "zero garbage bags." However, we do want to see those garbage piles get smaller over time. We also want to make sure that all the material coming in and out of our schools are going to the right places. So, we work to make sure all the recyclables get to recycling, and all the organics are placed into proper bins. A lot of it really comes down to education and operations.

PSP: As you've been rolling this out, what would you say has been one of the larger challenges at getting schools to comply? Is it something with the student body, is it an administrative thing, is it a neighborhood thing?

MM: It can be a combination of all of them, but at some schools, probably one of the biggest challenges is dealing with people's ideas about sustainability. For some people at a lot of schools, the excuse is, "well, you know, I have so many other things to do, I have so many other things to worry about. This isn't something that is at the top of our list." And for other schools, this is at the top of their list. And we're trying to embed a

At 733 schools, the City's Organics Collection program has more schools than the entire L.A. Unified School District, the second largest school district in the U.S



culture of sustainability across our entire school system so that it becomes a part of the status quo, and it's not seen as a burden.

PSP: How can students and parents help with this process? How can they help their school communities make this transition?

MM: It's a great question, and there's a lot of examples of students and/or parents who have actually been the ones to push administrations to adopt better environmental practices in their schools. That is, I think honestly, is one of the most effective ways to get stuff done. District 3 (Upper West Side, Manhattan) is a great example.

Parents throughout the district formed a parent group that is dedicated to green initiatives, and through that group, District 3 parents were able to start pushing their schools. Parents got involved after their kids brought up their schools' lack of environmentally-sound practices. After months of work, these parents helped push the City to doing things like the organics collection program, and as a matter of fact, many of the 733 schools that are part of the organics collection program owe their participation to the grassroots support that their students' parents provided them.

City Students Finally Get Their Shot at *Hamilton*

WE DID NOT THROW AWAY OUR SHOT
- THE CLASS



This month, 1,300 City public school students got the opportunity to walk into the Richard Rodgers Theatre in midtown Manhattan and sit down for an exclusive matinee performance of the hottest ticket in town, Lin-Manuel Miranda's Broadway show, *Hamilton: An American Musical*. For most, just getting the opportunity to watch *Hamilton* would be a monumental event unto itself. But for these students, the *Hamilton* performance was just the perfect ending to an already spectacular day.

As reported in [November 2015's Public School Press](#), the DOE partnered with the Rockefeller Foundation, the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, and *Hamilton's* producers to provide 20,000 City public high school students with \$10 tickets to the play's Wednesday matinees. The 1,300 students that attended on April 13 were the first grouping of City students to watch the musical about American Founding Father, Alexander Hamilton.

Before the 2 p.m. matinee performance, the invited students arrived at the Richard Rodgers Theatre earlier that morning to perform small, original, *Hamilton*-style rap battles and monologues that they created weeks earlier back in their respective schools. To create their performances, students identified and researched historically-important men and women who lived in the late 1700's, when Alexander Hamilton was alive. In addition, all students were provided

with some of the primary sources that *Hamilton's*

creators used to flesh out their characters. Once students had created their works, each school held a competition to determine their best student productions, and the winning sketches were the ones performed by students at the Richard Rodgers Theatre on April 13.

After the student performances, students participated in a special Q & A session with Lin-Manuel Miranda, creator and star of *Hamilton*, along with other cast and production team members. Students learned a bit about the production process, actors' backgrounds, and life on Broadway. They even learned that two of *Hamilton's* cast members, Anthony Ramos, Jr., and Miranda, were former City public school students themselves!

The students who have been chosen to attend these *Hamilton* education programs and matinees are eleventh graders from 12 Title I schools who are registered to AP U.S. History or Honors History classes. Certain schools also opted to select students from their special education and English language learner populations.

For pictures, videos, and reactions from this historical event, please review the DOE's [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) accounts and search for the hashtag, [#EduHam](#).



Celebrating **EARTH DAY** in NYC!

Throughout April and May, New Yorkers can celebrate Earth Day by participating in conferences, plant installations, and other activities including litter pickup, hiking, and face-painting.

For more activities, visit the [NYC Parks Events website](#), and follow the DOE on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

SATURDAY, APRIL 16

Earth Day 2016 Pre-Kick Off (Free)

Kimlau Square at Chatham Sq. on Oliver St & E. Broadway, Manhattan, **11am – 4pm**

Drop off clean and dry clothing, paired shoes, linens, handbags, belts, and other reusable textiles with GrowNYC and help reduce your contribution to landfills. Stay to learn more about recycling and sustainability, and help clean & beautify Chinatown alongside the Chinatown Partnership.

