

This is the **Indiana PTA Good News Alert** that goes out every Sunday night throughout the year. **Please feel free to pass this on to your PTA contacts! We hope you all are having a good weekend!**

We are looking to highlight PTA's and Council's across the state that are excelling at membership, projects, or just have a great idea to share! We also hope this keeps you up to date on deadlines and events for Indiana PTA. Please feel free to pass this on!

INDIANA PTA UPDATE

Indiana PTA Website Now Available in Spanish

The Indiana PTA website has been translated into Spanish. The result is that now Spanish-speaking parents, students, and administrators can now log onto our site, click on the "En Espanol" link in the bottom right corner (under Quick Links) and be directed to our site in Spanish. Try it out and see. You'll notice that the site doesn't look exactly the same, but that is due to the Spanish translations often being longer than the English versions. That shouldn't effect read-ability. In the coming weeks, Nichole Thomas and Pat Taylor will be working on linking existing Spanish documents within the English and Spanish sites, so that both English and Spanish visitors will have access to them. We also may look at having training materials and other WORD or PDF documents translated into Spanish to put on the site. Here's to the next step in making Indiana PTA accessible to ALL people!

America Goes Back to School: A National Town Hall Meeting with Arne Duncan

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan is traveling throughout the country to engage a broad group of stakeholders—including parents—in an open and honest conversation about federal education policy in anticipation of the reauthorization of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act*. Already, the secretary has met with hundreds of mothers and fathers, students, teachers, principals, education support staff, superintendents, college professors, higher education administrators, and community leaders during his national tour, "Listening and Learning: A Conversation About Education Reform." One of the most important things policymakers can do is to connect with the people who are affected by the decisions they make. During his tour, Secretary Duncan has heard and noted that in order to prepare students for success in today's globally competitive workforce, it is not enough simply to preserve the status quo. Parents and other education stakeholders across America want better schools, curricula, and teachers for their children and, through forums such as this **National Town Hall Meeting**, they are helping to shape future education policy.

On this **special edition of *Education News Parents Can Use***, Secretary Duncan will **engage in a live, interactive discussion with parents across the nation by telephone,**

email, and with a studio audience. This event is one stop along the secretary's national "Listening and Learning" tour to gather input on the administration's education agenda, including: early childhood learning, quality schools, parent responsibility, higher standards, teacher quality, health and safety, workforce development, and higher education. Throughout the hour-long program, parents will have a chance to offer the Secretary their suggestions and their hopes about reforming education in the United States in a public dialogue addressing topics of importance to schools, families, and communities, including:

- What is working and what needs to change in the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act*?
- What do we need to do, and what do we need to do differently to ensure our students are successful?
- What does a quality school look like, and how can more schools become consistently high achieving?
- How can parents become more involved with and engaged in their child's education?
- What are some effective practices for recruiting, retaining, supporting and compensating highly effective teachers?
- What steps are schools at all levels of education taking to ensure a safe and healthy learning environment?

CONTRIBUTE TO THE DISCUSSION! They want to hear from you—parents, teachers, and students! Call the show during the live broadcast at **1-888-493-9382**, between 8:00 – 9:00 PM Eastern on September 15th. **Ways to Watch:** *Education News* is available on local education, government or public access channels; some PBS member stations; the Dish Network and DirecTV; BYU Television (DirecTV, Dish and via local cable providers); and Channel One. To learn more, visit www.ed.gov/edtv.

Vote for Your School as "America's Favorite School"

Next week, Care2.com and GreatSchools.net will be launching their first ever "America's Favorite School" contest to recognize and reward schools across the country that go the extra mile to help our children learn, grow and thrive. At the end of this fun, eight-week contest, the school with the most votes will win \$20,000! Voting will begin on Monday, September 14th here: <http://www.care2.com/schoolcontest>. They are excited at this fun opportunity to help parents and communities rally around their schools, and they want to help you in any way they can to get the word out to your parent volunteers, neighbors and school community. They have materials available for you to use to promote the contest:

Flyer in English:

http://dingo.care2.com/c2p/contest/school/Care2SchoolContestFlyer_English.pdf

Flyer in Spanish:

http://dingo.care2.com/c2p/contest/school/Care2SchoolContestFlyer_Espanol.pdf

Web banners: http://dingo.care2.com/c2p/contest/school/Care2GreatSchools_Banners.zip

Care2 is committed to ensuring that all schools, regardless of demographics and average community income, have the opportunity to win. Care2 will be awarding a \$500 cash prize every week to a randomly selected school. In addition to the grand prize awarded to the school with the most votes, Care2 will award a total of \$11,000 to the four schools in second through fifth place.

