



President's Perspective by Chris Steiner

Hello and welcome back to the 2010-11 school year. We hope all of you have had an enjoyable and restful summer. The PTO is excited to get back to work and get all of your favorite programs running again. Chess club has just started up with the guidance of chess teachers. This is a wonderful program open to all ages. There will be an evening event on December 8th for anyone interested in checking it out and for parents to see first hand what their child is learning. Also, Language Stars has begun with many participants learning either Spanish or French. Junior Great Books is also accepting registration forms with plans to begin in January. And finally, our art volunteers are ready to open our children's minds to the wonderful world of art. All of these programs can provide some excellent enrichment to all of the students of District 161!

This year we will again be hosting our wonderful fundraiser Mardi Gras! It will be held February 26, 2011. This will be our only District fundraiser for the year so we hope that as many of you as possible can attend. There are many opportunities to volunteer so please contact our co-chairpersons, Alicia Gavin and Maretta Marsh if interested. We always welcome new faces and fresh ideas!

As always, each school PTO wants as many parent volunteers as possible. Every parent has something to offer and the children love seeing their parents at school. Your presence shows that you value education and that their effort is important. If you do not know who your building chairs are at your school, please check the District website at www.sd161.org and click on the PTO link. All of the names are listed. Please, introduce yourself and get involved! Together, we can keep our schools strong!

Please join us at our next District PTO meeting at Normandy Villa at 9:30 a.m. on November 4th!

Normandy Villa
41 East Elmwood
Chicago Heights
708-647-7000

Flossmoor Hills
3721 Beech Street
Flossmoor
708-647-7100

Heather Hill
1439 Lawrence Crescent
Flossmoor
708-647-7200

Parker Junior High
2810 School Street
Flossmoor
708-647-5400

Serena Hills
255 Pleasant Drive
Chicago Heights
708-647-7300

Western Avenue
940 Western Avenue
Flossmoor
708-647-7400

PLEASE NOTE:

All 10/11 PTO meetings will be held at Normandy Villa

November 4, 2010 at 9:30 a.m.
January 13, 2011* at 7:00 p.m.
March 10, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.
April 7, 2011 at 9:30 a.m.
May 5, 2011 at 9:30 a.m.

* meeting at Parker Jr. High

If you have ideas or suggestions you would like to see incorporated into this District wide newsletter please email Chris Steiner at chrisdsteiner@gmail.com

We'd love to hear from you!

Western Avenue

Western Avenue has had a busy start to the school year!

In August we again held our PTO job fair at fee payment day and got a jump on filling our volunteer needs in the classrooms and school wide. We continued with our central cashier system where parents can pay for PTO items such as hot lunch, Junior Great books and Spirit wear with one check and at one time.

During the first week of school we held our annual Boo-Hoo breakfast for kindergarten parents as well as our Classroom Volunteer Coordinator orientation breakfast at Flossmoor Station. The students enjoyed an assembly which addressed the issue of bullying.

Our annual back to school picnic with burgers and hot dogs from Flossmoor Station was well attended. Almost 700 meals were served and everyone had a wonderful time! Our CHARACTER COUNTS! club collected school supplies and sold lemonade for a quarter to benefit the Jones Memorial Center in Chicago Heights. Open House followed and was also well attended and everyone enjoyed the delicious treats provided by our hospitality committee.

Our PTO hot lunches will kick off this week with hamburgers and cheeseburgers from McDonald's.

Serena Hills

During the summer the Serena Hills North parking lot was reconfigured. The new parking lot will be used for staff parking and buses only.

Serena Hills PTO started off the school year with a "Meet and Greet" during kindergarten orientation serving orange juice and teddy grahams to the new kindergarten students and welcoming parents with cake and coffee. Wed. Sept. 1st was our open house for parents of all grades to meet their children's teachers.

Tuesday, September 14th was a Parents Café at 9:00 a.m. for all Serena Hills parents to attend. These meetings will be held monthly and different topics will be covered. The topics for this month will be: Principal's Perspective Mrs. Westerlund discussed the start of the new school year, curriculum, new programs and procedures and welcomed questions from parents. Ms. Dickerson presented an overview of the CHARACTER COUNTS! and PBIS programs at Serena Hills.

