



PTA President's Notes.....Geeta Welden

Dear Parents,

My name is Geeta Welden, and I would like to welcome you to McMurray Elementary. It is my pleasure to serve as the new President of your PTA, and I look forward to meeting and working with many of you this year.

It has only been a few weeks since school started, but the PTA has been very busy. So far, we have supported the Ambassador Program, provided First Day Packets, and had a great McMurray Kick-Off. Other activities include Picture Day, Open House, and brunch with the Principal. I would like to thank all of the PTA committee chairs, the PTA Board, and all of the volunteers who played (or will play) a key role in making these activities successful.

We have nearly 1000 students at McMurray Elementary, and the PTA is constantly working with the principals, teachers, and guidance counselors to provide these students with quality programs and activities. However, the PTA cannot succeed without YOUR help. If you have not yet joined the PTA, please consider doing so. Programs and activities like Character Counts, Red Ribbon Week, various assemblies, Reflections, After School Enrichment, Relay for Life, and many others are heavily dependent on the time and effort of parents like you.

In addition to the programs and activities sponsored by the PTA, we supported the startup of our new Student Council, and we provided support to our teachers during the introduction of our neighborhoods. Again, we would be unable to provide this type of support to the school and the students without help from the parents. Not only can you help with any program or activity, the PTA is also a great forum in which to discuss issues, voice concerns and present new ideas to school administrators and other parents.

Please consider becoming a PTA member. Together, we can continue to enhance the school experience for our children. Contact any of the PTA officers listed on page 4 of this newsletter to learn how you can help. If you are interested in participating in any way—serving on a committee, volunteering for an activity, etc.—please do not hesitate to contact any PTA officer or committee chair. You are welcome at any time—Just call!

Geeta Welden
President, McMurray PTA

Principal's PenDr. Robert Freado 941-5020

Reflecting, Focusing and Leading

Our new superintendent, Dr. Nina Zetty, has shared her vision with the community, and it includes three essential perspectives. We are moving forward with respect for all that has been accomplished and the traditions that have been established in the past. We are focusing on the present in order to provide an excellent educational experience for our current students while we envision and plan for a bright and successful future as we continue our journey of working towards excellence.

At McMurray Elementary School, we are keeping a reflective eye on the past as we continue to honor over fifteen years of accomplishments achieved at our school. The new McMurray Elementary School first received students at the start of the 1993-94 school year under the leadership of Ms. Toni Sulkowski, the school district's current Director of Technology. McMurray transitioned into the current configuration in 1999, and this year marks the tenth year of my tenure as principal of the school. Students in grades K-5 attended McMurray from 1993-1999.

There have been many memorable events and achievements over the past ten to fifteen years. Parents, teachers, students and administrators have contributed to the successes of this school by serving selflessly in the best interest of our students. This year also marks the tenth year of the grass-roots character building initiative in our community known as Peters Township Character Counts. Our community, schools, and students have been recognized for excellence in academics and character over the years to the credit of so many fine children and adults who have contributed to these achievements. I felt privileged on the first day of school this tenth year to tell our students that we want them to develop strong minds and soft hearts in the established tradition so that they are prepared to lead, serve and contribute today and throughout their lives.

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MCMURRAY ELEMENTARY PTA NEWSLETTER

The McMurray Star

Helping our students reach for the stars

McMurray PTA Newsletter

Articles and photos are due by the 2nd Friday of the month. Please submit to Jackie Platt @ djplatt@comcast.net or call 724-260-0096.

The PTA is sharing the attached information through the Peters Township School District.

The events or programs of the PTA may not all be initiated or supervised by the District.

McMurray Mission Statement

McMurray Elementary School has established a character education initiative based upon core values... Respect, Responsibility, Honesty, and Caring. McMurray Elementary takes a comprehensive approach to character education. We recognize that parents play the primary role in the character development of their children and that we play an important supportive role to which we obligate ourselves. We work together with parents and the community to teach and promote positive character development by giving increased attention to our core values and other important character traits. It is our vision that we will promote good character in every aspect of life in our school and provide a positive school climate in which they can learn to the best of their abilities.

