

April 2007

Volume 59, Issue 4

Published by

Seattle Council of

- Parent
- Teacher
- Student
- Associations

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President's Message

Looking Ahead to New Challenges

2007 will certainly be an important year in the future of our Seattle Public Schools, and PTA members have a unique opportunity to make a difference. I have announced that I am a candidate for Seattle School Board, Position 2. In order to dedicate myself to this effort, I am resigning as Seattle Council President. Sharon Rodgers and Iris Okimoto-Nielsen, our two Vice Presidents, will lead the Council until the May 21st election. You are in capable hands. The Seattle Council Board is strong and positioned to move forward.

As we enter the final stretch of our school year, your PTAs are undoubtedly selecting a nominating committee and hosting new officer elections. As your term as a PTA officer comes to an end, please consider volunteering at the Seattle Council level. Our school district leadership needs the same type of great support and input that

your principal does. The opportunities are broad and varied, and you never know what might happen next. I would wholeheartedly encourage others to consider serving in this capacity. I assure you that you will get back more than you give!

Finally, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to support you and to serve the children of the Seattle Public Schools as the Seattle Council PTSA President. Your passion and energy has been a constant source of amazement to me. It has been an honor and a privilege to work with people as dedicated to children as the PTA members within our Seattle Public Schools.

I wish you all the very best.

Sherry Carr

Seattle Council PTSA General Meeting And New Officer Training Conference

Monday May 21, 2007

John Stanford International School
4057 5th Ave NE

5:30—meet for dinner and networking

6:00—General meeting

Elect SCPTSA 2007-08 Officers

7:00—9:00 Training Workshops

A great opportunity for incoming officers to learn some PTA basics as well as returning officers to pick up some new ideas. Please plan to join us!

It's not too late to register for Washington State PTA Convention—May 4-6 at DoubleTree Hotel—SeaTac

Go to <http://www.wastatepta.org/meetings/meetings.htm> to find out more and register online. Represent your PTA members and learn how to maximize your PTA's effectiveness.

Washington State PTA Announces REFLECTIONS Winners

National PTA, Washington State PTA and Seattle Council PTSA support student excellence in the arts through the annual Reflections Program. Reflections is a National PTA arts enrichment program created to give students in kindergarten through 12th grade the opportunity to create artwork based around a theme, in the categories of visual arts, photography, literature, music, film and dance. Students submit their art through local PTAs in the age categories of primary (K-2), intermediate (3-5), junior (6-8) and senior (9-12).

This year, 450 local PTAs from across the state supported Reflections, which allowed 17,640 students to create and share art inspired by the theme "My Favorite Place." Our 30 PTA Councils handled 14,305 entries, which included 8,000 visual arts entries, 3,700 pieces of literature and 2,100 photographs. From these entries, the Councils and non council local units selected 1,060 finalists which were sent on to the WSPTA level of Reflections for additional judging. With the help of 42 judges and the Reflections Committee, over 500 volunteer hours have been given at the state level in support of the program, with even more volunteer hours given at the local and council levels of the program.



WSPTA Reflections will honor 130 students chosen as finalists in their arts categories at a special **Reflections Ceremony** to be held at the annual WSPTA Convention in May. These students will receive Reflections medallions and much applause for their creative work. The students' entries will also be displayed in the Recognition Area of the Convention for all to enjoy.

This year's program saw an 11% increase in participation at the state level. We sent 24 student entries to National PTA Reflections to be considered for National awards. Last year's program gave us 6 National Reflections award recipients. Because of our PTA's strong commitment to Reflections, we will continue to give thousands of children the chance to participate in the arts and to be recognized as artists. We are proud to give children this opportunity and grateful to the many volunteers who make Reflections happen each year.

Be sure to be a part of Reflections next year, when the theme will be "I can make a difference by..." For more information about how your PTA can participate, email reflections@seattlecouncilptsa.org.

The following students from Seattle schools were recognized by Washington State PTA for their outstanding work:

Literature Primary - Award of Excellence
Isaac Kim
When I Looked at the City
Partners At Lowell School PTA

Film/Video Primary - Award of Excellence
Eli Bloch Garcia
The 7-11 Video
Daniel Bagley PTA

Literature Intermediate - Award of Excellence
Julia Christensen
My Favorite Place
Stevens PTA

Film/Video Senior - Award of Excellence
Tim Willis
Room
Garfield High PTSA

Musical Composition Senior - Award of Excellence
Miran McPoland
Stargazing Suite
Garfield High PTSA

Choreography/Dance Intermediate - Award of Merit
Koki Atcheson
With
Partners At Lowell School PTA

PTA Men: Partners in Making a Difference

This program recognizes the important and different contribution that men make in children's lives and in their education. All men involved in a youngster's life -- fathers, uncles, grandpas, brothers, step-fathers, mentors, neighbors, pastors and friends -- impact the children they care about. Research clearly shows that male involvement positively influences academic success at all levels of schooling – preschool through college! When male figures are involved with kids' schooling, kids enjoy school more and perform better in and out of school.

