



A Parent's Guide To

PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES

OFFERED AT

THE

MANHATTAN NEW SCHOOL

BY GRADE & SCHOOL-WIDE

2013

Introduction

Dear Families:

This booklet has been developed by the MNS School Leadership Team (SLT) to inform the MNS parent community about the diverse and wide ranging supplemental programs and activities offered to our children throughout the school year. Some of these activities are spear-headed by our teaching, specialty and administrative staff, while others are organized by the school through partnerships with outside organizations who operate these programs (together with MNS staff) in our school. Grade-level initiatives as well as those that are school-wide are presented in this booklet.

Upon reading through this document, I hope you will be amazed at the wide range of programs offered at Manhattan New School. Many of the grade-level programs are not free and therefore require funding. Some of this funding is provided by the Department of Education. However, it would be impossible to provide the wide range of programming without PTA dollars generously donated by you, our parent body.

I would like to acknowledge the dedicated teams of parents, headed by our PTA co-presidents, who launch, coordinate and organize our fundraising events and efforts each year. These events and efforts include our annual appeal for the MNS General Fund which gives all families the opportunity to make a tax exempt contribution to our school; school store and bake sales; our annual Auction and Fest with Zest Spring Carnival, to name a few. These events provide the funding that enables MNS to offer our children such spectacular enrichment programming.

I would like to thank all the teachers, specialists and staff who help to make these programs happen. I hope you will find this an invaluable resource you will turn to again and again.

Sharon Hill
Principal

Note: Although most of these programs have been ongoing for a number of years, the programs described in this booklet may change from year to year based on available funding.

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MNS

For Entering Kindergarten Children

Ice Cream Social

This annual, spring event is for incoming Kindergarten children (usually held in June). Designed as an orientation, children and their families are introduced to the principal, assistant principal, and to all the Kindergarten teachers. It is an opportunity for the incoming students to visit the school and to understand what Kindergarten is like, and to meet other incoming Kindergartners.

The program is held on a half-day, so the children currently attending MNS are not at the school when the Social is being held. The program is formal and well organized, running approximately 2 hours in length. Principal Sharon Hill often initiates the event, speaking to the children and their families in the Café (the lunchroom). Then, the children are brought upstairs and taken into the various Kindergarten classes so that they can see what a Kindergarten class looks like, and to meet the teachers and the new children in a more intimate setting. The children may do art projects, read, and play with the toys in the classrooms. At the end of the program, all children are brought back to the Café for ice cream and to join our music teacher in a sing-along.

MNS

Kindergarten Activities

Carl Schurz Park

All of the Kindergarten classes visit Carl Schurz Park once per week, weather permitting. Depending on the number of classes per grade, the entire grade may visit the park on the same day or choose two separate days on which they visit.

These visits allow the children to meet other children from the grade who may not be in their class, develop their gross motor skills, and release excess energy.

Children travel with their classes by foot to the park, accompanied by their teachers and parent volunteers. Parent volunteers are always needed for this weekly event.

On a rare occasion the children may visit another nearby park.

Musical Outreach

The Musical Outreach program is sponsored by the West End Symphony. Professional musicians and educators from the West End Symphony conduct two workshops, one in the fall and one in the spring. These workshops, which are approximately 50 minutes each, are interactive learning experiences intended to give children the basic foundation for a lifetime of contact with the treasures of music and literature.

A reading component is integrated into the workshop where stories are set to original music to provide textual clues and to engage the imagination of the children. In a previous year, the book ***Caps for Sale: A Tale of a Peddler, Some Monkeys and Their Monkey Business*** was integrated into the musical repertoire. Typically, the story is provided to the teachers in advance so the children are familiar with it before the musicians come to class.

The program goal is to provide an introduction to musical concepts through a first-hand experience in seeing, hearing and playing instruments of the symphony orchestra. Among the instruments introduced are the clarinet, flute, bassoon, saxophone, electric guitar and percussion instruments.

Exercises in listening and sound discrimination are conducted. Often, children are asked to clap along to the music. The follow-up visits by the musical artists reinforce and expand upon the previous learning.

For more information on Music Outreach, visit: <http://www.musicoutreach.org/>

100th Day of School

The 100th Day of School is an exciting event for the Kindergartners. Lead by their teachers, these young children hone their math skills by counting to the 100th day of school using cubes, straws, and a variety of in-class materials. As the 100th day approaches, excitement always builds. The children are asked to prepare for the day by collecting 100 of any object they wish and bringing these 100 items to school.

In school, 100 Day art projects abound. Children may do artworks with 100 stickers, 100 cotton balls, 100 words, etc. The day is often accompanied by teacher-led programs such as 100 Day songs, books, jumping jacks, 100 art, etc. Sometimes, each teacher may prepare an activity and the children will rotate classrooms to participate in each. Other times, classes individually participate in their own 100th Day activities.

