



Children First!

News & Information from Metro Nashville Public Schools

April 25, 2008

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Spaghetti Fest at Sylvan Park Elementary Paideia Design Center

Friday, May 2, from 5 – 8 p.m., **Sylvan Park Elementary Paideia Design Center** will host its 25th annual Spaghetti Fest and Kids Carnival. This year's festival wraps up a historic school year, as Sylvan Park celebrates its 100th year of educating children in Nashville. The night offers a family event with a block party atmosphere, complete with a catered spaghetti dinner, midway games, pony rides and much more.

Spaghetti dinner tickets are \$6 and include salad, bread, beverage and dessert. Game and ride tickets are \$.50 each, or purchase an all-you-can-play armband for \$18. Family Fun Packs are available and include four dinner tickets and 20 midway tickets for \$30. Purchase tickets online at www.sylvanparkschool.org or at the door.

Proceeds support enhancements for the music, art and Spanish programs, as well as create funds for special projects throughout the year, and provide classroom supplies, printer cartridges and other necessary supplies. The Sylvan Park Elementary Paideia Design Center educates children in Kindergarten through fourth grade and is located at 4801 Utah Avenue.

For more information about the Spaghetti Fest and Sylvan Park Paideia Design Center, visit www.sylvanparkschool.org or contact Betsy Hoban at 584-4139.

Antioch Student Wins MNEA Scholarship

Congratulations to Brittany Hummer, a student at Antioch High, for winning the \$3000 MNEA Johnella H. Martin Scholarship. Brittany is a senior and will be attending UT Knoxville in the fall. She will study to be a special education teacher. Brittany is very involved with the Leadership Program and was instrumental in the development of the program at Antioch. She is involved with student council, won excellence awards in English, biology and chemistry, was the driving force of the pep club and is an amazing peer buddy to the life skills students.

Sales Tax Holiday This Weekend

This is a final reminder that this weekend, April 25 - 27, the state has issued a **Spring Sales Tax Holiday**. Tax exempt items are:

- School and school art supplies with a price of \$100 or less per item;
- Clothing with a price of \$100 or less per item; and
- Computers with a price of \$1,500 or less.

An important note for parents: standard school attire will be back during the 2008-2009 school year. This Spring Tax Holiday will be a great opportunity for parents to purchase clothes for next school year and save money.

For more information about the Spring Sales Tax Holiday, visit www.tntaxholiday.com. This website lists exempt items, a retailer's guide and frequently asked questions.

J.T. Moore's Superior Jazz Performance

The **J.T. Moore** Jazz Band and Jazz Combo attended Solo and Ensemble Festival Saturday, April 12. Both groups earned superior ratings in which each member received a medal. Congratulations to both groups.

MNPS Librarian Receives Top Honor

Congratulations to Diane Chen who received the Louise Meredith School Library Media Award at Tennessee Library Association's annual conference. The Louise Meredith School Library Media Award recognizes a School Library Media Specialist who has made unique and worthy contributions to the total school instructional program through effective unified school library media services. Diane has given outstanding leadership in numerous library associations including TASL, TLA, ALA and AASL.

Hillwood Spring Arts Night

Friday, May 2, **Hillwood High** will hold its annual Spring Arts Night from 6 – 9 p.m. to showcase the work of Hillwood Visual and Performing Arts students. The evening will include dinner, a strings performance, theatre performances, a chorus performance, a Jazz Band performance, a percussion group performance, as well as an art show including all students taking art this year. The arts show is free. Dinner will be provided free for students, but other guests will have to pay.

The faculty of Hillwood is extremely proud of the work done by the visual and performing art students this year. A few of Hillwood's many accolades include an art student receiving the

Presidential Scholarship to Watkins School of Art and Design, all 55 Hillwood students received a superior rating at the Middle Tennessee School Band and Orchestra Association contest, and an undefeated marching band season. For more information, contact Christine Randolph at 353-2025, ext. 1093.

MLK Freshman Places 3rd in National Speech Competition

Congratulations to MLK freshman, Lendsey Thicklin, for placing 3rd in the 3rd Chinese Bridge US High School Student Speech Contest in Boston, a nationwide contest. Lendsey has been studying Chinese the last 2 years and has never been to China. About three fourths of the participants have been to China.