***A Good Mind and a Good Heart
Always Make a Great Combination!***

Principals remarks continued.....

Our focus on the present includes responding to the challenges of designing and implementing a relevant, useful and exciting curriculum for the students of the first decade of this century. The implementation of world language classes for 6th graders began last year, and the program continues to grow as we will begin offering Spanish to fourth grade students next year. Our teachers are reviewing and, in some cases, piloting new language arts materials as we work towards revising curriculum in this area for next school year. A new initiative in writing is underway as our teachers in fourth and fifth grades begin implementation of the use of the 6 Traits Writing Process and the Write to Learn Writing Software. Our students continue to use Investigations in Math along with traditional resources in order to prepare them for the future. Our teachers and students continue to use a variety of technology and access the many resources available in our library to enhance their learning experiences. These and other changes, such as our New master schedule, show how we are focusing on the present and working towards excellence.

There is a bright future on the horizon for McMurray Elementary School and the Peters Township School District as we face the challenges of preparing our students for an exciting and ever-changing world. We currently have thirty-nine classrooms in use by 1,014 students. There are thirteen teachers at each grade level, and we offer a wide-variety of special area classes including music, art, health and physical education, library and special education services. We are planning ways to accommodate for the needs of our students as our student population and programs grow, and we will need to be creative and resourceful in our planning. Two ways that we have already responded to this need include the conversion of one stationary computer lab to a classroom and the modification of library space so that the library classroom can be utilized as a regular classroom. The stationary computer lab has been replaced by a mobile lab of computers.

We envision a future of children increasingly using technology in every classroom and teachers instructing, facilitating and guiding their learning in new and varied ways. Our students will study and prepare for careers that don't even exist today. We will be working hard to prepare them to gain the knowledge and skills they will need to explore, compete, serve, and thrive in a diverse and expanding marketplace.

The educational experience at McMurray Elementary sounds as exciting as it is challenging as we lead into the next decade and beyond. Our purpose and journey will remain grounded in the foundational truths that reside in the words of former President Theodore Roosevelt: "To educate a person in mind, but not morals is to educate a menace to society." The spirit and mission implicit in our school motto will remain. A Good Mind and a Good Heart Always Make a Great Combination. Thank you for your support, encouragement and partnership.

Robert G. Freado
Principal

McMurray Elementary School Spirit Days 2008-2009

**Remember to wear red and white to show your
school spirit on these Fridays:**

September 26	December 19	March 27
October 24	January 30	April 24
November 21	February 27	May 29

**McMurray Spirit Wear Orders
are due September 24th.**

**Students may submit orders to
their teachers.**

Office DEPOT 5% Back to Schools Program

Help our school earn
FREE SUPPLIES!

Our school will earn credits equal to
5% of your purchases to use for FREE
supplies. You can credit the school each
time you shop at Office Depot.

Remember to give our school ID #:

**School Name: McMurray Elementary School
ID #: 70087063**

- in stores
- at www.office.depot.com
- when calling 1-800-GO-DEPOT

McMurray Star Newsletter is going paperless!!!

Sign up on the school distribution list: www.ptsdk12.pa.us/PTemailnews

Campbell's Labels and Box Tops For Education

Please remember to send in your **Campbell's Labels for Education** and **Box Tops for Education**. The LFE and BT programs are a great way to get FREE merchandise for our school and these programs are even better this year. With your help, McMurray Elementary can make this the best year ever.

Participating in both programs is easy— simply save proofs of purchase from participating Campbell products and Box top eligible products and send them to our school.

Please visit www.labelsforeducation.com and www.boxtops4education.com for a complete list of eligible products and point values. Help multiply our efforts by asking your friends and family to collect proofs of purchase on behalf of McMurray Elementary.

Thanks so much for your support. Together with **Campbell's Labels for Education** and **Box Tops for Education**—we can build a better school.

If you have any questions or would like to help, please contact coordinator, Tracey Lusk at 724-941-7062

Coming soon.....

Abitibi Paper Recycling at McMurray School!

Please save your:

**Magazines • Shopping Catalogs • Newspaper
Office & School Papers • Junk Mail**

Please, drop off in the green & yellow bin in the McMurray parking lot.

