



MST PTA CONNECTION

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Message From the President . . .

It's fall and along with the welcome relief from the heat comes the beginning of another school year. I want to welcome back our returning families and welcome our new families to another exemplary year. The old adage is true: time really does seem to speed up as you get older. It is hard for me to believe that this is my family's seventh and final year at MST.

As I look back over our years here, I am thankful that we have had such a wonderful school with talented teachers and administrators who happily work with the PTA in our efforts to serve our school community. This summer as I listened to report after report on the news of other school districts laying off teachers and charging bus fare, I realized how truly blessed we are to be in such a strong district.

The financial turmoil that has defined the last few years, however, has had an impact on our PTA. We are faced with the double challenge of fewer volunteers and greater need as we try to support the school as much as possible. Please contact our volunteer coordinator, Josh Cedor, if you have any time that you can give, volunteer-services@mstpta.com. We have projects that only require a one-time commitment of an hour or two, as well as ongoing projects.

If you have questions or suggestions about our PTA, please contact me at president@mstpta.com. If e-mail doesn't work for you, you can always send a note to your child's teacher addressed to the PTA. I will do my best to get back to everyone as soon as possible.

I hope that all of you have as positive an experience as we have had here at MST.

Debbie Springsted
MST PTA President

Reasons to Join the PTA

1. Members have a voice in all business of the association and can help guide our priorities.
2. A strong PTA helps ensure a strong school, especially in challenging times.
3. Our PTA supports the faculty and takes on some duties, such as stuffing Thursday Folders, which allows the teachers to spend more time helping our students learn.
4. Involvement in your child's school shows them that education is a priority and encourages them to do their best.
5. As a member you are entitled to the following discounts:

La Quinta state discount rate

3% off auto insurance from Nationwide Insurance

5%-10% off Enterprise Rent-A-Car

15% off admission to Schlitterbahn, Fiesta Texas, and Seaworld

Discounts on selected Sharp Electronics products

14% discount at T-Mobile

7% off at Dell and monthly specials

For more information about available discounts, please visit www.txpta.org.



This year's Reflections program theme is "Diversity Means...". Every student can participate so unleash your artistic, musical, dance, and writing talents. The categories are: Visual Arts, Literature, Musical Composition, Photography, Film Production, and Dance Choreography. Entries are due to Mrs. Lester by Friday, October 14, 2011. Complete rules, entry forms, and guidelines are available at www.mstpta.com. Contact Allison Lord at reflections@mstpta.com with any questions.

PARENT EDUCATION

Welcome to another school year at MST! Through my position in Parent Education, I will do my best to bring you information and resources that will be valuable to you and your family.

Are you aware that studies have been done showing us that parental involvement in a child's education makes a huge positive difference? Most of the time, we think this means "Mother's Involvement". Research has shown that no matter what income or cultural background a family is from, when a father is involved in their child's education, the child learns more, performs better in school and shows healthier behavior. This is true even if the father does not share the same home with his children.

Sparking your interest? You can find out more at www.txpta.org under programs.

What is SAGE?

SAGE, which stands for Special and Gifted Education, is a committee within the RISD Council of PTAs dedicated to the unique needs of special and gifted students. Valuable websites available are:

www.texasprojectfirst.org – an excellent starting place for learning about special education in Texas. It was designed by parents for parents and is a project of the Texas Education Agency. This website is in both English and Spanish.

www.txp2p.org – a nonprofit organization created by parents for families of children with disabilities, chronic illness and other special needs throughout Texas. The majority of their staff, Board of Directors, and volunteers are parents of children with disabilities or chronic illness and has many years experience providing parent to parent support.

www.richardsongifted.com – a wonderful Richardson parent support group for children that are gifted. Richardson Gifted has joined forces along with other North Dallas parent groups to bring a monthly game night to families in the area. It will be held in Plano at the Dallas Games Marathon location on a Saturday each month from 5pm-10pm. There is no charge for this event; however donations will be accepted to cover building expenses. You may bring a sack dinner/snack, and snacks will be available to purchase. Please see the website for specific dates.

Resources listed above and many more can be found at www.risdpta.org. Just click on SAGE.

