



Newsletter

15th District Office • 319 South 15th Street • Louisville, KY 40203 • (502) 485-3535

every child. one voice.®

November 2009

President's Piece

Fall Into Perspective

When you woke up this morning, you were safe, comfortable, and secure in your own bed. For 8,582 (or 1 in 9) students and families in the Jefferson County Public School (JCPS) District, there is no permanent home.¹ You were perhaps able to turn on the news or open the paper and find out about the weather or the day's activities. For 2,000 students and families, English is their second language and culture.² Most likely, you sat at a table and enjoyed a good breakfast and knew what you would have for lunch and dinner that day as well as for the rest of the week. For 62,275 students and families who are on reduced-price meal status, they cannot say the same thing.³

Traditionally, November is the month when we express thanks for all of the amazing blessings in our lives. We gather with friends and family, eat far too much, and high-five each other over a college football game we watch on a big-screen television. We pack up our abundance of leftovers and make plans for the next holiday get-together. But far too many of our JCPS families will not be able to do this over Thanksgiving Break. Many will go to shelters or to food banks. Many will go to community centers or outreach organizations. Many will simply make do with what they have—without complaint.

Our help as Parent Teacher Association (PTA)/Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) members is crucial. Our community is in crisis. I know that for many of us, our schools seem relatively untouched by these statistics. In fact, to some, these are just numbers. But, for many of our PTAs/PTSAs, these are the faces they see every day. I am proud of our PTAs/PTSAs whose membership campaigns have flourished, whose fundraising efforts have surpassed last year's, and whose goals for the new playground or SMART Boards are soon to be achieved. But the truth is that your success is far outweighed by those groups who are struggling to engage parents on any level. Not because these PTAs/PTSAs lack strong leadership or a dedicated core group of volunteers but because the students they serve need more than a sticker on Kentucky Kids' Day or a glow stick for Halloween safety.

So I urge you to think outside of your school to our larger community. We must work together to help **all** of the students of JCPS. If we don't, then we will have failed in our PTA mission: **everychild.onevoice**.

May you be blessed during this Thanksgiving Break with a joyous family gathering,



PTA President Myrdin Thompson, with husband Joel, sons Seth and Jonah, and daughter Finn.

shelter, and food. May you be reenergized by the work you do on behalf of the children in our community. May you continue to strive to achieve our goal: "Together We Can ... Make a Difference."

Myrdin Thompson

President

¹For the 2008-09 school year; per www.metropolitanhousing.org; *News and Notes*; August 1, 2009, article "Where Do You Live: Louisville's Homeless Children and the Affordable Housing Crisis"

²For the 2004-05 school year; statistics per www.Urban.org/publications; December 11, 2006, publication *A Profile of the Foreign-Born in the Louisville Metropolitan Area*

³Per Oct 9, 2008, article at www.wave3.com "More JCPS students in free lunch program"

Membership: More Than Just Money! It's an Opportunity!

Sweaters and blue jeans have replaced shorts and T-shirts, pumpkins have been carved, and fall festivals have come and gone. What hasn't changed? Membership and its importance in helping the PTA/PTSA excel in its success as one of the largest nonprofit organizations! Membership is more than just money. It's a chance for parents and teachers to work together as a unit to brighten, better, and build positive characteristics within our youths' surroundings and education.

PTA membership dues help fund awards, scholarships, and programs created to boost students' self-esteem. These scholarships aren't just for kids; they are for the adults within the community who give back by reading or encouraging students to use their

artistic abilities through the Reflections Program. Membership gives us the numbers we need to show that we are supported by staff and parents alike. Our efforts to create positive reinforcement through the Self Esteem Award or the Rising Star Award show that involvement is key. Remember that our schools need the support and backing of everyone and that PTA/PTSA membership is what keeps us thriving. We need voices and hand-in-hand support so that our fight for the rights of children can continue on.

Pumpkins have been carved, fall festivals have come and gone, but PTA/PTSA still brews and burns brightly. Help us keep the torch lit by asking our families, businesses, friends, neighbors, and community sup-

porters to join our efforts in making today's youth into tomorrow's everlasting torch.

