

Newcastle Elementary PTSA

Parent Teacher Student Association



PTA Unit: 2.6.18 • PTSA President: JuliAnne Diesch • Newsletter Editor: Sangeet Kindra

Aug 4th, 2014
2014-2015 School Year
Issue 1

Cub News

Upcoming Events

August 5th - August 12th
Enrollment Verification
Process through
[Family Access](#)

August 29th
Teacher Assignment
Notifications are Available
through Family Access at
4:30 PM

September 2nd
Meet the Teacher
11:45 AM-12:30 PM

PTSA Back-to-School Picnic
12:30 PM-2:30 PM

September 3rd
First Day of School
Grades 1 to 5

Kindergarten Parents
Meeting

September 4th
First Day of Kindergarten
(Followed by Tears & Tissues
for Kindergarten Parents)

September 12th
Coffee Talk with Rich
Mellish 9:30 AM -10:30 AM in
the Commons

September 15th
First General PTSA Meeting
7:00 PM in the Commons

October 24th
Newcastle Elementary
Costume Carnival
6:00 PM – 8:00 PM in the
Commons

President's Note

Happy August everybody! With so many exciting happenings for the 2014-2015 school year, I didn't want to wait until September to send a Cub News! Our theme for this year is Community & Service, and I invite all families to participate fully in our Newcastle Elementary community and help us develop further a culture of service among our students. In this edition of Cub News, you'll find: information about upcoming events in August and September; an introductory bio from our new principal, Rich Mellish; an update on the 2015 Auction *Inspiring Greatness* on March 14, 2015 (mark your calendars now!); and a call for volunteers.

Starting August 5th, student enrollment needs to be verified through the Enrollment Verification Process [EVP]. Log in to your [Family Access](#) account and complete this process before August 12th. You'll need to verify the enrollment of each child attending school for the 2014-2015 school year.

One of my goals is to have every family registered with the PTSA, and if every family also joined the PTSA it would provide a voice for all our children! The EVP contains a link to register with the PTSA, or you can directly go to www.newcastleptsa.org and click on "Back to School Sign-up" in the left-hand column to do so. This will take you step-by-step through the following:

- Family Information Page - Family contact information must be entered by **September 26th** in order to be included in the 2014-2015 Student Directory, so please complete this section!
- PTSA membership
- Volunteering opportunities
- Donations for staff PTSA memberships/auction tickets
- Donations for Gift-a-Book to support our school library
- Purchase student yearbook(s)

Throughout this year, the PTSA will maintain monthly Cub News publications (via email), weekly calendar e-blasts, and once a trimester we will send home a printed newsletter highlighting past events and giving a snapshot of upcoming happenings.

I am looking forward to this year with great excitement. I hope you do as well, and please let me know if you have any questions.

Warmly,
JuliAnne Diesch
jpdiesch@yahoo.com
PTSA President

Rich Mellish: Personal Bio & Introduction



Newcastle Community,

Over the last few days and weeks I have made my official transition into Newcastle Elementary. It is a joy to begin this journey with you. As I start to meet the people and learn the story of Newcastle Elementary I begin to set my roots and look forward to the year to come. Since I didn't get the chance to meet the community before the summer break, I will be working with JuliAnne Diesch and the PTSA leadership on the transition and opportunities for you to learn about me and for me to get to know you. To start, please see below for information about my background. I am sure throughout the months to come, there will be many opportunities to learn more about each other. In the meantime, I hope you continue to enjoy the summer.

*Sincerely,
Rich Mellish*

Personal Background

I come from a West Coast family. We started in California but I mostly grew up in **Walla Walla, WA**, until I left to attend the **University of Washington**.

I graduated from the UW in 1994, married in 1996 and now have 2 **busy boys** - a 3rd grader at Apollo Elementary, and a 6th grader entering Maywood Middle. The two of them differ from each other quite a bit as students and give me lots of stories to use in public speaking!