Core skills developed are math (counting, grouping) and art.

Dancing In the Cafeteria

Every year in early June, Kindergarten students perform in the Café with their teachers and classmates. This is always a fun event and one that the entire family, including older siblings, can enjoy.

Project EXSEL

Project EXSEL (SEL stands for 'social and emotional learning') is a program run by Valerie Radetzky, the MNS Guidance Counselor, and Anita Lee, our School Psychologist. Weekly classes in social skill development are offered for the full academic year to all Kindergartners (and 3rd graders). This program is based on the work of Daniel Goleman, bestselling author of ***Emotional Intelligence***. Goleman argues that our emotions play a much greater role in thought, decision making and individual success than is commonly acknowledged. He defines "emotional intelligence" a trait not measured by IQ tests as a set of skills, including control of one's impulses, self-motivation, empathy and social competence in interpersonal relationships.

Students refer to this program as 'Self Science'. The weekly sessions offer social skill competencies including self awareness and empathy. Some of the topics discussed are:

- accepting differences
- expressing emotion
- conflict resolution
- problem solving
- perspective-taking

The social skills lessons are easily integrated into the academic curriculum by the classroom teacher, providing continuity in education through literacy, as the children acquire necessary social-emotional competencies.

At the Kindergarten level, puppet work, drawing activities, and role playing are used to accompany the weekly book. Sometimes, children are paired and they share a role play or an activity together – and then discuss it with the class. For example, one activity designed to teach empathy and accepting others' opinions has two children each wearing a large pair of shoes made of construction paper. The children are asked to take a position on a topic and are face to face, dealing with a situation while their classmates watch. Then, they are asked to take the other persons' perspective and vocalize that argument (i.e. standing in someone else's shoes). In another lesson, the children will use thermometers cut from construction paper and discuss feelings which are highlighted by the degrees on the thermometer. Feelings such as happy, sad, angry are discussed as are degrees of these emotions and appropriate responses when feeling a particular way.

Books are often used to accompany the discussions. In Kindergarten, examples of books used in the past are ***How Are You Peeling? Foods With Moods*** by Saxton Freymann and Joost Elffers and ***When Sophie Gets Angry*** by Molly Bang.

For more information on Project EXSEL, visit: <http://www.projectexsel.com>

To view a video of Valerie and Anita teaching a 3rd grade class at MNS in a video lesson, visit the Project EXSEL site at:
http://pd.ilt.columbia.edu/projects/exsel/teachers/resources_teach.htm

For more information on Daniel Goleman, visit:
<http://www.danielgoleman.info/blog/>



1st Grade Activities

92nd Street Y Music Program

Each year, 1st graders participate in the 92nd Street Y School of the Arts Musical Introduction Series. This program introduces young children to the world of music in the concert hall and in the classroom. Children are introduced to the music of many cultures with the goal of nurturing their ability to become active listeners and to express themselves through music. The program introduces children to basic musical concepts such as melody, rhythm and dynamics; fosters their listening skills and enables students to create and perform their own work through singing, rhythmic accompaniment, storytelling and movement.

The program includes:

- 4 professional concerts at the 92nd Street Y, representing a variety of musical styles.
- 12 in-school visits by a musical teaching artist who prepares the children for each performance, helps them to learn basic musical concepts and developmentally appropriate vocabulary, and develops their capacity to actively listen to and comment on music.

In past years, music themes have included Americas Jazz, Middle Eastern, Classical/String Quartet and African music. The concerts typically take place between December and May. Classroom teachers escort the children to each of the four concerts held at the Y.

Each child will build their own musical journal book to reflect on their musical experiences. At the end of the program parents will view their child's musical explorations and musical journeys.

For more information on the 92nd Street Y:

http://www.92y.org/content/musical_introductions_series.asp

MNS

2nd Grade Activities

Manhattan School of Music Opera Residency Program

The 2nd grade (together with the 3rd grade) participates in this program, sponsored by the Manhattan School of Music. The program's aim is to expose students to opera and to give them an understanding and appreciation of this musical form.

For four days (typically in the winter/spring) Manhattan School of Music students (undergraduate or graduate) come into the school and meet with students for nearly one hour. These instructors follow a structured four-part program:

- 1) In the first class, instructors introduce themselves and speak to the children about how they developed their interest in music and opera.
- 2) The second class will be an original opera written by the Manhattan School of Music students. In the past, the opera was based on the book ***The Cricket in Times Square*** by George Selden.
- 3) The third class will prepare students for the final production as they learn about the elements of opera. The range of voices - soprano, alto, tenor and bass - will be used in various combinations, including solo, duet, trio, quartet and chorus. A story will be revealed through music, drama and movement. Our students will be made aware of the tempo, pitch, dynamics, melody and harmony.
- 4) In the fourth and final class, the instructors will present a final opera performance. The children will be familiar with the music and plot - as the classes leading up to the performance will have well prepared them for it.