SUNDAY, APRIL 17

Earth Day in Prospect Park (Free)

Audubon Center at the Boathouse (Prospect Park), Brooklyn, **11am – 4pm**

Join the Prospect Park Alliance at the Audubon Center for its annual Earth Day celebration.

Celebrate Earth Day at Fort Tryon Park (Free)

Margaret Corbin Circle (Fort Tryon Park), Manhattan **10am – 2pm**

Help install many new plants on the Fort Washington Terrace slope. Plants, tools, and gloves will be provided. Long pants and sturdy shoes are strongly recommended.

FRIDAY, APRIL 22

GreenThumb Workshop: Beneficial Insects (Free)

City Hall Garden (City Hall Park), Manhattan, **11am – 4pm**
This workshop will uncover insects that play a critical role in the life cycles of your garden plants.

Sherman Creek Stewardship Day: Earth Day Cleanup (Free)

181 Street & Amsterdam Avenue (Highbridge Park), Manhattan, **10:30am – 1pm**

Help pick up litter and clean up the pathways to reveal the hidden beauty of this part of the park.

SATURDAY, APRIL 23

Good Earth Day in Chinatown (Free)

Kimlau Square at Chatham Sq. on Oliver St & E. Broadway, Manhattan

10:30am – 1pm

Drop off clean and dry clothing, paired shoes, linens, handbags, belts, and other reusable textiles with GrowNYC and help reduce your contribution to landfills. Stay to learn more about recycling and sustainability, and help clean & beautify Chinatown alongside the Chinatown Partnership.

SUNDAY, APRIL 24

Arbor Fest (\$10 adults; \$8 children; Free for members)

Queens Botanical Garden Queens, Queens, **11am – 6pm**

Enjoy a variety of activities for all ages, including a petting zoo, arts and crafts, live music, face-painting, tours, food and craft vendors, compost demonstrations! Admission includes all attractions; food and drinks are not included.

SATURDAY, APRIL 30

Spring Soil Health

Queens Botanical Garden, Queens, **10am - noon**

Spring is here and it's time to prep for the upcoming growing season! Join Queens Botanical Garden staff members to learn how to grow healthy plants and care for your soil. Discuss soil testing, cover crops, compost application, and growing season planning tips. [Register here](#).

FRIDAY, MAY 13 – SATURDAY, MAY 14

International Youth Environmentalist Youth Summit (IYEYS)

Multiple Locations, Bronx and Manhattan

Students can join over 140 young environmentalists at the IYEYS. Powered by Greening Forward, the IYEYS is a conference for youth who aspire to start global organizations. Students will network with other students to learn from one another and work towards climate reduction, green and wild space advocacy, and creating campaigns that will reduce waste, address climate change, advocate for green and wild spaces, and more.

Parent to Parent with Yolanda Torres

Executive Superintendent of the Division of Family and Community Engagement

Dear Parents:

This April marks the twentieth anniversary of National Poetry Month. Since 1996, we have used the month of April to highlight poetry, honor poets, and increase appreciation for this literary form, and as we celebrate National Poetry Month, we have a rare opportunity to step back from the ordinary and look at our lives, the world, and each other with fresh eyes. The arts in general, and poetry in particular, can help to open our minds and hearts while allowing us to see things from new perspectives. In all of our lives and across all of our various roles – parents, grandparents, school leaders, and so many others – I believe it helps to see oneself as an artist who stands in front of a canvas and asks him/herself, “what do I want to achieve?”

Have you ever gone to the Metropolitan Museum of Art and stared for a while at a Rembrandt self-portrait? You stand far away, and you see things from one perspective – you see the whole person and get some sense of who he was. But then you step in as close as you can without setting off the alarms, and suddenly, you see the intricate patterns and layers of paint that are physically embedded on the canvas. If you find yourself at a crossroads at work, at home as a parent, or just on a particularly challenging day, take a step closer to look at the details, then take a step back and reflect on what you see in the work that you do. None of us are ever too old to grow and surprise one another, including ourselves.

I experienced a beautiful surprise last month when I spoke to an audience of parents with students enrolled in District 75 schools. During my speech, I shared with them a poem which, as the mother of a differently-abled child, spoke to me. My hope was that it would speak to these



special parents as well. Sometimes, what we deal with is hard to express in mundane terms, as our feelings and experiences may run too deep:

What You Should Know About My Child

Remember that he is, first of all, my child.

