

Best Ideas 2008-2009

Timber Ridge Elementary - Adventures in Reading

Timber Ridge asked the reading specialists and media specialist to present a mandatory volunteer training seminar for all Adventures in Reading volunteers (where parents are scheduled to read in classrooms). The seminar included a multimedia presentation as well as a "tool box" kit for each volunteer to keep at home to be used on an ongoing basis. This was created to focus on encouraging higher thinking. They had over 50 volunteers in attendance. www.timberridge.ptsamail.com

Eastvalley Elementary – Math Club

"E=MC(squared)". This is a PTA sponsored Math Club that is open to all students. It encourages practice in basic math facts as well as helping with real work problem solving and critical thinking. Math problems are downloaded from the web site and turned into the "math box" in the media center. The top Math Whizzes get rewarded at the end of the year. Some problems are encouraged to be solved by the whole family. Eastvalley also translates key articles in their Eagle Eyes Newsletter into Portuguese due to the large Portuguese population in their school. www.eastvalleypta.org

Garrison Mill Elementary – Legislative efforts

Their PTA's Legislative efforts involved: holding a student mock election, utilized the tongue depressor campaign with the help of their school nurse and personally delivered them to the Governor's office on the PTA Day at the Capitol, asked parents to sign a petition and write letters to state representatives to keep nurses, one of their second grade classes wrote letters to Governor Perdue, participated in a press conference on the Capitol's front steps, and the Executive Committee and Principal appeared on three local TV stations standing up for PTA ideals. This is advocacy at its best and getting the kids involved this early in these campaigns is inspiring. www.gmpta.org

Mt Bethel – Challenger Book Publishing

Mt. Bethel Elementary established an in-house "publishing company" called Challenger Book Publishing, which nurtured the art of creative writing in the students. Those who wrote a book met with an adult "editor" between two and four times. There was one committee chair and two parent volunteer editors. PTA funds were used for copying and binding. www.mtbethel.blogs.com/pta/

Dodgen – "MUST" Monday

Dodgen Middle School PTSA started a new program called "MUST" Monday. A small donation of food was requested the first Monday of each month. Parents and students collected the food as the students entered school and put them into boxes, which were then delivered to Must Ministries. www.dodgenptsa.org

Pope High School – Exceptional Children

Pope PTSA showcases the abilities of its Special Needs Students to the community while helping them learn and practice life skills by working customer service and inventory management in the PTSA Spirit Shop, assisting with the folding of the school newsletter and being the “Fluff & Fold” group caring for the linens used at PTSA receptions.

www.popeptsa.org

Tritt Elementary School – “Screen on the Green”

Parent & Family Involvement in a big collaboration with Health & Youth Services and Environment hosted a “Screen on the Green” free family night. Prior to the film, a slide show of PTA programs and lesser known activities of the local unit was shown. A healthy variety of food was provided for people to enjoy. The Environmental committee used the opportunity to promote campus recycling and beautification. Effective communication made this program a big success.

www.cobb.k12.ga.us/~tritt/pta/pta.htm

East Side - Communication

In 2008, East Side Elementary PTA combined its commitment to be a "greener" organization with our on-going efforts to improve communications with our families. Through a review of enrollment dates, we created a distribution list whereby each family (versus each child) would receive a copy of the school newsletter. Other program announcements and flyers that could not effectively be communicated via our weekly electronic newsletter were also sent home on a per family basis. Committee chairs also designed half-page flyers in lieu of full-page flyers. This literally saved thousands of pieces of paper throughout the school year. www.eastsideelementary.com

Also, East Side families were allowed to "opt-in" to receive a paperless copy of the newsletter. Approximately 150 elected this delivery method, again, saving copying costs, carbon emission and paper ending up in the waste stream. Also as a bonus, these families received their copy of the newsletter a day early!

