



## Annex Construction Begins

by Daniela P.

Boom! Clang! Crash! P.S. 11 is constructing a new building at the cost of nearly ninety million dollars. The construction is expected to be completed by September 2017. The new building called the annex, will be five stories and provide 350 additional seats. For many years, P.S. 11 has struggled to find ways to provide teachers and students with enough space to learn in an environment that is spacious and accessible. Although the administration has been successful in finding ways for children to learn and P.S. 11 students do well academically, the expanding population has created a serious need for more room.

With much planning and some creative solutions, the administration was able to find ways to accommodate the construction while school continues to be in session. Last year kindergarten students

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### Buddy Reading Program

by Tai S.

Have you heard about the new program at P.S. 11? Twenty-six classes have been participating in the P.S. 11 Buddy Reading Program. For one period each week, younger students buddy up with older students and read books that they enjoy together. When the students finish reading they discuss what they have read with their partners. Some classes draw or write responses.

The program is run by Dr. Moore. Although Dr. Moore is often busy helping new teachers, she felt it was important to create the buddy reading program. The reason she wanted to create it was because she was looking for a way to motivate students into reading and enjoying books. "I used to have a buddy reading program in my own classroom when I was a second grade teacher. I remember the students being excited to read to their buddies," she explained.

With that in mind she began to think of ways to introduce the same idea at P.S. 11. When she first mentioned the idea to the teachers she had several classes



sign up. As the word spread around, additional teachers and students became interested and eventually 26 classes joined.

The students have really enjoyed the experience. Fourth grader, Nicole V. who was paired with a first grader says that her partner is really cute and it was a special experience. She felt that the program gave her the chance to practice reading aloud and work on creating questions to help her partner understand the story. Many kindergarteners who worked with 3rd and 4th graders agreed with their buddies that it was a good experience.

Natalie, of Class K-013 said, "My buddy's name is Karen. We read a book about equal and plus." Her classmate, Peyton stated, "I liked when my buddy Stephanie was reading because I liked her books. She read animal books and she read long and short books." Teachers also found the experience beneficial. Although it took a lot of planning and scheduling, 4th grade teacher Ms. Cruz said that her students loved reading to their buddies. "It made them feel good as readers and as students that could be counted on to help others learn," she explained. Ms. Escalante, a kindergarten teacher who had her children paired

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### What Goes Into Your Lunch?

by Sumaitaah A. and Nicole V. Every day, students go up to the



cafeteria counter and pick up a tray. Did you ever wonder who works so hard to serve you food each day?

Two very important people at P.S. 11 that you may not even know are Ana Roxas and Keaterini Manolatos. Ms. Roxas is the manager and is charge of our cafeteria. Ms. Manolatos is the cook who prepares and makes the delicious food.

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*Buddies read to one another in Ms. Cruz's class.*



## Annex Story

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commuted to P.S. 171 in Astoria and this year 5th and 6th graders have been relocated to P.S. 361 nearby. These changes have allowed P.S. 11 to build a new addition that will duplicate the size of the current building.

In the new annex there will be additional space for specialized classes such as science and art classrooms. According to P.S. 11 Principal, Ms. Pena-Jorge, "Students will be more comfortable." The employees of the cafeteria are also excited since there will be a new and expanded lunchroom with additional space and new appliances.

According to the website for Omni Architects, the organization in charge of planning the addition, an important part of the project includes "the redevelopment of the 40,500 square foot playground, in which terraced outdoor classrooms, play equipment, and a new athletic field will be located." Other improvements include new elevators, improved bathrooms and toilets, a music classroom, and classrooms equipped with state of the art tools. Many of the students are excited about the building but say it is difficult to wait so long. For fifth and sixth grade students it is especially tough because they will have graduated by the time the new building is finished. Michael G., a 5th grader, mentioned, "I am disappointed to be leaving P.S. 11 without having the chance to use the new science lab," and other

rooms. "However", he added, "My sister, Zara (a 4th grader) is so excited to spend her final year at the new P.S. 11 school. I plan on coming back and visiting P.S. 11 when the new school is finished!"