My life revolves mostly around family and school, but in those few spare moments I enjoy playing racquetball, hiking, biking, kayaking, white-water rafting, wood-work and reading.

I will freely say I have enjoyed the **two best jobs in education**: High School Math Teacher and Elementary Principal. Both allow for a great deal of engagement with students, addressing some of their greatest challenges and celebrating their successes.

What drives me personally and professionally is a commitment to building community, engaging in collaboration and helping others attain personal successes, even in the face of challenges.

Professional Background

I started teaching in 1994 at **Ballard High School**, teaching mostly math and the occasional social studies class. In 2001 I started my Principal career at **Schmitz Park Elementary** in West Seattle, then in 2008 transferred to **West Mercer Elementary** on Mercer Island.

My favorite successes professionally center around building **strong parent-school partnerships**, creating and refining **support programs for students**, enriching programs to **engage all students** at high levels, and (most importantly) building and supporting **cohesive, effective staff teams** that set a high bar for learning and citizenship for all.



**Personal Bio & Introduction
Continued on the Next Page...**

As a life-long learner I have consistently sought learning opportunities. I received my BA in History with a Math minor. I received my Master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction with a focus on teaching English language learners, I completed the Danforth Educational Leadership Program and the Executive Leadership Superintendents Program - both graduate certification programs. I have also engaged in trainings and served on boards with my professional associations and continuing education programs including the Teacher's College at Columbia University. I am a nationally certified principal mentor and generally love learning, leadership and building school systems.

Popsicles at the Playground

Calling all kindergarten families for Popsicles at the Playground on August 21st!

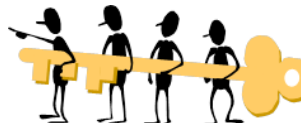
Kindergarten parents, we hope that you will join us on **Thursday, August 21st** from 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM at the Newcastle Elementary playground for the first meet-and-greet event for all incoming kindergartners. It will be a great opportunity to have your little one get to know other students entering Newcastle Elementary as well as for parents to meet. All family members are welcome to join in on the festivities. We hope to see you there!

Tears & Tissues

We would like to invite all kindergarten parents to join us on **Thursday, September 4th** just after the bell rings to celebrate the start of your kindergartner's elementary school journey! We will have tissues on hand just in case you'd like to shed a few tears of joy/sadness and coffee and donuts to share for all. We hope that you will join us for this start of the school year kick-off celebration!

Please contact Huyen Sewell (huyensewell@gmail.com), or Samantha Chong (samisaurus@gmail.com) with any questions.

Newcastle Elementary *Inspire Greatness* Auction



The PTSA auction is our largest fundraiser and in order to make it a success we rely entirely on the time, talents and generous donations of all our families, teachers, administrators, and community.

Here's how you can get involved:

- ✓ **Join the Auction Team.** Many leadership and support opportunities are still available and include catalog manager, procurement and corporate sponsorship roles as well as premium wine table coordinator! Contact co-chairs Elysa Piha (empiha@gmail.com) and Luisa Gass (L_vacca@hotmail.com) to find out how you can help.
- ✓ **Procurement Blitz.** While you are out and about, please ask your favorite businesses to donate an item for our 2015 auction. Donating is a *win* for them as it exposes their business to new customers. Ideas include restaurant/retail gift cards and activities/entertainment for kids and families. Please [click here](#) for more information on procurement. The procurement form can be found [here](#).
- ✓ **Target corporate sponsors.** Monetary donations bring down the costs associated with the auction and in exchange provide a cost-effective means of advertising for local businesses. We have a comprehensive set of sponsorship offerings tailored to companies of all sizes. Please consider leveraging your relationships with local businesses to make this important ask. Corporate sponsorship form can be found [here](#).

The Newcastle Elementary *Inspiring Greatness* Auction will take place on March 14th, 2015 at the Westin Bellevue. We thank you in advance for your participation and support!