Let me see him smiling in his sleep and let me think about how handsome he is and not about how delayed that smile was in coming.

Help me not lose sight of my son in the shadow of his limitations I know that you care for my child and that you work hard with him.

I need your expertise to help him become all that he is capable of being. You need my help in understanding who he really is and in following through at home with things that are important.

Remember, you send him home at night and have days off and paid vacations. Let me have the luxury of having a vacation, sometimes physically, sometimes just emotionally, for a day, a week, a month, without you judging me.

I will be there for him when you are long gone. I love my child with an intensity that you can only imagine.

If on a given day I am tired or cross with him, listen to me, lighten my burden, but do not judge me. Celebrate with me, rejoice in who he is and who he will become but forgive me if from time to time I shed a tear for who he might have been.

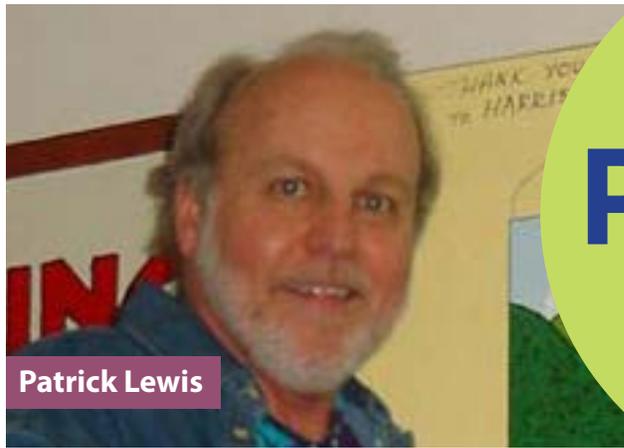
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May we all see the beauty and the poetry in our children, ourselves, and our lives.

Best,
Yolanda Torres



Ada Limón



Patrick Lewis



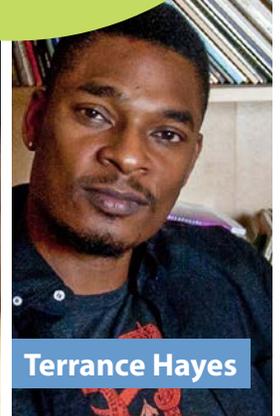
Jacqueline Woodson



Lee Bennett Hopkins



Helen Frost



Terrance Hayes

Celebrate poetry throughout the month of April! Be a part of one of the world’s largest literary celebrations by reading, writing, and studying poetry with your children this month. For a larger listing of suggested works and websites for parents, teachers, and students, please visit the [DOE’s official National Poetry Month webpage](http://schools.nyc.gov//Academics/PoetryMonth). (<http://schools.nyc.gov//Academics/PoetryMonth>)

Books Elementary Grades (K-5)

- ▶ **Amazing Places** by Lee Bennett Hopkins, illustrated by Chris Soentpiet and Christy Hale
- ▶ **Everything is a Poem: The Best of J. Patrick Lewis** by J. Patrick Lewis
- ▶ **Mural on Second Avenue and Other City Poems** by Lillian Moore, illustrated by Roma Karas

- ▶ **One Today** by Richard Blanco, illustrated by Dav Pilkey
- ▶ **Poems in the Attic** by Nikki Grimes, illustrated by Elizabeth Zunon
- ▶ **Salsa: Un Poema para Cocinar, A Cooking Poem** by Jorge Argueta, illustrated by Duncan Tonatiuh

Middle Grades (6-8)

- ▶ **Booked** by Kwame Alexander
- ▶ **Brown Girl Dreaming** by Jacqueline Woodson
- ▶ **Carver** by Marilyn Nelson
- ▶ **Inside Out and Back Again** by Thanhha Lai
- ▶ **Locomotion** by Jacqueline Woodson
- ▶ **Salt: A Story of Friendship in a Time of War** by Helen Frost

High School Grades & Beyond (Grades 9+)

- ▶ ***Black Butterfly*** by Robert M. Drake
- ▶ ***Chasers of the Light: Poems from the Typewriter Series*** by Tyler Knott Gregson
- ▶ ***Citizen: An American Lyric*** by Claudia Rankine
- ▶ ***How to Be Drawn*** by Terrance Hayes
- ▶ ***The Lightning Dreamer: Cuba's Greatest Abolitionist*** by Margarita Engle
- ▶ ***Voyage of the Sable Venus and Other Poems*** by Robin Coste Lewis