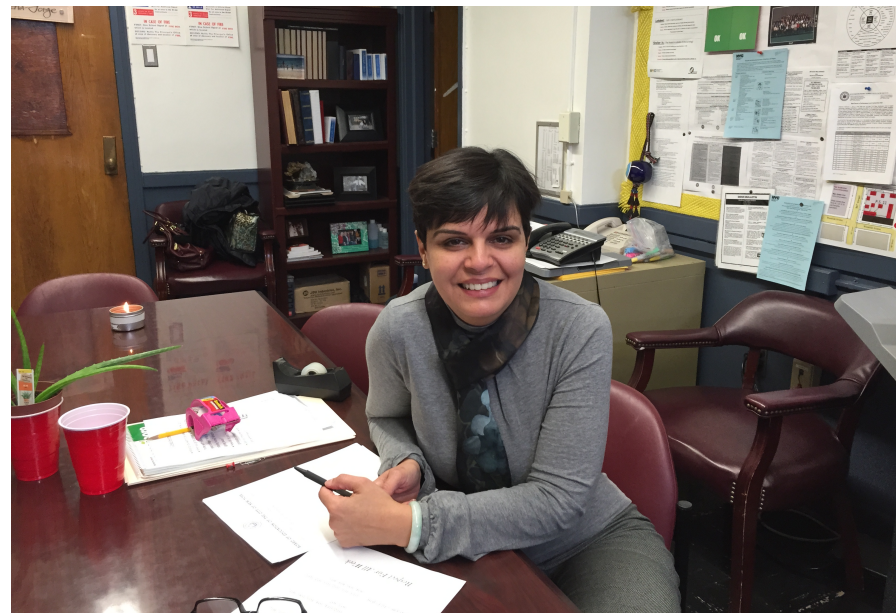
As they wait for the building to go up, some students feel that the construction can be noisy at times. One 1st grader mentioned that one day her teacher had to close the windows because of the noise. However, it doesn't seem to bother most students. According to Sumaitaah, a 4th grader, "I don't really hear the noise because we're on the second floor. People on the bottom floor can probably hear more than us."

The majority of students and staff at P.S. 11 seem to have a positive view of the construction. Mr. Cassulis, a paraprofessional, feels that the construction is going quickly and well. He explained that the main frame is mostly up now so the construction workers will soon be able to work on the interior of the building. This means the noise level will probably soon be quieter.

Ms. Menges, a 4th grade teacher is looking forward to the annex. She stated, "Observing the construction daily has been interesting and a great learning experience. I look forward to our community having a modern facility."

What is your opinion about the annex? Let the P.S. Planet staff know. You can leave a note in Mrs. Ashton's mailbox in the office.

## Interview with Ms. Pena-Jorge



By Tai, Eleni, and Samantha

We recently had the chance to sit down with Ms. Pena-Jorge, the principal at P.S. 11. We found out that she is very busy and really loves our school!

**Q: What did you want to be when you were a little child?**

A: I always wanted to be a teacher. I would pretend to teach and read to invisible students.

**Q: What do you do in your spare time?**

A: When I have spare time, when I'm not with my kids or my husband, I like to read a book. Right now I'm reading the book, *And Then I Found You*.

**Q: What was your first job at P.S. 11?**

A: My first job at P.S. 11 was in 1994. I was a 2nd grade teacher.

**Q: Did you ever think you would become a principal?**

A: No, I did not. I loved being in the classroom and I always thought I would stay there.

**Q: What is the main change you have made to the school?**

A: I hope I have encouraged teachers to take ownership of their teaching and to be creative in the classroom as they teach to meet the different learning styles of their students.

**Q: What is your favorite sport?**

A: I have to be honest, I am not athletic. However, I do watch baseball and most season ending games. For example, I watch the Super Bowl and the World Cup.

**Q: Is there a particular grade you loved the most?**

A: Second grade. I love all the grades, but my heart is in 2nd grade. It's where I started.

**Q: What advice would you give to someone who wants to become a principal?**

A: Spend several years in the classroom getting to know different types of learners and then as an instructional coach or assistant principal, learning how to work with different adults who are also different types of learners.





## Buddy Reading Program

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with Ms. Cruz's class pointed out that the program offers kids a chance to hear different individuals read aloud. "I think that it's important for children to have that type of experience," she said.

So the next time you notice a group of very short children sitting in a fourth grade classroom, pause to take another look; it could be some kindergarteners hanging out with their reading buddies!



## Lunch Story

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The manager and the cook have been working at P.S. 11 for almost 12 years. The cook's motto is, "Any job you do, you must love it." That is what has inspired her to keep working at P.S. 11. The cook loves her job so much that she travels to Woodside from Staten Island each day. It takes her 45 minutes in the morning. The greater struggle is in the afternoon when it takes her an hour and a half to get home. However, she says it's all worth it because she wants to make sure the children get good nutrition while they are at school learning.

According to Ms. Roxas the menu is planned by the NYC Department of Education School Food organization.

Ms. Roxas explains that this organization makes sure that students get the proper nutrients they need for participating in school. She says that they are committed to providing healthy food choices among their students.

The next time you Ms. Manolatos or Ms. Roxas in the cafeteria you may want to say thank you. They do much more than just stand behind the cafeteria counter. They really care about kids and their health. According to Ms. Manalatos, "The best part of this job is to see kids having breakfast and choosing from the salad bar at lunch. "Because I love all of you."