**DO NOT leave paper trash outside of the
recycle bin! Thank you!**



Wet paper can not be recycled and the slightest breeze will blow the paper all over the parking lot!

This recycling project benefits PTA sponsored programs for our children.

Giant Eagle Apples for the Students

Remember to register your Giant Eagle Advantage card to participate in the Apples for the Students program. Only register once but, remember to change your school account to McMurray Elementary: **0683**

Attention Volunteers

**Can you help out ...
ONCE IN A BLUE MOON?**

Please send in your name, email, phone number with the words "Blue Moon" written on it.



Thank you in advance.

Mark your calendar! **Brunch with the Principals** is coming. Take advantage of the opportunity to meet Dr. Freado and Mr. Stoehr and learn more about your child's school. Light refreshments will be served and babysitting will be available.

4th Grade: Friday, October 3, 2008

5th Grade: Friday, October 10, 2008

6th Grade: Friday, October 24, 2008

All meetings will be held in the LGI room from 10:30 am until 12:30 pm. Informational flyers will be coming home with your child one week prior to each meeting. Please return the RSVP slip by the appropriate deadline.

If you are interested in helping out or have questions, please contact: Minna Allison 724-969-0983 (4th grade) or Deb Antonucci 724-941-1341 (5th grade)

Sally Foster Order Pick Up

Orders will NOT be sent home on the school busses!!!

Tuesday October 7th and Wednesday October 8th ...during school hours (9 am until 3:30 pm)

Thursday October 9th ...3:00pm until 8 pm

Questions? Call Kimi Forse 724-941-6576

Fall Scholastic Book Fair

McMurray Elementary will be holding a Scholastic Book Fair, in the library from Monday, September 22 until Thursday, September 25th.

Your child will be visiting the book fair with their classes. A schedule of class times, informational letter, and a flyer will go home with students on the 18th. Students will need to be prepared to purchase during that scheduled time. We will not be able to place books on "hold" for a later time.

PTA 2008-2009 Reflections Program

This year's theme is "WOW"

Be creative and show your talents!!!

Enter in photography, visual arts, literature, music, dance or video.

The official rules for each of the categories and entry form for the program can be found on the PA PTA website:

www.papta.org/1421010251914537j/blank/browse.as;?A=383&BMDRN=2000&BCOB=O&C=53800

You may enter as many times (in as many categories) Please be sure to follow all of the directions carefully.

Your entries are due by October 30th. You can bring your entries into school and give it to your teacher or drop off at the PTA room.

McMurray Open House **COOKIES NEEDED!!!!**

Just a friendly reminder that Open House is on Tuesday September 23rd and Thursday.

There will be a cart inside the office and you can place your cookies on the cart (you do not need to sign in).

Thank you, in advance, for all of your wonderful cookies!

If you have any questions, please give us a call.

Shelli Banko 724-942-2902 or Kathleen Chaudhari 724-941-8546

2008– 2009 McMurray Elementary PTA Officers

OFFICERS	NAME	PHONE	E-MAIL
President	Geeta Welden	960-1108	geeta@websouth.com
1st Vice President	Carol Planitzer	969-4122	cplanitzer@comcast.net
2nd Vice President	Jodi Lesniakowski	941-1772	jodi@jodisart.com
3rd Vice President	Barbara Calfo	941-7856	barbcalfo@aol.com
4th Vice President	Michelle Smith	969-0287	m3sonsmith@verizon.net
Secretary	Joanne Jaworski	348-5342	jojaworski@aol.com
Treasurer	Sarah Lindsay	941-5331	lindsayusa@yahoo.com
Assistant Treasurer	Karen Bovalina	941-3023	buzzerb@verizon.net

Important Dates To Remember

9/23 Open House 4th and 5A, 6:30 pm—8:30 pm

9/25 Open House 5B and 6th 6:30 pm—8:30 pm
Area Council meeting with Administration, 9 am

10/14 PTA meeting, 9 am

10/16 Character Counts: stamping out bullying Assembly with Jay Banks and No Tune Left Behind, 7pm

10/26 Character Counts walk for awareness, 1 pm at the PT Rec Center

10/29—11/3 Red Ribbon Week