McGavock High School Business Leaders

Congratulations to the Business Department at McGavock High for a successful trip to the State Future Business Leaders of America Leadership Conference in Chattanooga, April 10 – 12. The following students placed in the statewide competition: Derek Wynne, 2nd Place Business Procedures; Tyler Cooper, 3rd place Cyber Security and 7th place CISCO Networking; Ashley Capps, 3rd place Video Scrapbook; and Nick Rollins, 4th place Computer Problem Solving. These students also qualified to represent Tennessee at the National Leadership Conference in Atlanta this summer.

Students Celebrate Earth Day with Sidewalk Art Contest

Monday, April 21, third-graders at Cockrill Elementary School celebrated Earth Day with a Sidewalk Art Contest. To be eligible to win, students needed to create art that has the best combination of the following:

- Does the picture go with the theme "Appreciate the Earth"?
- Does it include the words "Earth Day 2008" somewhere on it?
- Is it original and creative?
- Does it look like effort was put into the work?
- Is it artistic? (The overall "look" of the artwork)

Volunteers with Friends of Beautification (part of Metro Beautification & Environment) served as judges for the event. The event winners were: Aubrey Hand, Amalia Goodin and Gabriela Lemus, 1st place; Brianda Tonche, Daniela Rosales and Haley Pressely, 2nd place; and Roniqua Collier, Jerrienne Stinson and Keyonna Smith, 3rd place. Congratulations to all of these students.

Glendale Elementary Partners with Artists

Thursday, April 17, **Glendale Elementary** hosted an "Artist Partners Reception" to honor a group of artists who partnered with the school to teach students about sculpting, photography, bookmaking and folk art. The artists honored were Bebo, Lesley Patterson-Marx, Kate Dwight and Mark Mosrie. At the reception, the children's work was on display along with the professional art, which was for sale. More than 150 people attended, enjoying the art and food. Cathy Barnett, Glendale art teacher, coordinated these artists and directed the projects. The partnership was made possible by a grant from the ABC funded by the Tennessee General Assembly. Glendale would like to extend a large thank you to the PTO and Ms. Barnett for allowing the children this unique opportunity.

Antioch Choir Joins with Professional Chorale

Sunday, April 27, **Antioch High's choir** will take the stage with the Concert Chorale of Nashville in a special performance at St. Henry Catholic Church. Last fall all Metro high schools were invited to perform with the Chorale. Antioch won the bid based on numerous letters from choral students, the choir director and the principal. The two choirs have been rehearsing together since January.

Lockeland Design Center Enjoys *Oracy Storacy*

Tuesday, May 3, from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m., Lockeland Design Center will host its 3rd Annual Lockeland Storytelling Festival, *Folktale Fiesta*. The *Lockeland Voices* will perform at the event. The Nashville community is invited to enjoy the student performance, games, activities, an art show and great storytelling.

This year, Lockeland Design Center prepared for the festival with the help of professional storyteller Diane Hackworth. Ms. Hackworth spent an entire week at the school, helping students improve their listening and speaking skills through the art of storytelling. Ms. Hackworth is an artist with the Tennessee Arts Commission, and she has been a storyteller, working with schools, for the past twenty years. The school was able to fund Ms. Hackworth through a Tennessee Arts Commission mini grant titled *Oracy Storacy*.

Gateway Elementary Participates in the Music City Marathon's Kid Marathon

Fifty third and fourth **Gateway Elementary School** students will be participating in the Music City Marathon's Kid Marathon Friday, April 25. Students have been preparing for the event by running a mile each day throughout this year. The third and fourth graders have logged in 385 miles. The entire school, grades K-4, has run a total of 680 miles with kindergarten running the most with a grand total of 218 miles this school year. The third and fourth graders received \$25 grants each from Bridgestone tires to cover registration expenses. Gateway would like to offer a special thank you Bridgestone Tires for assisting the students.

Gateway Elementary School Accreditation

Gateway Elementary will be hosting an accreditation team May 1- 2. The school is undergoing its five-year evaluation for accreditation with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and Council of Accreditation and School Improvement.