Essay Contest

Men make a difference in the lives of the children they care about, and children are more successful in and out of school when they have the guidance of an involved male role model. Washington State PTA promoted a statewide essay contest that explored this vital relationship – from our children's perspective.

Elisa Sun, a first grader at Lafayette Elementary was a regional winner for Seattle, Shoreline and Northshore School Districts. To read Elisa's essay about her dad and the great cooking he does with her and her sister, go to <http://www.wastatepta.org/programs/PTAmen.htm>.

WSPTA Membership Awards

Congratulations to the following PTAs that have achieved some of the highest levels of membership growth!

GOLD Level—10% increase from the previous year's membership enrolled and paid by January 25th

PLATINUM Level—20% increase from previous year's membership enrolled and paid by March 30th.

Gold

B. F. Day PTSA
 Gatewood PTA
 Green Lake PTA
 Greenwood PTA
 Laurelhurst PTA
 Lawton PTA
 Loyal Heights PTA
 John Muir PTA
 Orca At Columbia PTA
 Sanislo PTA
 Stevens PTA
 Wedgwood PTA
 Denny Middle PTSA
 Madison Middle PTSA
 Mercer Middle PTSA
 Franklin High PTA
 Ingraham High PTSA
 Chief Sealth PTSA
 Seattle Special Education PTSA

Platinum

B. F. Day PTSA
 Greenwood PTA
 Lawton PTA
 Loyal Heights PTA
 John Muir PTA
 Orca At Columbia PTA
 Sanislo PTA
 Stevens PTA
 Wedgwood PTA
 Denny Middle PTSA
 Madison Middle PTSA
 Mercer Middle PTSA
 Franklin High PTSA
 Ingraham High PTSA
 Chief Sealth PTSA

Enroll Next Year's Officers Early!

By enrolling your 2007-2008 PTA officers today, you will be insured that your PTA will receive the information needed to start the new PTA year off right. Below are detailed instructions to walk you through this new process. All that is needed is a current login and password. (Note: Only record the new officers. The enrollment system is not set up to receive new members for the 2006-2007 PTA year until July 1.)

1. From the Washington State PTA Web Site (www.wastatepta.org) click on "Enrollment/Members Only".
2. Next, click on the word "Login" on the right hand side of your screen.
3. Enter your login and password then click on "Sign On."
4. In order to enter the new officers, you need to know their member ID numbers. If you do not know their ID numbers, please proceed to number 5 below. If you do know the member ID numbers then skip to number 7 on this list and continue.
5. Click on the word "Membership Reports" on the tool bar at the top of your screen. Then click on "LU Membership Roster" on the left menu bar.
6. Scroll down the Membership Roster writing down the member ID number shown to the left of the name. Repeat for each incoming officer. Once finished with the roster select the back button at the top tool bar to close the roster.
7. Click on the words "Search, Rapid Renew, Sign Up, Incoming Officers" on the top of the screen. Then look to the left menu bar and select "2007-2008 Incoming Officers"
8. Enter the ID number in the appropriate position. If you have multiple officers in a position, just click on the 'Incoming Officers' link again and enter the additional ID's.
9. When done, click on "Preview" to double check your entries.
10. If the information shown is correct, click on the "Submit" button to confirm the officers. If it is incorrect, click on the "Back" button, make necessary changes, "Preview" again, and "Submit".

NOTE: If the incoming officer isn't a current member of your PTA then email the name, title/position, address, home number and email address to support@wastatepta.org. This information will be entered after July 1st.

Any questions or if you need additional assistance, please contact support@wastatepta.org or call 800-562-3804.

"Why do you need this information now?"

- WSPTA Bylaws require that next year's officer be elected by April 30.
- Your new board should be planning for next year over the summer.
- You will want to start your membership drive in August, so it's important to have your plans in place and the membership website up-to-date.
- Newsletters, Leadership Packets, training news, and some IRS and Secretary of State mail comes during the summer. It is vital that this information gets to the right people.

"But we want to include new families who will come in the fall in leadership positions."

- You can appoint new members as committee chairs, or as co-chairs with experienced members. Don't hold off elections in the hope that you'll get a passel of new leaders.