In the past, ***The Arboolies of Liberty Street*** and ***Eli's Kite***; original operas commissioned for this program were performed.

For more information on the Manhattan School of Music Outreach Programs visit:
<http://www.msmnyc.edu/special/outreach/>

Swimming at Asphalt Green

Every 2nd grade class is given 15 sessions of swim instruction at Asphalt Green. This program is partially funded by the PTA and sponsored by Asphalt Green, as part of their community programming.

Typically the grade splits up, where one-half of the grade goes to Asphalt Green for the first half of the school year (approx. September-January) and the rest of the grade goes for the second half of the school year (approx. January-May). Children bring their swimsuits and towels to school and are bused or walk, with their teachers to Asphalt Green accompanied by parent volunteers, who also help the children in the dressing rooms.

At Asphalt Green, the children are initially tested and placed into groups according to their swimming ability. For the remaining sessions, children are given swim instruction – with some playtime at the end of each session. Each session lasts approximately 45 minutes.

Asphalt Green is a not-for-profit organization, located at 90th Street and York Avenue, dedicated to assisting individuals of all ages and backgrounds achieve health through a lifetime of sports and fitness.

For more information on Asphalt Green, visit: <http://www.asphaltgreen.org/>

MNS

3rd Grade Activities

Carnegie Hall LinkUp!

MNS participates in a Carnegie Hall-sponsored program called LinkUp! At the start of the school year, the children are given recorders that they can keep. Throughout the school year and as part of their weekly music class with Steve Listengart, the children are taught to read music and to play their recorders to a variety of musical pieces.

Each year there is a theme and specific orchestral selections studied. In past years, the theme has been ***America: My Country, My Music***. Children have studied the following selections: ***Porgy and Bess: A Symphonic Picture*** arranged by Rubert Russell Bennett, ***Fanfare for the Common Man*** by Aaron Copland, ***West Side Story*** by Leonard Bernstein, ***Variations on America*** by Charles Ives. Selections are performed at the LinkUp! Concert.

Toward the end of the school year, typically in May, LinkUp! sponsors an audience participation concert with the NY Philharmonic at Carnegie Hall where the entire 3rd grade, together with children from participating schools from across the city, play their recorders along with an orchestra. The orchestra is on the stage and all the children are seated in the main Carnegie Hall Theater. In addition to playing along with the orchestra, the children also sing songs together.

Please note that due to space limitations in Carnegie Hall, only the children and their teachers attend this event.

http://www.carnegiehall.org/article/newsletter/art_newsletter_07051502.html
http://www.carnegiehall.org/article/explore_and_learn/elst_linkUp.html

Chess

All 3rd graders experience an in-class chess program. This program, which is one period a week, is designed to introduce children to chess, chess strategies, and sportsmanship. The program is run by Kids Chess Network, an organization that also runs the lunch-club and after-school chess programs at MNS.

A Chess Master leads each class. Initially, a large chess board is displayed to introduce children to the game itself, the goals, and the game pieces. After a period of group instruction, the class is divided into groups of two and each group plays chess. Sometimes, the groups play each other, where groups of two children may play against another group of two.

The Kids Chess Network is an organization whose mission is to provide interesting and fun educational activities for children. Programs are run under the belief that the best way to achieve this goal is to demonstrate, at individual levels, the logic and beauty of chess, which provides transferable benefits to other subjects.

The program lasts throughout the academic school year.

For more information on Kid's Chess Network visit: <http://www.kidschess.com/>

Manhattan School of Music Opera Program

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For four days (typically in the winter/spring) Manhattan School of Music students (undergraduate or graduate) come into the school and meet with students for nearly one hour. These instructors follow a structured four-part program:

- 1) The first class tends to be one in which the instructors introduce themselves and speak to the children about how they developed their interest in music and opera.
- 2) The second class will be an original opera written by the Manhattan School of Music students. In the past, the opera was based on the book ***The Cricket in Times Square*** by George Selden.
- 3) The third class will prepare students for the final production. Students will learn about the elements of opera. The range of voices - soprano, alto, tenor and bass - will be used in various combinations, including solo, duet, trio, quartet and chorus. A story will be revealed through music, drama and movements. Our students will be aware of the tempo, pitch, dynamics, melody and harmony.
- 4) In the fourth and final class, the instructors will present a final opera performance. The children will be familiar with the music and plot - as the classes leading up to the performance will have well prepared them for it.