Contest details: The "America's Favorite School" contest is an online contest with a simple online vote form and easy tools people can use to spread the word to family, friends, and community. Voting runs from September 14th through November 8th, 2009, and any individual gets one vote only for the duration of the contest. Anyone in the U.S. who is 13 years of age or older may vote, and they have tools in place to prevent voting by children under the age of 13. Please feel free to email me or call Rebecca Young with any questions you have. She can be reached by email at rebecca@earth.care2.com and in the office at (650) 622-0860 ext. 160.

PTA SUCCESS STORIES

The New **Paul Harding High School Parent/Teacher/Student Association** in Fort Wayne will host a community back-to-school event at Paul Harding High School on **Saturday, September 19, 2009, 9:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m.** The community is invited to come together with the PTAs and PTSA of Paul Harding High School, Prince Chapman Academy Middle School, Village, Southwick and Meadowbrook Elementary Schools. The presenter, Mr. Clifton Ervin, will address the 40 Developmental Assets and focus on improving parent/teacher/student/community relationships. This conference will establish a network of cooperation and collaboration among the stakeholders (parents, teachers, students, administrators, and the community) and serves to help to identify ways that all stakeholders can contribute to student success. The presenter will offer challenges to attendees with a return in the spring for assessments, feedback and testimonials. Other benefits of the conference include:

- parents learn how they can be more involved in the educational process
- parents identify effective communication strategies to enhance the parent/teacher/student relationship

· help to build a mutual support system uniting all academic levels of PTA to build a foundation for continuous parental involvement from elementary through high school.

For additional information or to register contact Sherry Fincher at 260-625-8433 (office) or 260-433-1024 (cell.)

The playground at **Francis W. Parker Montessori School #56** got an extreme make over on Friday, August 28, 2009 thanks to the generosity of Lowes Home Improvement and Roche Diagnostic. The project was part of the United Way Day of Caring. Lowes became involved when the PTA asked for a discount on paint to freshen the existing playground equipment. Lowes employee, Corey Batts saw an opportunity for a store, community and PTA project. The school now has new picnic tables, benches, and a shade spot. The barren playground has new landscaping and mulch was also added. The PTA provided healthy snacks for the volunteers as well as serving lunch to thank the volunteers for the work. Lowes donated \$3000 in supplies and provided 15 volunteers and Roche also contributed financially and provided 35 volunteers.

The **School City of Hammond and PTA** are reaching out to have 100% Staff Membership. From September 15 – November 15 our goal is to have every employee in the district to join the PTA where they work. Additionally, **Hammond Council PTA** will continue to offer the All School Community Membership, the Principal's Club and Community Sponsorship Membership opportunities.

On the first day of school **O'Bannon PTA** had a pancake breakfast for all the parents. They invited the following organizations to attend. They each presented what they do to help the community. Parents visited each table and signed up for whatever they needed. Organizations that participated included: Lake Area United Way; North Township Trustee; Parents As Teachers; Catherine McCauley Clinic; Hoosier Healthwise; Woodmar Methodist Church-Mentor's Program; Hayward Library; Calumet Area Literacy Council; First Steps; Books, Brushes and Bands; New Life Learning Center; St. Margaret's Hospital Financial Counseling; YMCA-Before and After School Care; Harris Bank; Purdue Ext. Coop--Health Programs; and Dad's On Guard. They had all kinds of giveaways, sold spirit wear, and "Parents and Teachers as One" shirts. They had PTA sign up, volunteer sign ups and PTA information. They talked about the monthly Character Traits they will be doing this year and all the planned PTA functions. The outside of the school was decorated with large bunches of balloons, a balloon arch in front of cafeteria doors and table top balloon arrangements on the cafeteria tables. This turned out to be a wonderful community outreach opportunity and brought families together with the school. O'Bannon PTA donated school supplies to the Salvation Army and each year the teachers let their PTA know if they have students that have supply needs and the PTA provides for them.