Continue working hard on your memberships. Kudos to Louisville Male High and Conway Middle for maintaining their ground and reaching for the stars! I am very proud of you. Stay tuned! An update on how each school is doing will be coming soon to a newsletter near you.

Also, if you are having something special at your school, write about it and send it in. We want to know your ideas and approach for getting families to support your school. Happy turkey hunting!

Alisha Pasley

Tax Time Is Here: Have You Filed?

The IRS filing deadline is **November 15, 2009**, for the 2008-09 fiscal year.

PTAs/PTSAs whose gross receipts are normally \$25,000 or less must file IRS Form 990-N (also known as the e-Postcard) no later than **November 15**. Gross receipts are normally considered to be under \$25,000 if your PTA/PTSA is:

- Up to a year old and has received \$37,000 or less during its first tax year.
- Between one and three years old and averaged \$30,000 or less in gross receipts during each of its first two tax years.
- Three years old or more and averaged \$25,000 or less in gross receipts for the current and two preceding tax years.

The electronic filing system is facilitated by the Urban Institute and can be accessed directly at <http://epostcard.form990.org>. No special software is needed, just Internet access. After registering as a user and creating a login ID and password, you will receive an e-mail with a link that will allow you to activate your login ID and create the e-Postcard. (If this is not the first time you have filed the 990-N, you will need to get the login and password from the filer last year.)

You will need the following information:

- Parent company name (PTA Kentucky Congress—the group number is 5110.)
- Federal Employee Identification Number (EIN) of your PTA/PTSA

- Tax year (July 1 through June 30 fiscal year)
- Legal name (as it appears on the IRS database—this should be the same as it appears your bylaws.)
- Mailing address (Use the school address.)
- Web address (if one exists)
- Name and address of a principal officer (generally the president or treasurer)
- Confirmation that your annual gross receipts are normally \$25,000 or less

Some of this information will be prepopulated from IRS records. At the completion of the e-Postcard filing, you will receive a verification-of-filing receipt. Make copies of this receipt, keep it with all important PTA records, and make sure you pass this information along to the new president and treasurer each year. **Exempt organizations that fail to file for three consecutive years will have their tax-exempt status revoked.** You will also need to send a copy of the verification-of-filing receipt to: Office of the Attorney General, Capitol Suite 118, 700 Capitol Avenue, Frankfort, KY 40601-3449 and Kentucky PTA, P.O. Box 654, Frankfort, KY 40601-0654.

Additional information can be found on the IRS Web site at www.irs.gov under the Charities and Nonprofits tab.

If your PTA's/PTSA's gross receipts were more than \$25,000 and you do not meet any of the three conditions above, then you must file Form 990 EZ. You may also file Form 990 EZ (and any associated schedules) if your gross receipts are below \$100,000 and your total assets at the end of the year are less than \$250,000. If gross receipts are more than \$100,000, you must file the longer Form 990 with its associated schedules.

Calendar of Events

November

- 5** No school—Professional-Development (PD) Day
- 15** Send membership dues to the Kentucky PTA Office.
IRS filing deadline
Deadline to submit Warren H. Proudfoot Award (Outstanding School Board Member) applications to the Kentucky PTA Office
- 15-21** American Education Week
- 25-27** No school—Thanksgiving Break

December

- 8** Reflections Celebration, 6:30 p.m., Sallie Phillips Durrett Auditorium
- 15** Send membership dues to the Kentucky PTA Office.
- 21-Jan. 1** No school—Winter Break

The Path to Parent Involvement

Parent involvement is one of the keys to student success. The Commissioner's Parent Advisory Council has worked diligently to come up with a comprehensive performance-assessment tool, called *Kentucky Family and Community Involvement Guide to Student Achievement*.