Websites

- ▶ **National Poetry Month Website** (<https://www.poets.org/national-poetry-month/home>)
 - Learn about National Poetry Month from the Academy of American Poets, including 30 ways to celebrate poetry
 - Participate in **Poem in Your Pocket Day 2016** on **April 21**. For more information, visit: <https://www.poets.org/national-poetry-month/poem-your-pocket-day>
- ▶ **Reading Rockets** (<http://www.readingrockets.org/calendar/poetry>)
 - Contains additional book suggestions for K-2 readers
 - Videos interviews with famous poets
- ▶ **The Library of Congress' Poetry & Literature Resources** (<https://www.loc.gov/poetry>)
 - Review the Library of Congress' vast archive of recorded poetry, literature, and learning materials for students of all ages
 - *La Casa de Colores*, or the 'House of Colors,' is a web project recently launched by U.S. Poet Laureate, Juan Felipe Herrera. *La Casa de Colores* includes two features: "La Familia," which provides opportunities for anyone to contribute to an epic poem, and "El Jardín," which is a webpage documenting Juan Felipe Herrera's experiences with the wealth of materials available at the Library of Congress. For more details, visit: <https://www.loc.gov/poetry/casadecolores>



Get informed about all of the latest school news, events, and programs.

Visit schools.nyc.gov/subscribe to sign up to

PUBLIC SCHOOL PRESS

SIGN UP!

SUMMER IN THE CITY

A NEW APPROACH TO SUMMER LEARNING

Apply for Summer Classes

Beginning on April 20, families throughout the City will be able to apply to have their children registered for this year's [Summer in the City \(SITC\) summer learning program](#). Students who apply for SITC programming and are not mandated to attend summer school will be accepted to these programs via a lottery. For more information or to apply, please visit schools.nyc.gov/summerschool.



The DOE Speaks Your Language!

No matter what language you speak, all parents have the right to obtain general information about the Department of Education's programs and services. To learn more about the DOE in English as well as in Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, French, Haitian Creole, Korean, Russian, Spanish, and Urdu, visit the [DOE's website](#) or call 311.

Parents may also use the multilingual [I Speak card](#) whenever they visit their child's school and/or DOE office. Any parent in need of assistance can just show this card to a staff member to receive services in their native language.

Dates to Remember

April 22: Earth Day

April 25 - 29: Spring Recess
(Schools Closed)

May 10: Parent Conferences
(High School)

May 11: Parent Conferences
(Middle School)

May 12: Parent Conferences
(Elementary School)



The Gift of Nothing

By Patrick McDonnell

(Little, Brown and Company, 2005)

Mooch the cat wants to find a gift for his best friend, Earl the dog. But Earl already has a bed, a bowl, and a chewy toy. In fact, Earl has it all. "What do you get someone who has everything," Mooch wonders. And then it comes to him: nothing. He'll give Earl the gift of nothing.

As Mooch searches far and wide for nothing, he quickly learns that it's not for sale. Then, sitting in a meditative pose on his cushion, he finds...nothing. He promptly puts it in a small box, inside a larger box, and wraps it up. When Earl opens his gift, he exclaims, "There's nothing here." "Yesh," Mooch agrees, nothing but the two of them. Sitting side-by-side, looking out the window, Mooch and Earl come to see that nothing is everything.

This charming book by the creator of the syndicated comic strip, MUTTS, poses a universal question: what is really important in life? It reminds us that while the world is full of things for sale, possessions don't satisfy our souls. Relationships and shared experiences are what touch our hearts and enrich our lives. Stopping to savor the joys of each moment is priceless.

Let us all carve out a few minutes each day to sit quietly and appreciate the intangible gifts we have both given and received this school year:

- The gift of knowledge that is lifting our children's lives
- The gift of personal and professional growth
- The gift of wisdom
- The gift of caring and involved teachers
- The gift of partnership and collaboration
- The gift of understanding that everyone in your children's school community wants to be accepted and celebrated for who they are

Let us all learn Mooch and Earl's simple lesson: that the gift of nothing truly is everything.

2016-2017 School Year Calendar Released

New York City's public school calendar for the upcoming 2016-2017 school year is now available in ten languages. Among the announced dates:

- First day of school: September 8
- Thanksgiving Recess: November 24 - 27
- Winter Recess: December 26 - January 2
- Mid-winter Recess: February 20 - 24

- Spring Recess 2017: April 10 - 18
- Last day of school: June 28, 2017

Visit the [DOE's School Calendar website](#) to review next year's calendar, or download the NYC Public School Calendar to your personal calendar app by clicking [here](#).

