



Children First!

News & Information from Metro Nashville Public Schools

August 22, 2008

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Encore "Back to School" Celebration

MNPS 5th, 6th and 7th grade Encore staff is hosting a "Back to School" celebration for returning Encore students and their families. The program will host a picnic at the Nashville Sounds game, Monday, August 25, when the Sounds take on the Albuquerque Isotopes. If by chance it rains, the event will be rescheduled for Tuesday, Aug. 26. Gates open at 4:30 p.m., and the game starts at 6 p.m.

This event is FREE!! Families should check in at the Encore registration table at the stadium. An "all you can eat" buffet is being offered for adults (\$15) and students (\$7.50) which includes hotdogs, hamburgers, barbeque, chips, potato salad, baked beans, soft drinks, lemonade and ice cream. Guests can also choose to buy a la carte items in the stadium.

Important Upcoming Test Dates

As current juniors and seniors prepare for life after high school, we want to remind you of some important test dates -- ACT and SAT testing dates. Throughout the school year, these tests will be offered numerous times and at numerous locations. For more information about ACT testing, visit www.actstudent.org. For more information about SAT testing, visit www.collegeboard.com. Below are currently scheduled ACT and SAT testing dates:

ACT Test Dates	Registration Deadline
September 13	August 12
October 25	September 19
December 13	November 7
February 7	January 6
April 4	February 27
June 13	May 8

SAT Test Dates	Registration Deadline
October 4	September 9
November 1	September 26
December 6	November 5

January 24	December 26
March 14	February 10
May 2	March 31
June 6	May 5

Give a Day, Change the World

Saturday, Aug. 23, from 8 a.m. – 2:30 p.m., hundreds of volunteers will be on hand to transform the grounds and facilities at Nashville School of the Arts, which currently serves 700 metropolitan Nashville students in grades 9-12. Services will include: landscaping the main entrance, creating a butterfly garden, painting and murals inside the school building, and building and painting mural benches.

This volunteer project, Give a Day, Change the World, is sponsored by CSX and City Year, an organization that unites young people of all backgrounds for a year of full-time service, giving them the skills and opportunities to change the world, make a difference in the lives of children and transform schools and neighborhoods throughout the United States.

Gateway Elementary has Strong Community Support

August 22 from 6 - 8 p.m., Alta Loma Baptist Church will sponsor a "Back to School Carnival" for Gateway Elementary School Families. This event will be held at the church at Alta Loma and Gallatin Road and will provide entertainment, food, and fun at no charge.

Aug. 11, Gateway Elementary School had another outstanding community-centered event as the PTA signed up parents and provided breakfast for parents to meet and chat. At 6 p.m., the staff, parents, students and community members returned for the school's Open House. The Open House began with an official opening ceremony with the Gateway staff being introduced followed by a brief overview of the mission of Gateway Elementary School and the school's targeted focus for this school year by Principal Constance L. Hayes. PTA president Teresa Richardson introduced the PTA staff and spoke on the PTA mission for the year.

Afterward, parents and students went to classrooms where they met teachers and each Gateway student was presented with a bag of school supplies provided by the congregation of Alta Loma Baptist Church and Pastor Rev. Jones. Gateway's Parent Liaison, John Lane, distributed helpful hints to parents on school success. The school secretary, Patricia Cundiff, provided an information booth where parents were able to return all forms, receive help completing forms and ask school questions. In all, more than 80% of Gateway attended.

Percy Priest Kicks Off the School Year

Percy Priest Elementary kicked off the school year Monday, Aug. 11 with a morning of events for new and returning families. A *First Day Fair*, held in the school cafeteria, featured informational booths and refreshments. Here, parents could join the PTO, purchase school spirit wear, sign up for fundraisers, and get car rider and school bus information. The Fair also gave parents an opportunity to reconnect and catch up after the summer break.

Kindergarten families attended the annual *Boo Hoo Breakfast*, held in the school gymnasium. Volunteers transformed the gym into a festive space, complete with linen tablecloths, decorative centerpieces and delicious homemade goodies. Hillsboro Presbyterian Church, one of Percy Priest's Pencil Partners, loaned tables for the event. More than 100 parents attended the breakfast.

Following the breakfast, families new to Percy Priest attended a *New Families Meeting*, where school staff members, along with parent volunteers, gave a brief orientation to Percy Priest Elementary and answered many questions. New Family “Buddy Cards” were also distributed, connecting newcomers with returning parents as a source for follow-up questions and concerns.

