

Greenbelt Elem School PTA Meeting
September 1, 2009

President—Mimi Noorani

Quote of the Month for Mimi: “Our local schools are the fabric of our society!”
About Mimi: 2nd year at GES and 1st year as President. You can contact her in person at meetings and at school. E-mail is a good alternative for contacting Mimi.

We thank last year’s board, including Anne Gardner and Kirsten Dabelko as last year’s President and Vice-president, working to grow our PTA. We especially note projects like our school mural completed last year. We provide assistance for field trips, school assemblies and many events (see below). We seek the involvement of all school families!

Items Needed:

- Tennis Balls (for the bottom of our student chairs.
- Rocking Chairs

Our big goal this year: **Encourage more parents** to feel connected to PTA and school. We see the care all our parents provide and know that we all can be involved. We have jobs small and large that will suit everyone. Our opportunities can provide great time connecting parents with their school and their own children! Any current or previous-year board member will be happy to guide you to volunteer or to navigate the workings of our school and our PTA.

Volunteer Dos and Don’ts:

All can participate. You should enjoy yourself—try connecting your skills and interests to our needs! Be clear on your limits and your schedule. Also, let us know if you need to reschedule!

Arts Integration/ Maryland Artist-Teacher Institute: (“MATI”): 5 teachers and our principal spent 15-hour days this past summer to get ideas on integrating art into our curriculum. We distributed an article tonight about how the arts connect to the different learning styles of our students, to tap into the kind of intelligence

each student has. Research shows that student engagement and test scores rise as the arts come into play.

Ms Novick: “Hall of Fame” is a theme for our school this year, a project where students nominate peers for recognition. This is a cooperative project between parent and student. Though it has been a challenge to understand, you should feel free to contact teachers with any questions.

Essential Question developed this summer at MATI: How is this person, event, organism or place significant or meaningful to your life? We start small and local, with children’s experiences, like a student’s pet. Our visual art curriculum has not been particularly loaded in the past, but this initiative involves many arts. Due to our PTA’s funding of this initiative, the InterAct program will come to our school to work with Grades 1, 3 and 5 (as well as their staff). These grades will then expose the remaining students in the school to their work. African Drumming for Grades 2,4 and 6 has been funded through our PTA acquiring a state grant. Thanks to Melissa Eehrenreich for writing the grant proposal!

Principal’s Report – Ms. Seidel

- Great turnout tonight! Ms. Bush is our new Asst. Principal. Our previous AP has moved to Beltsville. Thank Councilwoman Ingrid turner. We are fortunate to have a relationship with her. She donated book bags full of supplies through her connections with outside organizations that help GES.
- Sing-in sheets are provided at pta meetings, to provide positive points for the students as part of the PBS program here at GES.
- The Parent Handbook is posted on the school webpage. It explains many policies and procedures for our school.
- Smooth opening to school. Instruction and texts distributed from Day one, student acclimation is smooth.

- Parent portal is our computer program giving info on student grades and projects upcoming. Parents use their portal numbers to search this info and is obtained by
- Contacting Annie Haber, here M, Th and Fri mornings as a parent liason. She is a front line to getting message to teachers, as well as help with the parent's questions.
- Monday folders that collect important news about school operations and events will remain consistent from last year's practices. The Newsletter appears on school and pta webpages.
- Students need to send in \$5 for scholastic weekly reader. PTA funded this up front and the \$5 will pay back them back.
- October 24 (Oct 17 was original date)—Gorgeous Prince Georges Day. Beautify our school day. Bring a friend, a shovel, etc. to help plant and maintain the outside of our school as well as our trail.

Officer Parker

Marty Parker, school resource officer to staff, parents and kids, here as well as at Greenbelt MS and Roosevelt. He has been doing this for 13 years now, and loves working with students. He teaches several programs, like the DARE to 5th graders and the Drug Resistance Training to 6th graders. Last year the bike rodeo for younger kids was also successful. Thanks to the PTA, who sent two 5th and 6th graders to safety training camp. Officer Parker continues to work with the challenges n our parking lot, as parents drop-off and pick up their children. He suggests we all follow to the letter the directions of our adult monitors: stay in vehicle, move as directed.

Oct 7: walk to school day—this keeps growing!

Please call (Ms. Seidel can contact me) I am a resource

Treasurer's Report – Brigid Willson

InterAct Theater: \$686 paid with approximately \$2,000 more due
Request for 2 mailboxes, tot \$525 Pending book sale proceeds.