Antioch Celebrates International Day

Antioch High School recently celebrated International Day. The event had a huge turn out and included students who performed song and dance numbers from Mexico, Venezuela, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Colombia, Salvador, Honduras, Kurdistan, Laos, Ethiopia, West Africa, Nigeria and Costa Rica. The event was organized by Antioch's Foreign Language Department, but was largely successful thanks to the support Principal Aimee Wyatt, who has been enthusiastic and supportive of all multicultural activities. Participants prepared for months, offering two performances: one for the students during the day and another for their parents in the evening.

2008 CMA Music Festival Weekly Update

Metro Nashville Public Schools and the Country Music Association are continuing their important relationship through great activities and partnerships, including the 2008 CMA Music Festival. This terrific event, set for June 5 – 8 in downtown Nashville, will involve hundreds of MNPS students in numerous activities. If you would like to learn more about the FREE Family Zone, which will feature world-class family entertainment and educational activities, visit www.cmafest.com/familyzone.

Fall-Hamilton Named a Title 1 Distinguished School

Friday, April 25, at 8:30 a.m., **Fall-Hamilton Enhanced Option** will be recognized at the Tennessee State Board of Education Meeting as one of two recipients of the 2007-08 National Title I Distinguished School Recognition Award for the state of Tennessee. The meeting will be held in the 1st floor conference room of the Andrew Johnson Tower. A five member team from the school and district will attend at this meeting including: Chris Henson, interim director of MNPS; Wanda Holman, Title 1 director; Kecia Ray, interim director of Federal Programs; Sandra Moorman, principal of Fall-Hamilton EOS; and Elly Joplin, Title 1 teacher at Fall-Hamilton EOS. This award was first presented to the school at the National Title I Conference recently held at the Gaylord Convention Center at Opryland in January. Sandra Moorman, the principal, was one of the presenters on a panel for Family/Community Engagement during the conference.

Fall-Hamilton Enhanced Option was selected to represent the state's Title I schools that have made the most progress in significantly closing the achievement gap between student groups. Achievement data, poverty data and Adequate Yearly Progress success for two or more consecutive years was used to screen for state schools selected for site visits. During the site visits, state evaluators reviewed the following areas:

1. Teaching and learning based on the approved state curriculum.
2. Use of research-based instructional strategies.
3. Opportunities provided for all students to learn.
4. Coordination of Title I program with other programs.
5. Implementation of sustained research-based professional development.
6. Established partnerships with parents, families, and the community.
7. Effectiveness of criterion and norm referenced test, TVASS scores, formative assessments, portfolios, writing samples, attendance rate and promotion rate.

After the visit, the results were reviewed by the Project Director along with a review committee to determine the schools to be recommended to the Executive Director of Federal Programs and the Commissioner of Education. Fall-Hamilton received a perfect score from the site visit.

Alumni Central Wants You!

Graduates of MNPS are finding it easier than ever to organize class reunions and stay in touch with high school friends through MNPS Alumni Central, the district's website connection that will serve as an email and information directory for former students. There is no registration fee. Graduates simply visit www.alumni.mnps.org and follow the online instructions. Alumni will also find information about existing alumni associations at many schools, or information about creating an association if one does not already exist.

Shayne Elementary Upcoming Events

Saturday, April 26, from 8:30 – 10:30 a.m., **Shayne Elementary** will continue the celebration of Earth Day with an Earth Day Grounds Clean-up and Beautification Day. Parents, students, PENCIL Partners, staff and other community members are invited to participate.

Wednesday, April 30, Shayne Elementary will enjoy a school wide field trip to the Nashville Sounds game to celebrate meeting the school's reading goals. After the game, students will head back to school for a cook-out followed by a kickball game between the 4th graders and Shayne staff.

Tusculum Elementary Book Character Read Night

Tuesday, April 29, at 6:30 p.m., **Tusculum Elementary** will host a Book Character Read Night for parents and students. School teachers and principals will dress as their favorite book characters and read to students and parents. All are invited to enjoy this night of family, fun and reading.

Summer Learning

This summer, current 9th, 10th and 11th graders are invited to attend the **XXI Tech Skills and Careers Institute** at Nashville State Community College. Students will learn valuable 21st Century work skills, network with local businesses, expand their creativity and even earn money. Two sessions will be offered: "Designing for the Future," June 9 – 13, and "Entrepreneurship," June 16 – 20. Both sessions will be Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. Lunch will be provided. Sessions will be taught by an MNPS teacher and a NSCC professor. A local business volunteer will also work with each session to connect student projects to the business world. Students will be paid for successful completion of the program. For more information, contact Fred Frazier at 862-8890, ext. 77413.