Parent Leader Corner

Are you thinking about running to be an officer of the Parent Association/Parent Teacher Association (PA/PTA) in your child's school? Are you a little unsure about each role's responsibilities? Below is an outline of the responsibilities for each position on the Executive Board. Note that this information should also be spelled out in your PA/PTA's bylaws:

President:

- Presides at all meetings of the association
- An "ex-officio" member of all committees except the nominating committee
- Appoints chairpersons of association committees with the approval of the executive board
- Delegates responsibilities to other association members
- Encourages meaningful participation in all parent and school activities
- One of the eligible signatories on PA/PTA bank checks
- Plans the agendas for general membership meetings alongside the executive board
- Attends the following meetings: executive board, Presidents' Council, School Leadership Team (SLT) and of course, general membership meetings
- Assists with the June transfer of association records to the incoming executive board

Recording Secretary:

- Records minutes at all association meetings
- Prepares notices, agendas, sign-in sheets and materials for distribution
- Prepares and reads the minutes of each association meeting, and distributes copies of the minutes at the next scheduled meeting for review and approval by the general membership
- Manages the safekeeping of the association's

records in the principal's office

- Incorporates all amendments into the bylaws and ensures that signed copies of the bylaws with the latest amendments are on file in the principal's office
- Responsible for reviewing, maintaining, and responding to all correspondence addressed to the association
- Assists with the June transfer of all association records to the incoming executive board

Treasurer:

- Responsible for all financial affairs and funds of the association
- Maintains updated record of all income and expenditures in the principal's office
- One of the signatories on PA/PTA bank checks
- Adheres to and implements all financial procedures established by the association
- Prepares and presents a written report of all transactions at every executive board and general membership meeting; this report must include income, refunds, reimbursements, and other expenditures, and opening and closing balances for the reporting period
- Prepares the association's interim and annual financial reports
- Makes all books and financial records available for viewing by members upon request and for audit
- Assists with the June transfer of all association records to the incoming executive board

Did You Know?

- Every parent member has the right to vote at all PA/PTA meetings. If the organization becomes a PTA, voting rights are extended to eligible teachers. Voting by proxy or absentee ballots is

Parent Leader Corner (continued)

not permitted.

- A candidate running for an office position does not have to be present at the time of the election to be eligible to run. However, the candidate must make every effort to let the nominating committee know that she/he cannot attend the election.
- As excited as you might be to run for PA/PTA office, you may not campaign for your position. No materials in support of a candidate or slate of candidates can be distributed or posted in the principal's office or on the school's website. Anyone who violates this rule may be deemed ineligible for office.
- This information, and so much more, can always be found in [Chancellor's Regulations A-660 \(http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/EBEFFD82-30D5-4B91-9F9A-6A07B0D0F2D6/0/A660.pdf\)](#) and on the [DOE's Parent Leadership resource webpage \(http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/FACE/ParentLeader/PAPTA+Info.htm\)](#)

Parent Council Leadership Institute

Now in its second year, the Parent Leadership

Council Institute has provided leadership training to select groups of Parent Leaders. Participants provided us with great feedback about their experiences:

"I participated in the Parent Council Leadership Institute in fall of 2015, and what I learned from facilitator David Mensah has been invaluable not only as the President of my CEC but as a professional and a parent Leadership is not about changing the behavior of others or making other people follow me. It is about understanding the motivations of others, looking for opportunities in conflict, and getting to the goal that serves my constituents. I highly recommend this training for anyone regardless of what role they play on the Council. – **Shino Tanikawa, President, CEC 2.**

"The biggest takeaway from the experience was that it all begins and ends with you. Putting energy onto another party won't get you the results you are looking for. This change of mindset will catapult you into a new way of thinking that will begin your transformation into an exceptional leader. Today I utilize what I learned on a professional as well as personal level." – **Elena Romero, Borough President Appointee, CEC 15**

Ideal PA/PTA Spring Elections Timeline

Deadline/Timeframe	Task
By April 1	Notify principal of election date
At least 2 weeks before election	Submit election notice to principal/PC for distribution
At least 10 days before election	School distributes election notice to parents
By June 15	Hold election (This gives a two-week buffer, in case you need to reschedule, etc.)
Within 5 days of election	Submit election certification (with officer contact info) to principal