We would love to hear YOUR school's PTA events and membership stories! How's membership going at your school? Make sure to send in your school's story so that we can recognize your efforts here in the coming weeks!

REGION NEWS

This week is the Southern Region Training. See below for details for the region trainings that are left this year. Make sure you make plans to attend for your region! Following are the dates we have available as of this publication:

SOUTHERN REGION BACK TO SCHOOL PACKET/LEADERSHIP TRAINING:

Thursday – September 17, 2009

Starting at 5:00 p.m. with the Vendor Fair

Career & Technical Center

Evansville, IN.

Contact Natalie Jones at 812-401-3203 or at Natalie.jones@evsc.k12.in.us for more information

HAMMOND TRAININGS:

The **Hammond Council PTA** will host a Leadership Packet Training on **Tuesday, September 22nd @ 6:30 p.m.** at the School City of Hammond Administration Building located at 41 Williams Street. Please enter through Door C.

A **Bylaw Update/Writing Workshop** will be held on **Tuesday, September 29th** at Irving Elementary School, 4727 Pine Street. The workshop will begin at **6:30 p.m.** Please RSVP to Dee Jones at ptadee@yahoo.com. Additional Packet Training will be available to those not available for the September 22nd training during this time. Please enter through Door A.

FORT WAYNE COUNCIL TRAINING

After the first meeting of the **Fort Wayne Area PTA Council** on **September 22nd at 7:00 p.m.**, there will be a short mini-workshop on financial reports, audits and taxes. The meeting will be held at the Grile Administration Building, 1200 South Clinton St. The Fort Wayne Area PTA Council is also looking for nominations for their "**Big Heart Awards.**" Contact Julie Klingenberger at jklingenberger04@comcast.net for more information.

NORTHEAST REGION FALL TRAINING will be held:

Saturday - October 10, 2009, 9:00 am – 2:00 pm

Forest Park Elementary School

2004 Alabama Ave. in Fort Wayne, IN

Contact: Julie Klingenberger at jklingenberger04@comcast.net

MISHAWAKA TRAINING RESCHEDULED

Unfortunately, the Leadership Conference scheduled for September 12th was cancelled. The training has been rescheduled for **Tuesday, October 20th** at the **Mishawaka PTA Council Meeting**. The meeting will be held at Mishawaka High School. Check back for more info.

[National PTA Update](#)

Last Chance to Register for FREE Kit!

Official PTA Kit registration will close September 30, 2009. [Register now](#) to get your PTA's kit as soon as possible for the new school year—and to make sure the kit ships to the address of your choosing. Go to PTA.org/ptakit_register/ to register for the kit today (be sure to have your local unit ID number with you). Note: You should keep your address updated or verify your address on record with your state PTA office to ensure prompt and correct delivery of PTA resources throughout the year—including the Official PTA Kit if you choose not to register by September 30.

To purchase additional kits or to order a kit after September 30—at a cost of \$35—use this [order form](#).

GOOD THINGS ARE HAPPENING IN INDIANA PTA! WE ARE EXCITED FOR THE NEW IDEAS AND PROGRAMS THAT CAN HELP YOUR UNITS!

NOTE: How do I get my school featured in an Indiana PTA Good News Alert? If you have a great story that you would like us to use, contact us directly at the above email or phone number or let your Region VP know and we will highlight your PTA in one of our weekly emails! **Contact your Region VP at: Northwest: Dee Jones (ptadee@yahoo.com)**, **Northeast: Julie Klingenberger (jklingenberger04@comcast.net)**, **Central: Sharon Wise (swise36@comcast.net)**; **Southern: Natalie Jones (twinmama02@yahoo.com)**. Also don't forget to check out the Indiana PTA website at www.indianapta.org for some great information and the revamped National PTA website at www.pta.org. The new format for the “PTA Great Idea Bank” could also be really useful for your unit – it can also be found on the National PTA website.