I.T. Creswell Community Fellowship Breakfast

I.T. Creswell Arts Magnet Middle School invites the public to attend the 4th Annual Community Fellowship Breakfast, Saturday, May 7, from 8 – 9:30 a.m. The breakfast will be held in the school gymnasium. The theme is "We are Family." Guests will enjoy guest speaker CeCe Winans, a Grammy Award Winning Gospel Singer & Songwriter. If you would like to attend, please RSVP by April 30 to monica.bryant@mnps.org or call 291-6515 ext. 1108.

Mayor's Town Hall Meeting

Mayor Karl Dean will hold a Town Hall Meeting Monday, April 28, at 6 p.m. at Glencliff High. The public is encouraged to attend and share their ideas.

Special Education Town Hall Meeting

Metro Nashville Public Schools' Special Education Department, along with FACE, the Family Advisory Council on Special Education, will be hosting their 5th Annual Town Hall Meeting Thursday, May 1, beginning at 5:30 p.m. at the Central Administration Building at 2601 Bransford Avenue. The meeting will be held in the district's board room.

Families can learn about programs offered through the Special Education Department, ask questions and learn about changes and issues in special education for the 2008-2009 school year. Staff members and administrators from Special Education, along with other family members and

FACE members, will be there to provide information and answer questions. Registration begins at 5:15 p.m.

Rip Van Winkle Might Be Amazed...

-- Commentary by Woody McMillin, Director of Public Information

A recent *Tennessean* guest editorialist opined that if Rip Van Winkle awakened today, he would find schools now as they were 100 years ago. That's probably the perspective of many who are unfamiliar with the new technologies, programs and learning experiences in place at Metro Nashville Public Schools.

In fact, schools are much different now than they were just a decade ago. Some examples in our district:

- MNPS high school students have opportunities to learn in real-world workplaces and on college campuses. Through the Math & Science School at Vanderbilt, MNPS students are studying complex subjects with some of America's best and brightest researchers and professors. At Nashville State Community College, MNPS students mingle with college students every day as part Middle College, a program for students to earn high school and college-level credits concurrently. And at the Big Picture High school, students are doing internships in businesses and organizations across the city.
- Other high schools are transitioning to small learning communities, which allow students to investigate careers, study with focus on particular career paths, and benefit from teachers working together more cooperatively to help every child be successful. A part of this effort is the concept of ninth-grade academies, which separates freshmen from upper classmen, helping to assure greater academic progress.
- We now have more than 19,000 computers in our schools, with children learning everything from elementary reading to computer aided drafting. Students are using a variety of software applications and hardware management to prepare for future careers.
- Phones in classrooms, computer projection equipment, digital parental messaging systems, experimental web-based parent portals to academic info and other electronic tools are evidence of new learning and communications strategies.
- Constantly expanding language classes are now in place to prepare students for a more global business community, with a vigorous emphasis on Chinese oral and written skills.
- Tennessee's largest offering of International Baccalaureate programs, providing some of the world's most rigorous academic instruction; and constantly expanding Advanced Placement and Honors classes.
- More partnerships with outside organizations and businesses – Nashville Symphony, Titans, Nissan, Bridgestone, Frist Center to name a few – to provide enriching experiences.

- More on-line learning opportunities and increased communication via email and websites to channel information quickly.
- Enhanced option schools, which provide additional hours of instruction each year, providing more time to learn and grow.
- More training and professional development opportunities than ever before for teachers, who are constantly looking for new ways to challenge and assist all students.

If you drive by an MNPS school in the next few weeks, you are likely to see students learning out-of-doors, taking classes in courtyards, in parks or on athletic fields; that's an intentional effort to break away from the traditional classroom experience.

And while we still use the teacher standing in front of a rectangular room concept, that's not a bad thing. It works, just as round wheels have worked for centuries. Our goal is to think beyond the shape of a room, concentrating on the capabilities of the human mind and the possibilities for developing character. I think Rip Van Winkle would be amazed at what we're doing and how much has changed.