## The Running Club Rocks!

By Rebecca and Erin

"Drip, drip, squeak!" That is the sound of the fifth and sixth grade girls' sneakers squeaking and the sweat dripping off of their clothing. They have been exercising so hard and say that it is fun!

Ms. Kotsogiannis, the gym teacher, also known at P.S. 11 as "Ms. K", started a running program for girls who are in grades five and six. She started the club about four years ago with 18 girls. Now there are 37 members. Ms. K explains that she got the idea for the club because she "wanted to start an afterschool program that was fun and free." In the beginning it was just a walking club organized by Ms. K but then she contacted New York Road Runners and officially became a running club.

According to Ms. K, the club becomes more popular every year because "girls hear about it from their friends" and then join. Mackenzie, a 5th grader says that, "The running club is a wonderful experience." "Do we just run?" she asks. "Not always. We also learn a lot about staying healthy and fit." Vanessa, of Class 502 explains, "The Running Club is very fun and tiring but worth it because it's good for you. After you run you feel really good about yourself." Her classmate, Sariyah agrees. In her first race she said she was "so excited and nervous. I didn't know if I was going to be good or not but I believed in myself." She ended up finishing in just over 10 minutes. "I was so proud of myself"

Even if you are not a member of the running club, you may want to get out there and exercise!

*The Fourth Grade Enrichment Program is sponsoring a Toy and Clothing Drive. If you are interested in donating gently used toys or clothing, please contact Mrs. Ashton, Room 308. (No stuffed animals please).*

## PS 11 PLANET STAFF

The 4th Grade  
Student Newspaper of  
PS 11

Student Reporters:  
Tai,  
Omar, Anas,  
Sumaitaah, Eleni, Erin,  
Rebecca, Samantha,  
Daniela, Nicole

Adviser: Mrs. Ashton





# Artists' Gallery

P.S. 11 held its first calendar contest. Winners had their illustrations published in one of three calendars. The contest was a success and all of the calendars were sold! The money will go toward equipment for P.S. 11 students.

*Edited by Anas and Omar*



# Poetry Corner

## Winter

On a winter day  
we could not play  
Snow covered the outside  
floor and also blocked the  
door.



So we got bored, bored,  
bored, bored and then I  
Had an idea so then  
we talked it wasn't bad  
then we were glad

Then we were on a boat  
riding a fluffy gray goat  
wearing a bright yellow  
coat.

We imagined that  
we were climbing up  
a giant, giant cup

While playing around we  
found out that the snow  
had melted into  
giant winter puddles.

So then for hours we  
pretended we had super  
powers.

*By Aaron Perralta*

### Movie Review:

### Star Wars: The Force Awakens

by Tai S.

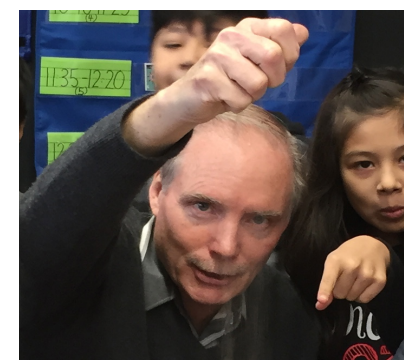
I recently saw the movie Star Wars: The Force Awakens. First, I'll do a short rundown of the characters. There is a new villain Kylo Ren, who has that personality that runs a chill down your spine (or specifically, mine)! Actually, I cannot exactly say that he is a villain without further confirmation from the "big man", director JJ Abrams because there is a rumor floating around about that, but printing that would be a spoiler! So if you really need to know ask me in person. Of course, every movie has its cons. I think Kylo Ren should have a deeper and raspier voice like Darth Vader, but overall he lived up to my expectations. Okay, I know this is really girly-girl talk, but seriously, the new droid BB-8 is really cute. I love how he (or she?!) follows Rey, the main character while making adorable beeping noises. For all the girls reading this, yes, there is a new 'warrior princess' in this episode, too. There is also a new Jedi called Finn who is not voluntarily a part of The Resistance (good guys). These characters, along with some new secondary characters are well-developed and add to the story. During the movie I was almost always on the edge of my seat and the few times I wasn't I was filled with surprise. I hope that you get to see the movie and enjoy it as much as I did.

# THE STAFF SPOTLIGHT

## Mr. Sweeney

### 4th Grade Science Teacher

by Eleni C. and Samantha C.



Q. How old were you when you started to like science?

A. Elementary school.

Q. Did you teach elsewhere before coming to P.S. 11?

A. I.S. 145 in Jackson Heights, Queens. I came to P.S. 11 because it is a great school.

Q. What is your favorite part of teaching science?

A. I like teaching because it will help students to understand the world they live in.

Q. What is your favorite dessert?

A. Keylime pie. It is delicious!

Q. What do you enjoy doing at home in your free time?

A. Parachuting.