The six objectives are:

1. **Relationship-building:** The school staff builds productive, personal relationships with parents of all students.
2. **Communications:** Two-way information in many forms flows regularly between school staff and parents about students' academic achievement and individual needs.
3. **Decision-making:** School staff encourages, supports, and expects parents to be involved in school improvement decisions and to monitor and assist school improvement.
4. **Advocacy:** For each student, the school staff identifies and supports a parent or another adult who can take personal responsibility for understanding and speaking for that child's learning needs.
5. **Learning Opportunities:** The school staff ensures that families have multiple opportunities to understand how to support their children's learning.
6. **Community Partnerships:** The school staff engages and partners with community members to plan and implement substantive work to improve student achievement.

In upcoming issues, we will print ideas that both parents and educators can use to help support these objectives.

For questions or to schedule a workshop on how to use the assessment tool, call Sharon Whitworth, Special Projects chairman, at **485-7450**.

In Memory of Kenneth Helfrich

The following people donated money to the 15th District PTA in memory of Kenneth Helfrich. Kenneth was the husband of Marlene Helfrich, who was our first 15th District PTA President. She is still actively involved in PTA and serves on the Kentucky PTA Legislative Team.

- Rose Babiak
- Marty Bell
- Vicki Ensor
- Michael G. Judah, Judah Real Estate Group
- Joanne Owen

Reflections Celebration Time Is Here



Don't forget to come to our 40th Reflections Celebration on **December 8** at 6:30 p.m. in the Sallie Durrett Auditorium, 4409 Preston Highway. Come and celebrate with our student award winners, and see the fantastic work that they have accomplished. You are also invited to a reception after the ceremony in Gheens Flex Rooms A and B. All work by the students will be on display for viewing.

Hats Off to CAP

September PTA Volunteers

Audubon Traditional Elementary PTA
Chenoweth Elementary PTA
Conway Middle PTSA
Coleridge-Taylor Montessori Elementary PTA
Coral Ridge Elementary PTA
Crosby Middle PTSA
Dunn Elementary PTA
DuPont Manual High PTSA
Eastern High PTSA
Camp Taylor Elementary PTA
Fern Creek Elementary PTA
Fern Creek Traditional High PTSA
Field Elementary PTA
Foster Traditional Academy PTA (plus their Family Resource Center [FRC] coordinator)
Greathouse/Shryock Traditional Elementary PTA
Gutermuth Elementary PTA
Hawthorne Elementary PTA
Hite Elementary PTA

Large Clothing Donations

On September 10, the Clothing Assistance Program (CAP) picked up a very generous donation from Hanna Andersson at their Riverport Warehouse. We would like to thank Janine Ressonider and Mike Lamb of Hanna Andersson for considering CAP worthy of such a donation. David Adams of Dansson: On the Outside brought a 25-foot flatbed trailer loaded with 9 pallets of boxes that each held about 20 large boxes of

Local Unit Shout-Outs

Jeffersontown Elementary PTA

Grandparents are special! September is the host month for Grandparents Day. At Jeffersontown Elementary, the PTA wanted to honor grandparents in a special way. We did so by hosting a special two-day lunch, in which all grandparents were invited to eat lunch with their grandchildren. Tables decorated with special centerpieces were set up in the cafeteria, music was played, and desserts were provided by our room parents. PTA memberships were available, and all grandparents who joined were entered in a drawing for a gift card to a local restaurant. Over the two-day lunch, 235 adult lunch tickets were purchased. The students loved spending time with their grandparents, and the grandparents enjoyed meeting their grandchild's friends and teachers. It was a very successful and special event!

clothes. We were met at CAP by Kyle, Russ, Zach, and Josh Nyitrai, current and former students at Eastern High School, to help unload the trailer. It took numerous trips, but it was well worth it. Some of the clothes have already been put in the Family Room, and the families are very excited to see them. Thanks to everyone involved!

Another great supporter of CAP is LifeBridge at Southeast Christian Church. They have more clothing than they can store and have brought two trucks with about 100 boxes of clothes in each. These donations allowed us to keep the Family Room stocked while PTAs/PTSAs were working on Back-to-School activities and before they could have clothing drives at their schools. Thank you to Lisa at LifeBridge, who calls every week to see if we need more!

