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16th District PTA News

Sept/Oct 2008



President's Message

By now everyone has received their CATS testing results. Overall FCPS is continuing to improve, which is great news. I recently had the privilege to participate in the Pep Rally at Liberty Elementary where a plan was announced by the Prichard Committee to get Kentucky schools into the top 20 by the year 2020. This year's results are a sure indicator that we will be doing just that.

And while I am happy for all of our schools, I am irritated by how testing results, NCLB results, CATS results, ACT's, and any other indicators are reported ... in bits and pieces. We need to look at the big, overall picture and not small snippets at various times. I believe that when we do that, we lose focus of the bottom line, and this is why some believe we "teach to the test." I wish Kentucky lawmakers would develop a plan where all of the results were reported at the same time.

Anyone who has stepped foot inside a school recently can attest that learning is going on. But when you see that your school is "failing" for the NCLB, or that your academic index has dropped, or *only* made a 3 point gain when your goal was to make a double digit gain, one can only be led to believe that learning is not happening. I know personally that this isn't the case!

I compare my hearing about any of these results to that infuriating critique when you are dieting. You know the one, you've lost 20 pounds, your cholesterol has dropped by 30 points, you've lowered your blood pressure, and you are proud of your accomplishments. But all they can say is, "I know the perfect exercise that will help you lose your love handles!" You feel deflated. Yes, you still need to work on the love handles, but couldn't they be happy with all of your other accomplishments too?

We need to stay focused on the big picture, our kids. Are they learning? Are they progressing? Are they happy? For the first time in my motherhood, all three of my kids (I have one each at the elementary, middle, and high school levels), were excited about school starting back, getting back into the routine and looking forward to their classes. They come every day telling me about something fun and exciting that they did in a class, and not gossiping about what the other kids did or said. THAT is what is important to me.

If your child is not happy and they are not progressing, then you need to be more involved. Talk to their teacher(s). Find out what is going on so that you can ask more in-depth questions about their

day and not just the open-ended ones like "How was your day?", "Did you have a good day?", or my personal favorite, "Do you have any homework?" Get involved so that you can ask more questions like, "Did your teacher go over an example of how to solve those fractions that we worked on last night?", "Did you start a new unit in Science today about frogs?", or "What was the topic of your open response question in Language Arts?"

There are only a few indicators that I can think of that show how well parents are doing in helping their kids as far as their education goes in FCPS: attendance records (are you getting your child to school?), sign-in sheets (are you visiting the school during regular hours or special events?), and SBDM voting counts (which are reported on school report cards). If we only look at that, we are failing as parents. At one school, which has approximately 570 students, only 81 parents participated in the last SBDM election! That's 14%! But does that mean the parents at that school aren't good parents? NO!!!!

If you receive results about your school that you are not happy with, step back and look at the big picture. Start first with your child and see what you can do to help. Then move on to their teacher and see what you can do to help them to help your child. And if you can, don't stop there. You are rolling now. See what you can do to help the entire class, or the entire grade, or the school as a whole! Be a part of the solution. No one will or can do more for your child than you.

Tina Moorhead, President
16th District PTA

Mark Your Calendar

- SeptemberLibrary Card Month
(sign up for a card & check out a book)
- September 15-25.....Fall Testing
- September 23 Kentucky Kids Day
- September 26no classes for students
- September 22 National Family Day
(have dinner with your family)
- September 30All PTA dues need to
be submitted by this date
- October 6-10.....Start the Art Week
(participate & appreciate)
- October 8Int'l Walk to School Day
- October 20-24..... Red Ribbon Week
- October 24Dixie Elementary Fall Festival

Bylaws Workshop

September 23
6:30 - 8:00 PM

Conf. Room C • IAKSS
RSVP to
jconradpsi@alltel.net

Membership Notes

Thanks to all the schools who have already sent their 16th District PTA Dues in. If you have not done so yet, please submit by mail or at the September roundtable. Remember all dues are due by September 30th. This due bill is from 2007-2008 year end totals of membership. Make checks payable to **16th District PTA** and mail to: **Lucy Blankenship, 276 Riviera Ct., Lexington, Ky. 40509.**

How are everyone's membership drives going for this year? Need ideas or help? Just e-mail me and we will get our heads together. Have a super year!

Lucy Blankenship,
16th District 2nd VP – Membership

God's Pantry Food Drive

Be a Hunger Hero in this year's food drive and fight against hunger in Fayette County. The 14th annual Kids Helping Kids food drive will run through October 31st. Last year every school in Fayette County participated in the drive and donated 99,855 pounds of food. The largest donation of the year! This year's goal is 100% participation and to crack the 100,000 pound food donation ceiling.



Please contact Robert Srodulski, Food Drive Coordinator at God's Pantry Food Bank, should you have any questions: robert@godspantry.org or 288-5330.

Ten monetary awards will be presented to the schools that donate the most pounds of food per student.

Special thank you to Toyota Motor Manufacturing Kentucky, Georgetown KY for their sponsorship.

2008/2009 PTA Reflections Program

WOW!

...is the theme for this year's Reflections Program. Reflections is a cultural arts program that was established by National PTA in 1968. Students, grades P-12, in



schools with a PTA or PTSA, are invited to participate in the categories of visual arts, photography, musical composition, literature, dance and film/video.

Reflections entries are judged at the local level, the district level, then at the state level. State winners are sent to the national level. Kentucky has had National winners for several years. **Deadline for this year to the District level is November 20**, so plan your school's judging prior to the November 20th deadline.

TO DO LIST

- *Select your Reflections Committee/Chair;
- *Obtain judges for each category (judges can judge more than one category, but parents should not judge a category that their child has entered);
- *Set a deadline for your school that will allow enough time for all entries to be judged and the winners from each category to be turned into the District by November 20th;
- *Copy the following from the Leadership Handbook: pages 3-11 from the "Programs" section and pages 7-9 from the "Forms" section;
- *Read over all the information carefully. Use the school entry form obtained at the District Leadership Training.
- *Judges should receive a copy of the category that he/she are judging prior to the judging period in order to familiarize themselves with the rules;
- *Each entry must include name, grade level, category, school name, and Artist Statement on the back of each entry. Names are NOT permitted on the front of any entry, with the exception of CD's and DVD's. Videotapes or cassettes will not be permitted.
- *You can also download any of the above forms from the Kentucky PTA's website at www.kypta.org under the "program" link.
- *On the day of your judging, make certain that every judge has a copy of the rules.
- *Each category winner must complete an official entry form, and, if under 18, have it signed by their parent/ guardian to be turned in with their entry to the district level.
- *A "Local" Participation Form must be completed by each school and turned in with the winning entries.

Questions? Contact Faith L. Calhoun 859-536-0271 or faithcalhoun@yahoo.com

Kentucky PTA Kid's Day



Celebrate Kentucky PTA Kids Day on September 23, 2008 then tell us about what you did to make the students at your school feel special.

PTA NOTICES

Important Tax Reminder

All PTAs and PTSAs need to either file your taxes or do the e-postcard. Deadline: November 15, www.irs.gov/eo

16th District PTA Newsletter

E-mail gailburge@aol.com if you

- have news and events from your school that we can include in future newsletters
- would like to receive the monthly district newsletter through e-mail.

16th District PTA Executive Board

Tina Moorhead - President
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Marsha Strein - Past President
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CHECK OUT THESE SITES

<http://www.kypta.org/>

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