In the past, ***The Arboolies of Liberty Street*** and ***Eli's Kite***, original operas commissioned for this program were performed.

To learn more about the Manhattan School of Music, visit:
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Project EXSEL

Project EXSEL (SEL stands for 'social and emotional learning') is a program run by Valerie Radetzky, the MNS Guidance Counselor, and Anita Lee, our School Psychologist. Weekly classes in social skill development are offered for the full academic year to all 3rd graders (and Kindergarteners). This program is based on the work of Daniel Goleman, bestselling author of ***Emotional Intelligence***. Goleman argues that our emotions play a much greater role in thought, decision making and individual success than is commonly acknowledged. He defines "emotional intelligence" a trait not measured by IQ tests as a set of skills, including control of one's impulses, self-motivation, empathy and social competence in interpersonal relationships.

Students refer to this program as 'Self Science'. The weekly sessions offer social skill competencies including self awareness and empathy. Some of the topics children discuss are:

- accepting differences
- expressing emotion
- conflict resolution
- problem solving
- perspective-taking

The social skills lessons are easily integrated into the academic curriculum of the classroom teacher, providing continuity in education through literacy, as the children acquire necessary social-emotional competencies.

At the 3rd grade level, which is a pivotal year when issues in the social-emotional realm rise to the fore, students appreciate having a context in which to talk about their feelings and come up with strategies to deal with the numerous social interactions they encounter during their school day. Among the topics discussed in the 3rd grade are teasing, bullying, learning differences, peer pressure, similarities and differences and issues related to multiculturalism.

Books help to stimulate the discussions in 3rd grade.

For more information on Project EXSEL, visit: <http://www.projectexsel.com>

To view a video of Valerie and Anita teaching a 3rd grade class at MNS in a video lesson, visit the Project EXSEL site at:
http://pd.ilt.columbia.edu/projects/exsel/teachers/resources_teach.htm

For more information on Daniel Goleman, visit:
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MNS

4th Grade Activities

Band and Chorus

In 4th grade, the children are given the choice of joining Band or Chorus. Either option requires a 2-year commitment, as this program continues into 5th grade. Lisa Rizzi leads the Band program and Steve Listengart, the Choral program.

1. Beginning Band

In September, children interested in band have the opportunity to select a woodwind, brass or percussion instrument to play. To aide in their decision, children have the chance to pick up a mouthpiece from the various instruments, to see what it is like to blow through each of them.

Children are asked to complete a form, prioritizing their instrument preferences and parents are asked to sign the form, showing their agreement and commitment to the program. It is important to note that with drums, no more than two children can be selected.

The following instruments are offered in band:

- Clarinet
- Drums
- Flute
- Saxophone
- Trumpet

MNS provides instruments, on loan, to those children who receive free school lunch. All other children must rent or purchase an instrument from an outside source.

Early in the school year, children are expected to have their instruments in hand (usually by late September or early October).

In addition to various online stores where an instrument may be purchased, parents can visit the following locations in Manhattan where instrument rentals or purchases can be made:

Sam Ash Music: www.samashmusic.com

Rayburn Music: www.rayburnmusic.com

Children will receive instruction on how to play their instrument twice a week. Once, during their weekly music class and a second time with a Manhattan School of Music teaching artist (usually after lunch). The teaching artist will come to the school once a week to instruct small groups on a particular instrument (i.e. trumpet, clarinet, etc.). There is a different artist for each instrument. These small group sessions offer the children an additional opportunity to learn.

Children are expected to bring their instruments to school twice a week. Instruments are not stored in the school.

Band performances occur at the Winter Solstice and Spring Concerts. Fourth graders are expected to continue with the same band instrument into the 5th grade.

2. Chorus

Children who select Chorus meet once a week with Steve. The children learn about the mechanics of using the voice and may be accompanied by a percussion group (a voluntary extended day group of children who play the drums, tambourine, maracas and other percussion instruments).

The selection of songs to sing is a shared process. Steve often chooses material, but the children are also given the opportunity to listen and vote for those songs that they would like to sing. Each year, the choral group has selected its own name.

Class Overnight: Ashokan

Toward the end of each school year, MNS 4th graders experience a three-day, two-night overnight trip in which they are exposed to outdoor/environmental education and living history programming, while enjoying bonding time with their friends and teachers. In recent years, the grade trip has been to Ashokan, a center in Olivebridge, New York. This facility is in the Catskills, due west of Kingston, New York (approximately a 2-hour drive or 100 miles north of MNS).

Children may participate in a range of activities: from colonial crafts (i.e. blacksmithing, tinsmithing, broom making); adventure (i.e. ropes, orienteering, canoeing, cooperation activities and games); living history (i.e. visiting an 1800's school house, Indian village, homestead); and nature and ecology (i.e. hiking, forest ecology, water).