Luisa Gass & Elysa Piha
Auction Co-Chairs

Back-to-School Picnic



After meeting your teacher on September 2nd from 11:45 AM-12:30 PM, join us in the Commons and on the playground. Become a member of the PTSA and help us reach our goal of 100% membership! Pizza and refreshments will be for sale from our incoming 5th graders, so stay for lunch and play from 12:30 PM-2:30 PM!

Annual Newcastle Costume Carnival!



Save the date for a night of spooky cool fall family fun on Friday, October 24th from 6:00 PM-8:00 PM in the Newcastle Commons! All you ghosts and goblins, grab your costumes and join us for loads of carnival fun - games, music, pizza, treats, photos, and more!!! Everyone welcome - parents, students, and siblings. Hope to see you all there to scare up some fun!

Critical Volunteer Positions!

Thank you to those of you who have volunteered to help with the PTSA programs this year! We have a wonderful group of individuals as Chairpersons and Coordinators of our many programs, activities and other PTSA related responsibilities.

We still have some openings we need to fill, and some of them urgently.

Staff Appreciation Coordinator - all year
 Emergency Preparation Coordinator - all year
 Polar Express - Fall/Winter
 Bulletin Board - all year
 Corporate Rebate Program - all year
 Corporate Matching - all year
 Reflections - Fall
 Family Night Co-Chairs - Winter
 Family Night Co-Chairs - Spring

If you have interest in any of these positions, please [click here](#). Thank you!

Calling All Student Artists!



Does your student like to draw or paint? Author stories? Or prefer to make the next viral YouTube video? If you answered yes to one or more of those questions... then REFLECTIONS is for you! The Reflections Program is a National PTA and Washington State PTA cultural arts competition. The purpose of this program is to provide an opportunity for students to use their creative talents by expressing themselves through their own original works.

Each year, Reflections challenges students to create art that supports a specific theme. Themes are selected from thousands of ideas submitted by students to National PTA's Reflections Theme Search. This year's theme is: **The World Would Be A Better Place If...**

Students participate by submitting entries in one of six categories: Literature, Music Composition, Photography, Visual Arts, Film/Video, Choreography/Dance and Special Artist. This program provides an opportunity for students to explore and learn about various art forms. Artistic exploration and expression enhance and develop intellectual, social and physical skills. Creating art is a valuable learning process! Your child doesn't have to be a protégé of Monet, Gene Kelly, or Steven Spielberg to participate...Reflections is for everyone!

For more information on the program, entry forms, and category guidelines and FAQs, please [click here](#).

It is not too early to get started!

2014-2015 PTSA Executive Committee

President

JuliAnne Diesch
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VP Volunteers

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Secretary

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Treasurer

Angela Ursino
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Officer-at-Large

Edana Peacock
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WANTED: Reflections Chairperson



“Logic will get you from A to B. Imagination will take you everywhere.” - Albert Einstein

If you believe that the arts are an essential element of education and that the artistic process unlocks even greater human understanding, then we want YOU to chair this year’s Reflections program!

The National PTA Reflections Program is an art recognition and achievement program that provides opportunities for students to express themselves creatively and to receive positive recognition for original works of art inspired by a pre-selected theme. The program increases community awareness on the importance of the arts in education.

As chairperson, you will help coordinate volunteers, distribute information and promote the program, display entries, identify judges, and coordinate a reception for participants. You will also get to witness awesome, imaginative, and amazing works of art unlike any you’ve seen before - all created by spectacular new talent from Kindergarten through 5th grade.

At Newcastle Elementary, we see firsthand the impact an arts-integrated curriculum has on our students. If you’d like to positively influence our young artists, please contact Allison Sweeney at aewsweeney@gmail.com. Student entries will be due the beginning of November.

****PLEASE NOTE: IF WE DO NOT HAVE A CHAIRPERSON IN PLACE BY THE END OF SEPTEMBER, THE REFLECTIONS PROGRAM WILL NOT HAPPEN THIS YEAR FOR OUR NEWCASTLE LIONS.**