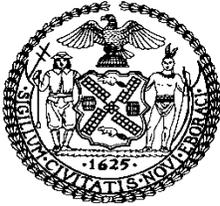


THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK COUNCIL MEMBER GALE A. BREWER



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OPEN SCHOOLYARD IS WIN WIN FOR WEST SIDE

NEIGHBORHOOD AND CITY AGENCIES WORK AS PARTNERS

August 31, 2012 – Council Member Gale A. Brewer (D-Manhattan) announced an agreement today creating access to temporary play space for school children and the public while their beloved Tecumseh Playground, at West 77th Street and Amsterdam Avenue, Manhattan is renovated. The Department of Education has made arrangements for the public to use the O’Shea Complex/MS44 schoolyard at the corner of West 77th Street and Columbus Avenue on Saturdays and school holidays, starting Saturday, September 1, 2012 and including the Labor Day holiday, September 3, 2012, until Tecumseh is completed. “The nearby O’Shea School Complex/MS44 schoolyard will be ours for recreation,” said CM Brewer, while the Parks Department works hand in hand with PS 87 on the Tecumseh renovation, all thanks to a capital grant allocated by Council Member Brewer.

“I’m really proud of how West Siders have pulled together to make this happen,” said Brewer. “All our stakeholders have jumped in to be supportive,” and she noted the Parks Department’s early July start-up as an important piece. “We have a wonderful design, and much credit for that goes to the contributions of the PS 87 community. Big, big thanks go to our school leaders, school custodians, the West 77 and 78 Street Block Associations, Community Board 7 for its strong support, and the Departments of Education and Parks. By working together, we’ve found the temporary space we need for play and recreation, and we’re on track to have a shining new Tecumseh open in spring 2013.”

“This is the Upper West Side, and naturally we had a lot of issues to work out,” added Brewer. “We wanted PS 87 school children to use 78th Street for recess from 11am-2:15pm until next spring, but how to keep balls from breaking windows? Our PS 87 parents identified and paid for a professional play organization to create alternative games. And what about daytime access for emergency vehicles, Access-A-Ride, and postal deliveries for people working at home? Well, we solved that, too. We needed permits for the O’Shea complex, and our school custodians came through for us as did the West 77 Street Block Association.”

The O’Shea schoolyard is a busy place all year around: Every Sunday it’s home to the popular Greenleaf Market. Each May thousands attend New Taste of the Upper West Side, hosted by the Columbus Avenue

Business Improvement District. On October 20, 2012 the Brownstone School holds their Halloween Fair, and Beacon Paint and Hardware sponsors a fundraising walk on October 13, 2012 for Guiding Eyes for the Blind, a nonprofit that breeds and trains guide dogs for the blind and service dogs for autistic children.

And of course the O'Shea complex already serves the kids of three schools- The Computer School, Anderson School, and PS 452. "Their support was critical," said Brewer. "They're great schools academically, with phenomenal after school programs that utilize the schoolyard into the late afternoon. Opening the yard to the public on Saturdays and school holidays means the yard is now a 24-7 center for the community- and since this is New York, that's as it should be."

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