All 4th grade teachers, several administrators and parent volunteers accompany the children on this trip. There is a per child fee (amount determined based on fundraising). Parent volunteers are asked to absorb their share of the cost. Bus transportation is organized for the entire grade and factored into the cost of the trip. For those families who cannot afford the price of the trip, funds are made available.

Prior to the trip, an information session is held at MNS for 4th grade families to learn more about the trip. In addition to learning about the itinerary, logistics, and packing instructions, they have an opportunity to ask questions of both the MNS staff and the Ashokan program representative in attendance.

For more information on Ashokan, please visit: <http://www.ashokancenter.org>

National Dance Institute (NDI)

All 4th graders participate in the National Dance Institute (NDI) program. NDI is a not-for-profit arts education organization founded in 1976 by Jacques d'Amboise, a former New York City Ballet principal dancer. Through in-school partnerships, workshops, and public performances, NDI uses dance as a catalyst to engage children and motivate them towards excellence. The program goals are to foster a love of the arts and a curiosity about the world. Children learn to work together, to develop personal standards of excellence, and a belief in themselves that carries over into all aspects of their lives, for the rest of their lives.

Classes are led by professional teaching artists: a master teacher-choreographer, an assistant teacher, and a musician. These professionals meet with each 4th grade class for one period each week, throughout the school year. Initially, a dance theme for the year is selected. Past themes have included Africa, Mexico and John Lennon. The dancers work with the children to choreograph dance moves to the musical themes developed by the composing team. Teachers also incorporate the annual theme into their classwork, such as in writing, reading, music and art.

The program ends with a grade-wide performance at the end of the school year, attended by family and friends. The 4th grade also performs to the MNS student body.

There is an opportunity for motivated and talented children to receive a scholarship to continue their NDI experience by participating in after school, Saturday, and / or summer sessions.

For more information on NDI, please visit: <http://www.nationaldance.org/>

No Place for Hate

Created by the Anti-Defamation League and endorsed by the New York City Chancellor of Education, this program helps children embrace all kinds of diversity by empowering them with knowledge and tools for handling social situations dealing with respect, safety, teasing, bullying, discrimination, and prejudice.

The program is taught once a week to 4th and 5th graders during computer class so that children can cultivate media literacy by analyzing images on the internet and other media sources. The children also keep a journal in which they are encouraged to explore their reactions to class lessons and discussions. "No Place for Hate" culminates in group work where the children pick one medium with which to convey messages about respect, discrimination, and prejudice that they have learned. It is important at MNS to have a school environment where all students feel respected regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, or disability. "No Place for Hate" is a wonderful program that promotes respect for all differences.

For more information on No Place for Hate, visit: <http://www.adl.org/npfh>

4th & 5th Grade Fall Costume Party

The Fall Costume Party is an evening Halloween Dance for 4th and 5th graders. The dance takes place in late October and is held in the MNS Café. Music is provided by a DJ.

Children are usually asked to bring a bag of candy. Parent volunteers are needed to help organize the event, to chaperone, bring food and drinks, and to check in the children.

4th & 5th Grade Dance-a-Thon

In May, 4th and 5th graders participate in a dance-a-thon where they enjoy an evening of dance to raise money for grade specific events. The dance takes place in the MNS Café. The event includes snacks, beverages, and music provided by a DJ.

MNS

5th Grade Activities

Band and Chorus

In 5th grade, the children continue their Band or Chorus experience.

1. Band

Children will receive instruction on how to play their instrument twice a week during their weekly music class and with a Manhattan School of Music teaching artist. A teaching artist will come to the school once a week to instruct small groups on a particular instrument (i.e. trumpet, clarinet, etc.). These small group sessions offer the children an additional opportunity to learn.

Band performances occur during the Winter Solstice and the Spring Concert.

2. Chorus

The Chorus meets once a week. The children learn about the mechanics of using their voice and they may be accompanied by a percussion group (a voluntary extended day group of children who play the drums, tambourine, maracas and other percussion instruments).

The selection of songs to sing is a shared process. Steve often chooses material, but the children are also given the opportunity to listen and vote for songs to sing. Each year, the choral group selects its own name.

Chorus performances occur at the annual Winter Solstice and the Spring Concert.

Manhattan School of Music Jazz

In April, Manhattan School of Music will send several of their jazz students to visit our 5th grade students to introduce them to the genre of jazz. The first session is typically a 40-minute introduction to jazz, with a discussion of many musical examples. Some of the demonstrated styles include New Orleans/Chicago Dixieland, Swing, Be Bop, Cool Jazz, Blues and Rock Fusion. The second visit is a Jazz Discovery concert. Music vocabulary associated with jazz will be emphasized such as beat blues, groove, harmony, improvisation, riff, scat and syncopation. Students will become familiar with common jazz instruments such as trumpet, trombone, saxophone, piano, guitar, double bass and drums.