September 15th was the 1st of our weekly ice cream Wednesdays, during the lunch hour.

Friday the 24th we will hold a back to school Roller Skating Party and the Glenwood Roller Rink from 6 to 9 p.m. for all students and their families to attend.

Flossmoor Hills

Welcome back to what we know will be a fantastic school year. We kicked off the school year with our Boo Hoo/Yahoo Breakfast and a Back to School Celebration which is always a pleasure for the students and parents. The children enjoyed face painting, spin art, an inflatable obstacle course, games, music, dancing, and karaoke. We would like to extend a special thank you to all of the teachers and volunteers that helped to make this event a success. The Room Parent Orientation, held on August 31st, allowed new and existing parents in the District the opportunity to gain more knowledge on volunteer roles and to sign up for volunteering in their child's classroom. September 1 marked Flossmoor Hills' Open House in which the PTO welcomed new parents into the District, promoted our New Eagle Spirit Wear and the room parents introduced themselves to the teachers and parents of their respective classrooms. On Wednesday, September 8, Language Stars Spanish classes began.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- Tuesday, September 21 from 7:00-8:00 p.m. we will host our first PTO meeting of the year, all Flossmoor Hills families are welcomed to attend
- Beginning Tuesday, September 28 - Ice Cream Tuesdays will resume, students can purchase popsicles and ice cream pops during their lunch period.
- Beginning Friday, October 1 - PTO Hot Lunches will start.
- Beginning Monday, October 4 through October 18 - we will kick off our Fall Fundraiser "Cookie Dough."
- Wednesday, October 13 from 7:30-8:15 p.m. - Art Volunteer in the classroom orientation will be held at the Flossmoor Hills School Library.
- Annual Career Day and fall party on Friday, October 29 - (kids love this day!)

Heather Hill

Right from the start Heather Hill was off and running.

Our Boo Hoo Breakfast was just that, Boo Hoo!! Our new kindergarten parents enjoyed a continental breakfast hosted by our hospitality committee which filled with pastries and other goodies, while learning what makes Heather Hill unique. There were smile, tears and plenty of hugs to go around.

Our New Student Orientation had a record number in attendance. Our new parents' learned all about ISAT, NWEA, COGAT, and of course, all about the HH PTO. After their orientation, they enjoyed a tour by Mrs. Smith, which lead them right to the room parent orientation meeting.

Our Room Parent Orientation also had a record number in attendance as well. Our veteran room parents were more than eager to help the entire kindergarten parents sort through the maze of rules and party specifics.

Our third major back school event, was Our Back to School Picnic. Another record number in attendance. Our PTO provided hot dogs, lemonade

and popcorn. While our parents provided fruit, veggies, dessert, and even frappe was on the menu. We had an overwhelming number of parent volunteers, but the best, was our in house DJ Dad who provided the tunes so we all could show off our dancing skills like, the Electric Slide, Cupid Shuffle and more.

Heather Hill's spirit wear fundraiser was extended by another week due to its popularity. The second deadline is approaching soon.

We are very proud of our students, parents and staff for an outstanding job.

Parker Junior High

Thank you to the NJHS children that aided in directing parents on Open House night and to the parents that attended. The school year is off to an enthusiastic start!

Our PTO fall fundraiser, Innisbrook wrapping paper and gifts, is running September 9-24. Please support the Parker PTO and your kids! Parents District 161 is very excited to be using a new student management system, Skyward that includes family access to grade and teacher information. Family login and password information will be mailed home on September 15th and will be available for use on September 20th.

The School Store is open for business! Items such as folders, pens, pencils, paper, and many other classrooms needs are for sale. Come and visit Parker's own School Store!

Our fine arts are in full bloom! Auditions for the fall drama have occurred, and choir, band and orchestra are getting their talents ready for a new season of making beautiful music.

Plans for Red Ribbon week are underway for October 25-29 as we help our students in choosing to be substance-free!

The Fall Book Fair is scheduled for November 15th-19th.

The PTO is proud to help support the PBIS/CHARACTER COUNTS! champion recess which rewards students displaying good behavior with gift cards.