We have begun to offer coats, mittens, hats, and gloves, but we will shortly run out. If you have not held a clothing drive, please consider doing so and highlighting the need for these items. Remember, we clothe the entire family, so all sizes are welcome.

If your PTA was unable to volunteer on your scheduled date, you should have received a note card with a new date. If you need to reschedule, you can call CAP at **485-7062** during office hours or contact me via e-mail at jpcscap@jefferson.kyschools.us. I am at CAP on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Students served as of October 1: 4,700. Last year, we served approximately 5,100 the entire year.

Paula Wolf, CAP Director

American Education Week

This year, the tag line for American Education Week is "Great Public Schools: A Basic Right and Our Responsibility," which is a call to America to help children achieve and grow in the 21st Century.

The National Education Association's (NEA's) 88th annual American Education Week is **November 15 through 21**. This week will draw attention to the importance of providing every child in the United States with a quality public education. This is an opportunity to celebrate public education and to honor individuals who work hard to educate students. The NEA calls on all of us to do our part in making public schools the best

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Awards! Awards! Awards!



November is the time of year when we reflect on what we are thankful for. Our schools and students are very thankful for great PTAs/PTSAs that offer many wonderful programs and projects. Remember to share your programs with us by applying for the **Outstanding Programs and Projects Award**. We want to celebrate your successes with you! Not only does sharing help us recognize the hard work and efforts of your PTA/PTSA, but it also gives program ideas to other PTAs/PTSAs.

We are thankful for outstanding school board members. Show them how thankful you are for their service by nominating them for the **Proudfoot Award for Outstanding School Board Member**. The Proudfoot Award is presented annually to a Kentucky public school board member who has exhibited distinguished leadership and service to the community during his or her tenure on a local school board. Nominations may be based on significant contributions over a sustained period of time or on one outstanding contribution during the period of service. Nominees should be active advocates for public education and learning-advancement opportunities for all children within the community.

Nominations may not exceed six pages, including the form found in the *Kentucky PTA Leaders' Notebook*, Part 1: Forms, page 7. Entries must be postmarked by **November 15**. Faxed or e-mailed copies will not be accepted. The award will be presented at the Kentucky School Boards Association (KSBA) annual convention. The nominator of the award winner will be notified and asked to assist in ensuring that the winner is present at the recognition ceremony.

Thank you for your work on your award-winning PTA/PTSA year! If you have any questions about the awards offered by the 15th District PTA or Kentucky PTA, please let me know.

Tom Given



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American Education Week

Continued from page three
they can be so that every child can grow and reach his or her full potential.

A different aspect of school life will be highlighted each day during this week.

Monday, November 16

Open House Day—From national celebrations to local community events

Tuesday, November 17

Parents Day—Parents are invited into the classroom for a chance to experience what the day is like for their child.

Wednesday, November 18

Education Support Professionals Day—Individuals who provide

invaluable services to schools are recognized for their exceptional work.

Thursday, November 19

Educator for a Day—Community leaders are invited to work in the classroom so they can experience a day in the life of a school employee.

Friday, November 20

Substitute Educators Day—The educators who are called upon to replace regularly employed teachers will be honored this day.

For additional ideas on ways your school can celebrate American Education Week, the NEA is offering a free, online toolkit at www.nea.org/aew.

Five Things Parents and Educators Can Do to Build Relationships

What Schools Can Do

- Put up friendly signs inside and outside to welcome visitors.
- Work with the school council to develop customer-service guidelines.
- Post pictures of new students in the lobby.
- Map your school's parent-teacher contacts.
- Adopt a policy that teachers will send home materials once a month to help parents work with their child.

What Parents Can Do

- Greet other parents at all major activities and events.
- Recruit bilingual parents to be greeters and interpret.
- Set up a parent help desk or visitor welcome center.
- Offer low-cost or free activities for families so everyone can participate.
- Work to change the conversations "over the back fence."

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