The program is intended to foster an understanding and appreciation of jazz music.

Middle School Talks and Tours

The MNS guidance counselor, Valerie Radetsky, organizes a wide range of events for parents and children, to offer guidance and information about the middle school process. The process begins with a series of discussions with parents in June (when the children are ending their 4th grade year) and in September of 5th grade. In these meetings, Valerie informs families of the Department of Education middle school process, provides information on the past year admissions results, and answers questions.

During the school year, Valerie also meets with the 5th graders, visiting each class and discussing issues and answering their questions related to Middle School. A series of three structured talks occur, topics include "Making Good Choices", "The Middle School Process", and "The Middle School Experience." Children ask questions and express any concerns, receive information, and are coached in interviewing skills. Valerie may also meet with each 5th grade family individually, if desired, to speak more specifically about the available options and possible 'best fit'.

While parents may set up school tours on their own, Valerie provides updates in the NewsFlash about MNS-organized tours, which all 5th graders and their families are welcome to join.

While the Department of Education has altered its timetables in years past, the experience of recent years has been that tours occur in the fall and early winter, applications with school rankings are due in winter. Testing and interviews are conducted in the late winter, and notification of placement occurs in the spring. Please note that this schedule may vary from year to year.

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Philadelphia – Day Trip

To compliment the 5th grade social studies curriculum, 5th graders are treated to a day trip to Philadelphia. The children travel by bus, with their class and their teachers, select MNS staff, and parent volunteers. While the trip itinerary may change from year to year, the children typically visit key sites and museums, including Independence Hall (birthplace of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution), Liberty Bell, the National Constitution Center, Franklin Court, the site of Benjamin Franklin's home which houses a museum, and the Franklin Post Office (and printing press).

The trip is partially funded by 5th grade fundraising activities and families. For those families who cannot afford the price of the trip, funds are made available.

Rocking Horse Ranch Trip

Children in the 5th grade experience a final bonding trip just before graduation – a full day outing at Rocking Horse Ranch Resort, a dude ranch located in Highland, New York (approximately 90 minutes north of New York City). The Resort provides a wide range of activities for the children, including horse back riding, indoor and outdoor sporting and water activities.

This trip typically takes place at the end of the school year, in June. The 5th grade teachers, several administrators and parent volunteers accompany the children on this trip. There is a per child fee (amount determined based on fundraising). Bus transportation is organized for the entire grade and factored into the cost of the trip. For those families who cannot afford the price of the trip, funds are made available.

For more information on Rocking Horse Ranch Resort, visit:
<http://www.rhranch.com/index.html>

Jaradoa: Art Education Program

5th graders have an extraordinary opportunity to work with a theatre company called Jaradoa. During this 6-week program, students learn how to write two character plays, some of which are chosen and performed at school. Each week, the teaching artist brings a professional actor to model acting and playwriting techniques.

4th & 5th Grade Fall Costume Party

The Fall Costume Party is an evening Halloween Dance for 4th and 5th graders. The dance takes place in late October and is held in the MNS Café. Music is provided by a DJ.

Children are usually asked to bring a bag of candy. Parent volunteers are needed to help organize the event, to chaperone, bring food and drinks, and to check in the children.

4th & 5th Grade Dance-a-Thon

In May, 4th and 5th graders participate in a dance-a-thon where they enjoy an evening of dance to raise money for grade specific events. The dance takes place in the MNS Café. The event includes snacks, beverages, and music provided by a DJ.

5th Grade Graduation

Graduation is held a week before the school year ends, at a location on the Upper East Side. In recent years, the ceremony has been held at the 92nd Street Y. The ceremony is filled with special MNS style touches: singing, speeches, guest speakers, and a slide show highlighting grade-wide memories from their entire MNS experience, starting in Kindergarten. Of course, each child also receives their diploma and as a special memento, a graduation t-shirt that their friends and teachers may sign.

Children return to school after Graduation Day, enjoying their final days with each other and their teachers.

MNS

School-Wide Activities

MNS Auction Gala

Time of year: Spring

Money raised at this celebratory event goes directly to the enrichment programs for our children, as well as funding teaching assistants and so much more.