East Side – Waste Free Lunch

East Side also had another one that I thought was good. They sponsored a Waste Free Lunch day on February 25th. The program promoted using reusable containers and avoiding disposable items. www.eastsideelementary.com

Rocky Mount - Membership

Rocky Mount created a membership song entitled "We've Got the Music in PTA!" which consisted of touting PTA programs set to a medley of familiar tunes. The principal even sang a karaoke song in front of the students. www.rockymountpta.org

Kincaid Elementary – Parent Involvement

Kincaid increased parent involvement by using every effort to bring families to school. They involved students and families in programs; gave them time to spend together, reduced costs by providing free childcare and meals at programs, free transportation, and interpreters. The result was an increase in involvement from families that do not normally attend PTA events. Kincaid offered families free dinner and child care before their Parent Education evening and a free dinner before Family Fun Night which provided no-cost entertainment. They advertised free transportation to events and meetings. They had interpreters at Meet and Greet and advertised in Spanish. All of these efforts ensured support for all families. www.kincaidpta.org

Davis Elementary PTA – Parent Involvement

One way to increase parent involvement – “one great “hands on” way to be involved is with the Arts Alive program. This does not require a person that is artistically inclined. We have one parent per classroom that presents a lesson on 6 predetermined artists each year. The volunteer then directs and assists the children in making a piece of artwork similar in style to the particular artist.” www.cobbk12.org/~davis/pta

Davis Elementary PTA – Student Achievement

A program that increased student achievement – “PTA budgets an equal amount per grade level for things such as in-house field trips, speakers, plays, artist and author visits, etc. An example of the way this money was most recently used by our fourth grade team is to provide costumes that are used every year for an American Revolution Living Wax Museum. This is a huge production and the children must dress and perform the part of a “famous someone” from the American Revolution. What a fabulous way to learn!” www.cobbk12.org/~davis/pta

Sope Creek Elementary PTA - Communication

“The Sope Creek PTA uses the Room Representatives to deliver one “Sope Creek Families PTA Upcoming Events” email every Friday. This email is composed by the PTA Co-Presidents. If a PTA Committee has an event or needs a call for volunteers, they must submit their information to the PTA Co-Presidents by Tuesday for the Friday email. The teachers get a condensed version of the PTA family email every Wednesday for their Friday blog updates.” www.sopecreeklibrary.typepad.com/pta/

“The SCPTA blog has a site for each committee which they keep updated with current events, results of events if necessary, parent involvement information, and contact information. FeedBlitz feeds are utilized frequently to notify parent within 24 hours of the time a blog is updated. MoFuse, a service that allows parents to receive information specially formatted for their cell phone, PDA, Blackberry, or other mobile device is utilized by many parents. Communication has become more visual with our blogs...”

Dickerson Middle School – Teacher Support

Teacher Support – “Our PTSA added a Teacher Liaison position to the Board of Directors after many years of not having one. She was able to bring great ideas to the Board from the teaching staff and also communicate to the staff what the PTSA was doing.”

www.dickersonptsa.org

Dickerson Middle School - Community Involvement

“We were the only school in the United States to implement the BE A PENS PAL program. This program sprang from the PENS (Police Email Notification System) program created in east Cobb County as a notification network for the police to update the public about criminal activity, crime trends, crime statistics, traffic notices and rumor control in our area via email as well as providing crime prevention tips. The PENS program helped knit the community together, reducing crime and opening communication.”

Dickerson Middle School - Organization

“For the first time, we implemented a Dickerson PTSA Program Checklist to be utilized by the committee chairs in planning the programs and events. This checklist would ensure that nothing would “slip through the cracks” and more easily organize programs in addition to being a great tool for committee chairs in future years to follow.”

Kell High School – Welcoming

The Kell PTSA hosts a Welcome Party for the rising 9th grade families. It is an introduction to high school as the 8th graders are preparing for their entrance and eases some anxiety that parents may be having. This is the second year of the program. There is a presentation by the Kell guidance counselors and administrators as well as tours, classroom visits and a showcase of clubs and activities. www.kellptsa.org