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION ANNOUNCES MATH PANEL

The Washington State Board of Education is pleased to announce the selection of the Math Panel members who will work in an advisory capacity to the national consulting firm, Strategic Teaching, on the independent review of the K–12 mathematics standards.

“We had an incredible number of very talented people from all over the state apply to serve on the panel. We want to thank all of those who expressed a willingness to serve,” said Mary Jean Ryan, Chair of the Board. “We have selected a remarkable group of twenty individuals who will help us ensure that Washington’s math standards are truly world class- we owe that to Washington students.”

Members of the panel represent parents, business, higher education faculty, as well as K–12 teachers and leaders. The panel will meet with Strategic Teaching staff on April 26th, June 14th and July 17th at the Puget Sound Educational Service District in Renton. The Board will review draft recommendations from Strategic Teaching at the July 19–20th Board meeting in Spokane at Educational Service District 101.

The Board will hold a public hearing and focus group sessions around the state in July and August to get input from the public. A final report from Strategic Teaching is due to the State Board of Education by August 30, 2007.

For more information about the independent review of Washington’s K–12 mathematics standards, and the membership of the math panel, please visit the State Board of Education Web site at www.sbe.wa.gov.

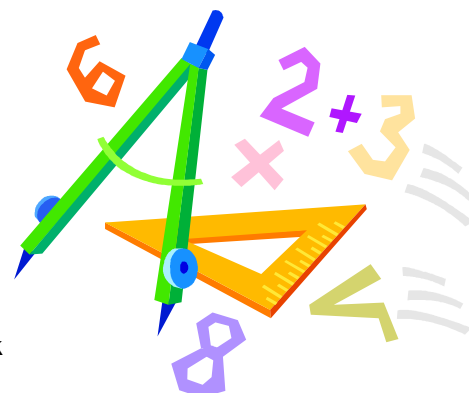
How Can PTAs Support Math Achievement?

Parent Education – Math concepts are sometimes taught in different ways and parents may feel they can’t help with homework because they don’t have a clear understanding of how their students are being taught and the expectations. Work with your school principal or math coach to set up parent meetings with a math specialist to discuss how to help with homework. Articles in your school newsletter or math letters are also useful to help inform parents how to support students with math at home. The Seattle Schools website has an item on supporting computational fluency with may be useful: www.seattleschools.org/area/math/3-4-5-resources/supporting_computational_fluency.doc.

Family Math Nights – Plan a fun and festive intergenerational evening around math games and puzzles. Get help from school staff members, community businesses such as educational toy and bookstores, Seattle Public Schools curriculum specialists and coaches, and your parent population. You may have untapped parents who work regularly with math concepts who would be happy to share their knowledge and skills, even if they’ve never volunteered before. By keeping the activities fun and playful, the whole family will enjoy a math night together.

Advocacy – Math curriculum and instruction is a hot topic currently – and is one of Washington State PTA’s top legislative issues this year. Become informed about the latest developments in math education and don’t be shy about asking questions of staff members. Speak up for well-rounded curriculum, excellent professional development programs that build teaching skills in math instructions and a plan to prepare EVERY student to be ready for the math concepts demanded by today’s high-tech jobs.

WSPTA Position Paper on Math and Science can be found at www.wastatepta.org/leg/math_science.pdf



Watch for Seattle Public Schools Family Survey - Coming Soon by Mail

The second annual Seattle Public Schools family survey will be sent to all households after Spring Break. The results will provide families a voice in several areas of program development. The survey will include questions on the following topics: family involvement in student learning, home school communication, school choice, and school environment. Family and community engagement is a key district goal and one of our benchmarks is to increase family involvement by 5% per year.

Last year, we sent surveys to 30% of our families and received approximately 6500 responses. Surveys were translated into ten languages. Forty-seven percent of the respondents were families of color and fifty-three percent were white. Almost 4 of 5 respondents were mothers and almost 1 in 5 were fathers. The remaining surveys were from guardians and grandparents.

Here is a sample of the survey responses from 2006.

- * 92% "strongly agree or agree" that school

staff encourages and welcomes family and community involvement.

- * 9 out of 10 "strongly agree or agree" that school staff is knowledgeable and respectful of the family's culture.
- * 77% reported that a family member "always or often" reads with their child or helps him/her find time to read.
- * 62% "always or often" attends events and activities at my child's school.
- * 24% report that they "always or often" volunteer at school.
- * 17% reported that they "always or often" participate in decision-making committees such as the Building Leadership Team, PTSA, or other parent group.

We look forward to the results of the 2007 family survey. We appreciate the time and effort of families to complete the survey.