On one Saturday evening in early spring, parents, teachers, and staff have the opportunity to come together at an adult-only event and mingle, mix, and eat delicious catered food. During the auction, money is generated in a variety of ways. There is the Silent Auction, a highlight of which is the **class projects** produced by the children in each classroom. You can imagine how spirited the silent bidding is! Then there is the **Live Auction** featuring a number of fabulous prizes. There is the **Teacher Playdate Raffle**, where lucky children can win a playdate with one of their teachers. There are also **Grade Basket Raffles** each with a different theme: sports, books, board games, electronics etc. There are many other fun opportunities to win during the evening. But even if you do not bid on a thing, it is a magical evening of fun and not to be missed!

Back to School Book Talk

Time of year: Fall

A relatively new tradition at MNS, the Book Talk for grades 3-5, has caught on quickly. Over the summer your children read a book with you and, usually during the second or third week of school, families gather in the classroom to engage in a book talk.

New Parents' Reception

Time of year: Fall

Every year the PTA organizes a reception for new MNS parents. Typically held within the first 20 days of the school year, it gives new parents a chance to meet each other, members of the PTA, the Principal, Parent Coordinator, and other members of the school staff in an informal and entertaining setting.

Curriculum Night

Time of year: Fall

Curriculum Night is a chance to come to school and hear about what your children will be working on during the year. Typically held in late September, before the 1st PTA meeting of the year, this a chance to learn about the curriculum units and field trips your child will be participating in and to really meet the people who will be teaching them. It is also a chance to see the room your children will learn in daily over the next 9 months. An added advantage is meeting your Class Parents and all of your fellow parents. This is not the time to ask specific questions about your child (conferences can be scheduled for that) but a chance to learn about the scope of knowledge that will be developed between September and June.

Open School Day

Time of year: Fall

A new tradition mandated by the Department of Education is Open School Day. This occurs during the same week as the Fall Parent/Teacher conferences. Families are invited to visit classrooms and observe the work our children are doing on a daily basis. This is NOT the time to engage the teachers in conversation about the curriculum or your child; the time for that is during Curriculum Night or Parent/Teacher conferences. This is an opportunity for our children and teachers to show us their stuff and discover how much has changed since we were in Elementary School.

Bake Sales

Time of Year: Bake sales occur throughout the academic year.

Location: School Cafeteria during the academic day and in front of the school after dismissal.

MNS Bake Sales are a real treat! Bake sales may be sponsored by a particular grade in conjunction with the PTA to support a class trip, such as the 4th grade overnight to Ashokan (see 4th grade), or by the PTA itself, to coincide with a holiday such as Thanksgiving or Valentine's Day. Bake sales connect MNS students to the larger school community through this fundraising endeavor. Everyone is invited to participate and families along with their children are encouraged to bake and/or buy. Classes are assigned a specified time to visit the bake sale and parents are encouraged to volunteer during the time of their child's visit.

Book Buddies

Time of Year: Year-round

Location: Classrooms

Beginning early in the academic year and continuing throughout, children in grades 3 through 5 are paired with a book buddy in classes K through 2. During these classroom get-togethers, children are encouraged to either read together or have the older child read to the younger child a book, which is "just right" for the younger one. In this way, the older children are empowered to be role models and the younger children are encouraged through example to take steps forward in reading. The Book Buddies program also helps to strengthen the sense of community throughout the school as children across the grades get to know one another.

Book Fair

Time of Year: The MNS PTA typically hosts the book fair during November of the academic year when parent teacher conferences occur. The fair usually spans a period of 3 days, with one late night.

Location: Auditorium

This school-wide event is a yearly favorite and is highly anticipated by both children and teachers alike. Individual classes are assigned a time when they will be brought to the fair and children have an opportunity to peruse the wide variety of books available and make a selection for purchase, if they like. Teachers also have the opportunity to add to classroom libraries by creating wish list boxes, which families may select from for donation.

Parents are notified in advance of the time their child's class will visit the Book Fair in the event they would like to volunteer. As with every event, parent volunteers are greatly appreciated!

Coffee Talks with the Principal and Assistant Principal

Time of Year: Fall and Spring

Location: Staff Lounge, 2nd Floor

Twice a year, coffee meetings are offered to parents in the morning, after school has begun. These meetings are an opportunity for parents and school administrators to engage in a dialogue about curriculum, share impressions and ideas, and receive answers to any questions about the education at MNS. Each grade meeting occurs on a different day so parents can attend and ask questions relevant to the grade(s) of their child(ren).

City Harvest Food Drive

Time of Year: First week in December

Location: MNS Café

City Harvest is the nation's oldest food rescue organization, dedicated to feeding the hungry of New York City. City Harvest picks up food and delivers it to soup kitchens, food pantries, day care and senior centers, homeless shelters and other places that serve those in need. Each year, City Harvest will rescue over 20 million pounds in nutritious food.

This event is co-sponsored by the DOE. MNS school children are asked to drop-off cans, jars and/or boxes of food at the MNS Cafe for the city's hungry families.