Fundraising

Brief Card at tonight's meeting lists ways you can save for our PTA:

- Search engine powered by yahoo 'good search.com' designate our school we get 1 cent
- Through our PTA website, Greenbelt.com/ gespta, you can find an Icon for Amazon. Click this and we receive a percentage of your purchase.
- We Recycle cell phones ink cartridges—bring them to the school.
- Box tops, label for education (campbells soup)
- Monthly Gift Cards from Target, Safeway and Giant: register them through e-scrip.com

Need volunteer to pick up cards from stores. You simply hand them a form letter from our school and the business donates a gift card to us, which we use for purchasing classroom supplies. Ex., last year we received a \$500 donation for teacher appreciation, as well as a few other large corporate sponsors.

Co-op, Chipotle Thank You

We have books to sell for anyone willing to help –contact Melissa sites!

Art Supply donors (Joanne's, Plaza stores)

Events

Book Sale Needs: Contact, Melissa Sites

We sell 20,000 – 30,000 used books at this event. One more day of collections, then move them to Roosevelt Center for Labor Day festival. We will move the books Thursday around 2 pm. Teachers have volunteered for shifts for selling books at the festival. Selling will be easy, as the prices are rounded to the dollar, with some shifts at \$1 for every book.

Parent shifts sign-up –Contact Amy Hansen, Carolina Napp

Parade Float Assembly (decorate Amy Hansen's Prius car and wagons for parade.

Children Welcome: Sunday Sept 6th 4:30 at Anne Gardner's home 113 Northway -

Contact Brighid Willson, Anne Gardner

Labor Day Parade: 9:30 line up--walk in parade and hand out books that promote our book sale –Contact Brighid Willson

Guest Readers—local celebrities will read children’s books at the stage area between acts.

Favorite Books poster, completed by our teachers, will be on display at the sale.

Festival Outreach during book sale (Needed donations for Arts initiative, petitions for Middle School progress, general fundraising, newsletter)

Scholastic Book Fair 11/31 – 12/4. This fundraiser provides books for our teachers. New books pub. by scholastic (in instrumental music room) . Here’s how it works: Children browse the room of books during the school day and return to purchase with their wish lists from home. Thursday night (probably) the room opens to families. We need shift workers to -Contact Amy Hansen, Karen Yoho.

End of year events: we are adding performances this year to the spring fair and multicultural dinner. We will be looking for volunteers

Teacher appreciation

Sept 25, drama training for teachers.

Let’s bring baked goods for our 70-member staff!

Student directory

Kirsten Dabelko is heading this committee and has compiled the directory in the past two years. This form will ask for your student’s info and is not connected to school files. Any info you would like to share can be useful for families to connect with each other. Kirsten needs some volunteers for this work: Data entry , fact checking, etc. the directory form will go home in a week or two.

PTA Newsletter is always looking for good writers for grants and the letter.

Arts Committee

Lucy Dirksen says the art night last year was so successful, and that the students really responded and engaged with the work, that perhaps having this event once a quarter instead of the one night as planned would be good. Anyone is welcome

to join this committee, or give of their talents in making the day/ eve event happen.

“Middle Years” Committee -- Joan Whelan

Our Middle school is fed by us and 5 other feeder schools. The city has been seeking new bldg for 20 years. Funding for year one of a rebuilding plan is in place, but they will not break ground until more funding is coming. (New buildings will be erected gradually, then deconstruct the old, leaving a historic portion standing.) Our Petition is passing around tonight and during the Labor Day Festival to add support to continue the work of this building plan, a renewal for our MS. Please influence neighbors, friends, retail establishments to sign and/ or distribute the petition.

Health/ Wellness Committee

The local coop is sending a rep to talk about healthy eating, as well as other ways to enrich our student’s lives.

Walk to school Day—need for reps from each neighborhood. Let us know your interest and your neighborhood.

Garden/ Nature Committee

Grants available for this kind of work, but we need to assess our needs. A committee is forming to determine what is best for our focus on this area. Contact Ms. Zanin, GES staff.

Garden events:

Sept 19, Sat 9 am, weeding and prep for October

Oct 24 9 am (tentative), beautification day

School store

Need people to bring in things that appeal to students as awards: Journals, supplies, small toys.

Gathering donations from businesses is an important volunteer activity for us.

Staffing for the store, in the morning for 30 minutes. Your job is to receive tickets from students in return for the items. Last year was successful, but there were

never enough people to maintain the store. Volunteer and you can be done by 9:30! Contact Ms. Hamm or Ms. Behe to place your name on a schedule.

Destination Imagination--Amy Hansen

Last year our team had fun and earned 2nd place! This year, we would love a coach for this cooperative competition enrichment problem solving event. It involves students in challenging, thought-processing skills. The coach's job is to ask questions without divulging any answers. Sounds cool, right?

Motion to purchase 2 extra mailboxes for new teachers is made by Anne Gardner, and seconded by Kirsten Dabelko. Passes unanimously!

Contacts for all of our different committees are available on our PTA website:

www.greenbelt.com/gespta