Lin Carlson
Equity, Race, and Learning Support Department
lcarlson@seattleschools.org

Books and Bricks—SPS School Closure/Consolidation Process

After Seattle Public Schools announced their intention to close/consolidate several schools for Fall 2007, Seattle Council PTSA member-representatives voted to allocate up to \$10,000 to fund community building programs, events and activities (to be identified and designed by the impacted groups) and facilitation/mediation help for community meetings.

SCPTSA Board member Sabrina Friend is part of the SPS "Books and Bricks" committee, which is charged with facilitating these painful transitions. The committee is designed to address the physical aspects of moving programs to new buildings (Bricks—headed by Kathy Johnson) and the academic management issues involved with joining two programs (Books—led by Hajara Rahim).

SCPTSA's role is to help with bringing the affected communities together, to help with the emotional and relational transitions as communities begin to work through what their "new community" will look like, and to advise on the logistical aspects of merging parent groups (or creating new ones).

Project requests approved so far:

- High Point/Fairmount Park Joint Community Breakfast
- Viewlands/Broadview Thomson Back-to-School Community Picnic and Resource Fair

Principals, Family Support Workers, parent leaders, staff and other community members are pulling together to make sure that these challenging transitions produce successful schools and welcoming communities for students next fall.

More information can be found at www.seattleschools.org/area/06consolidation/index.dxml

Multilingual Interpretation Equipment Acquired by Seattle Public Schools

In response to the increasing diversity of Seattle Public Schools' student population, the School District has recently acquired ultra modern **Multilingual Interpretation Equipment**, thanks in large part to the generous contribution made by the Seattle Council of the Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA), and to the efforts of the Department of Communications and the Family and Community Partnerships Program.

This excellent Equipment facilitates interpretation in up to six different languages simultaneously, through the use of headsets. It consists of six transmitters and 100 receivers—all wireless, with rechargeable batteries. The transmitters' channels are then programmed to a predetermined amount of receivers, depending on the number of people who speak each of the languages that will have interpreters at any given event.

In this way, parents and other family and community members who speak languages other than English will have access to participate fully in Family Nights at schools, school and PTSA meetings, school-community events, conferences, etc, and so become a more integral part of their students' academic life.

To inquire about borrowing the equipment to use at a PTA or other school events, contact Hung Pham at hpham@seattleschools.org.

Office of Family and Community Partnerships & Department of Communications

Healthy Schools Summit—May 22-23rd 2007

Washington state's first ever Healthy Schools Summit is being held on May 22nd -23rd , 2007 at the Lynnwood Convention Center in Lynnwood, WA.

Join us for one or both days to learn how healthy schools boost academic performance.

Day 1 (Tuesday, May 22nd) sessions will focus on tools and strategies to make your school a healthier place through keynote speaker Pat Cooper, EdD, Superintendent of Schools, McComb School District, Mississippi and through a variety of sessions from people in the field. This day also includes special sessions for schools using The Great Body Shop health education curricula. This day is geared primarily toward school professionals and partnering agencies with a focus is on boosting academic achievement through healthy schools.

Day Two (Wednesday, May 23rd) focuses on the Safe Routes to Schools (SRtS) movement featuring keynote Tracy McMillan of the University of Texas at Austin, where she teaches and studies children's transportation issues through a joint lens of Community and Regional Planning, Civil Engineering and Social Work. Dr. McMillan will help your SRtS team lay the plans for success. Choose from a host of breakout sessions and collaborate with others from around the state to advance SRtS in your community. Day 2's intended audience expands to include school families, PTAs, community organizations, law enforcement, design and health professionals.

Registration information is available at www.psesd.org (Day 1) and www.saferoutes-wa.org (Day 2)

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Have you elected new officers for 2007-2008?

A strong Nominating Committee reviews the performance of officers seeking re-election (it doesn't happen automatically!) and considers the entire parent and staff population to find the best candidates who will move your PTA forward.

Electing your officers early makes for a smooth transition and a jumpstart on next year.

When officers are elected early, they can take advantage of these spring leadership training opportunities:

- WSPTA Convention May 4-6 at SeaTac Doubletree Hotel
<http://www.wastatepta.org/meetings/meetings.htm>
- SCPTSA New Officer Training May 21 5:30-9:00 pm
John Stanford International School 4057 5th Ave NE

Your Board of Directors will have the summer to plan the coming year including Back-to-School events and an awesome membership recruitment drive. The rest of the year will run much more smoothly when you get off to a good start.

If you have questions about recruiting and electing officers, or need help, contact your SCPTSA area director or email scptsa@seattlecouncilptsa.org.