For more information on City Harvest, visit: <http://www.cityharvest.org/>

Winter Concert

Time of Year: Late December

Location: MNS Auditorium

Each grade performs in a Winter Solstice concert on the designated date for that grade. Each grade's concert begins in the morning, after drop-off. Typically, the following is what each grade performs:

- **K-2nd Grades:** each class sings several songs
- **3rd Grade:** sing and play recorder
- **4th and 5th Grades:** band performance and chorus sings

MNS Has Talent (Talent Show)

Time of Year: This dazzling event typically takes place on a weekend night and the following afternoon between late January and early February.

Location: Auditorium

Hosted by the MNS PTA as a fundraiser, ***MNS Has Talent*** features student participants, grades K through 5, who would like to show off their talent before an enthusiastic MNS audience. In the past, student acts have consisted of singing, lip synching, unicycling, piano playing, stand-up comics, magicians and much, much more... resulting in an evening of pure fun for everyone.

Sign up forms for talent are usually sent home via backpack during the month of December for those children who would like to participate. Additional forms may also be picked up in the Main Office on the 2nd floor after the initial announcement has been made to the MNS community in Newsflash.

Tickets are sold for this event with proceeds used to support the school. Student announcers and performers do not need to purchase tickets on the night in which they are included in the program. Ticket order forms are also sent out via backpacks in advance.

Project Cicero

Time of Year: 3 days in early March

Location: Drop-off at the MNS Café

Each year the MNS community participates in the Project Cicero book drive which presents our book-rich community with the opportunity to help book starved public schools in the City. Families bring new or gently used children's books to one of the Project Cicero drop off boxes located in the MNS Café. There is no limit to how many books a family may donate so if your child has outgrown some books that are marked for spring-cleaning, this is just the place to send them. Note: For textbooks and non-fiction books, please ensure that they have been published in the last 5 years.

For more information on Project Cicero, visit: <http://www.projectcicero.org/>

Fest with Zest Spring Carnival

Time of Year: Saturday in Mid-May, during the day

Location: East 82nd between 1st & 2nd Avenues and MNS Café

Enjoy the delicious tastes of a street-side barbeque while listening to the sounds of a fantastic DJ. Shop for treasures in our finer flea market or with the vendors lining 82nd Street. Games, arts and crafts, cupcake decorating, rides and more will give your kids a day of fun-filled activities, while giving you a chance to connect with school families and community friends.

This annual event is an important fundraiser for the school and parent and student volunteers are always needed and appreciated throughout the day.

Field Day

Time of Year: Late May to June

Location: Asphalt Green

Held in May or June, this is an opportunity for the entire school. *Lower Grades (K, 1, 2)* and the *Upper Grades (3, 4, 5)* accompany their teachers to *Asphalt Green*. Everyone is assigned a color and corresponding colored t-shirts are distributed. Students play a wide variety of games and sports including capture the flag, soccer, relay races and more. Sports equipment is provided and parents are encouraged to volunteer as referees or come and enjoy the day as fans!

Movie Night

Time of Year: Throughout the academic year.

Location: Classroom

This new event at MNS has quickly become a favorite. Each grade typically hosts a movie night in which children pay a nominal amount to watch an age appropriate movie with classmates in their classroom. Movies are shown on the smart board and as a treat popcorn or other snacks are served.

Recycling Program

Time of Year: Year round

Location: Entire MNS facility

Spearheaded by NYC's Department of Education, MNS has gone green! As a community we are dedicated to the environmentally friendly practice of reducing and reusing paper products by using recycle bins and purchasing paper products with a minimum of 30% post-consumer recycled content; even our lunch trays are recycled. In addition, all non-paper products require a minimum of 5% recycled content and organic products are used to keep MNS sparkling clean.

Spring Concert

Time of Year: End of school year

Location: MNS Auditorium

Each grade performs in a Spring Concert on the designated date for that grade. Each grade's concert begins in the morning, after drop-off. Performances tend to follow these themes:

- K- 2nd Grades: each class sings several songs related to that Social Studies curriculum
 - 1st Grade: Neighborhood and Transportation songs
 - 2nd Grade: New York and Bird Songs
- 3rd Grade: sing and play the recorder (also play recorder at LinkUp! Concert)
- 4th and 5th Grades: band performance and chorus sings

MNS Annual End of Year Picnic

Time of Year: A Friday evening in June

Location: Central Park's East Meadow just north of the entrance at 5th Avenue and 97th Street or Carl Shurz Park, depending on permit approval.

Join the entire school community in this final celebration of the year. Pack a picnic dinner and bring a blanket to spend an evening of enjoyment outside before parting ways for the summer.