



Message from the PTA Co-Presidents, Kate Boyd and Susan Cook

HELLO McNEAR FAMILIES!

Welcome back to another great year here at McNear Elementary School. We know that communication is important to our families so we are excited to roll out the first PTA newsletter of the year. We will be sending out a weekly newsletter via the Sunday calendar email and there will be a hard copy posted in the PTA case in the breezeway across from the front office.

THANK YOU KENDALL AND CHRISTI!

First of all, we would like to thank outgoing PTA co-presidents Christi Reynolds and Kendall Abramson for all their efforts over the last two years. They worked tirelessly and did an amazing job leading the PTA. We are grateful for all their hard work.

IF YOU MISSED THE LAST PTA MEETING...

We had a great turn out for our first PTA meeting of the year. Guest Speaker Betsy Fox of the Caring School Community talked about the importance of giving our children not just a great academic education, but a rich social education as well. She discussed tools that teachers use through class meetings and collective problem solving to create a safe learning environment. She pointed out that children who feel secure at school are more likely to excel academically and she cited statistics that Fortune 500 companies now rank problem solving skills and the ability to work collaboratively above all else. You can find out more about the Caring School Community at <http://www.devstu.org/caring-school-community>.

We also discussed ways to strengthen the parent community of McNear and ensure that every family member is welcomed and informed. We are creating a Buddy Program to reach out to new families and focusing on regular communication with the entire school. Aside from this newsletter, we have updated our Facebook page! Find the McNear Elementary PTA here [<http://www.facebook.com/pages/McNear-Elementary-PTA/81029894486>] and click "Like" to be kept up-to-date on what's going on with the PTA. We want to reach as many families as we can through our communications (while

killing as few trees as possible)! If you have any ideas about how to reach more of our families, please let us know.

We also heard concern from many present at the meeting that school programs and volunteer needs should be explained more clearly. To that end, we started a list of upcoming events and open volunteer positions, so that interested people can know more ahead of time what exactly is needed and what it entails. We've posted this list in three places: the PTA board in the breezeway, the bulletin board in Kindergarten, and on the Volunteer page of the McNear website [<http://www.mcnearelementary.org/volunteer.html>]. We'll be adding to this list continually, so this will be a great resource for initial questions. If you'd like to know more, please contact us.

The next general PTA meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 7th at 7:00.

WHAT'S GOING ON...

Wednesday popsicles are back! The PTA has revived the tradition of selling popsicles after school on Wednesdays. This is a great way for kids and parents to say hi to friends while enjoying a tasty treat. Look for us in the breezeway near the office.

There will be a **garden committee meeting** on Monday, September 26 at 7:00. If you are interested in helping maintain our beautiful garden, please come. Green thumb not required.

After School Enrichment classes begin this week, and there are still opportunities to sign up. Here are the latest availabilities:

- ⤴ **Need 1 more for minimum:** Art to Wear, Golf, Mandarin Chinese, Things That Go, Jr. Birdwatchers
- ⤴ **Full:** Ceramics
- ⤴ **Spaces Available:** Cartooning, Healthy Cooking, Yoga/Art
- ⤴ **Minimum not met, may be cancelled:** Landscape/Acrylics, Singing

Download forms from McNear web site here: <http://www.mcnearelementary.org/ase.html>

Drop your form with a check made to **McNear PTA** in the office today!

April Citti, aprilcitti@yahoo.com, 765-0991

Elizabeth Fee, ehodan@hotmail.com, 773-1348

The **jog-a-thon** will take place during school this Friday, September 30. Kids can accept pledges up to the event, and then turn in the completed form with collected donations by October 15. Come out on Friday and cheer on the runners in your kid's class, or stay as long as you can and watch all the McNear students soar.

VOLUNTEER ROUNDUP

We are sad to be losing our **volunteer coordinator** Jackie Lebihan; we already miss her enthusiasm and constant stream of ideas. Jackie hit the ground galloping this fall, and even after only a short time at this post she will be leaving a huge hole.

She also leaves an open position. If you'd like to donate your time and effort to the PTA, this is a great way to pitch in. The volunteer coordinator helps match event and program needs with willing people, based on skills, availability, and desire. It's an excellent way to get inside the workings of the school and PTA, and focus on the people and the community. If you want to know more or throw your hat in the ring, please contact Susan or Kate any time.

We also have a strong need for **bilingual support**. Do you speak both Spanish and English, or have enough of a grasp of both languages to edit translations? We have lots of opportunities to contribute, like becoming a **McNear Buddy** to a new family or helping translate school announcements and fliers. Any way that you can give would help strengthen our bilingual community.

Please let us know if you have any questions about anything. We are almost always available and welcome any feedback or ideas. Or look for the new **Suggestion Box** folder in the office and drop us a note!

Kate and Susan

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