What does PTA membership do for me and my school? Parents wonder this all the time. PTA provides opportunities to meet with others who have the same interests as you. By sharing common concerns, you will feel more empowered. Being part of PTA connects families and schools and results in parental support and makes school involvement easier. PTA also provides educational opportunities. From local-level parent education meetings to the Texas PTA Annual Convention, PTA encourages learning and the sharing of accomplishments, interests and concerns. Ultimately, PTA provides the opportunity to serve, to volunteer and to contribute to the welfare of all children, because children represent our future. PTA will introduce you to a great variety of new activities and opportunities to share your special talents. PTA will give you opportunity, not only to impact your local community, but to have input in major legislative and policy issues affecting children throughout the state. Membership gives you a voice. Exercise your right to vote. Get involved.

Until next time,

Ready. Set. Achieve!

Karen Leo

MST PTA Parent Education

Save The Date: Multicultural Night

November 17th, 2011

It's time for a night of adventure as we explore the world. Are you game?

MST is hosting its annual Multicultural Night on November 17th. Plan to join us for a fun-filled evening where you and your family can experience other world cultures, as well as share your own.

We invite you to participate and share your cultural heritage by showcasing the objects that make your culture unique, such as clothing, jewelry, coins, artifacts, maps, posters, books and flags. Cultural groups are also welcome to perform.

Look for more information, as well as how to participate in the upcoming weeks. Got questions? Contact Annette Lynch at multicultural@mstpta.com.

We look forward to seeing you for an evening of fun and excitement!

Special Thanks . . .

Thank you so much to our families who have already donated to the “**No Hassel Fundraiser**”, with particular thank you to the Wilson family our first *Super* Donation!!! Thanks to the generosity of our MST families the PTA has raised almost \$650 so far. Great Job everyone!!!! Please submit your form and donation to the office in the lock box, if you have not yet donated and want to do so. For those of you who have not donated, keep an eye out for our *Enjoy the City* fundraiser coming out in the next couple of weeks!!!

Family	Grade	Teacher	Donation Level
Hernandez	Pre K	Andrews	Basic
Lewis	1st	Hemmingsen	Basic
Monk	1st/4th	Hemmingsen/Starnes	Basic
Downing	1st	Romes	General
Wilkinson/Barrow	6th	Naranjo	General
Balcazar	4th	Cabrebra	General
Fallin	1st	Romes	General
Rowe	5th	McLeroy	General
Jones	6th	Naranjo	General
Annaswamy	3rd	Hollingsworth	General
Annaswamy	5th	McLeroy	General
Zachary	4th	McClendon	General
Wilson	5th/K	McLeroy/Patak	Super



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!!!

Upcoming PTA Meetings

October 20	Math & Science Night
November 17	Multicultural Night
December 15	Band, Orchestra & Choir Performances
January 26	Reading Night
February 23	Talent Show & Dinner (Location to be determined)
March 22	Open House
April 19	Art Night
May 30	6 th Grade Graduation (BHS)

Fall Carnival

Our Third Annual MST Carnival was a huge success! Everyone had a great time and we raised over \$1,500 dollars for the PTA. A special thanks goes out to Rebecca Patterson and Dawn Simmons for their dozens of hours of work creating the carnival. It couldn't happen without all of the staff, parents, Scouts, and students who volunteered their time to set up, run booths and clean up. Last but not least, Ms. Vaughan's and Mr. Wooten's willingness to take water balloons to the face is very much appreciated.

Letter from the Editor . . .

Amazingly, we are already through the first six weeks of our school year. It seems like just yesterday we were enjoying the lazy, hot days of summer while searching out new backpacks and lunch boxes for the fall. Now our schedules are filled once again with homework, after school activities and science projects on the horizon.

This is my first year as a mother to have two of my three children in school at the same time. It's strange to have a sixth grader on the verge of adolescence with junior high looming while beginning the journey all over again with a kindergartener on the brink of academic discovery, knowing how quickly the years fly by. It's also very, very busy!

Some of us thrive on the chaos and busyness while others are skilled at keeping it simple. I'm still trying to figure out which category I fall into. Maybe you, also, are learning how to juggle more this year, or you might be learning that sometimes we have to let go of the little things. Personally, I seem to be letting go of sparkling clean floors and social networking, but that helps me stay on top of all the other things my kids need from me. Either way, I bet your kids aren't the only ones in your house learning something new this year. I know that I am learning every day what we can and cannot handle as a family during this season of life.

I hope that you all enjoy this exciting new school year, that you stay strong and committed and that you remember that we are never too old to learn as well, even if it is how to be better parents to our bright young minds!

My Thanks,

Heather Barrow