The day’s events also gave all Percy Priest families an opportunity to meet the school’s newly appointed principal, Mrs. Melinda Williams. Mrs. Williams succeeds Stephanie Chatham, who left Percy Priest in early August to serve as principal at a US Navy base school on Andros Island, Bahamas. An MNPS educator for 22 years, Mrs. Williams most recently served as principal at Dodson Elementary School. According to Williams, the first day marked the beginning of another outstanding school year.

Mentoring Partners Needed

This fall, PENCIL Foundation is launching a pilot mentoring program. Funded by The Grainger Foundation, the program will match caring adults with students in the freshman academies at Pearl-Cohn and Maplewood High Schools. Studies have shown that mentors have a positive impact on a student's school attendance, self-esteem and help negate problem behaviors.

PENCIL is now recruiting mentors to spend an hour a week for a minimum of 12 weeks with a student. If you are interested, please contact Suzanne Warner at 242-3167 x 225 or swarner@pencilfd.org.

Reading Partners Needed

PENCIL Foundation Reading Partners program made it possible for 481 students to receive one-on-one reading assistance during the 2007-2008 school year. Nearly 400 caring volunteers took time out of their day to either read aloud to a classroom or spend 30 minutes a week with a child helping them build the essential skills needed to become a fluent reader. PENCIL invites you to make a difference this year by becoming a Reading Partner. PENCIL can help place you in a school that is convenient to your place of work or home. Thirty minutes a week is all it takes to provide a child with the extra attention they need. Fall orientation sessions are scheduled for Aug. 28, Sept. 3, Sept. 10, Sept. 17, Sept. 25, Oct. 7, Oct. 14, Oct. 21, and Oct. 28, all from 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Attendees are welcome to bring a lunch to the orientation session. To sign up for one of these dates, contact Ann Johnston at 242-3167 x 232 or ajohnston@pencilfd.org.

Overton Chef Helps “Adopt a Ship”

Rick Martinez, second year culinary art instructor of Overton High, recently assisted the American Culinary Federation and the US Navy with a program called “Adopt a Ship.” This program recruits ACF members holding the title of certified culinary educator or certified executive chef to work side by side with navy culinary specialist and help teach them some new skills. Mr. Martinez, who holds both titles required of the program, served in San Diego, CA as a volunteer with the US Navy the week prior to the start of school. Thanks to Mr. Martinez, some sailors out west will be enjoying some fine dining.



NSA Students Get a Special Visitor

Friday, Aug. 22, William “Will” Wingfield, Nashville School of the Arts Alum and recent contestant on Fox’s hit series *So You Think You Can Dance*, made a special visit to the students at his Alma Mater. Wingfield held a question and answer session with dance students about his experiences on *So*

You Think You Can Dance, dancing in Vegas with Celine Dion, dancing on the Grammy's, taking Alvin Ailey classes, and everything in between.

Starting this September, Wingfield will be on a nationwide tour with other cast members from the hit series, as he was voted (by America) one of the shows Top Ten dancers.

MNPS Awarded 2008 Improving Literacy Through School Libraries (LSL) Grant

MNPS has recently been awarded a 2008 Improving Literacy through School Libraries Grant. Last year, with the help of Mary Martin and Jack Backer, Dr. Susan Whitworth, MNPS Coordinator of Library Services, applied for this grant that targeted three high schools in great need of library resources -- Maplewood, Stratford and Whites Creek. The grant is for \$334,376 that will be divided among the schools.

The Improving Literacy Through School Libraries (LSL) program is designed to improve student literacy skills and academic achievement by providing schools with up-to-date library materials and to ensure that school library media centers are staffed by well-trained and professionally certified school media specialists.

The program is administered by the Department of Education and is the first program specifically aimed at upgrading school libraries since the original school library resources program was established in 1965.

Mayor's Town Hall Meeting

Monday, Aug. 25, Mayor Karl Dean will hold his first Town Hall Meeting of the new school year at Overton High. The meeting will begin at 6 p.m. and will be held in the auditorium.

New School Board Sworn In

Tuesday, Aug. 26, the new Metro School Board will be sworn in to office at the regularly scheduled board meeting. New members include Alan Coverstone and Sharon Gentry. Returning members include Edward Kindall, Gracie Porter, Karen Johnson, Mark North, David Fox, Steve Glover and JoAnn Brannon. The meeting begins at 5 p.m.



To request an accommodation, please contact your building principal or department head. (Interpreters for the deaf or hard of hearing must be requested forty-eight [48] hours prior to the event.) Questions or concerns may be referred to the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Customer Service Center, 615/259-4636.

Si usted necesita información adicional o si usted tiene alguna pregunta, por favor llame o contacte al director de su escuela.

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